



Education for Sustainable Development – Building Sustainable Schools in Mexico's indigenous communities

In Mexico, **36.6% of the population presents educational backwardness**; the major amount of that population belongs to an **indigenous group**. The states with the highest proportion of illiterates are Chiapas, with 18.41%; Guerrero, 17.53%; Oaxaca, 16.92%, and Veracruz, 12.02%. Furthermore, while the national illiteracy rate is 6.31% for men and 8.89% for women, is more than double in those states which also concentrate de highest rates of indigenous population.

In order to address the deep problems associated with the lack of education, **poverty and marginalization**, the Govern of Mexico has launched an **Education Reform**. This has been endorsed by Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO. The Reform represents an important political and institutional platform.

This reform includes actions related with the **Post-2015 Agenda**, based on education for sustainable development as a fundamental pillar for future generations. The UNESCO Office in Mexico has developed successful methodologies for ESD implemented in indigenous contexts as the state of Hidalgo. So the Minister of Education has requested UNESCO's support to **continue implementing these actions across the country, in 32 States of the Mexican Republic**.

| | |
|--|---|
| Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies): | Mexico |
| Duration (in months): | 36 months |
| Name and unit of project officer | Education for Sustainable Development |
| Partner(s) institutions: | Ministry of Public Education in Mexico, UN partners on ESD. |
| Total estimated budget inclusive of Programme Support costs (13%) | USD 2 million |

Rationale and background

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) helps individuals and groups to find solutions for sustainability challenges. ESD means including priority sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption.

There are clear linkages between education, poverty reduction and sustainability. The poor and marginalized are disproportionately more affected by poor environmental and socio-economic conditions.

ESD can contribute to sustainable environmental management to improve livelihoods, increase economic security and income opportunities for the poor. Educational responses to poverty need to address the fact that many of the world's poor do not participate in the formal market economy but in non-formal economies, and many are self-employed entrepreneurs.

Education that is relevant and purposeful has the power to transform people's lives. ESD has the potential to equip people with skills needed to improve their livelihoods.

According to EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014, in Latin America where performance in education is higher in general, children from disadvantaged backgrounds also lag far behind their wealthier peers.

Girls in poor households face some of the worst disadvantages, indicating that there is an urgent need to tackle gender gaps through education policies.

Living in a disadvantaged area, especially rural ones is a huge barrier to learning. In some Latin American countries, achievement gaps in mathematics and reading between rural and urban students exceed 15 percentage points.

In the case of Mexico, there is a close relationship between having a quality education and poverty reduction. Proof of this is the large difference in the income and other development indicators among the states that have lower rates of education and educational services versus those who have higher educative rates. It is notorious the huge difference between the incomes of the poorest states – which also concentrate the major amount of indigenous population- with an annual income of 3500 USD per capita, compared to an annual per capita income of 22 ,000 USD in states with higher welfare conditions as the Mexico City.



Map of the indigenous population in Mexico

Another factor related to poverty and exclusion is the territorial dispersion as this impedes access to quality educational services.

In the case of Mexico, the fact that Indigenous disadvantage is not only important for school achievement, but also in the access to education. The states with the greatest presence of indigenous language speakers are Oaxaca, Chiapas, Yucatán, Hidalgo, Guerrero and Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi and Puebla, also those states concentrates the population with lower odds of both access and educational attainment and higher rates of poverty and marginalization.

The causes of educational backwardness of the indigenous population include, other things, the use of a language different from the Spanish, the absence of an intercultural approach existing

large schools of indigenous areas, and precariousness and marginalization of their people.

Of 100 youth aged 6-14 years who speak an indigenous language, 28 cannot read and write. Chiapas is the state with the highest percentage of young people illiterate; this lag is extended to the population that speaks an indigenous language in this entity.

More than half of children speakers of indigenous language aged 6 to 7 years old cannot read and write. This is understandable considering that most children Indigenous learners in Spanish early school years and subsequently are introduced to literacy, especially in regions where there are no teaching materials in the native language.

In the gender composition of the illiterate speakers, most are female.

One of the major challenges in the country is to improve the access of indigenous people to schools. Attending to that challenge, the education ministry of Mexico has developed various modalities of education, such as schools where a teacher attends children of different levels; through this, there has been a relevant progress which is reflected in increased school attendance.



INALI, cultural diversity in Mexico

Concerning the fulfillment of the MDGs, it is observed that the advance achieved in literacy is over 94 percent of the population, the state with the lowest rate is Chiapas, which already has 94.8

percent of the population between 15 and 24 literate; while Mexico city reach 99.6 percent.

However, it still faces the challenge of literacy to groups of indigenous language speakers, who have historically suffered a deficit of access to education with respect to the population in general. The Government of Mexico has taken actions to address this situation, strengthening the Indian education and aimed at migrant children, as well as tele-and services for rural populations.

Among the challenges identified by Mexico to fulfill the Millennium Development Goal 2: “Achieve universal access to primary education”, better education requires the strengthening infrastructure, basic services and schools equipment.

| Indicador ^a | Línea base 1990 ^b | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | Última fecha disponible | Meta | ¿Cómo va México? |
|---|------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Objetivo 2. Lograr la enseñanza primaria universal | | | | | | | |
| Meta 2.A. Asegurar que, para el año 2015, los niños y niñas de todo el mundo puedan terminar un ciclo completo de enseñanza primaria | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 Tasa neta de matriculación en la enseñanza primaria (6 a 11 años de edad) (%) | 97.6 | 99.3 | 97.3 | 100.5 | 100.3 (2012) | 100.0 | Meta cumplida |
| 2.2 Proporción de alumnos que comienzan el primer grado y llegan al último grado de enseñanza primaria (%) | 75.1 (1991) | 87.7 | 92.2 | 95.4 | 96.4 (2012) | 100.0 | A cumplirse en 2015 |
| 2.3 Tasa de alfabetización de las personas de 15 a 24 años de edad (%) | 95.4 | 96.7 | 97.5 | 98.5 ^c | 98.6 (2012) | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| 2.3.a Tasa de alfabetización de las mujeres de 15 a 24 años de edad | 94.8 | 96.5 | 97.5 | 98.5 ^c | 98.6 (2012) | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| 2.3.b Tasa de alfabetización de los hombres de 15 a 24 años de edad | 96.1 | 96.9 | 97.6 | 98.4 ^c | 98.5 (2012) | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| 1.5 Relación entre ocupación y población en edad de trabajar | 54.0 (1995) | 56.3 | 55.8 | 55.3 | 56.3 | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| 1.6 Proporción de la población ocupada con ingresos inferiores a 1.25 dólares por día | 6.3 (1989) | 6.6 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 2.7 (2012) | Reducir | Meta cumplida |
| 1.7 Proporción de trabajadores por cuenta propia y los no remunerados ^d | 37.1 (1995) | 31.9 | 31.0 | 29.1 | 28.6 (2012) | Reducir | Meta cumplida |

Fulfillment of the MDG 2

Concerning MDG 1, “to eradicate poverty and hunger” in 2012, 45.5% of the population in Mexico was living in poverty and 9.8% in extreme poverty.

Goal 1 is monitored from 9 indicators, of which Mexico has served 8 and one recorded insufficient progress:

- August 5 indicators with defined targets were met early.
- In 2012 the goal of halving, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than \$ 1.25 dollars a day was fulfilled.

- The goal for 2015 is 4.6% and the national flag in 2012 and reached 4.0%.
- We have increased the income of the population.
- It has reduced poverty gap.
- Increased the occupation in relation to the population of working age.
- Reduced by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

| Indicador ² | Línea base 1990 ² | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | Última fecha disponible | Meta | ¿Cómo va México? |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Objetivo 1. Erradicar la pobreza extrema y el hambre | | | | | | | |
| Meta 1.A. Reducir a la mitad, entre 1990 y 2015, el porcentaje de personas cuyos ingresos sean inferiores a 1.25 dólares por día | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 Proporción de la población con ingresos inferiores a 1.25 dólares diarios (Paridad Poder de Compra respecto al dólar) | 9.3 (1989) | 9.4 | 6.1 | 5.3 | 4.0 (2012) | 4.6 | Meta cumplida |
| 1.2 Coeficiente de la brecha de pobreza (intensidad de la pobreza) | 3.0 (1989) | 2.9 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.1 (2012) | 1.5 | Meta cumplida |
| 1.3 Proporción del consumo nacional que corresponde al quintil más pobre de la población | 5.0 (1989) | 4.4 | 5.5 | 6.7 | 6.7 (2012) | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| Meta 1.B. Lograr empleo pleno y productivo, y trabajo decente para todos, incluyendo mujeres y jóvenes | | | | | | | |
| 1.4 Tasa de crecimiento del PIB por persona ocupada | 2.6 (1996) | 5.3 | 7.6 | 5.4 | 2.3 (2012) | Aumentar | Progreso insuficiente |
| 1.5 Relación entre ocupación y población en edad de trabajar | 54.0 (1995) | 56.3 | 55.8 | 55.3 | 56.3 | Aumentar | Meta cumplida |
| 1.6 Proporción de la población ocupada con ingresos inferiores a 1.25 dólares por día | 6.3 (1989) | 6.6 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 2.7 (2012) | Reducir | Meta cumplida |
| 1.7 Proporción de trabajadores por cuenta propia y los no remunerados ³ | 37.1 (1995) | 31.9 | 31.0 | 29.1 | 28.6 (2012) | Reducir | Meta cumplida |
| Meta 1.C. Reducir a la mitad, entre 1990 y 2015, el porcentaje de personas que padecen hambre | | | | | | | |
| 1.8 Proporción de niños menores de 5 años con insuficiencia ponderal | 10.8 (1988) | 5.6 (1999) | 3.4 (2006) | ND | 2.8 (2012) | 5.4 | Meta cumplida |
| 1.9 Proporción de la población por debajo del nivel mínimo de consumo de energía alimentaria | 4.9 (1992) | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.3 (2012) | 2.4 | Meta cumplida |

Fulfillment of the MDG 1 IN México

The project in more detail:

The project seeks to link forces for ESD, with national actors from the educative public sector, creating a model aimed at building sustainable schools adapted to the realities of indigenous contexts in Mexico.

Attending to the ESD commitment at providing every individual with the opportunity to acquire the values, competencies, knowledge and skills that enable him or her to contribute to a humane, socially just, economically viable and ecologically sustainable future, and also to empower societies, communities and individuals everywhere to shape their future actively and responsibly, the project seeks to integrate the experiences of the educational communities in favor of

sustainable development in order to come up with creative answers to problems that threaten the future of the new generations in Mexico, such as access to water resources, sustainable waste management, climate change and food security.

Likewise, the project aims to strengthen the capacities of communities for self-sustainability with actions based on the promotion of local traditions and the rescue of community values.

The proposed project is needed to support the Global Action Programme to scale up and generate ESD action around the world which is UNESCO's top strategic priority for ESD from 2015 onwards.



Why UNESCO?

In December 2002, by Resolution 59/237, the UN General Assembly declared the years 2005-2014 the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Member States thus committed themselves to intensified efforts to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into education and learning. The UN General Assembly designated UNESCO the lead agency for the global implementation and coordination of the DESD

Overall Goal/Objective

To contribute to the achievements of ESD to improve livelihoods, increase economic security and income opportunities for the poor by the consolidation of a model of sustainable schools based on indigenous contexts from Mexico.

The project has the following specific objectives:

-To integrate the principles of ESD to inform and strengthen the quality of learning experiences for sustainable development in indigenous contexts from Mexico.

- To Develop a Model of Sustainable Schools according to Mexico's indigenous contexts in which government actions, driven by civil society and private partners are articulated.

-To promote the review of national educational policy from the perspective of sustainable development.

Main expected results

1. Quality of learning experiences from indigenous contexts from Mexico are strengthened by the ESD principles.
2. A model of Sustainable Schools according to Mexico's indigenous contexts is implemented.
3. Educational policy is reviewed from the perspective of sustainable development.

Activities and deliverables

Activity 1: Strengthening the quality of learning experiences from indigenous contexts from Mexico (expected result 1)

- Networks with Education partners in Mexico In order to have the alliances and agreements requested for the development of the Sustainable Education Model.
- Workshops on ESD to provide resources on ESD to stakeholders, and also **integrate the principles of ESD in the learning experiences.**
- Online platform. Spaces for exchange of experiences on ESD.

Activity 2: Building a Model of Sustainable Schools according to Mexico's indigenous contexts (expected result 2)

- **Survey on ESD:** it is necessary to know the present condition of sustainability in educational contexts in Mexico. It is therefore start from the participatory identification of such conditions as are: the infrastructure, other existing initiatives in favor of sustainable development, the ability to articulate a network of local actors, the contents of the curricular areas, co-curricular and extracurricular.
- **Design of a Model of Sustainable Schools,** considering the results of the survey on ESD, a first version of the Model Sustainable Education will be held.
- **Pilot test of the Model of sustainable Schools,** pilot of the model proposed Sustainable Education, on schools of indigenous contexts.
- **Consolidation of a Model of Sustainable Schools,** considering the results of the pilot test.

- **Activity 3: Review of the Educational policy from the perspective of sustainable development (expected result 3)**

- ESD teacher training in order to set up a peer to peer learning strategy on ESD.
- International workshop to set up recommendations for reviewing the Educational policy from a sustainable development approach.

Beneficiaries and stakeholders

Direct beneficiaries:

Policymakers, educators, a variety of ESD stakeholders, students from indigenous contexts.

Implementation strategy

Three main activities will be undertaken to contribute to the achievements of ESD to improve livelihoods, increase economic security and income opportunities for the poor by the consolidation of a model of sustainable schools based on indigenous contexts from Mexico.

Activity 1: Strengthening the quality of learning experiences from indigenous contexts from Mexico

UNESCO will set up networks with ESD educational partners in Mexico to promote the agreements requested for the the development of the Sustainable Education Model.

Also an online platform on ESD will be created for the exchange of experiences on ESD, relevant documents and good practices.

Activity 2: Building a Model of Sustainable Schools according to Mexico's indigenous contexts

It is necessary to know the present condition of sustainability in educational contexts in Mexico, therefore a survey on ESD will be held.

Considering the results of the survey on ESD, a first version of a Model Sustainable Education will be developed, this version will be tested as a pilot model on schools of indigenous contexts.

The results of the pilot test of the model as well as lessons learned are addressed in a final version.

Activity 3: Review of the Educational policy from the perspective of sustainable development

The main objective of this activity is to set up a peer to strength the capacities of education policymakers to develop ESD policies. For the achievement of that goal, UNESCO will organize an international workshop to exchange expertise and to provide training for the integration of the ESD principles.

Teachers will also be trained with tools for the implementation of sustainable education model, based on the principles of ESD.

All the actions will be developed from a gender approach, that includes the involvement of women and girls, the use of a gender neutral language and the development of activities that promote gender equality.

Sustainability and exit strategy

National stakeholders and local beneficiaries will be enrolled since the beginning of the project to develop ownership of the actions.

If it is possible, the activities will reinforce ongoing strategies and national or local projects.