

Mexico: Strengthening the Contribution of Education in the Knowledge Economy

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EDUCATION

Strengthening the Contribution of Education in the Knowledge Economy

Overview

Since 1990, Mexico has achieved universal primary education and gender equality, meeting the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as focusing on improving quality and relevance. Through International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) lending and knowledge services, Mexico has provided scholarships and school grants, supported education assessment and secondary reform, leading to increased performance on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Full Brief—4 Pages

[Mexico Education: Strengthening the Contribution of Education in the Knowledge Economy—PDF, Sept 2010](#)

Challenge

Coverage at the primary and lower secondary education levels is essentially universal, with 98 percent and 88 percent respectively and no gender imbalance. Educated workers are increasingly in demand and are a bottleneck in many sectors. Unless Mexico can increase the quantity and quality of upper secondary education (USE) and higher education graduates, it will fall behind international competitors. The enrollment in USE is high (98 percent of lower secondary graduates enroll), but the graduation rate is only 60 percent. Education quality is a major concern at all levels and most students do not meet minimum standards.

Approach

The education sector accounts for a large percentage of public expenditure and the government has been quite selective in choosing areas for IBRD intervention, focusing on where it can have a positive impact taking advantage of its strengths through its investment and knowledge products. These areas include assessment and evaluation, community participation, improved equity and inclusion, and policy dialogue.

One important area in the National Education Strategy is promoting greater community participation in schools. The

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More Results

39,000
schools represented by expansion of the PEC school grant program from 21,000 schools in 2006

120,000
number of teachers who have received universal training

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Bank has supported this objective, including the Program of Quality Schools (PEC) and Support to School Management (AGE) that focus on disadvantaged schools. The Bank is also supporting efforts to improve inclusion through better targeting of scholarships and an increased focus on indigenous and disabled students.

Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo (sp)

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» Data

In the past fifteen years, the World Bank has supported most areas of the education sector, with a strong focus on early childhood development and rural education (**Compensatory Education Project**, 2010 for \$100 million). Supporting school-based management has also been a major area of Bank work (**School Based Management II**, 2010 for \$220 million). The Bank is also supporting secondary education (**Upper Secondary Education DPL**, 2010 for \$700 million) and higher education (**Tertiary Education for Student Assistance**, 2005 for \$171 million).

Results

Through IBRD-financed projects and technical cooperation, the Bank has contributed to the achievement of the following results:

- The creation of a targeted scholarship program for poor upper secondary students, focusing on students not covered by the Oportunidades Program, a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program (mostly located in urban areas), to around 320,000 students in 2009.
- The expansion of the PEC school grant program from 21,000 schools (2006) to 39,000 schools (2009), representing 18 percent of basic education schools mostly in poor and very poor communities. The average school grant was MX\$43,000 per school, benefiting a total of 6.8 million students. These grants have supported the purchase of school furniture, computers, basic maintenance and infrastructure, among others.
- The expansion of the AGE school grant program, covering 67,000 of the poorest schools and providing basic school supplies to around 5 million poor and indigenous students. School grants have largely focused on purchasing additional school supplies and basic maintenance.
- The introduction of an annual student assessment in the last year of upper secondary education in 2008 along with universal training of upper secondary teachers and school directors, focusing on improved teaching techniques, enhanced curriculum, and school leadership. To date, 120,000 teachers have received training with a goal of 240,000 teachers by 2012.

Partners

IBRD, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and OECD are the major international partners active in the education sector reform. All three institutions have worked closely to coordinate their activities and to ensure complementarities. The federal government has played a leading role in identifying interventions and supervising the activities of each agency. Mexico also has a wide range of civil society and philanthropic organizations in the education sector.

Toward the Future

Mexico realizes that it must continue to focus on improving access and equity while increasing the quality of the education system to remain competitive in a changing global environment. The Bank will continue to participate strategically in the education sector through a combination of knowledge products and policy dialogues, which will take advantage of the

Bank's global experience and its convening authority. This dialogue will be complemented by continuing IBRD-financed projects that support strategic interventions.