Early Warning System

IADB-EC-T1372

Closing Gaps VI and VII: teaching and learning throughout primary school

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Quick Facts

Countries	Ecuador
Financial Institutions	Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
Status	Active
Bank Risk Rating	C
Borrower	Government of Ecuador
Investment Type(s)	Advisory Services
Investment Amount (USD)	$ 2.50 million

Project Description

This TC will support the last stages of an innovative ongoing study in Ecuador, Closing Gaps. No study of teacher quality in a developing country is comparable in the rigorous design of its identification strategy, nor in its execution. The project's main objective is to better understand the learning process during elementary school, and to identify which of those characteristics and practices of teachers in the classroom are most successful in closing the learning gap between the poorest children and their better-off classmates.

These effects can only be observed throughout time, and are the ones that provide the most meaningful evidence to inform policy. Hence, the Bank has been carrying out this unprecedented longitudinal study, about to enter its sixth year. In Closing Gaps, two cohorts of children entering kindergarten (in 2012 and 2013), totaling more than 24,000 students, were randomly assigned to different classrooms within 200 schools. Children from the 2012 cohort were then randomly reassigned to classrooms in 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade. In every grade, compliance with the assignment rule has been almost perfect. This TC has two specific objectives: (i) to generate evidence on learning outcomes from the cohort of students and the effectiveness of teachers during the last two grades of elementary school; and (ii) to compare and analyze the results that have already been obtained throughout the project. This stage of Closing Gaps will be fundamental, as the data will be used to determine whether the effects of teacher quality on student learning are persistent in time during the entire elementary school cycle, and more importantly, to improve the understanding of how these effects interact differently with student learning from one year to the next during these extremely important formative years. The analysis of the results of this last phase will yield unparalleled information that the region has never had at its disposal before. Some of the questions that we will be able to answer include: Could a child assigned to an ineffective teacher in one year eventually catch up with a child that was assigned to an effective teacher that same year? Or would the child assigned to an effective teacher also learn more in all subsequent primary school years? Which different sequences of "effective" and "ineffective" teachers, during elementary school, matter more or less for a child's learning? To generate answers that could be applicable to the entire elementary school in general, and grade by grade in particular, it is necessary to obtain data of these last two years in elementary school (5th & 6th grade) of the children in the sample.

The project has significant and direct policy implications for Ecuador and other countries in the region, by providing rigorous evidence for the design of effective teacher selection and evaluation systems, targeted in-service teacher training programs, and for compensatory educational programs for disadvantaged children, among others. The first results of the project have been used in the design of an approved loan (EC-L1155), in the ongoing dialogue on early schooling and teaching quality with other countries of the region, and disseminated in a number of seminars and conferences. The results of the first year and a half of the project were published in a highly recognized peer reviewed journal in Economics (QJE), and a series of working papers with the rest of the results are currently in production.

Investment Description

- Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)

Contact Information

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF IADB

The Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI) is the independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who have been or are likely to be adversely affected by an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) or Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC)-funded project. If you submit a complaint to MICI, they may assist you in addressing the problems you raised through a dispute-resolution process with those implementing the project and/or through an investigation to assess whether the IDB or IIC is following its own policies for preventing or mitigating harm to people or the environment. You can submit a complaint by sending an email to MICI@iadb.org. You can learn more about the MICI and how to file a complaint at http://www.iadb.org/en/mici/mici,1752.html (in English) or http://www.iadb.org/es/mici/mici,1752.html (Spanish).

Bank Documents

- TC Abstract
- TC Document