

Instructional Leadership

in El Salvador

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Mid-Level Managers: Who Are They?

One-hundred and thirty-four mid-level managers completed EXCELL's training program.

- On average they are 44 years old. Women are on average four years younger than men.
- Ninety-four percent of men and 66% of women are married.
- On average, men have worked for 15 years in the MOE, and women for 13 years.
- Seventy-nine percent have a university degree, most frequently in education (28%) and business administration (24%). Twenty-five percent have graduate studies.

Note: this group is not statistically representative of management in the MOE. More information available on:

www.equip123.net/equip1/excell/esp

Thank You!

The EXCELL project is coming to an end. As an initiative of the Ministry of Education with USAID support, it is the result of the efforts of many people who believe in the importance of quality education in classrooms and schools, and in the need to focus on instructional processes. From their positions or as private individuals, each one has helped to improve quality in education in El Salvador.

We wish here to express our gratitude to all these people. Please accept our apologies if we have missed anybody. We really

appreciate your help.

For their strategic and technical leadership: Darlyn Meza, Jose Luis Guzmán, Rolando Marín, Matilde de Quintana, Mark Silverman, Ron Greenberg, Kristin Rosekrans, Dorita de Gutiérrez;

For their support and guidance on all aspects of the project's implementation: Lorena de Varela, Rolando Aguirre;

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For their help in developing fruitful alliances: Ligia Alvarenga, Delia de Avila, Rafael Ayala, Carlos Briones, Maritza de Cárdenas, Eugenia de Castrillo, Ximena Domínguez, Sigfredo Figueroa, Miguel Huevo, Leesa Kaplan, Ethel de Kuri, Mario Lima, Jayne Lyons, William Pleitez, Carlos Ramos, Joaquín Samayoa, Vitelio Sánchez, Juan Valiente;

For their persistence and good ideas in the consultative group: Julio Samuel Aguilar, Alberto Barillas, San-

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Principal and Manager Conference

On April 23, EXCELL held its principal and manager conference. Under the heading of "Learning in the Classroom: A Shared Vision" we sought a common purpose among principals and managers: to ensure effective learning among children in the classroom and in school, and that they communicate with each other to achieve that purpose.

With this activity the Ministry of Education (MOE) formally finalized the EXCELL project's training and technical assistance activities for 250 rural school principals and 150 mid-level managers in the MOE.

This activity was attended by Ms. Darlyn Meza, Minister of Education, Mr. Mark Silverman, USAID Mission Director and



more than 400 participants, including principals, mid-level managers from central and departmental offices in the MOE and special guests.

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USAID
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Thank You! (continued)

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dra de Barraza, Carlos Briones, Abigail Castro de Pérez, Agustín Fernández, Evelyn Jacir de Lovo, Ernesto Richter, Joaquín Samayoa, Jorge Yanes;

For their support for our principal training initiatives: Carlos Arias, Lizzette Yanira Arriaza, Antonio Ayala Turcios, Ana Enma de Cañas, Boris Cuéllar, Marta Gloria Díaz, Jorge Esperanza, Aristides González, Ana Miriam de Larreina, Concepción Miranda, Roberto

We thank Ambassador H. Douglas Barday, Donna Roginski, Jennifer Purl and Vilma Ponce for their role in obtaining donations totaling 49,000 books for rural schools; and Rebecca Thompson and Sarah Curflin for their help in securing media coverage for the project.

Gámez Molina, Guillermo Antonio Morales, Juan Angel Ortez, Ana María Rivera, Vilma Pereira de Ruiz, Herberth Elio Pérez, José Luis Pérez, Juan Bautista Quirós, Barbarita Ramírez, Jenny Lizette

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Ana Marta Najarro, Ernesto René Perla, Mario René Villalobos;

Above all, for their enthusiastic and diligent participation in our training and technical assistance activities: }thanks and congratulations to all the rural school principals, MOE mid-level managers, pedagogical advisors and staff in the MOE National Directorate for Monitoring and Evaluation.

"EXCELL has helped me to recognize that (...) it's up to me to affect positively those around me."

(School Principal, Cabañas)

Principal and Manager Conference (continued)

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In addition to a keynote speech by the project's Chief of Party, Felix Alvarado, participants attended presentations concerning a variety of results of their own work:

- Principals who implemented pedagogical innovation projects and quality reflection circles with their colleagues, teachers and parents;
- Managers who seek change in their offices through technical, administrative and financial transformation projects;
- A study prepared by EXCELL to show the main characteristics of teachers in El Salvador; and

- An inclusive education guidebook, prepared by EXCELL with support from the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation and Fundación Pro Educación Especial (FUNPRES).

"We may have the best planning in the world, but without qualified and committed people it is impossible to get results."

Upon closing the event, the Minister of Education, Darlyn Meza, said that "... this effort is framed to ensure that the 2021 National Education Plan will work. We may have the best planning in the world, but without people qualified and committed to making the necessary effort it is impossible to get results."

As Mario Nóchez, EXCELL manager for quality in edu-

cation stated in welcoming participants: "With this conference we are not closing down activities, but rather affirming the commitment each of us has to be an agent

for improvement and change in our respective places of work."

We encourage the principals and managers who have taken on the challenge to change themselves to continue in their effort to obtain quality education for all in El Salvador, through the education sector's most important resource: its people.

All conference presentations are available on our web page: www.equipl23.net/equip1/excell/conference.htm

Publications: Inclusive Education and Special Education Needs

Recently we presented the "Inclusive Education Guidebook: We Can All Learn," prepared for the EXCELL project with support from the Joseph P. Kennedy and Fundación Pro Educación Especial (FUNPRES).

The purpose of this guidebook is to offer principals, school administrators and teachers an introduction to the principles of inclusion and the main components of inclusive education. Additionally, it provides tools to increase educators' confidence in their ability to develop schools that admit and educate children with and

without special education needs. In a simple question and answer format the guidebook helps educational communities that have started on the road to inclusion.

Additionally, this month we will complete the preparation of four training modules for support of children with special education needs. These materials will be distributed to all schools and will remain available on our web page even after the end of the project.

Look for these publications on: www.equipl23.net/equip1/excell/



A tool for educational communities on the road to inclusion

An Excellent Team

More than a set of activities, EXCELL is a group of people with initiative, will and commitment. We wish here to recognize very the team that, in many different ways, contributed to the activities throughout the project with their professionalism and unwavering support. Without them this would not have been possible!

In training for mid-level managers, under the leadership initially of Zulema de Fuentes and later of María Elena Franco: Fernando Herrera, Luis Rivera, Patricia Sánchez, Rhina Sanabria;

In training for principals, under the leadership of Mario Nóchez: Morena Barraza,

Leticia Bonilla, Ruth Calasín, Rosy Cárcamo, Celia Cuéllar, Ketty Erazo, Emperatriz Hernández, Baudilio Murcia, Rocío Lemus, Silvia López, María Elena Martínez, Juan José Ruano, Ely Rubio, Jorge Santillana;

In research, monitoring and evaluation, under the leadership of Juan Carlos Rodríguez, initially of Helga Cuéllar: Cristela Escamilla, Mayra Pacheco, Claudia Zaldaña, María de los Angeles Márquez;

In the project's office management and administration, under the leadership of Ana María Díaz de López: Melissa Amaya, Guadalupe Errodas, Vidal García, Evelin

Gutiérrez, Diana Landaverde, Víctor Lara, Humberto Melgar, Kryssia Minervini, Cristina Pacas, Fausto Sandoval, Carolina de Trabanino, Ruth Rauda;

As consultants for training sessions Doris Acosta, Bessy Ayala, Anita Blumenberg, Florencio Chávez, Bernardo Grande, Roberto Figueroa, Yohalmo León, Marcita de López, Patricia

McCormick, Mauricio Meléndez, Gustavo Molina, Ricardo Orantes, Marta Gladys de Palacios, Carlos Palencia, Gerardo Quiñónez, Sandra de Umanzor, Fernando Vásquez, Abraham Zalzman;

As consultants for the preparation of training modules and other documents: Cecilia de Avila, Luis Botello, Vicente Cuchilla, Silvia Linnan-Thompson, Rafaela Santa Cruz, Lillian Rose, Wuilman Herrera, Zulema Lara;

As consultants in training and technical assistance: Carlos Carcach, Tony Dewees, Jaime Escalante, Raúl Gálvez, William Lázaro, Miguel Socías, Violeta Muñoz, Ron Wilhelm; and

In the headquarters of the EQUIPI partners: (for AIR) Cory Heyman, Alicia Santa, Heather Simpson; (for AED) Ray Anderson, Juan Carlos Bautista, Nassima Briggs, Egypt Brown, Barbara Gusinsky, Andrea Hamilton, Elizabeth Leu, Sergio Ramirez, Carmen Siri, Mark Wagner; (for JPKF) Maggie Mclaughlin, Jeannie Cummins.

The program gave me the chance to learn about and value how much the degree to which we, as a Departmental Directorate office, satisfy the needs and expectations of our internal and external clients."
(Manager)

"Pocos pelos, pero bien peinados"

(Not much hair, but well combed")

This phrase turned into the EXCELL project's mantra, repeated constantly by our Chief of Party, to remind us that we should focus on the important issues. There have been other funny phrases, always significant, which will be remembered by all team members when we need them. To Felix our best wishes, from all his team.



Quality in Education, A Shared Vision

The EXCELL chief of Party, Felix Alvarado, gave the keynote presentation for the principal and manager conference celebrated on April 23. The main ideas are summarized here.

Quality in education at the classroom level is the common reference point for principals and managers. However, we must remember that children in the school have a variety of learning needs: they must develop specific knowledge and skills, socialize into the culture of their community and their nation, find ways to fulfill their potential, and satisfy their human right to education. A quality education is a service, but also a cultural resource, an aspect of human development, and a tool for public policy that must respond to those various needs.

However, we are still short of achieving that. The 2021 National Education Plan reminds us that children in the schools are not learning what they need to know, are not interested in education and, in the best of cases, receive an education that is irrelevant to their daily life. This should not be a reason for pessimism, but rather an inducement to revise and continue the reform that has already borne valuable fruit over the last ten years.

In this sense, for children to learn effectively in the classroom and the school we must all learn: students need pertinent, motivating and useful learning, but teachers need to learn innovative instructional practices, principals must develop their empowerment in the school, and managers must learn to develop strategies that will effectively change the sector as a function of educational processes in the classroom, and to facilitate these processes.

This learning among children, teachers, principals and managers requires several conditions. The first of these is that we must be prepared to try change and not accept the usual excuses, such as the lack of resources and shortcomings in the legal or regulatory framework. Second, we must recognize common purposes; in El Salvador there are two key tools for this: the Institutional Educational Project (Proyecto Educativo Institucional, or PEI) on the school level, and the 2021 National Education Plan, on the sector-wide level. Third, we must address errors with an open mind. Without condoning mistakes or carelessness, we need to recognize that learning includes failure. Four, it is indispensable that we commit to goals and

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