



EdData II
Education Data for Decision Making

Reading on the Frontlines: The Case of Nicaragua

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Prepared by Amber Gove
RTI International, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA

About the Presentation

- This presentation was prepared for the 57th Annual Comparative and International Education Society, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA March 10, 2013.
- The USAID EdData II project is led by RTI International, Contract No. EHC-E-00-04-00004-00. Additional funding was contributed by RTI International.
- The presentation was developed by Amber Gove, RTI International, as part of the panel: "Making Learning Stick: Systemic Factors that Constrain (or Promote) Learning Achievement at Scale." Contributions were provided by Dr. Vanessa Castro and Jessica Mejia.
- All opinions are my own.

Outline

- EdData II Task Order 5: Promoting Quality Education in Nicaragua
 - Objectives
 - Activities
 - Accomplishments
- Status Update
 - Ministry
 - Civil Society
- Reflections on factors affecting scale-up

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Nicaragua Project Objectives

1. Assess the extent to which early-grade primary school children in different school settings learn to read with an acceptable degree of comprehension and at an acceptable rate of fluency; and
2. Raise the visibility of education quality, the importance of standards, and USAID basic education programming.
 - The Center for Education Research and Social Action (CIASES) and Carlos Cuadra Cardenal Publicidad, SA (CCCP) partnered with RTI as subcontractors.

Nicaragua Project Activities

- Improve awareness and quality of early reading development through:
 - Development of a early grade reading assessment in collaboration with the ministry
 - Dissemination of results, policy dialogue activities
- Support capacity development and sustainability through:
 - Training of trainer workshops (for teacher educators and ministry municipal leaders)
 - Policy dialogue activities
 - Production and distribution of videos: Social mobilization and teacher professional development

Nicaragua Project Accomplishments

- National EGRA (Diagnóstico de Lectura Inicial [DLI])
 - 126 schools, 6649 students
 - Developed capacity of local NGO, Ministry of Education interest
 - Follow-on to World Bank-funded assessment in Atlantic Coast, in Spanish and Miskito
 - Math
- Teacher Trainer Workshops
 - 4 workshops at Escuelas Normales
 - 230 participants
 - Ongoing use of videos and materials
- Unexpected:
 - Termination of evaluation aspect, no follow-on data collection
 - Robust civil society campaign

Status Update: Ministry

- Sustainability? Yes
 - Annual, national Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA): 15k students
 - Reading a priority of the government, regular national campaigns (Marti to Fidel, Save the First Grade)
- Technical Capacity? Mixed
 - Using same assessment from 2008
 - Sample very large, difficult to process
 - Teacher-administered for external monitoring/high stakes? (incentives?)
 - Students not randomly selected

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Status Update: Civil Society

- Objectives:
 - Elevate the status of the teaching profession
 - Stimulate society to improve grade 1 reading
 - Put reading and comprehension at the center of the education dialogue
 - Foster awareness, in particular in households, to motivate children to read



Status Update: Civil Society

- Campaign in its 4th year
- Annual revenue ~25k
- 23 civil society orgs, many new to supporting reading
- 93→154→200 schools



Reflecting on factors

- The L factor?
- Politics not policy
 - Mistrust of donors
 - Shortage of donor engagement
- Design to get it done or design to have it sustained?
 - Conflict between short-term project objectives and long-term system improvement
- Local NGO key to ongoing engagement, support, sustainability
 - Unexpected benefit—CIASES development and collaboration in improving EGRA data collection and administration