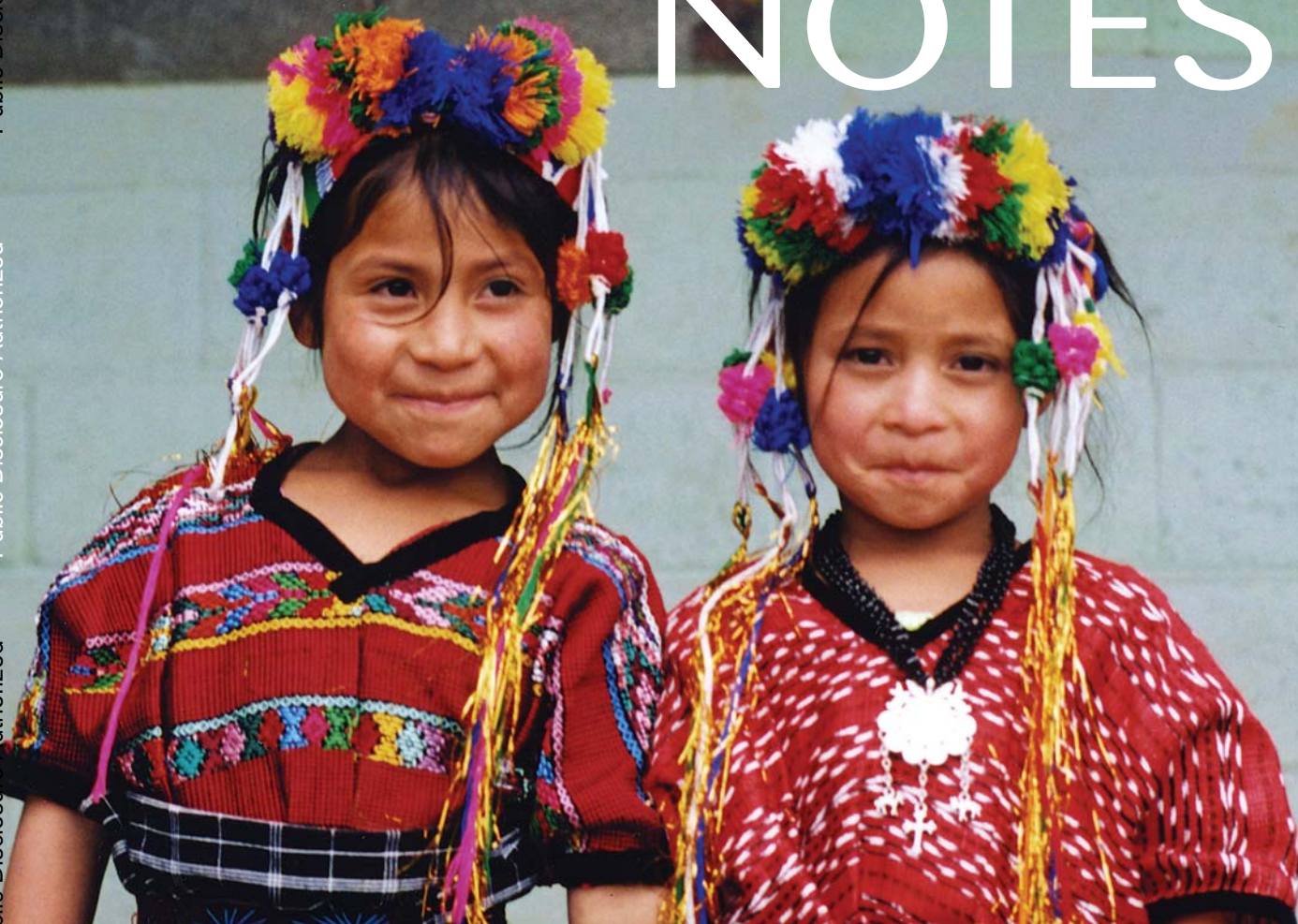


Education NOTES

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Decentralizing Education in Guatemala: School Management by Local Communities

Guatemala set out in 1992 to increase access to education in remote areas. Its National Community-managed Program for Educational Development (PRONADE) has evolved from a small, innovative pilot program in 19 rural communities, to a nationwide program reaching over 4,100 communities and 445,000 children. PRONADE is one of the most proactive managerial, administrative, and financial decentralization measures taken in Latin America. [Isolated rural communities have been truly empowered to administer and manage the schools.](#)

PRONADE schools are located

primarily in remote rural, indigenous areas. Communities receive financing directly from the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) based on four criteria. First, the community must find a site and demonstrate ability and interest in managing the new school. Second, the community must be located at least 3 kilometers from the nearest public school. Third, the community must have at least 25 primary school-aged children. Fourth, the community must not have any teachers already on government payroll. Financing is transferred directly to communities to cover teacher salaries, learning materials and school snacks. Administrative training for teachers and parents on how to manage their community school is delivered by *Instituciones de Servicios Educativos* (ISEs) who are nongovernmental organizations contracted by the ministry. Financing is contingent on community participation in school management ranging from the hiring of teachers to setting the school calendar. Each community is represented by a *Comité Educativo de Autogestión Educativa* (COEDUCA), a parent-run school committee.

PRONADE's Implementation Unit

The program is coordinated by an implementation unit headquartered in the capital. This unit is responsible for strategic planning, financial management, and

monitoring and evaluation. Specific activities include: (i) outlining the general framework of the program; (ii) determining the geographical areas that receive support; (iii) signing the legal covenant with the COEDUCAs; (iv) identifying, selecting, contracting and supervising ISEs; (v) monitoring and evaluating the program; (vi) transferring of funds to the COEDUCAs; and (vii) coordinating with MINEDUC, departmental offices and other institutions. The unit coordinates with staff from the Social Investment Fund (FIS) on school infrastructure matters and with the respective MINEDUC directorates on educational policy and assessment. The implementation unit leaves all school-level administration and managerial decisions in the hands of the COEDUCAs who receive technical assistance and advice from ISEs (Figure 1).

Education Committees (COEDUCAs)

The COEDUCAs are at the heart of the implementation structure. They are established as legal entities entrusted with administering the program on behalf of the community. They are elected locally and are comprised of parents and community members of whom at least two must be literate. Their functions include: (i) contracting and paying teacher salaries; (ii) maintaining accounting records; (iii) monitoring teacher and student attendance; (iv) defining the school schedule and calendar (within the existing national legal framework); (v) buying and distributing school materials; (vi) monitoring school libraries; and (vii) organizing school feeding programs. COEDUCAs receive funds directly from MINEDUC.

Educational Service Institutions (ISEs)

ISEs are contracted by PRONADE to: (i) identify educational needs in the communities they serve; (ii) organize and assist COEDUCAs in obtaining legal status; (iii) provide financial/administrative training for the COEDUCAs; and (iv) maintain updated information on the schools and students under their tutelage. Until 2001, ISEs also provided teacher development courses on "active learning" pedagogical methodologies as well as multigrade and multilingual classroom practices. Regional ministry offices, in principle, have taken over the role of pedagogical training of teacher's delivery of education.

PRONADE is implemented in three stages summarized below. The average combined cost of all three stages is approximately Q7,500 or US\$962.

Figure 1: PRONADE's Implementation Structure

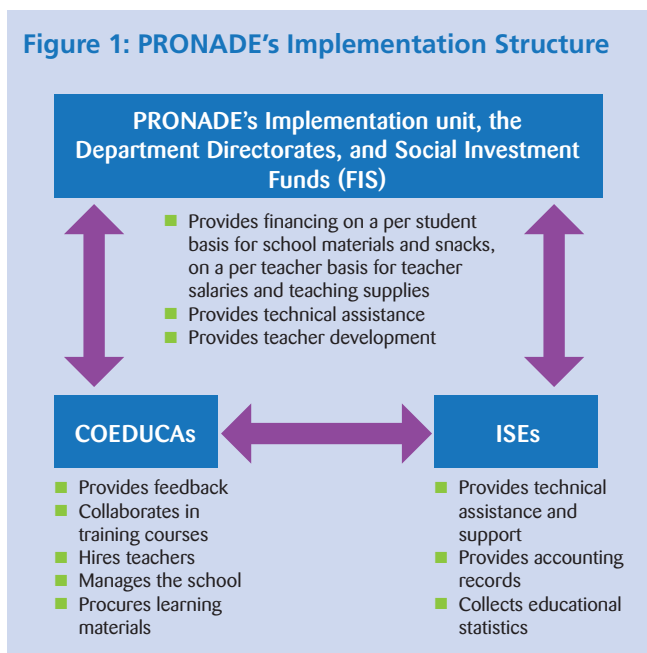
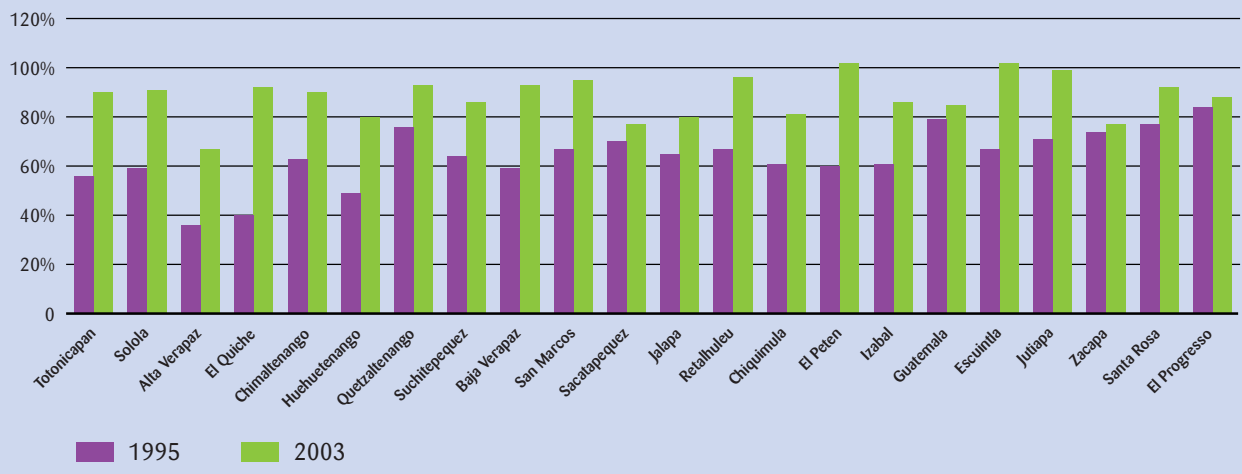


Figure 2: Percent of Primary School-Aged Population in School for 1995 and 2003



Stage 1 - Community Identification

The first stage is to identify communities that lack educational services. ISEs contracted by PRONADE carry out the identification activities.

Stage 2 - Organization and Legalization of COEDUCAs

The ISEs ensure that communities establish a COEDUCA, elect a provisional Board of Directors, and obtain legal status. Once the COEDUCA is legally established the ISEs provide three days of training (24 hours) in administration and financial management. The average time required to organize a COEDUCA and obtain legal status is three months.

Stage 3 - Follow-up Services

To participate in this stage, the ISEs must meet several requirements. Staff of the ISEs must be trained and be fluent in the Mayan language spoken in the locality they serve in order to provide administrative training to teachers and representatives of the COEDUCAs. The ISEs provide nine days of training. They make periodic visits to the school to ensure effective implementation of the program and monitor results that are, in turn, submitted to PRONADE's monitoring and evaluation unit.

Transferring Funds

PRONADE has established a trust fund to administer resources and streamline payments to COEDUCAs and ISEs. Consistent with the government's agreement that establishes PRONADE as a legal entity, the

Ministry of Public Finance (MFP) allocates sufficient resources to the trust fund to ensure smooth implementation of the program. MFP disburses funds every three months to a local bank on the basis of statements of expenditures submitted by PRONADE. Transfers are made to the COEDUCAs. Although funds flow from PRONADE directly to the COEDUCA, the ISEs provide substantial input in developing the budget and ensuring that funds are spent according to the categories and amounts established with PRONADE. The COEDUCAs make all payments out of their local checking account. The ISEs and PRONADE's Financial and Administrative unit are responsible for supervising the process. The COEDUCAs receive funds to pay for teacher salaries, bonuses and pension. The COEDUCAs also receive approximately US\$6/student/year to buy school materials, US\$28/teacher/year to buy teaching supplies and US\$12/child/year to provide a daily school breakfast/snack.

Program Achievements

PRONADE's goal is to ensure that at least 70 percent of primary school-aged children in each of 22 departments are attending school. The Department of Alta Verapaz is the only department that has not reached the goal, but has seen enrollment growth for 7 to 14 year olds move from 37 percent to 67 percent in eight years (Figure 2). Departments with the highest proportion of indigenous population have been slower in achieving full coverage. In 2003, an average

of 87 percent of children ages 7-14 were in school, albeit some not at the age appropriate level. Today, PRONADE provides services to children in 21 of the 22 departments of the country.

PRONADE contributed significantly to improved enrollment, at rates of increase that surpass all other countries in the region. Guatemala's primary net enrollment rate increased from 72 percent in 1996 to 89 percent in 2003. PRONADE schools accounted for 15.2 percent of the primary enrollment nation-wide in 2003. With the success of PRONADE and the increasing social demand for preschool, PRONADE introduced preschool education into its services in 1998. Enrollment in PRONADE preschool programs increased from 8,900 in 1998 to over 62,600 by 2004, accounting for 14.4 percent of the total enrollment in preschool in 2004.

Evaluations

A descriptive study including 330 PRONADE schools and 110 rural traditional schools (control) was carried out during the years 1999, 2000 and 2001. The study gathered information from school administrators, teachers, parents, students and the community at large. No information on student achievement was collected. The main findings of the study are as follows:

- On average, PRONADE students spent more time in classroom instruction (4.04 hours/day) than traditional rural schools (3.69 hours/day). The daily difference amounts to 12.6 more days of instruction. Additionally, PRONADE students are in school for 180 days during the year. (Traditional schools complete far fewer days in the school year.)
- Parental participation in school activities and contact with teachers and principals is higher in PRONADE schools than in the control schools.
- A larger percentage of control schools have access to water, latrines and electricity than the PRONADE schools.
- Promotion to higher levels is much better in PRONADE schools than in the control schools.

A study conducted by the World Bank (Wu, 2003) on achievement of third and fourth graders in mathematics and reading concluded that when controlling for the characteristics of schools and students, PRONADE schools perform as well as other rural schools in mathematics and better in reading.

Remaining Challenges

- The PRONADE program has not yet been institutionalized as an integral part of MINEDUC, leading to the perception that it is a parallel but unequal alternative to traditional schools. PRONADE teachers have only provisional status, with one year contracts and no formal pension. PRONADE has also experienced political challenges to critical aspects of the program.
- There have been frequent delays in payments of teacher salaries, as well as transfer of funds for school snacks, educational and teaching materials. Such delays have had a detrimental effect on teacher morale and job satisfaction.
- Quality issues and student learning outcomes must be dealt with more systematically. PRONADE teachers have not received consistent training in multi-grade and bilingual classroom practices.
- Impact evaluations are needed to determine how PRONADE is affecting student achievement, repetition and drop-out rates, as well as teacher effectiveness.

This note series is intended to summarize lessons learned and key policy findings on the World Bank's work in education. The views expressed in these notes are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Bank. For additional copies of Education Notes, please contact the Education Advisory Service by email at eservice@worldbank.org or visit the web site: <http://www.worldbank.org/education/>

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