« Making right to quality education a reality for all »

Improving the quality of teaching in 37 schools in Colombia

December 2006 - December 2009

In Colombia, the primary school enrolment ratio is 87%. However, only 69% of these children finish this cycle. In 2000, through the definition of the Millenium Development Goals, the United Nations asked all countries to achieve education for all by 2015. The concept of education for all implies not only the construction or the installation of schools but also the reinforcement of the quality of teaching, because without quality, education remains an abstract and meaningless concept.

The Colombian government has committed, like many other countries in front of the United Nations, to take actions to guarantee education for all. After a series of studies and investigations aiming at analyzing the situation of education in Colombia, it appeared that the improvement of the quality of education is a priority question for the Colombian educational system.

To accompany and accelerate the implementation of the necessary reforms by the government, Plan Colombia defined a broad program of 5 years duration in order to accompany the schools in the setting-up of improvement programs and thus consequently to improve the Colombian education system. The « Making right to quality education a reality for all » project takes place in this five-year program and aims at contributing to the development of a quality education which takes into account the interests of the child in 37 schools counting 28,358 pupils and 1,199 professors and directors.

The concept of educational quality is a central part of this 3 years project. By the implementation of this project, Plan Colombia seeks to reconsider the instruments and the methods of training and teaching the children. The goal is to optimize the educational methods so that the children can develop as well as possible the know-how, which is necessary to their professional and personal development.

In order to address the specific objectives, the following activities will be implemented:

- To reinforce the capacities of the professors: Design of workshops of training for teachers so they can implement a better pedagogy in class.
- To reinforce the co-operation: Organization of meetings for sharing experiences between the various schools and the community.
- To improve the participation of all: Involvement of professors, parents, pupils in the process of qualitative transformation of education.
- To raise quality education as a priority topic of action for the local and national authorities: Setting up of a strategy of lobbying at the regional and national levels.

The total budget is 225 438€ euros for the 3 years.

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1 Data source: Millenium Development Goals, Columbia Country Profile, World Development Indicators database, April 2004