

PD-ARB-926  
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**ACTION MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR**

**From:** E. B. Warfield, C/PDM  
**Through:** H. Arellano, DDIR  
**Subject:** Project Assistance Completion Report (PACR) -  
Rural Primary Education Improvement Project (520-0282)  
**Date:** May 26, 1994

**Action Requested:** That you sign below approving the attached PACR.

**Discussion:** The PACD of the Rural Primary Education Improvement Project (520-0282) was August 31, 1993. The attached PACR was prepared by J. Diaz, OH&E and reviewed by PDM. It is in accordance with M.O. 3.2: PACD and Project Phase-out Procedures.

Approved: W.S.R. Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_  
William Stacy Rhodes  
Director, USAID/Guatemala-Central American Programs

Date 6/7/94

Attachment:  
PACR 520-0282

Drafted: MAlban, PDM 200 5/26/94  
Clearance: TDelaney, PDM TED 5/30/94  
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**Project Assistance Completion Report**  
**Rural Primary Education Improvement Project 520-0282**

**Background**

From 1980 through 1984, USAID designed and implemented a pilot project (Bilingual Education Project, 520-0258) in 40 experimental and 40 control schools, in preprimary, first, and second grades, in the four major Mayan-language areas. The U.S. contribution to this project was US \$1.85 million, which financed the development of prototype instructional bilingual materials; an educational delivery model in which the language of instruction gradually shifted from the indigenous language to Spanish; and teacher training in Mayan languages. Academic achievement improved, drop-out and repetition rates were reduced, and promotion rates increased, in comparison to the effects on a similar group of children in 40 control schools. These results and continuous policy dialogue with Ministry of Education authorities and Congressional representatives led to support for the institutionalization of the bilingual program by Government decree in December 1984 and its stipulations in articles of the National Constitution.

Based on these results, USAID/Guatemala designed a second project, [Rural Primary Education Improvement Project (520-0282)] in the four major Mayan languages which included an expansion of the program to 800 bilingual schools (400 complete schools from preprimary through fourth grade, and 400 bilingual schools with preprimary only). This project was authorized on October 17, 1984, for a six-year period ending October 1990. It was designed to provide bilingual education services to the indigenous children of the Guatemalan Highlands and to create a permanent capability within the Ministry of Education to deliver appropriate instructional programs to Mayan populations. The U.S. contribution was to be US \$10.2 million in loans and US \$3.3 in grant funds, while the Government of Guatemala contribution was to be \$25.0 million, for an expected life-of-project total of \$38.5 million. Due to the devaluation of the Quetzal, a surplus in local currency was created that permitted extension of the Project Assistance Completion Date, first to November 30, 1991, then to September 30, 1992, and finally to August 31, 1993 for the loan agreement.

The Basic Education Strengthening (BEST, 520-0374) Project also included bilingual education as a priority within its components, and focused on improving the bilingual

education methodology and instructional materials as well as on expanding coverage to grades one through three in the incomplete bilingual schools.

### Goal and Purpose

The goal of the Rural Primary Education Improvement Project was to improve the social and economic status of the Guatemalan indigenous population. The purpose was to improve the efficiency and relevance of Guatemala's rural education system.

### Project Status

The six elements included in the project were completed as planned. 1. The *Administration and Supervision* Component created the implementing unit within the Ministry of Education to administer the national bilingual program in 400 complete schools (PP-4 grade) and 400 incomplete schools (PP grade only). This component provided for the appointment of bilingual teachers in the project schools and created the supervision system for the program. 2. The *Curriculum Development* Component developed, validated, and revised the bilingual curriculum, textbook prototypes, and other materials in 40 bilingual schools in the four major Mayan languages. 3. The *Equipment and Educational Materials* Component developed and printed textbooks and other instructional materials for preprimary through fourth grades. The goal, which was achieved, was to print 1.3 million textbooks and teacher's guides and distribute them to the bilingual schools. This component also provided 120,000 desks, 800 bookcases, flipcharts, and blackboards for all bilingual schools. 4. The *Training* Component provided University training for the program technicians and established bilingual BA education careers in two private universities which are still being offered. This component also provided and established permanent in-service training for bilingual promoters and teachers. 5. The *Evaluation and Investigation* Component completed a longitudinal study, carried out since 1985, to investigate children's academic achievement, drop-out and repetition rates, and promotion rates. All planned objectives to improve indicators were achieved. 6. The *Technical Assistance* Component provided funds for contracting U.S and local technicians and experts to transfer technology in applied research, linguistics, administration, supervision, and training.

### Contributions

The U. S. contribution was US \$10.5 million (Loan) and US \$3.3 million (Grant) for a period of five years. The Government of Guatemala planned to contribute \$25.0 million to the total project, but at the end of the project the total GOG contribution reached \$42.2 million. As agreed, 150 teachers were appointed annually through 1987. In the years following, the MOE failed to appoint the agreed number of teachers, until 1992, when the MOE finally complied with the covenant under the project.

### Outputs

A permanent Bilingual Education Division was established and institutionalized by Government Decree in 1984, and the Ministry of Education established the National Program of Bilingual Education (PRONEBI). The program was included in the Ministry of Education's budget. Regionalization of bilingual education services is now in process and regionalization was incorporated as a condition precedent within the BEST project.

A permanent training program was established in two private universities to prepare professionals in the area of bilingual education. In-service bilingual teacher training is functioning permanently within the program. This training reached 342% over the amount originally specified: approximately 5,400 personnel from bilingual schools were trained and re-trained over the project period in the new methodology.

After intensive training, more than 800 bilingual promoters were recognized and certified by the Ministry of Education as preprimary bilingual teachers, thus improving their salaries. This output was 162% over that originally specified (500). Three technicians obtained Master's degrees in Education at the University of New Mexico, achieving 97% of intended output. A total of 1,600 bilingual school directors were also trained, instead of 400 as originally designed.

A complete bilingual education curriculum and bilingual materials were developed, tested, revised, printed, and distributed, achieving 117% output (the original textbook printing was 1.3 million, and the final printing was 1.5 million for all bilingual schools). The National Program of Bilingual Education (PRONEBI) is the only entity within the MOE that provides preprimary education and learning materials for its schools. Coordination meetings with other donors resulted in the participation and collaboration of the World Bank

in textbook printing during 1994.

### Evaluation

The final evaluation was performed by a team that included a financial analyst, two anthropologists, and a management specialist, all of whom had experience evaluating bilingual education activities in Guatemala.

The evaluation concluded that the project had a positive impact on educational efficiency and quality in the target population of indigenous children by showing steady and statistically significant reduction in drop-out and repetition rates, an increase in promotion rates, and improved academic achievement. Participation in the bilingual program had a positive effect on students' Spanish language acquisition. The project had a positive impact on parents' knowledge and acceptance of bilingual education.

Nevertheless, the program has not had an equal impact on boys and girls, since boys showed higher academic performance. The program has also had a positive but limited impact on teachers, since teachers now insist on more training in the mother tongue. There has been an exodus of trained staff from the program, and PRONEBI must begin again to build its administrative capacity. In addition, the instructional materials need to be revised and improved. The Government of Guatemala must commit itself to institutionalizing bilingual education at the regional level, and the Ministry of Education must assume financial responsibility for this program. Each of these recommendations was included in the BEST project as conditions precedent and covenants.

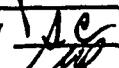
### Replicability

While the project may be replicable and can be extended to other linguistic areas, the implementing unit and cooperating institutions should have full support from the central government, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Education in order to strengthen the established capacity financially and administratively.

### Lessons Learned

The following are lessons learned to date:

- Project designers frequently overestimate the capacity of implementing units and set ideal benchmarks unilaterally, without consulting with Government officials and beneficiaries. The results of the project are frequently much lower than the planned outputs. Realistic benchmarks should be set in consultation with government officials and beneficiaries.
- Even though the project officers conduct continual dialogue with appropriate authorities, there should be a project Component aimed at ensuring that the activity is institutionalized and sustained.
- Coordination of donors can avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the use of all resources targeted to a given program.
- In the development of bilingual education materials, the varying levels of bilingualism that exist among target populations must be taken into consideration.
- A well-developed bilingual education program can be more effective than programs in the second language.

Drafter: JDíaz  Date 5/17/94  
 Clearance: SClay  Date 5/02/94  
 GCook  Date 5/5/94  
 MAlban  Date 5/9/94

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