Belize
Distributed Learning System (DLS)
Pilot Project
DLS Overview

- **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO’s):** written statements from curricula loaded into central database software

- **Learning Resources:**
  - files with video, voice, graphics and/or text;
  - linked to ILO’s;
  - Over 1.5 TB of learning resources acquired from Discovery Channel

- **Assessment Resources:**
  - knowledge & skills tests taken by students and graded by teachers on the computer;
  - linked to ILO’s;
  - Results accessible at all levels of the education system
Overall Project Objectives

• Increase Primary School Examination (PSE) score by 25%
• Reduce drop-out rate by 10%
Other Indicators Being Monitored

• Students’ grades
  – DLS students vs. non-DLS students
  – Previous class vs. current class

• Reading level of students

• Computer literacy level of students & teachers
Classes & Subjects

Primary School Classes being piloted:
  – Standard 2
  – Standard 5

Subjects being piloted:
  – Language Arts
  – Mathematics
  – Science
  – Social Studies
DLS Classroom
Potential Benefits to Learning

• Standardization of curriculum delivered to students
• Students can move at their own pace.
• Tracking of student learning is real-time.
• Teachers can focus on helping students individually based on the students’ individual needs.
• Need for intervention at all levels can be quickly identified.
Potential Benefits to Curriculum M & E

• Educators and administrators will be able to have information about the students’ learning progress at all levels of the education system:
  – Student
  – Classroom
  – School
  – Managing Authority
  – District
  – Country
DLS Partners

1. Schools
2. Ministry of Education
3. Belize Telemedia Limited (BTL)
4. Canadian Rotary Club
Issues/Challenges

• Teachers’ capacity
  – High percentage of teachers untrained in pedagogy
  – Most teachers are not ICT literate, esp. in the development of learning resources

• Large number of schools (especially, rural schools)
Issues/Challenges

• High cost to provide ICT in all schools
  – Cost to acquire & maintain equipment
  – Cost of Internet connection

• Database software was not ‘user friendly’ for students and teachers (software was originally developed for skills training in a business/work environment)
Questions

How do we provide a relevant education in the information age within the contexts of:

1. A large percentage of teachers not being trained to a minimum professional level?

2. A large rural, dispersed school population and single Internet services provider (i.e., challenge of cost and economies of scale).