

OECS Academic Recovery Programme
Report 6

Final Programme Report

Dr Björn Haßler

2021-04-xx

<https://opendeved.net>

Commissioned by



Organisation of
Eastern Caribbean States



Recommended citation:

Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021). *Final Report and Recommendations* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 6). Open Development & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4603101>. Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/TD6VRUSA>. Available under [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Commissioned by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Castries, Saint Lucia.

Version 1 | April 2021

Details about the references used in this report can be found in the OpenDevEd Evidence Library at <https://docs.opendeved.net>. Individual references are hyperlinked throughout this report.



This report is available under a Creative Commons Licence (Attribution 4.0 International).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

Contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1. Overview of ARP development	5
2. Progress with implementation	7
2.1. Component 1. Supporting teachers and instructors	7
2.2. Component 2. Diagnostic tools	7
2.3. Component 3. Special education and disability (SPED)	8
2.4. Component 4. Resource library: Open Educational Resources	8
2.5. Component 5. Engaging and supporting parents	8
2.6. Component 6. Community engagement	9
2.7. Component 7. Strategic partnerships	9
3. Recommendations at the OECS level	10
3.1. Offer weekly implementation support	10
3.2. Review and deploy an M&E platform for the ARP	10
3.3. Continue sharing resources	11
3.4. Develop a content library using a robust approach	11
3.5. Extending the programme to the other OECS member states	11
Bibliography	12

Abbreviations and acronyms

ARP	Academic Recovery Programme
COVID-19	Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2
EDMU	Education Development Management Unit
EdTech	Educational Technology
ELP	Early Learners Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
MoE	Ministry of Education
NCTE	National Council for Teachers of English
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PD	Professional Development
SPED	Special Education
TPD	Teacher Professional Development

1. Introduction

The present report is the final report, providing details of the OECS Academic Recovery Programme (December 2020 to April 2021). We are grateful to the various members of the ministries of the member states of the OECS and staff from the OECS for their valuable contributions throughout this period.

1.1. Overview of ARP development

The development of the OECS Academic Recovery Programme (ARP) has been, from the start, a consultative, participatory process. Education stakeholders have provided materials, documentation and other information from individual teachers to Ministry of Education officials and the Education Development Management Unit (EDMU).

Based on an in-depth literature review and interviews conducted with education stakeholders, a broad programme outline was developed, focusing on supporting struggling learners through building teacher capacity in the new normal of a blended learning context (Reports 1 and 2). The reports are:

1. Academic Recovery Programmes in the Eastern Caribbean — Literature Review (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 1), [↑available here](#);
2. Academic Recovery Programme: Synthesis of Qualitative Data and High-level Overview (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 2), [↑available here](#).

To support the ARP implementation, we produced several documents and guidelines. Report 3, which details the components of the ARP, provides critical recommendations and useful appendices. The document is summarised in Pitch deck (Report 4), presenting aspects of Report 3 in slide-deck form. The reports are:

3. An Academic Recovery Programme for the OECS for the OECS Member States (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 3), [↑available here](#);
4. An Academic Recovery Programme for the OECS for the OECS Member States: Pitch Deck (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 4), [↑available here](#).

Based on Report 3, a concept note was developed, supporting the implementation of the programme:

5. *Concept Note for the Implementation of the Academic Recovery Programme* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 5), [↑available here](#).

The concept note is accompanied by a range of different resources, such as an [↑implementation planning tool](#) and [↑notes for parental support](#), as well as a set of resources supporting teacher professional development: a [↑TPD programme itself \(with facilitator notes\)](#), [↑the TPD programme \(teachers version\)](#) and a [↑slide deck to support TPD sessions](#). We note that these resources have gone through review by the respective

ministries and were revised based on their feedback. We trialled the teacher professional development resources with teachers from the OECS and education sector management staff.

It is expected that these reports and resources, taken together, form the basis for the EDMU to begin full scale-implementation of the ARP across the four participating focus OECS Member States (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

2. Progress with implementation

While the consultancy's focus was to develop the ARP itself; however, some progress with implementation was made by the Ministries during the development of the programme. The section details the overall progress made — by the ministries — against ARP components. For guidance on the programme implementation, please see the [↑concept note](#).

Overall, the inception, development and trialling of the ARP, by using an agile approach to develop the programme iteratively, has resulted in notable — but in some cases uneven — progress concerning the key features highlighted in the [↑ARP itself \(Report 3\)](#).

2.1. Component 1. Supporting teachers and instructors

Support to teachers and instructors has focused mainly on teaching and learning practice within the new blended learning environment. An exemplar set of peer-facilitated resources for teachers (and guidance for facilitators; [↑TPD programme itself \(with facilitator notes\)](#)) and a [↑slide deck to support TPD sessions](#)) has been trialled. The trialling was undertaken with a group of teachers from all four participating member states. The teachers appreciated the sessions, and the sessions were well attended (with between 40–70 teachers per session). There was further development of materials following feedback from participating teachers and following the input of senior education stakeholders. The exemplar set of [↑TPD sessions](#) (each around an hour in length) should form the basis for the development of around 20 sessions, covering the essential aspects of academic recovery as outlined in the [↑ARP itself](#) and the [↑concept note](#).

Regarding the [↑Implementation Planning Tool](#), we note that psychosocial / counselling support to teachers is needed. It would also be helpful to enable better peer support for teachers within the territories but perhaps also across territories. Teachers appreciated a small-scale trial in cross-national teacher support (using WhatsApp). Teachers used the group to discuss both academic and personal topics relevant to their teaching. The group also offered a degree of peer support following the recent events surrounding the La Soufrière eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

2.2. Component 2. Diagnostic tools

There are several diagnostic tools in use across the territories, including national assessments. However, the degree to which rigorous diagnostic testing has been implemented varies (see [↑synthesis](#)). Significant work remains to be done to ensure that all children across the OECS can be tested in order to have access to appropriate

academic recovery measures. At a national level, stakeholders should review existing EMIS systems, monitoring frameworks, and key indicators to ensure that diagnostic data can be harnessed more effectively to allocate resources.

We also note that many activities ([Implementation Planning Tool](#)) are interlocking and complementary. For example, diagnostic tools at a classroom level are also covered in the TPD sessions. Moreover, the TPD sessions introduce the idea of assessment for learning (AFL). Incorporating diagnostic data into pre- and reteaching methods is also covered, as this is a required real-time method for teachers to assess and prioritise support to struggling learners.

Better teacher professional development and better systems analysis through diagnostic testing (both at school and national level) are quick wins. They should feature strongly in any ARP.

2.3. Component 3. Special education and disability (SPED)

The area of SPED remains an area of significant need. It is an area where longer-term investments are needed to ensure equitable education for all children. In the context of the ARP, we have included materials on differentiation in the TPD programme. However, specialist teachers and counsellors are insufficient in number; financial allocates for additional SPED staff where possible need to be made.

2.4. Component 4. Resource library: Open Educational Resources

In the development of the ARP, we have located several resources that could be useful and have made these available. However, the area of resources is difficult to manage for each state on its own. We return to this in our higher-level recommendations below.

We note that further work to develop the rest of the sessions should be undertaken by the EDMU, with attention paid to curricular alignment with CXC Learning Standards.

2.5. Component 5. Engaging and supporting parents

Guidance has been developed especially for parents to consult in the context of supporting their child's learning outside of the classroom. Importantly, this guidance is aligned with facilitator and teacher resources and actively encourages parents to foster collaborative ties with their child's school and teachers. The guidance takes into account parent mental health and seeks to support parents without burdening them with a cumbersome level of additional responsibilities.

The guidance has yet to be trialled on parents in focus countries. We strongly recommend attempting to connect with parents and low-income families.

2.6. Component 6. Community engagement

Given the tight timeframe of activities, community outreach and engagement have not been well developed. However, it appears that this is a potentially rewarding area. We recommend engaging community members and groups in the academic recovery programme. It may well be that this could surface community resources that can support students who are falling behind.

Regular and structured investment in engagement and monitoring will be vital to effective engagement with relevant stakeholder organisations and individuals within the community.

2.7. Component 7. Strategic partnerships

The short timescale of the ARP trialling period did not allow for the extensive development of strategic partnerships with NGOs, faith-based organisations, or the private sector. However, as with community engagement, this may well be a promising area for the future. The development and backing of some partnerships need to be overseen at a national level, while other partnerships could be driven at the local level by the school management.

One crucial area is to connect with the private sector in supporting the infrastructural sustainability of the programme in terms of providing students and families with the power, devices, and internet access needed for distance learning.

3. Recommendations at the OECS level

For the programme to run smoothly and be implemented effectively, we make the following recommendations.

3.1. Offer weekly implementation support

The weekly sessions with the implementation partners at the ministries helped develop the draft programme; they also offered essential means of sharing information and offering support.

We strongly recommend that regular implementation support sessions should be offered to member states. For example, a weekly one-hour session would accelerate implementation. Such sessions would require the two representatives from each member state to attend. Each country reports on progress made during the last week and commits to their tasks during the coming week. For example, the representatives could report on data that districts collected to monitor ARP progress. Such sessions could use a task tracking tool (such as a virtual kanban board) to offer prompts for discussion.

Implementation support is a vital process in the effective implementation of the ARP. It will facilitate accountability, problem-solving, and effective local and regional monitoring, thereby ensuring funds allocated for the ARP are used effectively. More importantly, it will support the goals of TPD — closing achievement gaps amongst the most vulnerable students and their families.

3.2. Review and deploy an M&E platform for the ARP

Several member states undertake diagnostic tests. M&E platforms (such as Tangerine, ODK) could be helpful to capture and analyse data. Similar arrangements should also be made to monitor the ARP itself. For example, an M&E platform could capture data about TPD participation. The TPD platform could also contain features that allow for new training and assess other relevant teacher training needs. For each training session, facilitators and teachers would upload evidence. Such evidence could even form assessment portfolios, allowing certification of the TPD. The portfolio could include student's work, teacher reflections, videos of teachers implementing strategies and reflecting on them.

3.3. Continue sharing resources

There is varying access to resources, information and expertise across the member states. We recommend creating more opportunities for sharing insights and resources for academic recovery. Sharing will promote greater access to a range of resources that will facilitate problem-solving, strengthen staff capacity and enhance the other aspects of the ARP.

Setting up a formal resource collection process encourages accountability and ease of monitoring where resources are allocated. It also facilitates inventory management and resource maintenance in ways that promote durability and effective resource management.

3.4. Develop a content library using a robust approach

There are various plans to enhance resource development in the OECS. The OECS needs to continue to play a pivotal role in consolidating and coordinating these undertakings. In addition to existing programmes, each state could select a core group to develop content resources for relevant subject areas. Efforts towards developing and deploying a regional platform should be strengthened; this would allow regional sharing and collaboration amongst the core groups from each state. The task force should receive regular training to ensure that they are updated with the necessary skills and resources. New content development should be coordinated with those core groups.

The development of a centralised resource library with relevant and aligned content available as open educational resources must be driven at a supranational level by the EDMU. This will be a key milestone in making more OER available in the OECS, lowering the cost of educational resources.

3.5. Extending the programme to the other OECS member states

The groundwork laid by the development of the ARP thus far should be capitalised upon. Given the positive reception by the four member states involved in this first phase, we recommend launching a second phase that includes all OECS member states.

Bibliography

This bibliography is available digitally in our evidence library at

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/TD6VRUSA>

Haßler, B., Adam, T., Blower, T., & Megha-Bongnkar, G. (2021b). *Academic Recovery Programmes in the Eastern Caribbean — Literature Review* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 1). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4780577>. Available from

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/DZA3GVBD>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

Haßler, B., Blower, T., Megha-Bongnkar, G., & Regis, C. (2021c). *Academic Recovery Programme: Synthesis of Qualitative Data and High-level Overview* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 2). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4780099>. Available from

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/XAMQ949U>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021d). *An Academic Recovery Programme for the OECS for the OECS Member States* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 3). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4780102>. Available from

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/P2D5IJBC>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021e). *An Academic Recovery Programme for the OECS for the OECS Member States: Pitch Deck* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 4). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4780107>. Available from

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/XQCXWE7I>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021f). *Concept Note for the Implementation of the Academic Recovery Programme* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Report No. 5). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4780110>. Available from

<https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/FMVT2NIB>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021fa). *Implementation Planning Tool* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Implementation Planning Tool No. 1). Open Development & Education.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4779907>.

Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/EM6IJ327>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))

- Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021fb). *Implementation Planning: Parental Support for the Academic Recovery Programme* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme Implementation Planning Tool No. 2). Open Development & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4555966>. Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/VK5QH5Q7>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))
- Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021h). *Implementation Guidance: Teacher Professional Development [Facilitators Version]* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme TPD Guidance No. 1). Open Development & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4555958>. Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/M9WXRHE7>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))
- Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021i). *Implementation Guidance: Teacher Professional Development [Teachers Version]* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme TPD Guidance No. 2). Open Development & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4555960>. Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/P2D5IJBC>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))
- Haßler, B., Megha-Bongnkar, G., Regis, C., & Blower, T. (2021j). *Implementation Guidance: Slide Deck for Teacher Professional Development* (OECS Academic Recovery Programme TPD Guidance No. 3). Open Development & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4603116>. Available from <https://docs.opendeved.net/lib/3TJE6CMI>. Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. ([details](#))