

THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE

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# CORRECTING CURRICULUM OVERLOAD

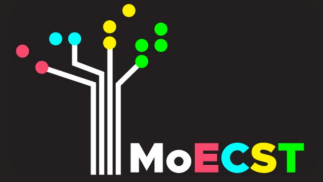
A First Step in our Education Reform Process

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Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology

# CONTEXT



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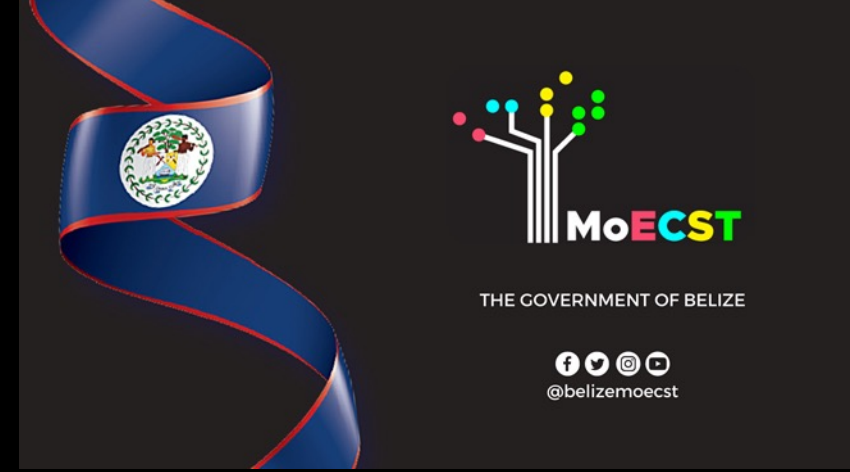
Stakeholders are dissatisfied with the present performance of our education system.

- Limitations of graduates in the workforce.
- Poor performance of secondary graduates in tertiary institutions.
- IDB report on low quality of primary school graduates.

[Näslund-Hadley, E., Alonzo, H., & Martin, D. (2013). *Challenges and opportunities in the Belize education sector*. Technical Note No. IDB-TN-538, Education Division, Inter-American Development Bank.]

Students, Parents, Teachers, Principals, and Managements are stressed due to too many subjects and too much homework.

# CONTEXT



Even the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recognized the problems with Curriculum Overload:

Confronted with the needs and requests of parents, universities and employers, schools are dealing with curriculum overload. As a result, students often lack sufficient time to master key disciplinary concepts or, in the interests of a balanced life, to nurture friendships, to sleep and to exercise. It is time to shift the focus of our students from "more hours for learning" to "quality learning time"

[Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018). *The future of education and skills*]

# NATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



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Look at international best practice.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Curriculum Framework:

- Vision, Aims and Objectives, Values and Principles, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Architecture, The importance of Competency, Areas of Learning, Teaching Methodologies and Strategies, Assessment, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

[United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization International Bureau of Education (2017). *Prototype of a national curriculum framework.*]

# THE ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION



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**This is a relatively new area of study that applies economic concepts to the field of education (National Bureau of Economic Research , 2021).**

**On the production (supply) side, a number of inputs (fixed and variable) are used to produce the education product.**

**These inputs include land, buildings, classrooms, teachers, utilities, school materials, and the curriculum, among others.**

**On the consumption (demand) side, are the students, families, and society at large, who consume the education product.**

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One important principle from economics is that of the *Law of diminishing returns to inputs*.

The law states that as a variable input increases, output first increases at an increasing rate, then it continues to increase but at a decreasing rate, then output actually falls after a certain point.

This economic principle is used to try to attain optimal production where inputs are adjusted if “too little” or “too much” is being used.

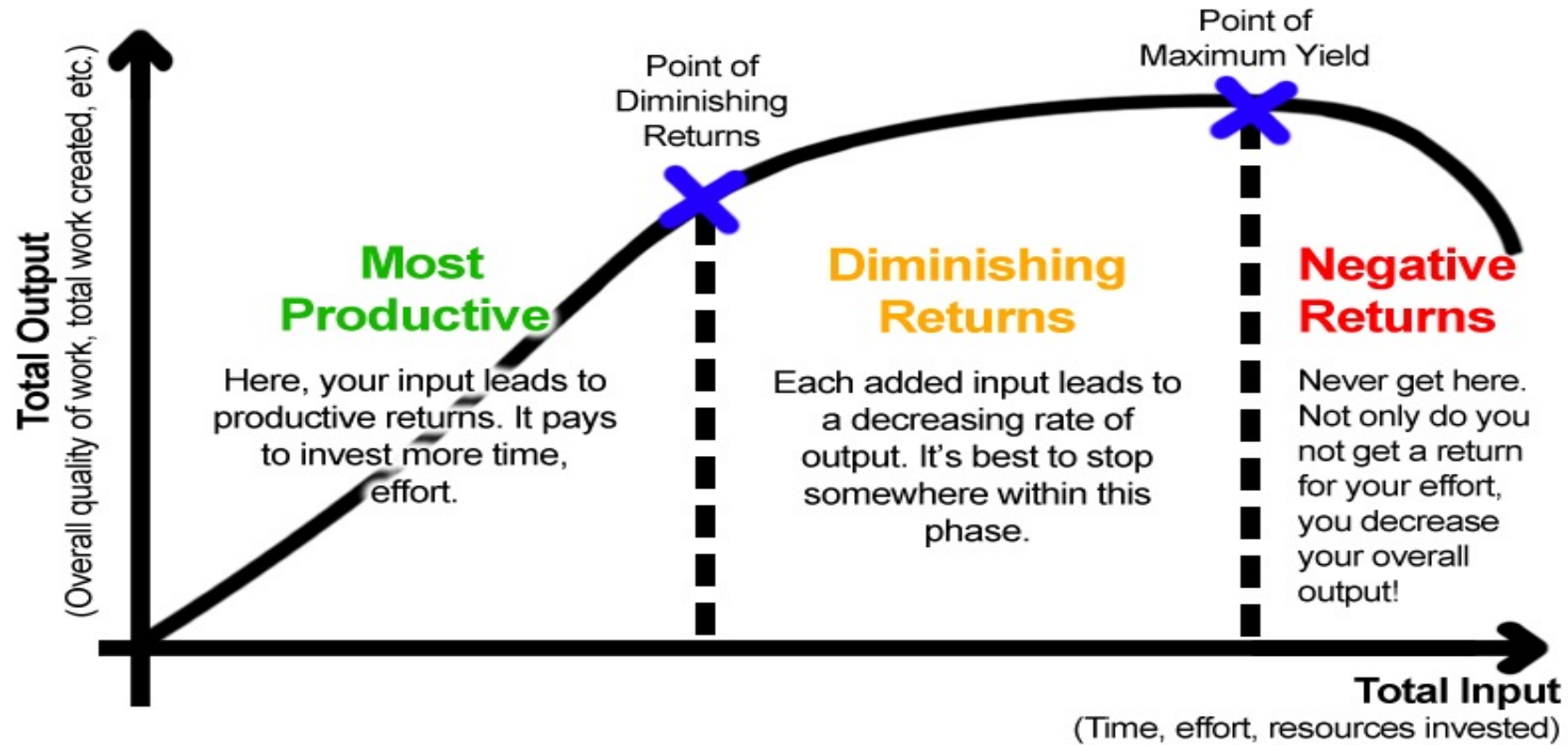
Example of overfertilization in the agriculture sector (Food and Fertilizer Technology Center, 2019).



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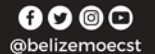
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YouTube videos on the Law of diminishing returns:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLSRMt-wWAM&t=46s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVo-ZV9pwcU>



# RECOMMENDATIONS (FROM 2020 BOOK)

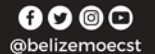


- 1. Reduce the number of subjects in the curriculum.**
- 2. Reduce the amount of homework.**
- 3. (Re)Train teachers by levels and specialty.**
- 4. Introduce personalized learning and personal leadership into the curriculum.**
- 5. Utilize the IBE-UNESCO curriculum development framework.**
- 6. Reform teacher training programs.**
- 7. Engage in national consultations with all stakeholders.**

# REFERENCES



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**THANK YOU!**

**GRACIAS!**

**SEREMIEN!**