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EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT. TITAJTAKEZAKAN. SPEAKING ACROSS TIME: ORAL TRADITION AND USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTs)

El Salvador. Contract number: 4500323040





Introduction

The project *Titajtakezakan. Speaking across time: oral tradition and use of ICT*, it was developed over a period of 18 months, from February 2017 to August 2018. The project proposed as a general objective the valorization of the ICH of the municipality of Santo Domingo de Guzmán with the use of information and communication technologies, responding to the need to inventory the local ICH with emphasis on the oral tradition contained in its mythology, stories and legends, to enable its appropriation and promotion in the hands of young people, who will be the main participants, and they will be encouraged to dialogue with the adults in the locality who conserve most of the knowledge, wisdom and techniques related to the ICH. In addition, were identified strategic partners the Educational Complex of the municipality, local government, initiative of the Cuna Náhuat, House of Culture and Associations of Community Development (ADESCO).

It is important to highlight that this project joins efforts from different sectors for the valuation and preservation of the indigenous identity of the municipality.

In its formulation, the project's operational plan contemplated the final evaluation at the close of project activities. However, in order to systematize and organize the evaluation information, translate it into English and achieve the dispatch of the documentation in defined times, this was done in June, while the last activity of the project was carried out in August, which consisted in the presentation of the book *Titajtakezakan. Speaking across time. Inventory of the oral tradition of Santo Domingo de Guzmán*. Although the printed book was not available, the edited book was presented at the time of the evaluation. We believe that this decision does not affect the overall result of the previous evaluation.

This document, therefore, gathers the opinions of strategic partners and participants who were involved in the project. Its content explains the methodology applied and the results of the query. To conclude, some conclusions and recommendations identified are described below.

Methodology

The evaluation process was carried out through close collaboration between the strategic partners, the participants and the executing agency, fostering reflection on the development of the project and the future expectations of the products obtained by it, for example, of the inventory of the local oral tradition.

The methodology used was of a qualitative nature through the application of semi-structured interviews in three focus groups to obtain the perception of those involved in the execution of the project. The first two was carried out at the end of the field work (ie, activity 6: Collect information on oral tradition related to mythology, stories and legends), in September 2017 with teachers from the Educational Complex, the main strategic partner, and in October 2017 with the participating students; while the third, in June 2018, when almost all the activities ended.

Table 1: dates of the focus groups and participants.

Nr.	Date	Participants	Number of participants
1	September 22, 2017	Teachers of Educational Complex of Santo Domingo de Guzmán, Municipal Government, Casa de la Cultura, students.	11 (2 women, 9 men)
2	October 16, 2017	Students participants.	16 (13 women, 3 men)
3	June 26, 2018	Educational Complex of Santo Domingo de Guzmán: teachers and students; Municipal Government, Casa de la Cultura, Cuna Náhuat, culture bearers interviewed during the project.	25 (12 women, 13 men)

The discussion in the focus groups focused on the following topics, established in the semi-structured interviews:

1. The importance of having participated in the project;
2. The importance of project execution for the community;
3. The use that they will give to the inventory of the oral tradition of the community;
4. Difficulties identified during its execution.



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Main results

As a context, it begins by describing in which activities each sector that participated in the evaluation activity was involved:

At the beginning of the execution of the project, the teachers were involved in the creation of the profile of the students to be selected, with the support of the Ministry of Education (MINED) cooperation was established between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, also providing the use of space and resources. Subsequently, the teachers were involved in different ways, in the subsequent activities of the project.

For their part, the students felt committed to learning about their cultural heritage and using web tools to disseminate the local ICH. The bearers had the participation in two moments: in the compilation of the oral tradition and in the validation of the oral tradition.

1. The importance of having participated in the project

Among other things, for students, it meant the use of ICT, audiovisual and use of different web platforms; acquire knowledge about the use of photography and video cameras, because they did not have many skills for their use. They also learned about the town's stories and new ways to spread the local ICH; recognize, in addition, the ICH that they now value more than before. Inclusive have projected to study careers related to what has been learned or tourism.

The interaction with the community until that time, little visible by themselves, was another of the aspects that stood out, because the approach and interaction with the community of elders and the transmission of knowledge about the oral tradition was promoted.

Students express that, by getting involved in project activities, it helped them to interact with other people, be proactive and interact with people of different ages.

While, for culture bearers it is an experience that they identify as an advance in the interest they perceive of young people and they see positively leaving them the notion of learning about language.

The teachers expressed: "The accompaniment of young people and the integration of new knowledge that will allow them to develop comprehensively and support students. Whenever there is a benefit in the knowledge of culture, there must be support from MINED. "

2. The importance of project execution for the community

In general, there are coincidences among the interviewees in the following points: decrease in disinterest on the part of the student population in preserving and disseminating the language; changes in attitude toward the language, there is greater acceptance towards it; It is positive because it promotes tourism in the locality and the implementation of language and knowledge.

The culture bearers considered that this project gives students a certain obligation not to forget their roots, the appreciation of the whole tradition and knowledge inherited by our grandparents. They also consider that the documentation of the oral tradition will be for the benefit of the new generations towards a new way of thinking about their culture. The strategic partners express that there is a lot of knowledge in the grandparents, that it must be obtained to transmit it and that it must not be lost by devaluing it.

The above, allows sensitize adults to contribute to the transmission of knowledge.

Therefore, the project has made it possible to put the language into practice in the schools, give the reasons and the sufficient incentives so that the students can learn with the aim of revaluing the culture and the language. And it is also considered that the media should be involved to disseminate, promote craft fairs, promote their practice and prevent their extinction.

3. The use they will give to the inventory of the oral tradition of the community

For the students it will be a legacy that they will leave to their children, as a safeguard of the traditions of the community and the transmission of said knowledge, to maintain its roots and cultural roots.



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The bearers consider that the material collected will remain as a reminder of what has been done, as a learning material and for the beginnings of a library specialized in the language.

The strategic partners consider that it will serve in the creation of material for parents' school and give talks about the oral tradition compiled. Strengthen the identity and make it known in different schools.

The documentary resource will serve the House of Culture to project itself in activities to make known the oral tradition and the speakers.

4. Difficulties during the execution of the project

The students, expressed that they did not manage to acquire sufficient knowledge about the use of the video cameras, some of the recordings are heard with a lot of noise.

As for the bearers, a story was found in which they recounted a family event, this was not pleasant and they asked to remove it from the inventory, because it would damage the integrity of the family. It was also identified that the bearers expected a payment for participating in the interviews; because in previous experiences with MINED, they received financial compensation.

On the other hand, the teachers expressed that they did not manage to join in all the activities demanded by the project because they had to attend to the school's own responsibilities.

Conclusions and lessons learned

The evaluation presented are perceptions about the execution of the project granted by its participants and strategic partners. In general, there is evidence of a positive perception of the project, and its results, such as the publication of the inventory and the interaction of the students with culture bearers, most of them older adults.

As executing agency, it is considered that there are significant advances in the capacities granted, especially to young people, to recognize the ICH, use of ICT; and the tools for the collection of inventories such as interviews, transcripts, webcasting. In young people, the project developed their skills, decision making, coexistence (interaction with older adults), proactivity, group work, among others.

It should be highlighted as an important result that culture bearers consider to have contributed significantly in the protection of oral tradition by getting involved in the transmission of their knowledge. With the project they saw the possibility of participating and interacting with young people. However, it is also evident that there is little interest in the ICH, so it is important to continue with these projects to safeguard traditional knowledge.

The commitment of the Educational Complex and of the strategic partners is positive, which was materialized in the resources granted and successful coordination. Institutions welcome the results of the project and the inventory can be a tool for disseminating and valuing the roots and identity of the community and will make the different sectors aware.

Finally, there are many ideas on how to publicize the inventory of oral tradition and how to strengthen projects linked to the ICH and the Nahuatl language; which will be retaken by the executing agency and strengthened, in its follow-up, the strategic alliances with the project partners and others that may join.

Some of the recommendations identified for future projects in the locality:

1. Establish more effective channels of communication with strategic partners to achieve better involvement.
2. That the bearers and the community of students can form links and communication to maintain the transmission of oral tradition and knowledge in general.
3. The school must assume greater responsibilities for the execution of this type of project, in such a way that the students feel also committed in all the time of execution of the project.
4. Implement a program of teaching the Nahuatl language to the participating students, who expressed their interest in learning during the interview phase, to communicate with those bearers who answered in Nahuatl.
5. The bearers of traditional culture have the difficulty of attending places close to the urban area. Strategic places should be taken into account to carry out activities in which they have participation. At



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the same time, provide for travel expenses for those who cannot move to the urban center due to lack of economic resources.

Photographic report





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31 August 2018

