



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Education in Labour, Employment and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ETEDPI)

Quick Facts

Countries: Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

Final Evaluation: December 2005

Mode of Evaluation: independent

Technical Area: Small Enterprise Development

Evaluation Management: Americas

Evaluation Team: Ian Chambers

Project Start: June 2004

Project End: February 2006

Project Code: RLA/04/52/NET

Donor: Netherlands (US \$ 874,118)

Keywords: Employment, Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Education and training for work

Background & Context

Project Background: The project aims to contribute in the reduction of poverty and social exclusion of the indigenous people of Central America by using an action strategy that is integrated in the execution of main sustainable projects of the economical, socio-cultural and educative development. This is being realized within an institutional framework that recognizes and respects the rights of the indigenous communities.

In reaching its objectives, the project has been using different programmes and strategies designed to improve basic primary education, literacy, and vocational and income-generating training. All of the projects undertakings has been adapted to the traditional decision-making processes and cultural values of the

indigenous communities, with a view of achieving sustainable poverty reduction. The project has worked around three complementary axes of action:

1. Promotion of productive employment through sustained support to economically viable and socially effective community initiatives, with particular emphasis on tourism.
2. Development of technical competence and human resources concerning methodologies of education and training for work.
3. Promotion, diffusion, and systematization of 'good practices' with regards to the implementation of the rights of indigenous peoples.

Evaluation Context: The scope and purpose of the evaluation is to observe the impact of the project on the beneficiaries, especially the changes that the project has produced. The evaluation also expected to give special attention to the strategies and methodologies that the project has been using. In addition, transversal aspects, like the consultation of the representative organizations of the indigenous peoples, and the promotion of gender equity were taken into special consideration.

The methodology of the evaluation includes an initial desk review of project related documents and material. A mission to meet with beneficiaries and key stakeholders, including the project Head Office, in San José, Costa Rica, follows this.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The project has presented a potentially successful and coherent strategy for poverty reduction but the time-frame has been too limited in order to fully consolidate this effort.

The project has failed in taking into account the indispensable role of access to credit as to ensure that education and training could be converted into income-generating activities.

Achievements in basic literacy, education, gender balance and the implementation of programmes defined by and relevant to ethnic minorities have all been demonstrable.

Local indigenous organizations have been strengthened by the projects activities and a better understanding of indigenous peoples' needs concerning basic and work education amongst national authorities have been achieved through the project.

The intended beneficiaries, the poorest and most socially excluded indigenous communities, especially women and youth, have indeed been targeted through the project. The numbers of beneficiaries, both individuals and communities, have even in many cases exceeded the number set out by the project.

The project has succeeded in implementing greater gender equality in basic education and in decision-making processes and this specific focus have had an overall significant positive impact on the results achieved. However, the generated results will hardly become sustainable if the project phase is not prolonged; this is especially evident in the cases of Nicaragua and Honduras.

The levels of literacy and basic education have increased, which is most evident in the cases of Nicaragua and Honduras since the project implementation in those countries has been focusing more on those issues.

In Sum, the project has made significant progress towards achieving its objectives. The project design provided for simultaneous attention to the three major themes: education, employment and rights. This has worked well in Guatemala, but in Honduras and Nicaragua it has been necessary to work in sequence dealing first with basic literacy and primary

education, then rights, then employment and income generation. Due to this, it is difficult to fully evaluate the impact that the project has had in Honduras and Nicaragua with regards to income generation activities. Generally, though, it can be said that the project's activities have been carried out effectively, and throughout the project always reflecting a respect and consideration of the indigenous people's traditional cultural and spiritual values

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations: The project should be extended, for at least 24 months, in order to fully achieve its objectives and to reach sustainability.

If the project was to be extended it would gain considerably from taking into account issues of access to credit among the indigenous peoples, both as individuals and on a community level, to enable them to transform their education and skills into sustainable income-generating activities.

The project should pay more attention to health issues, perhaps by mobilizing support for active interventions with the aim of improving basic health conditions and facilities.

Participatory processes that respect the traditional values and practices of indigenous peoples are vital to the outcome and success and future sustainability of this kind of project. This is a time-consuming process which needs to be taken into consideration in the project design.

The quality and character of the national coordinators are of great importance to this kind of project, but it does not mean that they necessarily have to be indigenous.

The project design needs to take into consideration the various levels of pre-project standards with respect to levels of literacy and basic education in order to fully achieve its objectives and to create sustainable results.