BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION WITHIN THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN PERU

Executive Summary

To date, there are still important unequal conditions affecting access to quality education in Peru. For example, based on the results from the Student Census Evaluation (ECE), the boys and girls in rural areas have a significantly lower educational performance when compared to counterparts in the urban area. In 2014, 34% of girls and boys in second grade in rural areas had not achieved the expected learning in language; compared to only 8% in urban areas (Minedu 2015). At the same time, in mathematics these percentages were 60 and 34% in rural and urban areas, respectively.

In this context, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is interested in knowing the current situation of primary and secondary education with the goal of identifying the most important intervention lines, where there is a possibility of collaboration between the international cooperation and the Government of Peru.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this rapid assessment is to analyze the current situation of the primary and secondary education sector; and identify the factors that hamper the achievement of the learning objectives, the critical reforms required to improve the effectiveness of the system, and the spaces where joint collaboration with the international cooperation is possible. This study also identifies the projects implemented by donors and outlines improvement opportunities in the sector.

The key research questions are:

* What are the bottlenecks of the public education system in Peru that affect the learning achievements of the students?
* What reforms should be implemented and what efforts should be reinforced to improve the effectiveness of the education system? What are the obstacles and opportunities in the implementation of these reforms?
* What are other donors in the sector doing?

Methodology

The study was divided in three stages:

* Assessment of the current bottlenecks in the education sector, regarding the main determinants of educational performance.
* Identification of improvement opportunities within the education sector.
* Identification of intervention areas.

The main sources of the study were secondary data from relevant databases, scientific literature related to primary and secondary education, and diverse technical and legal publications, alongside with primary data, mainly interviews to key informants in the public and private sector and donors.

Findings and Recommendations

Findings from the assessment are presented in two areas. The first is made up of the variables that directly explain basic education performance: teacher characteristics, infrastructure quality, availability of equipment and educational material, and the curriculum applied in class. The second group focuses on the determinants that affect educational performance through direct determinants; these are the management of the educational institution and the aggregated management throughout government levels. Based on the analysis of these variables, and taking into account current GOP priorities, resources and expertise, and donors’ technical comparative advantages, the following recommendations for cooperation are presented:

1. Availability of quality teaching: The policy for one on one support for teachers is a national priority. The study recommends expanding the actual coverage with efforts from the international cooperation.
2. Design of educational models for rural settings: This intervention line suggests supporting *Plan Selva* as it is a policy priority, but also a technical and financial one, insofar the public entity in charge of the project is new and lacks sufficient technical and financial resources.
3. Relevance of curriculum design: The contribution of the international cooperation in this field should address the development of information and communication technologies to be used in teaching models.
4. Strengthening management capacity: The support of the international cooperation must be addressed to strengthen the management capacity in schools, given the need for technical support and adequate funding. An additional need within management is the revision of roles and functions within decentralized government organizations.
5. Development of new evidence for public policy: This area requires technical development and budget support which can be strengthened by the international cooperation.

Detailed areas that will benefit from international cooperation support are shown in the following chart.

**Chart 2: Proposed areas where international cooperation may contribute with the basic education performance**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Availability of quality teaching |  | •Revision of public teaching career law |
|  | •Strengthening of policy for one on one support for teachers |
|  | •Additional policies ensuring teacher’s wellbeing |
|  |  | •Strengthening of required conditions for initial teacher training |
|  |  |  |
| Design of education models for rural settings |  | •Support for the implementation of *Plan Selva* |
|  | •Pedagogical proposal extended to all native languages |
|  | •Design and execution of intercultural bilingual education services for high school level |
|  |  | •Formalization of alternate education services for rural settings |
|  |  |  |
| Relevance of curriculum design |  | •Include development of soft skills in pedagogical proposal |
|  | •Strengthening of English component |
|  |  | •Use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching |
|  |  |  |
| Capacity building for school management |  | • Revision of the administrative structure of regional and local education offices |
|  | •Increased budgeting resources for training of school principals |
|  | •Development of management tools that include ICT |
|  |  |  |
| Follow up, monitoring, and supervision |  | •Update and consolidation of information systems of educational institutions |
|  | •Design of monitoring and follow up mechanisms with periodically verifiable indicators |
|  |  | •Strengthening of control mechanisms in the creation of private schools |
|  |  |  |
| Development of new evidence for public policy |  | •Evidence of ICT impact on educational attainment |
|  | •Evidence of the impact of implementing intercultural bilingual education services |
|  |  | •Supply and demand study of teachers and teacher training |