EL SALVADOR EDUCATION SECTOR ASSESSMENT
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ACRONYMS

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development
ADS	Automated Directives System
AT	Assessment Team
ATP	Technical-Pedagogical Assistant
CARSI	Central American Regional Security Initiative
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEN Strategy	U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America
CESAL	Center for Studies and Solidarity with Latin America
CNSCC	National Commission for Citizen Security and Coexistence
CNE	National Board of Education (in English)
CONED	National Education Council (in English)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAI	Development Associates International
DDL	Development Data Library
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DG	Democracy and Governance
DIGESTYC	General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses
DRG	Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance
ECY	Education for Children and Youth
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessments
EITP	Escuelas Inclusivas de Tiempo Pleno (in Spanish)
ELDS	Early Learning Development Standards
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
FAES	Armed Forces of El Salvador
FEDISAL	Foundation for Integral El Salvador Education
FEPADE	Business Foundation for Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTIS	Full-Time Inclusive Schools
FOMILENIO	Millennium Fund in El Salvador (in English)
FUNPRES	Pro-Education Foundation of El Salvador
FUSADES	El Salvadoran Foundation for Development
FUSALMO	El Salvador Foundation of the World
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	The German Society for International Cooperation (in English)
GOES	Government of El Salvador
IP	Implementing Partner
IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and/or Intersex
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ME&A	Mendez, England and Associates
MINEC	Ministry of Economy
MINED	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OOSY	Out-of-School Youth
PAES	Learning and Aptitude Test to Graduate from Secondary (in English)
PESE	El Salvador Education Plan (in English)

PESS	El Salvador Security Plan (in English)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PNC	Civil National Police
RERA	Rapid Education and Risk Analysis
RFP	Request for Proposals
SIMEDUCO	Teachers Syndicate (in English)
SERCE	Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (in English)
SOW	Scope of Work
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
TERCE	Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (in English)
TIMSS	International Tendencies in Math and Science Study
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
U.S.	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/El Salvador requested an assessment of the education sector in the country in order to inform future USAID education sector programs within the context of insecurity and the future Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). Originally planned for 2018, the CDCS' end date has been extended two years since commissioning the report. This assessment provides USAID/El Salvador with a broad understanding of the current state of El Salvador's education sector across pre-primary, primary, secondary, and non-formal education, including current and past initiatives of the Ministry of Education (MINED), donors, and other education stakeholders. The assessment was conducted over a three-month period by a team of researchers, led by Dr. Megan Gavin. It was carried out through a desk study and through structured interviews conducted during a two-week field visit from August 7 to August 25, 2017. Principal findings of the assessment are summarized below, by research question. The main recommendations are presented in the end.

Q1: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? Why?

Findings	Conclusions
Preschool education	
Although enrollment in preschool is increasing (nearly 28 percent, MINED 2016), it is still low in absolute terms (only 1 in 4 preschool aged children are in school). There are nearly equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled in preschool.	Preschool is making gains in terms of equitable expansion.
Basic education	
Enrollment at the primary level is decreasing (94 percent in 2009, 85 percent in 2015). There are high rates of repetition, especially in first grade (7.3 percent).	Primary is declining in terms of enrollment and internal efficiency.
Performance (basic/secondary)	
According to the Learning and Aptitude Test to Graduate from Secondary, PAES, basic graduates know about 50 percent of the curriculum. Fifty percent of a sample of second graders performed at the lowest literacy level.	Given available data, performance appears to be low in basic/secondary education.
Security	
More than 60 percent of schools report that they are in communities affected by gangs, drugs, robberies, and thefts. In 2016, a student (every 4 days) or a teacher (every 17 days) was the victim of a homicide. Five percent of teachers have been the victim of extortion in the last year. The most prevalent form of violence at the school level is students bullying other students (psychological).	There is a cycle of violence affecting students and teachers, both outside the schools and also within the schools, which is perpetrated by students and teachers.
Governance	
Among the top challenges identified in key informant interviews (KIIs) is weak institutional capacity. KIIs articulated that there are multiple dispersed projects, which lack central planning and coordination.	There is weak institutional capacity and a lack of coordination among institutions (state, non-state, donors, and civil society).

Q2: What is the availability and quality of education sector data?

Findings	Conclusions
Availability	
Twelve data sources are available on MINED's statistics page. Availability of data has improved in the last five years. There is in-house expertise for test design and management.	Data availability has improved; currently, there is some education data and expertise available in El Salvador.
Inconsistency	
Data on dropout and out-of-school children/youth are inaccurate. Data are also lacking on the quality and performance of teachers (as measured by teacher tests or classroom observations).	More data and transparency are required on out-of-school children and youth and on teacher quality and performance.
Gender & Social Inclusion	

Findings	Conclusions
Gender and inclusion data are lacking (e.g., disaggregation of disability).	There is a need for more disaggregated, quantitative and qualitative gender data (by ethnic origin, disability, and other characteristics).
Security	
There is a severe deficit of quality data on insecurity and violence, particularly with regard to education.	Interpretations of data should be made with caution as much is unknown, and assessments about insecurity are difficult.

Q3: What education initiatives are underway?

Findings	Conclusions
Funding	
Information on cooperation investment is neither quantified nor updated from MINED.[1] International investment is not equally available for all areas and levels of education. For example, there is international investment in mathematics, but not in primary literacy. Investment in Full Time Inclusive Schools does not focus on training teachers or on creating curricula and materials for learning to teach.	Investment in education exists in El Salvador; however, it is dispersed and does not concentrate on primary grades or literacy.
Stakeholders	
Save the Children currently works locally in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of literacy, early childhood, and building MINED's capacity to budget and plan. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) have a tested approach to train parents and communities to support education and prevent crime and violence.	A base exists on which to build practices for out-of-school children and youth and literacy in El Salvador.
Initiatives	
There are numerous and sizeable projects in citizen security related to education but few projects targeted at gender and social inclusion.	Gender and social inclusion specific projects are lacking compared to citizen security projects.

Q4: What are the key priorities of MINED related to basic education?

Findings	Conclusions
Gender & Social Inclusion	
Gender and social inclusion are prioritized as a combined, cross-cutting theme in the El Salvador Education Plan (PESE) and in related policies, specifically on gender equity and equality, and inclusion, respectively.	Prioritization of gender and social inclusion takes place only at the written discourse level and fails to trickle down to implementation at the school level.

Gender and social inclusion are not part of the awareness of MINED, whereas citizen security is.

Awareness is linked to funding, such that when donors make investment in an "issue," it is raised into awareness of all stakeholders. |
In MINED's annual reports, there have been no achievements reported with regard to gender. In KIIs with MINED staff, gender and social inclusion were not identified as priorities unless key informants were specifically asked about these topics.	
Security in school is a priority identified in the PESE.	
Infrastructure	
Infrastructure (such as building classrooms) is identified as a priority in policy documents and by MINED staff. However, there is limited investment and spending on infrastructure; currently, they only occur in areas of high crime.	Rebuilding and strengthening school infrastructure is a major priority, but funding is limited.
Teachers	

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[1] Information is available from the ministry of planning and is included in the annexes.

Findings	Conclusions
Teacher training is identified as the top priority in KIIs and the PESE.	Strengthening teacher capacity is a priority identified by MINED and, while they are making efforts towards improving it, more remains to be done. It is unclear what MINED hopes to achieve.
Improved teacher capacity is identified as an achievement for the 2016-2017 period.	
The law on teacher training and the outdated teacher training degree program require a revision	

Q5: What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable education for all?

Findings	Conclusions
Infrastructure Challenge	
Infrastructure exists at the primary level but is less adequate at the upper levels. Rural schools are largely characterized by multi-grade classrooms in deteriorating or poor condition (leaking roof, lack of water) and lack needed material. A small number of schools have only one teacher. There is an insufficient number of classrooms to meet needs (20-30 students per class) at the preschool, third cycle (grades 7-9) of basic education, and secondary levels.	At all education levels, there are not enough school buildings that are also: in good condition; adapted to the needs of all students; and equipped with necessary didactic material and equipment. This poses a key challenge to realizing universal quality education for all children in El Salvador.
Youth	
There are not enough relevant alternative programs (flexible modalities), including those for youth with criminal backgrounds. Existing flexible modalities lack relevance and quality.	Out-of-school children and youth are arguably the most vulnerable group in the education system, and society at large, and are not given priority.
Out-of-school children and youth are particularly vulnerable. They are the most impacted sub-group of the Salvadoran population in the context of violence, specifically related to gang violence. At-risk youth are addressed prominently in PESE. PESE does not include a focus on at-risk youth education beyond traditional secondary education; only one strategic action in the plan focuses on at-risk youth to create additional flexible modalities.	
Curriculum	
Curricula have been revised to include gender and competency-based learning but effective methods for getting the curricula to the classroom do not exist. These curricula are restrictive and do not include any peace education content or methods. There is insufficient training of teachers on the various revisions to the curricula (both in service and before service).	The challenge of curricula is less about quality, but more about the lack of relevant training and support for consistent, high-quality implementation of the existing curricula and recent revisions.
Teachers-challenge	
Initial teacher training is a three-year program with a rigid curriculum with some recent revisions (that are not complete). Teacher motivation is low due to: low social prestige; limited incentives to develop themselves professionally; uncompetitive salaries; and difficult working conditions.	Effective teaching and learning in El Salvador face acute challenges because of: poor and insufficient initial and continued professional development and support; teacher practices that reflect this deficient pre- and in-service training; and lack of teacher motivation.
Literacy	
The primary-level curriculum lacks consistency related to literature scope and sequence, and standardized testing to evaluate reading at the early grades (grades 1-3). Only 28.8 percent of all schools in the country have a library. A low percentage of parents are active with supporting learning and development, including reading, of their children.	Challenges related to reading in the early grades cut across curriculum, teaching practice, infrastructure, parent involvement, and culture.

Findings	Conclusions
One example of a program in this area is GIZ's Escuela Para Padres.	
Gender equity-challenge	
Larger society-wide gender discriminatory norms, behaviors, and attitudes are transmitted in the classroom by teachers and into the system as a whole through sexual division of studies. So far, few studies have been conducted around the intersection of gender and education, with the exception of early pregnancy and early union.	Some understanding exists on the extent to which gender and education intersect; however, it is incomplete and requires further analysis.
School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV)	
The assessment team found no literature that specifically examines SRGBV in all its various manifestations, aggressors and victims, and the impact on victims. Existing SRGBV literature gives examples of the impact on girls and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and/or Intersex (LGBTI) students, but does not address the violence of gangs, specifically involving boys and young men, from a gender perspective.	Some data on SRGBV exist, but there are important information gaps to understand the full scope of the issue and all of its manifestations and impacts. LGBTI individuals and girls are particularly vulnerable to SRGBV. Gang violence that involves predominantly boys as both victim and perpetrator is also a form of SRGBV, and has not been fully analyzed from a gender perspective.
Indigenous	
MINED neither disaggregates data by ethnic origin (i.e., three indigenous cultures in El Salvador) nor collects other relevant data of indigenous children and youth. To date, no special initiatives have been implemented by MINED to address the culture-specific needs of the existing indigenous communities. MINED's Policy on Inclusive Education makes only one vague reference to exclusion based on ethnicity.	The education rights of indigenous children and youth are not prioritized by MINED and Government of El Salvador, despite evidence of need.
Children with disabilities	
Data on children and youth with disabilities in the education system are limited and lack clarity. Enforcement of legal protections of special needs children and youth is rare. Children with disabilities often attend special schools and are not mainstreamed, although there is more will to do so, thanks to the inclusive schools.	Children and youth with disabilities are largely excluded from the education system, leaving them marginalized and preventing them from receiving quality education and support for their success. This, in turn, increases the likelihood for them to drop out.
Teachers do not have the needed training and support to meet the needs of various types of children and youth with special needs.	
Funding challenge	
Insufficient funds are allocated to education in El Salvador to meet the current needs [5-6 percent of Gross Domestic Product]. Rigid budget development processes make allocation to certain areas of the education system difficult. Actual spending does not reflect what MINED identifies as priorities in policy documents.	Available education funding is limited and could be more efficiently managed and better allocated.
Gender inequality challenge	
Various manifestations of Gender-Based Violence are widespread and typically lack effective investigation, prosecution, and adjudication. The role of women and girls continues to be largely related to domestic or reproductive responsibilities such as housework, childrearing, etc. High rates of early pregnancy and early union exist among adolescent girls.	Deeply rooted gender inequality that cuts across class is as an underlying cause of more immediate contributing factors of dropout and/or low enrollment among children and youth. Socially constructed masculinity, by and large linked to hyper aggression and violence, cuts across class and applies not just to the poorer classes (specifically young, male gang members) but also to the male political and upper elites.

Findings	Conclusions
Poverty	
Poor children have lower rates of enrollment and attendance across the education levels. Poverty and need to work rank as one of the most important factors contributing to dropout rates of girls and boys.	Poverty is a key underlying cause of limited equitable access to quality education in El Salvador.
Security	
Among children aged 7 to 15 that do not attend school, the second most frequently identified reason for that is violence or insecurity.[2] In 2016, 34 schools were temporarily closed as a result of threats from gangs. Twenty-six percent of the schools that reported dropouts indicated that the reason was gang violence.	Violence and insecurity cause dropouts and low attendance.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1**: USAID should mandate institutional capacity building (for decision-making) as part of all education activities. This requirement should be tied to measurable indicators as part of the project M&E plan and reporting deliverables.
- **Recommendation 2**: USAID should provide technical assistance to MINED to strengthen institutional capacity in integrating gender (via the new gender office within MINED). Specifically, this means providing TA support to the new gender office- for M&E, planning and implementation of gender related interventions.
- **Recommendation 3**: USAID should continue to incorporate violence prevention and peace building into education programs tied to measurable short and long-term outcomes. A security specialist position should be incorporated into requests for proposals (RFPs).
- **Recommendation 4**: USAID should support development of programs that tackle larger gender and social norms, practices, and behaviors that impact the education of girls and boys and SRGBV. Specifically, this means writing teacher guides which integrate gender awareness and SRGBV, creating student materials which integrate gender awareness, and offering trainings on how to use and develop these guides/materials in the upper grades.
- **Recommendation 5**: USAID should conduct a gender analysis of the education sector and use the results to inform future programming. The gender analysis should assess equity, safety, and empowerment in education activities in El Salvador (see USAID's Gender policy/framework for specific domains and recent work from Millennium Fund El Salvador (FOMILENIO in Spanish).
- **Recommendation 6**: USAID should continue to invest in activities to increase school coverage for out-of-school youth and other at-risk, marginalized, and/or excluded youth. This is related to Recommendation 3.
- **Recommendation 7**: USAID should consider investing in primary education, especially early literacy, via improving teacher capacity, delivering quality materials, and M&E for learning. USAID has good examples from within El Salvador and the region, particularly Honduras and Nicaragua, for basic education programs. These can serve as examples and be modified for the El Salvador context.

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[2] The first is lack of interest.

1.0 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/El Salvador is interested in informing future: 1) USAID education sector programs in the country within the context of insecurity; and 2) El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) originally planned for 2018. This assessment provides USAID/El Salvador with a broad understanding of the current state of El Salvador's education sector across pre-primary, primary, secondary, and non-formal education, including current and past initiatives of the Ministry of Education (MINED), donors, and other education stakeholders. The literacy rate in El Salvador is 86.2 percent, which is nearly the same as the global rate, 86.3 percent (UNESCO, 2016). As per the Scope of Work (SOW) (see Annex A), the assessment answered the following research questions:

1. Question 1 (Q1): What is the current state of education in El Salvador and why?
2. Question 2 (Q2): What is the quality of data available?
3. Question 3 (Q3): What are the current education initiatives?
4. Question 4 (Q4): What are MINEDs priorities?
5. Question 5 (Q5): What are the challenges to provide access to quality education?
6. Question 6 (Q6): What is USAID's comparative advantage?

1.2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The assessment was conducted over a three-month period by a team of researchers and staff from the USAID/El Salvador Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Initiative, implemented by Mendez England and Associates (ME&A). The team included: Dr. Megan Gavin, Team Leader; Jane Kellum, Education Specialist; Carlos Ochoa, Education Specialist; and Mario Pozas, Citizen Security Expert. Significant support was also provided by Katia Zepeda, Cindy Abarca, Mercedes Góchez, and Peter Appleton (all from ME&A); Mr. Adam Schmidt, USAID DG Office Director; Ms. Elisa Zogbi, USAID DG Office; Deputy Director Mr. Timothy Curtin, Education Team Leader, USAID/El Salvador; Nina Weisenhorn, Sr. Education Advisor, E3/Education, USAID/Washington; Ashley Henderson, Education Specialist, LAC,USAID/Washington; Karen Towers, Education Team Leader, LAC, USAID/Washington; Hector Matal, Education Specialist, USAID/El Salvador; and Orlando Hidalgo, USAID/El Salvador Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

The assessment carried out a desk study and a two-week field visit from August 7 to August 25, 2017. Data was collected through literature review and structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders [MINED, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donors]. In addition to central level stakeholders, local mayors and police were also interviewed so that their voices and valuable perspectives could be included in the findings of the assessment. Data were supplemented from MINED and USAID's Education for Children and Youth (ECY) Activity (teacher data). The recommendations section provides guidance based on USAID's program cycle, including the "five Rs" – Results, Roles, Relationships, Rules, and Resources.

The assessment team (AT) created a series of questions that were informed by the desk-review and the structured interviews.[3] A complete list of protocol questions can be found in Annex B. In addition, the AT created a literature review tool to code 50 academic, donor, implementing partner (IP), and government documents (see Annex D for the literature review tool, Annex E for an annotated bibliography of sources, Annex F for illustrative articles, and Annex G for a full list of sources). Results of the desk review and in-country visits were summarized and analyzed in consultation with the USAID/El Salvador team and the Washington D.C.-based USAID team. A validation workshop was held on August 24, 2017.

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[3] Codes used in Dedoose: access, prevention, quality, EGR, gender, retention, teacher training, ECD, universal education, infrastructure and classroom management, teen pregnancy, dropout, violence/insecurity, natural disasters, SRGBV, teacher capacity, content, pedagogy, assessment, materials, funding, and family/community involvement.

2.0 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 QUESTION 1: WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION IN EL SALVADOR? AND WHY?

The education system in El Salvador is comprised of initial, preschool, basic, secondary, and higher education. Within basic education, there is the first cycle (grades 1-3) and the second cycle (grades 4-6), which constitute primary education, and the third cycle (grades 7-9). Secondary education includes general and vocational education as well as flexible modalities. For the purposes of this assessment, the AT looks from preschool to secondary education, focusing mostly on basic education (primary and third cycle). This concentrates the discussion on the grades that appear to require most attention. These are also areas in which USAID has a comparative advantage, given its worldwide experience and experience within El Salvador (namely the ECY project), as well as the explicit focus of Goals 1 and 3 in the Education Strategy.

Table 1: Structure of the Education System in El Salvador

Education System Structure				
Level	**Cycle**	**Grade**	**Age**	**Mandatory**
Initial education			0-4	No
Preschool			4-6 years	Yes
Basic education	1 2 3	1st -3rd 4th -6th 7th -9th	6-8 years 9-11 years 12-14 years	Yes
Middle education	General Vocational/ Technical	10th -11th 10th -12th	15-17 years 15-18 years	No
Higher education			17+ years	No

Source: "Structure of the Education System El Salvador" www.dgb.sep.gob.mx, General Law of Education

The General Law of Education states: "*Education is a continuous process*." This emphasizes the movement from home to school as well as movement within the education system. Furthermore, it states: "*Education includes personal, social, and cultural aspects that are integral to the formation of a human being.*" This recognition to human development is important to note especially within the context of insecurity. Presently, more than ever, the education system is tasked with ensuring that learners have not only the appropriate literacy and numeracy skills, but also the ability to live and relate to others in a peaceful way. Specifically, the law mandates that the education system should aim to: 1) achieve the integrated development of the person; 2) contribute to the building of a democratic society; 3) include the respect for human rights and responsibilities; 4) fight intolerance and hate; and 5) be based on the national identity and unity within Central America. The panorama painted below reflects where El Salvador education system falls short of its legal mandate.

2.1.1 Preschool

Research continues to demonstrate that investment in early childhood development has among the highest returns on investment. Children who attend preschool tend to have greater success in the later years of schooling, especially with regard to the transition and success in the first grade (Reimers, 2003). In addition, children who attend preschool tend to have lower dropout and repetition rates, and they tend to develop early literacy skills. Furthermore, there are positive, long-term labor market outcomes. If education starts early with children from violent households and their parents, one can begin to counteract the violence at home/community. It is important to recognize the gains made in El Salvador in this regard. With support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), El Salvador has elaborated Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) for ages 0-3 and 4-6. Preschool education consists of children ages 4-6.

Since 2013, enrollment in preschool has continued to increase from 56.4 percent in 2013 to 57.5 percent in 2015 (see Table 2). Overall, preschool enrollment rates have been increasing since 2009 (when enrollment was 47.5 percent), while other levels of the education cycle (as discussed below) have been decreasing since 2013. There are very few gender differences at the preschool level (see Table 3).

Table 2: Preschool Net Enrollment (%)

Year	Net Enrollment
2013	56.4
2014	58.6
2015	57.5

Table 3: Preschool 2016, Gender (%)

Age	Girls	Boys
4 years	50.2	49.8
5 years	49.2	50.7
6 years	49	50.9

In 2016, according to MINED data, a total of 52,294 students (15.28 percent of the overall student population) were in preschool. Surprisingly, rural and urban differences are minimal; furthermore, there appears to be gender parity at this early level (see Figures 1, 2 and 3). What is happening at the preschool level may be worth examining to inform future levels, especially the investment in standards and a revised curriculum.

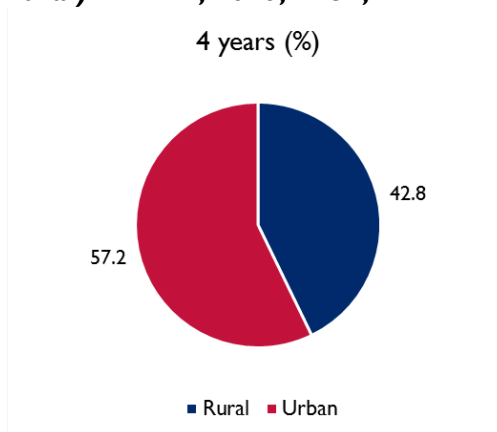**Figure 1: 4 Years (Urban/Rural) MINED, 2016, n=52,294**

4 years (%)

42.8

57.2

■ Rural ■ Urban

Figure 2: 5 Years (Urban/Rural), MINED, 2016, n=80,794

5 years (%)

47

53.03

■ Rural ■ Urban
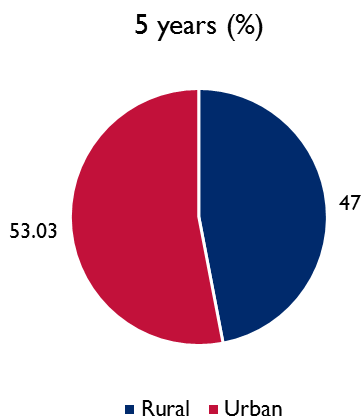
Figure 3: 6 Years (Urban/Rural), MINED, 2016, n=95,368

6 years (%)

■ Rural ■ Urban
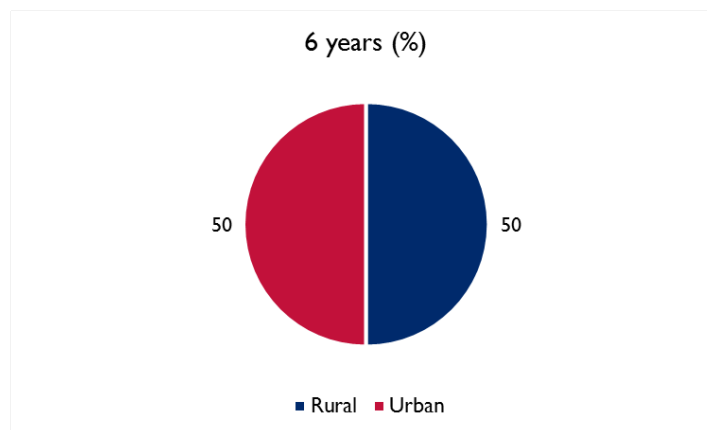
2.1.2 Basic Education

USAID has invested substantial resources in primary education in El Salvador, along with other donors and lending agencies. Further discussion of donor involvement will be described in Q3 below. The most noteworthy endeavors assessed include USAID's expertise with regard to teaching active teaching/learning methodologies such as *Aprendo, Practico, Aplico,* or *I learn, I practice, I apply* (APA by its acronym in Spanish) and their support for the Full-Time Inclusive Schools (FTIS) initiative (see Annex K for description of FTIS). These efforts have been expanded to children/youth between 10-24 years of age within grades 7, 8, or 9 and include out-of-school children and youth via the ECY Activity. It is crucially important to pause and evaluate primary education in order to thoughtfully determine where USAID intervention is best targeted. Findings from this assessment suggest that the primary grade achievements are moving backwards, although this needs to be analyzed with non-state actors and school data.

For example, between 2013 and 2015 net enrollment rates[4] in El Salvador for grades 1-6 were decreasing (from 88.35 percent to 84.72 percent) (see Table 4); while in 2009 net enrollment was near universal at 94.1 percent. Although it is well known that the demographics in El Salvador are shifting, resulting in more age equivalent children in the population in grades 7-9, this does not explain why net enrollments at the primary level are decreasing.

Table 4: Basic Education Net Enrollment (%) MINED

Year	Net Enrollment Grades 1-6	Net Enrollment Grades 7-9
2013	88.35	64.8
2014	86.47	64.9
2015	84.72	63.7

In the case of basic education grades 7-9, enrollment has increased since 2009 (56.6 percent) but it has remained fairly constant over the last three years, between 64 and 65 percent[5] (see Table 4). It is obvious that net enrollment rates are much lower than in the primary level. The reasons for the lower net enrollment rate include the following: 1) the opportunity cost for agriculture work in the case of boys and domestic work in the case of girls (FEDISAL, 2017); 2) migration; 3) insecurity; and 4) a curriculum that is not relevant for short-term work opportunity returns in the labor force.

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[4] The et primary school enrolment ratio is the number of children enrolled in primary school who belong to the age group that officially corresponds to primary schooling, divided by the total population of the same age group.
https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/stats_popup5.html

[5] *"Another factor for low enrollment in grades 7 to 9 is access; coverage in El Salvador is not good. While some may say that insecurity prevents youth from making the long trip to school, the sheer distance itself to grade 7 to 9 schools may impact attendance. Without transportation, students must walk. Many rural elementary schools go up to 6th grade only. While the curriculum could use some improvements, I would not solely link its pertinence or relevance to short-term work opportunity returns. The topic of jobs in agriculture and domestic work is valid and the curriculum does not teach skills in those areas, nor are grades 7 to 9 required for those jobs. The curriculum content is more appropriate for youth to continue on, to high school and high school is now required by almost all employers. Youth seeking jobs know that they need to graduate high school. What's missing in the tercer ciclo curriculum are life skills and entrepreneurial skills (also missing in the U.S., but that's another story). Another critique of tercer ciclois the teachers and the methods they use to teach."* Education Expert (2017)

Furthermore, the lower net enrollment rate reflects that primary students have not been prepared for success in the third cycle of primary education, i.e., the transition.

Furthermore, there appears to be slightly greater inequity and inefficiency at the primary level (as compared to preschool). Inefficiencies include high dropout and repetition rates. For example, although the national demographics suggest that the population of El Salvador has more females than males, at the primary level the gender division is not equal when simply comparing males and females in a given level. MINED reports parity of 1 in the basic level (i.e., no significant difference) (see Table 6); however, there are more boys enrolled than girls nationwide in El Salvador (see Table 5).

Table 5: Primary 2016, Gender (%), MINED

Grade	Girls	Boys
First	47.7	52.2
Second	47.8	52.1
Third	48	51.9
Fourth	47.8	52.1
Fifth	48.2	51.7
Sixth	48.1	51.8

In other words, average classes have more boys than girls. Parity was not disaggregated for primary. In addition, gender parity is not disaggregated at the municipal level although this data would be very useful in order to assess El Salvador Security Plan (PESS) and non-PESS municipalities. This reality with regard to gender is important to consider, especially with regard to curriculum, teaching-learning methods, and classroom management.

Figure 4: Gender Parity
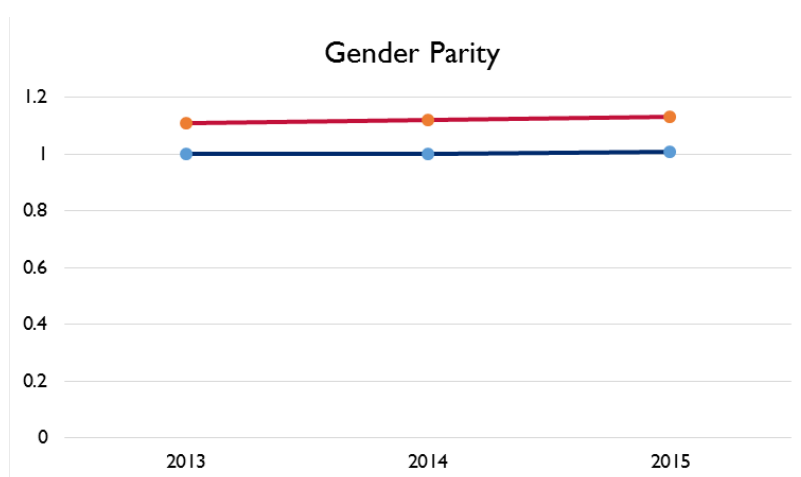
*Blue = Basic; Red = Media or Secondary

Table 6: Gender Parity, MINED

Year	Basic	Media
2013	1	1.11
2014	1	1.12
2015	1.01	1.13

At the basic/third cycle (grades 7, 8, and 9), in 2016 there were more males enrolled than females at each grade level (see Table 7). Again, while the gender parity index (or ratio of female to male students) appears equal and later favoring girls at the higher levels in 2016, it appears there are more males enrolled than females, as a percentage of the student body. 2014 data, however, suggests the opposite trend.

Table 6: Gender Parity, MINED

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Table 7: Basic 7, 8, 9 (%) 2016

Age	Girls	Boys
Seventh	47.3	52.6
Eighth	48.9	51
Ninth	49.9	50.1

In addition to gender, the rural/urban divide appears starker at the end of the basic education cycle. For example, there are more rural first graders than urban first graders (53.9 percent vs. 46.1 percent); whereas by the ninth grade there are more urban ninth graders than rural ninth graders (58.1 percent vs. 41.9 percent) (see Figures 5 and 6, respectively). Access is a main challenge for rural third cycle students. This is a shift to the cities (or urbanization), a trend that is happening worldwide. The reason is that urban areas are perceived as having more employment, health, and education opportunities.

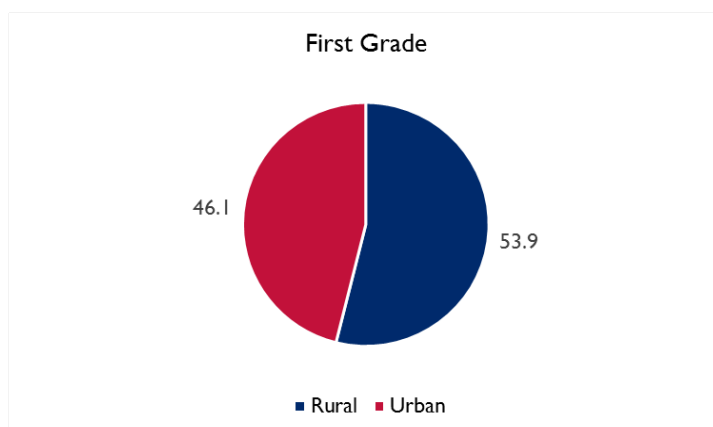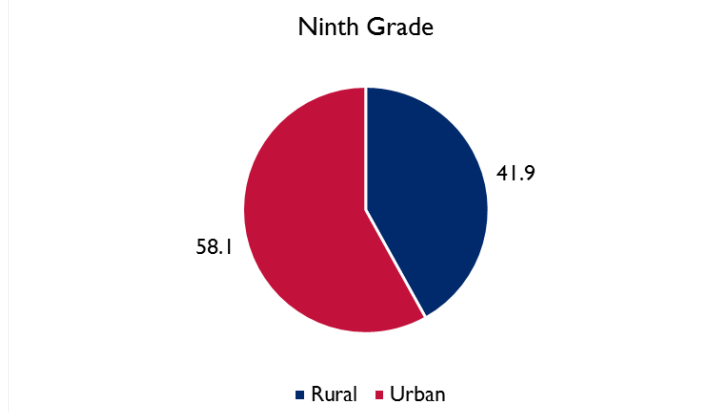**Figure 5: First Grade (Urban/Rural), MINED, 2016**

First Grade

46.1 53.9

■ Rural ■ Urban

Figure 6: Ninth Grade (Urban/Rural), MINED, 2016

Ninth Grade

41.9

58.1

■ Rural ■ Urban

There are high rates of repetition nationwide, especially at the first-grade level (7 percent in 2016) (see Table 8).

Table 8: Primary Repeaters 2016

Grade	Percent
First	7.3
Second	4.1
Third	3.9
Fourth	4.1
Fifth	3.8
Sixth	3.9

This reflects: 1) the unpreparedness of children for the first grade; 2) the fact that the school culture may be a shock for children coming to school for the first time; and 3) that children's parents may have never attended school and, therefore, are unable to support their children in the ways that lead to academic success. In addition, the first grade is when children learn the fundamental literacy skills. Learning is a reciprocal relationship between teachers and students; if teachers are not prepared to teach early literacy skills, then children cannot learn those foundational decoding skills that are so essential for later comprehension. See Table 9 below.

Table 9: Overage Grades 1, 3, 6 (%)

Year	First	Third	Sixth
2013	6.6	9.4	10.7
2014	6.6	9.2	10.5
2015	5.7	8.8	11

In the case of basic grades 7, 8, and 9, the repetition rate follows the same trend as at the primary level (see Table 10).

Table 10: Grade 7, 8, 9 Repeaters 2016

Grade	Percent
Seventh	6.89
Eighth	4.71
Ninth	2.48

The repetition rate appears to decrease in each subsequent grade. It is highest at seventh grade, nearly 7 percent (much like first grade) and is only 2 percent in ninth grade. Children do not know the content, get frustrated, and become unengaged. If they are struggling and do not learn in the early grades then they cannot be engaged in the upper grades. Hence, the dropouts. Children and youth that are likely to repeat tend to drop out by the time they reach the later grades, which explains the low repeat rate in ninth grade. Furthermore, as in the first grade, entry into the third cycle may be more of an academic shock for children and youth. This is especially true because the third cycle is considered more difficult and requires demonstrating content knowledge. If children have not learned the subjects in primary school, they are likely to repeat grade 7. Again, this reflects a deficiency in the primary system. Data confirm that the problems in the middle grades are a result of the early literacy skills (or the lack thereof) and this is important as part of a democracy and governance (DG) intervention.

The percentage of children overage appears to increase at each grade level. Overage at the basic level (grades 7, 8, and 9) is higher than at the primary level (see Table 11). In general, the percentage of children overage appears to be stagnant or decreasing slightly (with the exception of grade 6) since 2013. This is because they cannot read.

Table 11: Overage Grades 7, 8, 9

Year	Seventh	Eight	Ninth
2013	13.3	12.5	11.5
2014	13	12	11.4
2015	13	11.18	10.8

2.1.3 Secondary

There are two tracks for secondary: a traditional track and a technical track (formal/non-formal). Enrollment is presented in Table 12, separately for each track. A total of 104,473 students are in the general traditional track, and 100,878 students in the technical track. In addition, there are 2,887 students in the non-formal track (or flexible modality). The same is true in the technical track; there are high enrollment rates in Years 1, 2, and 3 (approximately 30,000) and very low rate for Year 4 (only 130). If these figures are correct, they reflect internal efficiency concerns. Only in the non-formal track do the enrollments increase in the last year. Possibly students are completing their studies in the non-formal setting.

Table 12: Secondary Enrollment[6]

	Female	Male	Total	Grand Total
General, 15-18 years old				
First year	27,997	29,279	57,283	
Second year	24,057	22,626	46,702	
Third year	250	238	488	
				104,473
				6.99 (% of the system)
Technical				
First year	19,449	20,105	39,571	
Second year	16,426	15,500	31,930	
Third year	15,224	14,014	29,247	
Fourth year	71	59	130	
				100,878
				6.75 (% of the system)
Non-formal				
First level	327	335	662	
Second level	404	442	846	
Third level	642	737	1,379	2,887
				0.19 (% of the system)
			Grand Total	**1,495,552**

2.1.4 Non-formal

In El Salvador, "non-formal" education is regulated by MINED in the sense that it falls under the formal education administrative system, MINED, although it is under the National Directorate for Adult Education. For example, EDUCAME (in English, educate me) is part of the MINED and the flexible/non-formal programs offered to youth and adults to finish their degree. It offers a flexible education program to young people and adults. The flexible program caters to people in situations of vulnerability that cannot successfully complete the traditional 11 years of schooling. It aims to provide older students the opportunity to resume their studies and complete them in a technical area. It includes various types of training programs: accelerated education; semi face-to-face education; virtual education; traditional distance education; and evening classes. Data are presented above. Only 0.19 percent of the students in the system are in non-formal education.

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[6] General is the general education curriculum, technical offers different technical degree options, and non-formal is a more flexible curriculum option, including distance and Saturday programs. Literacy Boost is a snapshot. The numbers in the snapshot are likely below given this is only a select sample (i.e. not representative but in Save sponsored schools). Furthermore, 77 percent may be a reasonable score in some subjects, but in reading mastering 77 percent of the of the alphabet by the end of second grade is not sufficient.

2.1.5 Performance

This section examines illustrative available achievement test data in El Salvador. For the purposes of this assessment, the team examined the PAES, the Prueba de Aprendizaje y Aptitudes para Egresados de Educación Media or the Learning and Aptitude Test to Graduate from Secondary. The AT also examined what appears to be the most reliable Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), implemented by Save the Children via their intervention in Literacy Boost. The limitation of this assessment is that it is not based on a representative sample but rather on the specific intervention sites for Save the Children's program. The baseline serves as a good general picture of the state of letter recognition, word recognition, and other foundational literacy skills in El Salvador. Again the situation is far worse than reported by Literacy Boost Assessment, given as explained in the previous page the sample is not representative and is comprised of Save sponsored schools.

On average, students exit their basic education studies with a score of 5.26 out of 10 (see Table 13). "*Students should not be exiting basic education knowing, on average, a little under or over 1/2 the material. This can't be fixed at the basic level. It needs to be fixed at the primary level.*" Rebecca Rhodes (2017). Mathematics appear to be the subject in which students perform the worst, in comparison to social studies where students perform the best. According to MINED (2015), global performance has decreased since last year (by only 0.04 points). Therefore, all scores are poor in general. On average students only master half of what they are expected to; furthermore, they are not improving.

Table 13: PAES, 2016

Area	Points
Global	5.26
Mathematics	4.85
Social Studies	5.83
Language and Literature	5.61
Natural Sciences	5.45

The Literacy Boost Assessment (Save the Children, 2013) measures various characteristics associated with literacy.[7] These include: home environment; gender; student background; and health and nutrition. For the purposes of this assignment, the AT focused on: reading skills with regard to letter identification; single word reading; fluency and accuracy; and comprehension. The team makes note of gender differences and similarities, where applicable.

Letter identification is measured by showing a chart of 56 letters to children and asking them to name each letter or pronounce the letter sound. On average, children (grade 2) in the baseline sample (i.e., treatment and control groups) recognized 77 percent of the letters (or 43 out of a combined 56 capital and lowercase letters). The single word reading subtest is measured with a chart of 20 words. Similar to their letter identification ability, on average, children (grade 2) know 77 percent of the words, or 15 out of 20 words. With regard to fluency (words per minute) and accuracy (percent of the passage read correctly), students read 36 words a minute and they are about 66 percent accurate. These subsets are presented together since the assessment is conducted simultaneously.

The comprehension subtest asks a series of questions related to a reading passage. Sixty-six percent of the children were able to answer the reading comprehension questions correctly; and 59 percent were able to answer the listening comprehension questions correctly. With regard to gender, there are statistically significant differences between girls and boys in each of the subtests, all favoring girls. The largest differences are with regard to accuracy.

Literacy Boost Assessment 2013 classifies students in emergent (52.2 percent), beginning (29.9 percent), and reading with comprehension tiers (17.9 percent) (see Figure 7).

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[7] The Literacy Boost results are inflated and unreliable. The likelihood is that national results in reading are considerably lower. (Source: USAID technical note/email communication 8/23/17. Nevertheless, they are the only reading data available to date and therefore must be interpreted with great caution.

Figure 7: Literacy Boost 2013
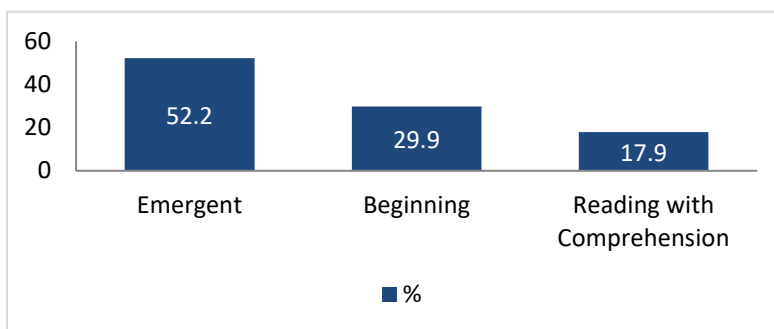
The endline did not show significant changes in performance (arguably the intervention was too short; please see full Save the Children report for more detail). However, two important correlations emerged. One was the relationship between disability (i.e., visual impairment) and student performance; students performed worse if they had a disability. The second was the relationship between home harassment/abuse and student performance; students performed worse if they were subject to home harassment/abuse. Lastly, the endline showed that having access to a great variety of books positively influences fluency and accuracy.

2.1.6 Teachers

According to MINED, 95 percent of teachers in the system (or 54,736) have at least one professional degree or more (for example a teacher license degree, "licenciada" in Spanish). The majority of these, 73.64 percent, have a traditional teaching degree followed by those with a certification in education (three-year degree), 20.4 percent. These data are from the Education Bulletin No. 27 (2016) produced by MINED and will be discussed in detail in Q2 with regard to the quality of analysis. No data on gender are presented. Furthermore, the data say nothing about the quality of the degrees nor about the teachers' performance. Twenty-four percent of teachers in the system have a specialization in basic education, followed by 16.3 percent with a specialization in preschool, and 15.7 percent with a specialization in social sciences. Only 8.2 percent have a specialization in mathematics (which possibly influences the poor student performance in mathematics), and only 11.4 percent have a specialization in language arts. Again, this says nothing about the quality of their specialization programs (including the content and the pedagogy).

2.1.7 Children and Youth with Disabilities

A total of 2,502 students are identified as special needs students in public schools in El Salvador (2017). These students are located in 29 public school centers and 213 special education classrooms (MINED, Education Bulletin No. 30, 2017). The majority of children classified with disabilities are classified as children with intellectual special needs (MINED's term); 77 percent or 2,070 students (both publicly and privately schooled, data is not provided in a disaggregated form) are classified as disabled. It is difficult to understand the classification of students (to be discussed in Q2), and it is difficult to ascertain the gender differences with regard to special needs (also to be discussed in Q2).

2.1.8 Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis

The available data indicate gender gaps related to the situation of girls versus boys in the education system. Data is limited to self-reporting with regard to social inclusion, and there are no diagnostics applied. Though there appears to be gender parity at preschool level, the situation changes as children progress in the system. The national demographics suggest that the population of El Salvador has more females than males, but at the basic level (grade 1-6), the gender division is not equal when simply comparing males and females in a given level. Girls tend to be steered towards domestic work in the home (rather than school) from an early age. MINED reports parity of 1 in the basic (grades 1-9) level, but at the same time there are more boys enrolled than girls nationwide in all three cycles of basic education, therefore the data may be wrong. Overall, enrollment for both girls and boys drops off after the primary education. Among other gender specific challenges that impact girls and boys in different ways, gender-specific causes of this include: opportunity cost for agriculture work in the case

of boys and domestic work in the case of girls; gender-based violence; school violence related to gangs and other; and early pregnancy and unions.

Overall, the secondary level shows limited difference in enrollment numbers of girls versus boys within the general, technical, and non-formal tracks for all years. The sharp decline in enrollment numbers affects both sexes in Year 3, likely for similar gender-specific reasons that begin manifesting at the start of the third cycle and continue through secondary level (including early pregnancy and the need to fulfill domestic roles). These and other gender-specific factors that exclude and marginalize girls and boys in the education system - as related to access and quality as well as how they intersect with other discriminations such as gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation, indigenous origins, and special needs or disabilities - are discussed later in the report.

2.1.9 Citizen Security and DG Analysis

This section explores why El Salvador is subject to poor education indicators. The factors vary from the current context of violence and its impact on the school environment to weak institutions and governance, lack of capacity, and poor infrastructure, among others.

2.1.9.1 Citizen Security

El Salvador is immersed in the highest levels of violence and citizen insecurity[8] since the end of the civil war in 1992. It has been dealing with a murder epidemic for more than a decade. Most of the homicides are attributed to gangs, drug traffickers, and other criminal groups. In this sense, drug trafficking destined for the U.S. and gang involvement in criminal activity are some of the causes of a generalized insecurity environment. Studies indicate that El Salvador has the highest concentration of gang members per capita in Central America (Seelke, 2017) and between 21-31 percent of students are associated with (but are not necessarily members of) gangs (Fusades/SolucionEs, 2016). In this sense, security remains a primary challenge for all school-based programming (Curtin, 2017). Homicides, extortions, threats, intimidation, and harassment are daily obstacles for children and youth. Gang activities, including coerced recruitment, sexual assaults, or girls' exploitation, are a major concern (Haiplik, 2016). As shown below, these issues affect students, teachers, principals, parents, and the education sector as a whole.

Homicides. The main problem related to citizen security in El Salvador is the high rate of homicides. During 2015 and 2016, "*El Salvador was the world's most violent country, and its capital, San Salvador, was the most murderous city,*" with a rate of 104 homicides per 100,000 people (The Economist, 2017). According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), El Salvador is the country with the highest homicide rate in the world for the school-age population. Between 2005-2013, 6,300 homicides were perpetrated against minors younger than 19 (UNICEF, 2016). Table 14 demonstrates the number of students and teachers killed per year. Many of them were attacked while attempting to go to or come back from schools, and sometimes within a few meters of education facilities (Flores, 2015c).

Table 14: Murders per Year- Students, Teachers

Year	Students	Teachers
2013	28	n/a
2014	31	10
2015	72	12
2016	42	12
2017 (first semester)	16	6

Sources: Hernandez, 2016, Flores, 2015c, Lopez, 2017, Andrade, 2016, Guzmán, 2017, Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA), 2016.

Based on such data, every five days a student, or every 17 days a teacher, were victims of homicide during the school year (200 effective days). To those figures, it would be necessary to add murders of

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[8] The following key concepts will be used during the analysis. Violence: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, poor development, or deprivation." [World Health Organization (WHO), 2017]. Citizen security: "a democratic civic order that removes the threats posed by violence in the population and enables secure and peaceful coexistence. It concerns, in essence, the effective safeguarding of a broad range of human rights … including, among others, the right to personal safety, freedom of movement, and the enjoyment of heritage …." (2012 Summit of the Americas, as cited in USAID 2013).

teachers' relatives, but data available are incomplete (Guzmán, 2017). Among the causes of student homicide are: links with gangs; refusing to belong to a gang; or not paying extortion. On the other hand, teachers are killed for: being considered police informants; not paying extortion; or not altering the grades to the children of gang members (López, 2016).

Extortions. Five percent of all teachers in the country have been victims of extortion or threats (see Figure 8). Extortions occur within the schools' immediate surroundings and inside the school premises (MINED, 2016). Extortion is a massive criminal activity and is so widespread in El Salvador that according to a teacher interviewed by a Reuters reporter, "*children working for gangs have to collect a daily 'renta' of 10 to 25 cents from each of their classmates*" (Haiplik, 2016).

School Violence. In schools, violence can be carried out by different actors (students, teachers, principals, parents) and can be expressed in a variety of ways (psychological, physical, sexual, and/or bullying) (see Figure 9). The most prevalent form of violence among students is psychological, following by physical aggressions.
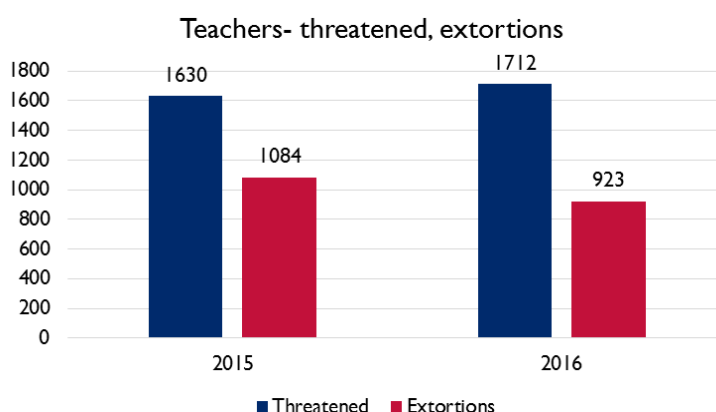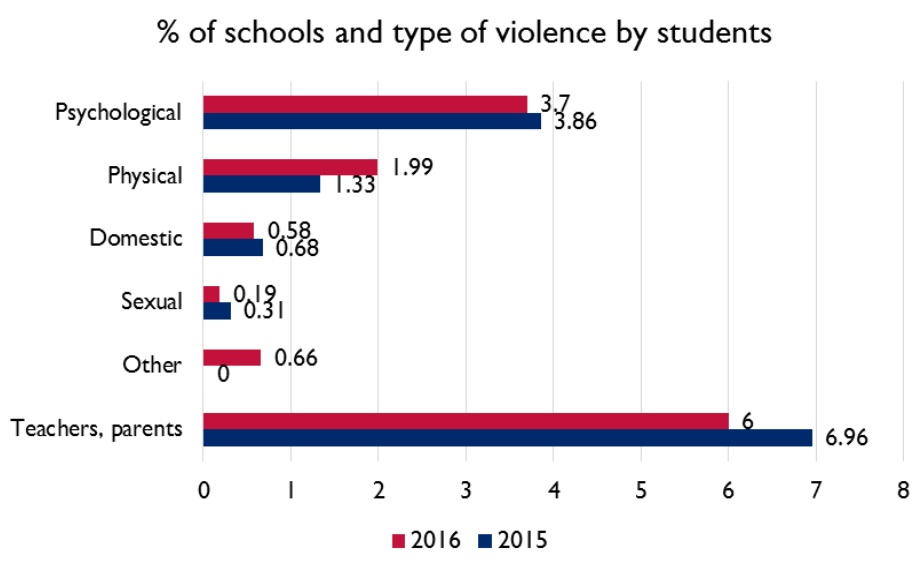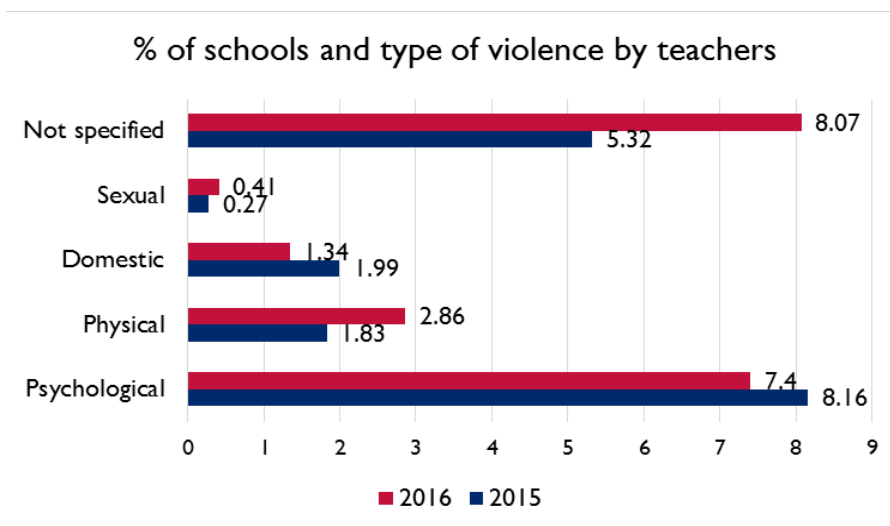
Figure 8: Threats and Extortions – Teachers

Figure 9: School Violence (percent and type), MINED 2016

Teacher to Teacher Violence. Violence among teachers is also present in schools and can be psychological, physical, bullying, and/or sexual. However, between 5 and 8 percent of all cases could not be categorized by the MINED survey (MINED, 2016) (see Figure 10). It is important to determine and identify this form of violence, currently not specified, in order to prevent it.

Figure 10: Violence by Teachers (percent and type), MINED 2016

% of schools and type of violence by teachers

Type	2016	2015
Not specified	8.07	5.32
Sexual	0.41	0.27
Domestic	1.34	1.99
Physical	2.86	1.83
Psychological	7.4	8.16

■ 2016 ■ 2015

Violence by Teachers. Violence of teachers towards other members of the school community include: psychological violence; physical violence; bullying; and sexual violence. It should be noted that almost seven percent of all schools reported instances of violence between teachers and parents.

School Closing. Citizen insecurity in schools is not limited to homicides and extortions. In 2016, 34 schools had to shut down temporarily at least once due to threats by gangs (MINED, 2016). This was the case for the *Centro Educativo del Cantón Piedras Pachas* in the Izalco municipality of the Sonsonate department, which was considered a "safe school." Due to the presence of police and the military, the educative community received threats as a form of reprisal. In some cases, teachers themselves asked the authorities not to come to the schools, since this exposes them to increased targeting by gangs (Salguero, 2016).

Other Forms of Violence. The climate of widespread insecurity in the country affects the education sector in other ways. For example, the rape of female teachers on their way to school is devastating, particularly in rural areas (López, 2017). In addition, the theft of office equipment and information technology (IT) at schools is a recurring phenomenon, given the vulnerability of school infrastructure. The office and IT equipment is highly valued by thieves. It is important to improve school infrastructure to better secure these assets (Alas & Mendoza, 2017).

Likewise, it has been noted that, in some cases, gang members use teachers to safeguard their arms—sometimes inside desks in classrooms—in order to avoid being arrested in case the authorities visit schools (elsalvador.com, 2017; Flores, 2015c). The gangs' control over some schools has not only allowed them to charge an extortion "fee," but has also forced teachers or principals to supply them with alcohol or to grant them or their significant others the management of school cafeterias (Beltrán, 2017). There are even some documented cases of schools being used to host wakes for gang members (Flores, 2015c).

2.1.9.2 Democracy and Governance

Weak institutional capacity and education governance also cause the low education indicators. These are associations, not statistically significant causal relationships. Various related weaknesses emerged in the literature and KIIs. The USAID (2016a) Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) report's overarching key finding is that ineffective governance in all sectors of El Salvador, notably in education, has led to breakdown of public and social services, including basic security. The DRG report highlights specific governance-related challenges such as: addressing problems bureaucratically; weak institutional capacity; mismanagement; clientelism; and non-evidence-based decision-making (USAID, 2016a). This is linked to what one Government of El Salvador (GOES) representative called an "*acute lack of professional development among career civil servants due to deficiencies in higher education training in public administration and non-merit based hiring for governmental posts*" (Anonymous).
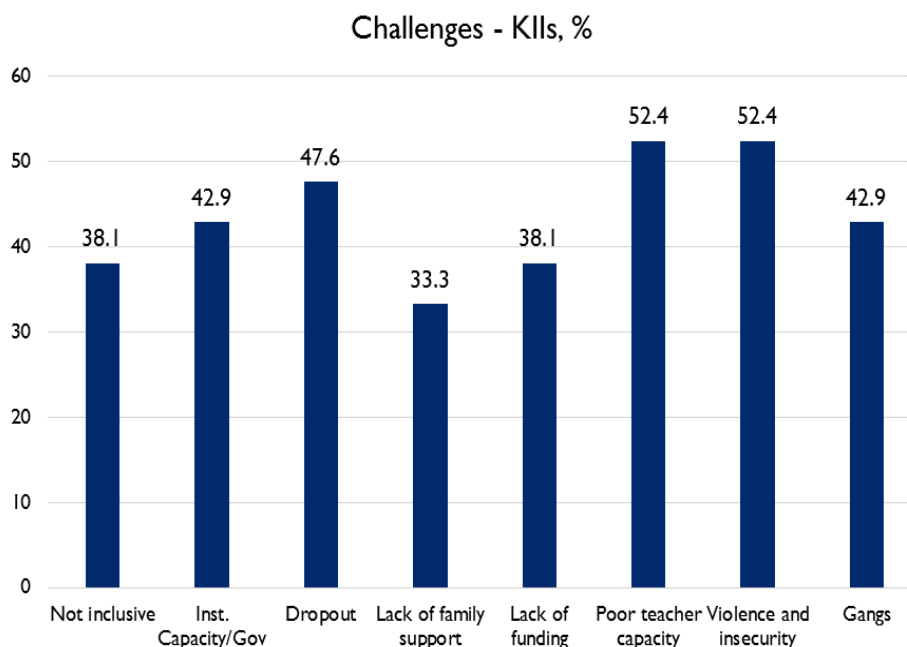
The GOES representative further highlighted a lack of enforcement of rules, laws, and policies, especially for the upper class and political class elites, which contributes to further deterioration of all sectors in the country, including education. In 2016, the National Education Council (CONED) also highlighted the latter challenge citing the example of current public policy designed to alleviate the school dropout with interventions such as free education, school supplies, and school meals that do not address underlying causes for students to drop out. Edwards et al. (2015) noted that the restructuring of MINED, which included new National Directors in areas such as prevention, provides important social supports to different populations but also takes focus away from the core responsibilities of access to high quality education for the entire population. The latter also illustrates what key informants identified as a primary governance challenge in the form of change of education plans and approaches with each subsequent government.

Text Box 1: Reflections on the Politicization of Education

The politicization of education has affected the system—one change and then another change. If the [education] system was stronger, we would not have the problems that we have with unemployment, migration, and violence that we do. Donor Representative and Security Expert

Lack of coordination among government institutions, within MINED, and among the non-governmental sector, to tackle, for example, the impact of violence on education and sexuality education was cited by the literature (USAID, 2016a) and KIIs. Education governance is also impacted by lacking gender mainstreaming at MINED. According to the diagnostic completed as part of MINED's gender policy development, important gaps in gender parity exist with staffing; females are favored in education centers and schools while staffing becomes notably male at the central and departmental levels of MINED where decisions are made (MINED, 2016). Sexual harassment, typically towards women, and unequal representation of women on decision-making committees, councils, etc. at MINED also pose important obstacles to sound education governance (MINED, 2016). One IP reported that even during the drafting of MINED's Gender Equity and Equality Policy, policy developers faced many challenges from within because of negative and "*machista*" attitudes during the policy development process. KII participants were asked to reflect on the challenges of the education sector. These challenges are discussed further in Q5. However, it is important to note that among the most frequently reported was weak institutional capacity and governance. This challenge was raised in 43 percent of the KIIs.

Figure 11: Challenges in Education

Challenges - KIIs, %

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Q1: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? Why?	
1. Enrollment in preschool is increasing (nearly 28 percent, MINED 2016).	1. Preschool is making gains in terms of equitable expansion.
2. Preschool enrollment is low in absolute terms (although increasing, only 1 in 4 preschool aged children are in school).	
3. There are nearly equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled in preschool.	
4. Enrollment at the primary level is decreasing (94 percent in 2009, 85 percent in 2015).	2. Primary is declining in terms of enrollment and internal efficiency.
5. There are high rates of repetition, especially in first grade (7.3 percent).	
6. According to the Learning and Aptitude Test to Graduate from Secondary, PAES,[9] basic graduates know about 50 percent of the curriculum.	3. Given available data, performance appears to be low in basic/secondary education.
7. Low performance is documented at the basic level as well, e.g., 50 percent of a sample of second graders performed at the lowest literacy level.[10]	
8. More than 60 percent of schools report that they are in communities affected by gangs, drugs, robberies, and thefts.	4. There is a cycle of violence affecting students and teachers, both outside the schools and also within the schools, that is perpetrated by students and teachers.

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[9] Prueba de Aprendizaje y Aptitudes para Egresados de Educación Media/Learning and Aptitude Test to Exit Middle School.
[10] This is based on Save the Children, Literacy Boost. The Literacy Boost is flawed (see report). Nevertheless, to date, it is the only assessment available for early grade reading in El Salvador. This is an important finding in and of itself. Literacy Boost uses the term "emergent readers" to not stigmatize the lowest performing readers. Emergent readers are unable to answer more than 50 percent of comprehension questions.

Q1: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? Why?	
9. Every 4 days a student or every 17 days a teacher was the victim of a homicide (2016).	
10. Five percent of teachers have been the victim of extortion in the last year.	
11. The most prevalent form of violence at the school level is students bullying other students (psychological).	
12. Among the top challenges identified in KIIs is weak institutional capacity (see Figure 21).	5. There is weak institutional capacity and a lack of coordination among institutions (state, non-state, donors, and civil society).
13. KIIs articulate that there are multiple dispersed projects, which lack central planning and coordination.	

2.2 QUESTION 2: WHAT IS THE AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION DATA?

This question is two-fold. First, the assessment examines the availability of education data, including with regard to gender and citizen security. Then, the team examines the quality of the existing data. The most transparent way to evaluate the quality, given that this was a literature review, was to thoroughly examine existing publications. The assessment team wants to acknowledge the advances made by MINED, and at the same time draw attention to inconsistencies with the aim of improving education sector data.

2.2.1 Availability

It is important to recognize the availability of education data on MINED's statistics website. MINED's website has a page specifically dedicated to education statistics. There are 12 options (or links) on this website. They include: a map of monthly enrollment; databases of school centers; education statistics by municipality; databases by student (in SPSS and Access); a system of indicators (interactive); publications (although not recent); statistical bulletins (which are recent); the forms used by the school centers; a Google earth system for school location; an interactive system of reports and statistics; data of final enrollment; and an observatory.

After carefully reviewing the databases, indicators and systems, the AT determined that the most useful for this assessment are: the municipal data; the final enrollment data; and the school bulletins. Those not used either did not have the years of interest (2014, 2015, and 2016) or did not have data disaggregated by municipality. There is limited ability to manipulate and filter data, and this functionality is not consistent across data sets.

El Salvador does not participate in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Reads (USAID/E3, http://www.lacreads.org/es); it would be useful to have internationally comparable assessment data [such as LAC Reads, Second or Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Studies (SERCE or TERCE), International Tendencies in Math and Science Study (TIMSS), etc.]. With regard to the PAES, it is important to note that MINED does have the capacity to design large scale assessments. This includes the capacity to create scale items, manage the creation of an item bank, and conduct psychometric analysis. On the other hand, the reports produced are not interpretable to the layperson or average parent in El Salvador. Furthermore, PAES raw data were not presented on the MINED website, nor were PAESITA data (which reportedly are small assessments for the primary grades). There is a lack of EGRA data, with the exception of the Literacy Boost Assessment (which has its own limitations, especially with regard to the small sample size).

2.2.2 Quality

Given the scope of this assessment, the most transparent way to discuss the quality of the education data is to examine specific examples of data and highlight positive and negative attributes. Quality data concerns include the reliability and validity; in other words, it is the degree to which a data set or sets fulfill the requirements for reporting on education. Here the AT uses three different examples, two

are from the MINED produced bulletins, one of which focuses on teacher data, and the other focuses on disability. In addition, the team examines data on out-of-school children and youth. The examples are supported by qualitative reflections from KIIs. To respect anonymity only titles are presented.

An assessment of the quality of data, data analysis, and report production can address various aspects of the process. These include data collection (i.e., the training of data collectors, the instrument design, the methods of data collection), data entry (i.e., the precision of actual data entry), data cleaning (i.e., how decisions are made to remove data), analysis (i.e., what techniques are used and how they are explained), and review. Here the AT focuses on the available information, i.e., the availability of the explanation of methods, the definitions and calculations, and the analysis approach.

The AT would like to acknowledge the challenge of collecting data in rural areas. Limitations include: long distances; difficult to find experienced data collectors; lack of electricity and Internet required for electronic data collection; challenging terrain; poor weather conditions; and insecurity. The team would also like to highlight the positive gains made, especially with regard to the availability of data. Key informants argue that over the last 20 years the availability of data has increased. Furthermore, there is "in-house" expertise with regard to test design and administration.

A reading of the MINED bulletin on disabilities (see Figure 12) left several important questions unanswered. For example, do some children have more than one disability? How many girls versus how many boys have disabilities? What is the percentage of children per grade that have a disability? Lastly, how are disabilities and special needs defined? USAID has a disability inclusive education, How To Note, that defines disability into the categories: physical, developmental, sensory, psychological, and other. These categories are not available in the data from El Salvador.

Figure 12: Example 1- Bulletin Special Education, 2016
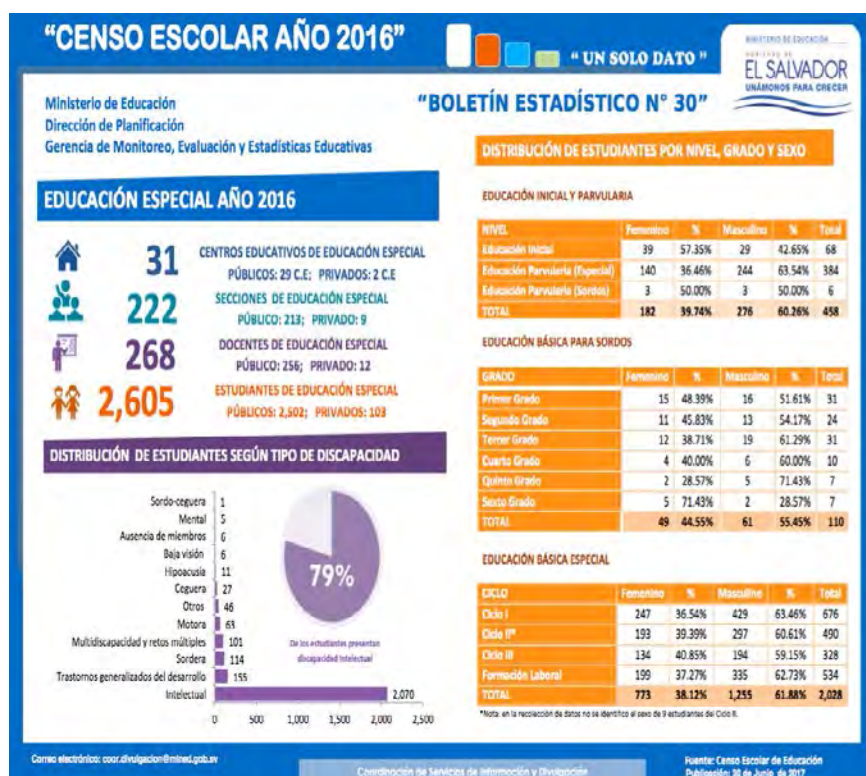
Positive aspects
-user-friendly images
-user-friendly color scheme
-user-friendly font size
-providing information on special needs
-disaggregated by public/private

Room for improvement
-provide definitions of terms
-provide calculation
-explain if students have more than one disability (i.e., coupling of disadvantage)
-provide gender disaggregation
-provide disaggregation by grade level or education level
-table titles should be clearer

The AT is also concerned about the accuracy of the data on the dropout rate and out-of-school children and youth. For instance, Figure 13, below, shows that the dropout rate has actually decreased between 2014 and 2015. Leading M&E experts and IPs question this statistic, however. This is because the gains are unrealistic in such a short time. Furthermore, IPs are in the field and see the reality. They attest to the fact that the rates are not accurate. While the El Salvador Education Plan (PESE) is valuable in identifying priorities for MINED, this assessment also sees what is not in the PESE. Most importantly, it does not address the challenge of dropouts and out-of-school children and youth. Qualitative data suggest that this is a real concern and is also influenced by politics (see reflections in Text Box 2).

Figure 13: Example 2 – Dropout MINED, 2016 (source ECY, USAID, DIGTYC 2016)
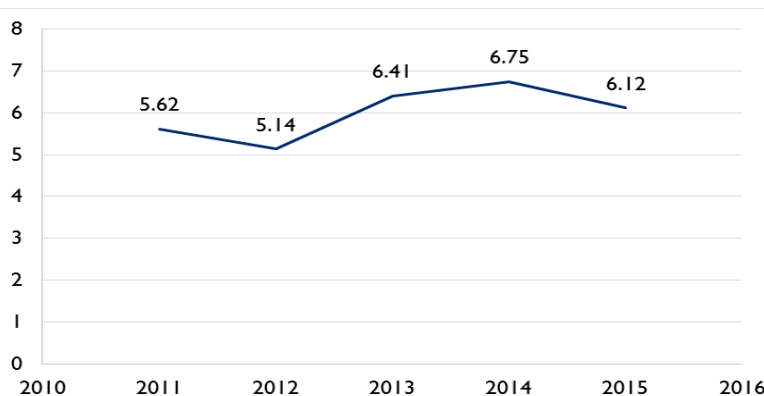
Positive aspects
provides information on dropout rate
is a clear line graph

Room for improvement
no information with regard to gender
no information with regard to
intersection with insecurity
*concerns about the reliability of this
information
** concerns about the influence of
politics on this information
***dropout and out-of- school children
and youth not mentioned in the PESE
See Text Box below.

Text Box 2: Reflections on PESE

> *There are 500,000 out-of-school children and youth between 12-24 years old. There is no clear policy how to serve the out-of-school children and youth. The PESE does not mention out-of-school children and youth. And the data and statistics are unreliable, they are very political and they are not always truthfully reported.*

There was little publicly available information on teacher characteristics and even less (i.e., no information) available with regard to teacher performance. KIIs highlighted that the biggest challenge (to be discussed in challenges section) is with regard to teacher capacity and performance (see Text Box 3, below).

Text Box 3: Teacher Challenges

> *Changing the teachers is the greatest challenge [for the education system in El Salvador], there is always resistance. Pre-service teacher training is poor quality, it is only theoretical and there are numerous thematic areas. The teachers do not learn how to teach in the classroom. They do not have a diverse set of teaching methods to teach various learning needs.* KII stakeholder
>
> *There are no laws for evaluating teachers nor firing teachers for poor services. There is no consequence. Teachers will be reading the newspaper, on their cellphone or another activity rather than teaching. There is no way to evaluate if they are doing their job nor incentivize them.*

Figure 15: Example 3 – Bulletin Teachers, 2016
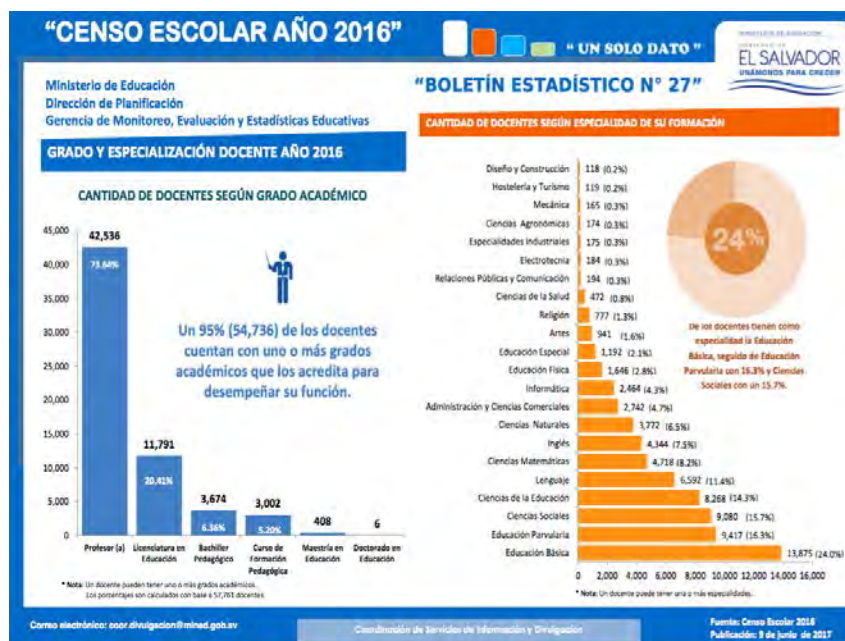
Positive aspects
-user-friendly images
-user-friendly color scheme
-user-friendly font size
-providing some information on teacher characteristics
See Figure 15.

Room for improvement
-provide a definition for the different degrees
-provide the value, i.e., total population of teachers
-provide gender disaggregation
-provide rural/ urban information
-provide information on years of experience
-provide calculation
-provide a title for the bulletin
*no information with regard to the quality of the degree
***no information with regard to teacher performance in classrooms

2.2.3 Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis

The available MINED data present gaps in disaggregation by sex for various indicators. The data analysis bulletins produced by MINED lack sex disaggregation of the teacher and school staff data. MINED data on students with special needs lack clarity on classification of students and gender differences. Overall, data are lacking on gender and other social inclusion specific indicators, such as:

- Trends in female enrollment (and its effects on population increase);
- Female vs. male placement in test scores by quartile by level, and by region, district, and urban/rural;
- Variation in salaries per teacher, urban/rural and by gender;
- Comparative learning achievement of girls' vs. boys';
- Experiences in the labor force of females vs. males and the disadvantaged groups as compared with the others; and
- Ethnicity.

MINED does not currently use a gender equality index such as the Beyond Access Gender Equality in Education Index (Unterhalter, 2006) that uses the following indicators to capture quantitative data:

- Girls' survival rate over five years in primary schooling;
- Girls' secondary Net Enrollment Ratio; and
- A country's Gender Development Index.

Assessing gender equality in education, however, goes beyond quantitative data that indicate numbers of girls and boys enrolled in school and how they progress through the education system. "*Concretely, it requires us to understand the institutional foundations that reproduce inequalities and that can support equalities*" (Unterhalter 2015: 2). Such an understanding requires a more complex method of measurement that involves both quantitative and qualitative data analysis through a comprehensive framework such as the one developed by Elaine Unterhalter (2015).

The Unterhalter framework captures data and measurement in domains of policy and practice in the education system, including: 1) institutions outside education; 2) institutions of the education system; 3) teaching and learning practice; 4) resource distribution to and within schools and education programs; 5) norms; 6) demographics; and 7) outcomes of education. To date, MINED has not implemented this level of measurement of gender equality in the El Salvador's education system.

However, this type of framework could guide the M&E plan for MINED's Gender Equity and Equality Policy in process of development.

For much more on social inclusion, please see Q5 where exclusions related to rural/urban, indigenous, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and/or Intersex (LGBTI), and other affiliations are analyzed in great depth. However, it is important to note that there are no data on these groups, with the exception of rural/urban, which is why there is little to analyze.

2.2.4 Citizen Security Analysis

Q1 presents valuable data. At the same time, there are concerns about the definition of terms, consistency of measures, and frequency of data collection and reporting. Given the state of insecurity, there needs to be information, statistics, studies, and program monitoring on the status of security citizen on a more frequent basis.

Available official data have incongruences, are incomplete, or are outdated. Recently (August 2017), the Civil National Police (PNC) has launched a new Transparency Portal (http://estadisticas.pnc.gob.sv) managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and sponsored by USAID. The portal has "*an advanced analyzer, which will allow the user to have access to 300,000 statistical records of 5 interrelated databases*" and "*the dynamic visualization of updated statistics on citizen security events*" (@PNC_SV, 08/22/2017). Before this new web site, the last available information was from August 2016 and there was a separate database, which contained crime statistics by municipality for the period 2009-2015. In addition, Instituto de Medicina Legal/Corte Suprema de Justicia has its own statistics about homicides and other violent crimes. However, there are little data on gender, school-based gender violence, or school security.

Sometimes, data are contradictory. For example, according to a freedom of information request submitted by a journalist, MINED reports that between 2012 and 2016, 313 teachers were transferred due to having received threats or extortions. However, data from the MINED Observatory in 2015 reveals that 171 teachers were transferred due to extortions and 365 due to threats that year alone (Guzmán, 2017). Thus, the real magnitude of these problems is unknown, which affects institutional responses. Despite the official data, there is no exact figure on the number of teachers or students who have faced extortion by gangs, nor on the amount of money that is extorted. A study by the Teachers Syndicate (SIMEDUCO in Spanish) estimates that 60 percent of teachers in the southern area of San Salvador are victims of extortion. The monthly extortion amount by school ranges from 25 to 100 dollars and, in some cases, is established by gangs, based on the number of teachers that work in a school (López, 2017).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Q2: What is the availability and quality of education sector data?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
Availability	
14. Twelve data sources are available on MINED's statistics page.[11]	6. Data availability has improved; although needing improvement, some education data and expertise are available in El Salvador.
15. Availability of data has improved in the last five years.	
16. In-house expertise for test design and management exists.	
Inconsistency	
17. Data on dropout and out-of-school children/youth are inaccurate.	7. More data and transparency are required on out-of-school children and youth.
18. There is a lack of data on the quality and performance of teachers (as measured by teacher tests or classroom observations).	8. More data and transparency are required on teacher quality and performance.
Gender & Social Inclusion	

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[11] http://www.mined.gob.sv/index.php/estadisticas-educativas

Q2: What is the availability and quality of education sector data?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
19. Gender and inclusion data are lacking (e.g., disaggregation of disability).	9. More disaggregated, quantitative and qualitative gender data are required (by ethnic origin, disability, and other characteristics).
Security	
20. There is a severe deficit of quality data on insecurity and violence, particularly with regard to education.	10. Interpretations of data should be made with caution as much is unknown and assessments about insecurity are difficult.

2.3   QUESTION 3: WHAT SECTOR INITIATIVES ARE UNDERWAY BY MINED, DONORS, AND STAKEHOLDERS?

Q3 examines which initiatives are underway. Gender and social inclusion as well as citizen security initiatives in the education sector are also examined. Please see Annex H, which provides a matrix of initiatives. GOES has all initiatives consolidated under their cooperation and external relations website (cooperacion.rree.gob.sv). The AT searched by each sector – education, gender, and citizen security – during the period of performance (2013 to date). With regard to MINED's specific initiatives, the AT relied on recent publications regarding the education plan.

2.3.1 MINED

Table 15, below, provides the details available publicly on the cooperation strategy website. Note that early childhood education projects are repeated more than once as they have different centers of focus and intervention locations. Therefore, the information available by the Ministry of External Relations should be interpreted with caution; in addition to repetition, it also appears some projects are missing; for example, ECY is missing in education while the USAID's Higher Education Initiative is included. ECY is considered citizen security, not education project.

Table 15: Education Projects (2013-2017)

Name	Amount (US$)	Status	Location
Education and Development integrated approach to early childhood (MINED)	109,732.44	Complete	San Isidro, San Jose Cancasque, Dept. of Chalatenango
One computer one child	1,000,000	In process	
Education sector Citizen Security project	890,027	Complete	
Education and Development integrated approach to early childhood with a focus on gender	152,400	In process	Sonsonate
Support for the fifth fair on opportunities for youth (JUVENTUR), 2014	22,000	Complete	
Higher education for economic growth (USAID)	22,000,000	In process	
Education and Development integrated approach to early childhood *USAID	109,867	Complete	Tejutepeque, Cinquera, Jutiapa
Video conference platform equipment	50,000	Complete	
Education and Development integrated approach to early childhood (MINED)	152,400	In process	Tejutepeque, Ilobasco, Jutiapa, San Isidro de Cabañas
Education and Development integrated approach to early childhood via families and communities	152,400	In process	San José Las Flores, Nueva Trinidad, Arcatao, San José Ojos de Agua, Departamento de Chalatenango
My game my learning- a proposal for integrated early childhood education	152,400	In process	Ahuachapán
Education improvement project in mathematics in basic and media *JICA	4,500,000	In process	

Source: cooperacion.rree.gob.sv

2.3.2 Donors

Donors support priority areas 33 and 34 of the PESE. Below, the AT identifies the different donors and their contributions. Please see Annex H, which has an exhaustive matrix of donor-funded activities.

USAID. USAID implements the ECY Activity via Foundation for Integral El Salvador Education (FEDISAL). The project is for a total of $25 million and works with more than 370,000 children and youth in 750 high risk municipalities. USAID also supports security-focused activities in the education initiatives such as those implemented by Glasswing, Creative Associates, and Development Associates International (DAI). These projects focus on providing opportunities for out-of-school children and youth in dangerous municipalities and equipping them with life and work development skills. As noted above USAID also supports higher education, but it is not part of DG.

Text Box 4: USAID Office Activities

> **USAID's DG Office Activities**
> -ECY, implemented by FEDISAL
> -Supérate, implemented by Sagrera Palomo Foundation and partially funded by non-USAID funds
> -Adopt-a-School, implemented by Business Foundation for Educational Development (FEPADE) under the Global Development Alliance mechanism, closed in July 2017
> -Crime and Violence Prevention Activity, implemented by Creative Associates [Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)-funded]: Youth outreach centers, but not really education
> -Youth and Community Development Program, implemented by Crisalida Foundation (Glasswing) (CARSI-funded): After school programs in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras
>
> **USAID's EG Office Activities**
> -Higher Education for Economic Growth Project, implemented by the Research Triangle Institute
> -Puentes para el empleo, a workforce development project implemented by DAI

Education for Children and Youth ($25 million, 2013-2018, FEDISAL) works to improve educational opportunities for vulnerable or disadvantaged lower secondary-level students and out-of-school youth aged 9 – 24, living in selected municipalities with high crime rates. ECY also provides technical and capacity support to MINED.

Superate ($3 million, 2010-2018, Fundacion Sagrera Palomo) is a leadership program that provides opportunities for underprivileged, public school students, between aged 11 and 18, to attend a three-year supplemental education program in order to enhance their education by providing English lessons, classes in computer applications, and life skills training.

Youth and Community Development Program ($7.4 million, 2012-2019, Glasswing) focuses particularly on after school programs. Its approach is that if community stakeholders (including parents, teachers, and students) actively participate in local development processes through which connection with youth are strengthened, they will contribute to a reduction in vulnerable and at-risk youth in their communities.

Adopt-a-School ($6.1 million, 2010-2017, FEPADE) is a recently concluded project that supported schools via equipment and instructional supports through assistance from private sector partners.

Anticipated activities include two multi-year CARSI-funded activities in and around schools that are expected to be awarded in the coming months. These combined activities represent $13 million in funding.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a five-year, $277 million compact with the GOES, is an investment designed to reduce poverty through economic growth by improving El Salvador's productivity and competitiveness in international markets. It will do this by improving the investment climate, strengthening human capital, and reducing transportation and logistics costs to promote a business-friendly institutional environment. GOES has committed to contribute $88.2 million on top of MCC's investment, constituting a combined total of $365.2 million. Of the compact's three projects, the Human Capital Project ($97.6 million) focuses on preparing the people of El Salvador to better meet the demands of a global economy. MCC will invest in 346 schools in the coastal zone of El Salvador, focusing on grades 7-12, where dropout rates are the highest. MCC will

also support reforms in technical and vocational education and training to ensure an integrated system that better matches the skills delivered by education providers with the demands of the private labor market.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) focuses its technical cooperation on mathematics education from grade 1 to grade 11. This is the case worldwide, in Central America, and in El Salvador, as well. As indicated in Table 15, JICA implements the Improving Mathematics Learning project alongside MINED (for a total of $2.1 million). This includes supporting the revision of the mathematics curriculum and the development of materials, such as the textbook, teacher's guide, and workbook for students, and supporting pre- and in-service teacher training. JICA sits within the MINED which allows for more area-wide cooperation, sharing of ideas, and joint ownership for the work, in turn promoting sustainability.

UNICEF has invested considerably in early childhood education in El Salvador. As described in Q1, UNICEF supported the development of ELDS, which provide standards, activities, and benchmarks for educators and parents. These guidelines give caretakers insight on how to promote and measure the development of early learners. UNICEF works directly in 10 municipalities, in 100 schools with a budget of $12.8 million. In addition, it supports girls and children's rights at the national level and initiatives regarding girls' pregnancy in 17 municipalities. The website www.unicef.org/elsalvador provides more information on UNICEF's engagement in El Salvador.

The World Bank is the main funder of the FTIS model. The total budgeted support is $60 million and the loan seeks to increase access, retention, and completion rates for students in basic and secondary school. The program works in 40 networks nationwide. In addition, the loan seeks to work along with MINED in order to increase and strengthen MINED's management and technical abilities. The World Bank has a long history of investment in El Salvador, including the famous EDUCO [Community Education Program (in English), Educacion Comunitaria (in Spanish)] program in the 1990s.

Taiwan provides support to MINED through the "one computer one child program." The total amount is $1 million. The project seeks to reduce the digital divide through the provision of access to the Internet as well as the material resources, connection and teacher training required to in fact access the Internet and use it. A total of 261 schools are part of the program.

Luxemburg offers a competitive fund. The fund is for $1.5 million dollars and is dispersed among 10 local NGOs. These NGOs implement projects in the areas of integrated early childhood development and social development of children and youth. It is part of the budget support provided to the national development plan.

Other donors also contribute. El Salvador has a common fund or a budgeted pool of money to which the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), the European Union (EU), and the United Nations (UN) system contribute. This serves as budget support for MINED driven initiatives. The most noteworthy among them is the FTIS model. Please be sure to see Annex H, which has all information.

AECID has a civil society strengthening project. The project strengthens civil society using an integrated education approach. It works with young children and youth. It encourages citizen participation for a life free of crime and violence. In addition, AECID works directly with youth to monitor, evaluate, and give follow up to the public policy programs related to violence and insecurity.

The German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) has a tested approach with Miles de Manos to work with parents in support of crime and violence prevention. They have been implementing it regionally and USAID has been collaborating with them over the last eight months to implement it in project schools. Much of their research came through U.S. universities, including the University of Oregon.

EU works with rehabilitation of children and women in La Libertad and Cabanas in El Salvador. Specifically, they work with working mothers and helping their children. They also strengthen the capacity of local governments to promote citizen participation and a culture of peace.

2.3.3 Other Stakeholders

In addition to MINED and donor initiatives, there are also various stakeholders who are active in the education sector (see illustrative examples below). Many of these stakeholders are international NGOs as well as local organizations. Some receive their funding from donors while others operate with their own funds from private individual contributions and sponsorship, for example Save the Children. These actors' initiatives are important to examine, especially as they pertain to initiatives that may be worth supporting in the future if evidence exists regarding their potential and impact.

Save the Children functions through sponsorship. The NGO has had a long history working in El Salvador. Save the Children works directly with the MINED and provides data and analytic inputs in areas such as early childhood development. In addition, Save the Children has produced high quality studies on topics such as literacy, numeracy, and M&E (e.g., with regard to the discrepancies in dropout, abandonment, and other data for out-of-school children and youth). Lastly, Save the Children prioritizes with MINED not only through the provision of more resources for education, but also through the planning and efficient use of these resources.

CRS works via local NGOs to provide services and training to out-of- school children and youth. Organizations include Fe y Alegria (also funded by workforce development project with USAID), and Caritas, among others. The service areas of the local NGOs dictate where CRS works. In addition to training teachers and working directly with youth, CRS also has a family methodology which supports families' understanding of insecurity so that they can support their children and youth in schools; in other words, that the reality of the family aligns with the program in schools and supports the youth from both directions. This family methodology has been piloted with success (according to KIIs) and is worth examining for future initiatives.

In addition, it is important to look at the Escuela Para Padres program from **GIZ,** which is the same as Miles de Manos. See final recommendation section for more information.

Plan International is an international NGO with a strong reputation. Its work in El Salvador focuses on the departments of Chalatenango, La Libertad and Cabañas. The projects implemented by Plan focus on reducing violence and specifically gender-based violence (GBV) of children and youth. Plan International is funded by private donors, primarily from the U.S.

World Vision works with sponsorship resources. It focuses on the whole development of children and youth in El Salvador. It uses a community development model and works in partnership with local provider organizations.

Center for Studies and Solidarity with Latin America (CESAL) is an NGO that works primarily with funding from Spain. It focuses on social prevention of youth- and gender-related crime and violence. CESAL forms a consortium with other local partners in El Salvador.

2.3.4 Gender Analysis and Social Inclusion

While there were approximately 11 projects related to rights and equity, and 11 projects related to social protection on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, only three of these focused on gender and/or social inclusion linked to the education sector (see Table 16). See Q5 for more on the gaps in provision and application of a gender lens to initiatives. Furthermore, their funding is limited; in other words, gender does not receive a lot of attention from a funding perspective. Funding is managed by the MINED.

Table 16: Gender and social inclusion projects (2013-2017)

Name	Amount (US$)	Status	Location
Life skills training for agents at the national level in public and academic systems to reduce stigma related to LGBT	53,359	In process	
Strengthening of the national table for rural women	30,072	Complete	
Strengthening of capacities to develop conditions to implement the national framework for equality	603,760	Complete	
Inclusive Christmas 2012 - for poor and excluded sectors	50,000	In process	
Equipment and physical support for children and youth	1,000,000	In process	Santa Ana

Source: cooperacion.rree.gob.sv

2.3.5 Citizen Security Analysis

While projects such as ECY were not identified as education projects, they were registered in the Ministry of Exterior Relations database as citizen security projects. It is clear the size of the investment in citizen security is larger but those projects are often implemented via the school and school system. Table 17, below, illustrates the different projects implemented in the context of PESS related to education or MINED activities. A more detailed table is supplemented in the Annex H.

Table 17: Citizen Security Projects (2013-2017)

Name	Amount (US$)	Status
Adopt a school	12,200,000	Complete
Transparency and governance	9,400,000	Complete
Justice sector strengthening	31,400,000	In process
ECY/USAID	25,000,000	In process
Superate/USAID	3,000,000	In process

Source: cooperacion.rree.gob.sv, infosegura.org

However, during 2016, various national institutions involved in preventing and addressing violence, including MINED, invested $46 million. The funds came from the special contribution based on two legislative decrees approved in 2015, applied to incomes above $500,000, and the charge of five percent tax to telephone services. MINED received $10,477,185; $6,517,185 were administered by Dirección Nacional de Jóvenes y Adultos and the rest by Departmental Directions. Some resources have been allocated for the repair of ceilings and bathrooms, providing psychosocial care of students, and painting of 116 priority schools to reinsert in the educational system 4,000 adolescents and young people (www.seguridad.gob.sv). One of the projects supported is Flexible Education, which seeks to ensure that children and adolescents who have had to interrupt their studies in the municipalities with the highest levels of violence may continue studying (Paniagua, 2017). All these activities are part of the Violence Prevention Program in the School Environment (MINED, Memoria de Labores, 2016-2017). Other initiatives in practice are on the following page.

Inter-institutional and Union Commission of the Teaching Sector for School Safety and Prevention aim to create schools that act as safe and neutral spaces, and to build teacher capacity to do so. The Inter-institutional and Union Commission of the Teaching Sector for School Safety and Prevention is composed of the following members: MINED, the National Civil Police, Armed Forces, Attorney General, Ministry of Justice and Public Security, Ministry of the Interior, and unions in the education sector, including Andes 21 de Junio, Siandes, Bases Magisteriales, Sintadmes 21 De Junio, Comité Pro Retiro Digno, and Sedesa-Bm y Codines (MINED, 2014).

The Commission mentioned above has established the **Protocol of Action in the Event of Extortions and/or Threats to Teachers**. The protocol, approved in 2013, is a framework for when a teacher requests to transfer schools to save his/her life. The Ministries of Education, Interior,

National Defense, and Justice participated in its creation, as well as the National Civil Police. The Protocol establishes that teachers "*threatened or extorted bring this to the attention of the principal of the school for which they belong, who in turn should go to the Departmental Directorate of Education to conduct a preliminary inquiry of the facts.*" In practice, this Protocol is very slow and bureaucratic, so authorities at MINED apply other alternatives or actions such as transfers or re-assignment of teachers to other schools (Guzmán, 2017).

Safe School Plan and the role of police and military personnel aim to follow up on reports of extortions, killings, and homicides that affect the school community. Since 2014, it was agreed to increase the presence of the PNC and the Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES) in 788 schools, classified according to the degree of registered criminal incidence in the area. These schools were assigned two personnel from the Armed Forces and one police agent (MINED, 2014b). Teachers, parents, principals, and students, however, have different opinions about the presence of police and military forces in schools [National Board of Education (CNE), 2012b]. Some believe that schools are being negatively affected by the presence of police officers within school facilities supposedly to guarantee safety and security of the school population (Haiplik, 2016). Others think that this presence ensures security.

Based on the climate of violence that affects schools, **other institutional responses** adopted include coordinating with other institutions, such as PNC, FAES, and the municipalities. Some schools get support from community organizations and a small amount (between 2 and 3 percent) resort to private security services (MINED, 2016). On the other hand, the components that make the education labor force feel the safest, according to the MINED Observatory, are the following: their relationship to the community; the building of perimeter walls; the presence of police and military authorities around/inside the schools; and private security, among others.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Q3: What education initiatives are underway?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
Funding	
21. Information on cooperation investment is neither quantified nor updated from MINED.[12]	11. Investment in education exists in El Salvador, but it is dispersed and does not concentrate on primary grades or literacy.
22. International investment is not equally available for all areas and levels of education. For example, there is international investment in mathematics, but not in primary literacy.	
23. Investment in FTIS does not focus on training teachers nor on creating curricula and materials for learning to teach.	
Stakeholders	
24. Save the Children currently works locally in M&E of literacy, early childhood, and building MINED capacity to budget and plan.	12. A base exists on which to build practices for out-of-school children and youth and literacy in El Salvador.
25. CRS and GIZ, have a tested approach to train parents and communities to support education and prevent crime and violence.	
Initiatives	
26. There are numerous and sizeable projects in citizen security related to education.	13. Gender and social inclusion specific projects are lacking compared to citizen security projects.
27. There are few projects targeted at gender and social inclusion.	

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[12] Information is available from the ministry of planning and is included in the annexes.

2.4 QUESTION 4: WHAT ARE THE KEY PRIORITIES OF MINED RELATED TO BASIC EDUCATION?

Three sources have been consulted to assess MINED's priorities: MINED directors, policy documents, and budget/spending documents. In addition to KIIs, an event was held at the start of the assessment (July 2017) at which each director within MINED had the opportunity to express his/her priorities. In addition, the Vice Minister discussed MINED's priorities. Furthermore, MINED has articulated its priorities via the Education Plan. Lastly, as part of their governmental accountability system, MINED presented its annual report to the national congress in July 2017.

2.4.1 Reflections on Priorities from MINED

Each director has his/her own unique priorities with regard to access to quality basic education. These include the priorities to:

- Expand the Inclusive School Model (see Annex K);
- Provide better access to and use of technology;
- Serve the rural and one-room schools, to give children access to arts education, and improve their fine motor skills;
- Provide reading skills in the first grade, including teacher training to do so;
- Provide 12 years of complete schooling, universal schooling; and
- Improve the safety and security in schools, including reducing bullying.

Below are some reflections from MINED. Often, each director reflects "priorities" for the area which he/she manages; in other words, the Director of Social Protection emphasizes school climate and family.

Text Box 5: Priorities of MINED

> Director of Nacional de Gestión Educativa – The priority is to expand the inclusive model for all children; the reason out-of-school youth is because the system failed.
>
> Edu Youth and Adults - The priority is that all the population has 12 years of schooling (need to look at the school of youth and adults), to eliminate illiteracy by 2019, reintegrating.
>
> Social protection – The priority is to lessen the violence in schools including bullying, education climate (a safe space for children/youth), family, and community.
>
> Director of Educacion Básica, grades 7-9 - The priority is teacher training, especially subject expertise in science for example, pre-service teacher training, in addition materials- mathematics with teacher participation (1-9, via JICA), asked MCC for language, evaluation - formative, not just PAES.
>
> Director of Educacion Básica, grades 1-6 - Physical and art education should be strengthened aligned to motor skills, creativity etc. Also multi-grade and one teacher schools, implication of drought, rain, and over age, transitions from preschool, the first grade.
>
> Director of Investigations, MINED - All schools should have sufficient computers.

2.4.2 The Education Plan (PESE)

This is the CONED plan that MINED does not claim. The PESE presents six specific priorities, which range from prevention of violence to infrastructure. According to MINED policy documents, they include:

1. <u>Violence-free school and central axis of prevention</u>: According to the document, external and internal violence in schools affects children and young people differently. Sixty-four percent of schools are located in communities with gang presence. The challenge is to strengthen schools, families, teachers, and the curriculum to improve the educational conditions of children.
2. <u>Quality of teachers:</u> there is no (or very little) assessment of teachers, their salaries are low, the support of directors to them is weak, and there is social violence. According to the document, 95 percent of teachers have two jobs, and 82 percent of those who teach have no incentive to continue studies. Financially, teacher training has not been a priority. The challenge is to increase the qualification of teachers and improve their salary conditions.
3. <u>Attention to the integral development of the early childhood</u>: currently, the budget to promote attendance of this sub educational level is very limited. The challenge is to have all children reach their full potential by creating a coordinated cross-sectoral system for bridging comprehensive early childhood care and pre-school education for 4-6 year olds.
4. <u>Twelve grades of universal schooling:</u> the quality of learning is low, the number of dropout students is large, and the curriculum is not very relevant. Although access is almost universal in basic education, in secondary education there is still a lack of access, especially in rural areas. There is a deficient formation in coexistence and culture of peace, limited educational resources, and few libraries. There is also little curricular relevance with the labor market, high rates of illiteracy, and little flexible educational offerings. The challenges include: universalize basic education and secondary education, from a timely income to an increase in secondary education coverage; increase educational attainment; strengthen multi-grade classrooms; provide opportunities for at-risk populations; articulate educational offerings with the labor market; and eliminate illiteracy in the country.
5. <u>Higher education for a productive, innovative, and competitive country</u>. The document indicates a disarticulation of the higher education system with other levels of education, low educational quality, and little relevance to the needs of the country. The public university has a low institutional level and inappropriate legal frameworks. The challenge is to achieve a superior education, technical, and technological quality, prioritizing departments that have greater barriers to access. In addition, strengthening the technical capacity of MINED to improve the attention of this educational level is required.
6. <u>Infrastructure for a comprehensive and quality education</u>. The document indicates an insufficient infrastructure in addition to an uncertain legal system for legalization of properties. Moreover, the existing infrastructure lacks an accessible and differentiated architectural design.

2.4.3 Annual Reporting

Text Box 6 shows the eight goals and associated achievements, which were reported by MINED during the 2016-2017 period.

Text Box 6: Goals Reported per the Annual Report (2016-2017)

1. Creation of a National System of Professional Development for Teachers
   - Seeks to strengthen initial training and teacher upgrading based on the needs of the education system.
   - Blended learning courses have been designed and offered in different curricular areas, workshops, and conversations.
   - The plan is to certify teachers and specialists, in addition to initiating the training of directors.

2. Early childhood educational development
   - Seeks to improve comprehensive care for children aged 0-7 and to improve access, permanence, and egress at all levels of education.
   - In initial education, care coverage has increased from 1.8 percent to 8.3 percent and in pre-school education has reached 68 percent. It includes the training of technical assistants for early childhood, specialists and teachers of initial and pre-school education. In addition, the teaching and management staff of 30 special education schools have been trained.
   - It is planned to hire more early childhood technical assistants and consolidate support for inclusion.

3. Creation of a National Educational Evaluation System
   - As its name implies, the aim is to create an educational evaluation system and strengthen the teaching performance.
   - In addition to the exit test (PAES) for students who graduate from high school, begin with the application of two quarterly tests to students of 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades in the areas of mathematics and language.
   - It will assess citizen capacities and strengthen the processes for evaluation. The participation of El Salvador in TERCE 2019 is expected. It will distribute booklets on the investigations carried out.

4. Construction of pleasant school environments
   - Seeks to improve school infrastructure, with spaces for recreation and inclusive environments, legalization of buildings, and reduction of risk of disasters and violence.
   - Forty rehabilitation or school construction projects were implemented. The legalization of more than 3,000 properties was achieved with an agreement with the National Registry Center.

5. Equity, inclusion, gender, quality and relevance of education
   - It is one of the broad lines of MINED, with different programs such as the strengthening of quality management in higher education, recreation and sports programs, the FTIS, the National Technical Assistance Program, the School Meal and Health Program, the presidential school package, the flexible education program, the chess program, and the early language immersion program.
   - Among its achievements are the expansion of online university courses, expansion of sports programs, improvement of school conditions [with funding from the World Bank, Fomilenio (MCC) and Italian cooperation], increased technical assistance coverage, the improvement of school refreshment, the delivery of school supplies, the incorporation of students who left school, training in chess, and the rescue of the Nahuatl language.

6. Revamping the national educational curriculum based on the professional development of teachers.
   - It contains mathematics apprenticeship improvement programs and the development of a relevant curriculum.
   - The mathematics curricula, the textbooks, and the plan of teacher training were updated.
   - It is hoped to continue updating curricula and increasing libraries and didactic resources in schools.

7. Generation and strengthening of conditions for the creation of knowledge and innovation.
   - It comprises a number of programs and sub-programs, some of which include: childhood and youth of the future; a child, a girl, a computer; attention to students with outstanding performance in competencies for scientific research; closing the knowledge gap; strengthening the technical vocational training system; and creating knowledge.
   - Computers were delivered to 770 schools; three interactive centers for learning science were created; student cooperatives are supported; more than 3,000 scholarships for higher education are provided; and research networks are consolidated. The strengthening of technology parks is also included, among other elements.

8. Deepening and strengthening adult education.
   - Its objective is to eradicate illiteracy in the adult population and provide access to continue their studies. Sixteen municipalities were declared free of illiteracy and are providing care for more than 46,000 adult students.

2.4.4 Gender Analysis and Social Inclusion

The PESE presents important priorities for MINED. Although gender and social inclusion were not identified as standalone priorities/challenges in the PESE, both are addressed as important cross-cutting themes in its diagnostic portion. Additionally, MINED developed a Gender Equity and Gender Equality Policy in late 2016, and an Inclusive Education Policy on Inclusive Education in 2010.

Participants reflected on how girls are performing better than boys; often, participants do not acknowledge the forms of discrimination and violence, which affect girls and boys and other socially excluded groups, including indigenous children and youth, children and youth with special needs, and the LGBTI community. Despite existence of written discourse that prioritizes gender and social inclusion, these were absent from the reflections of MINED representatives in leadership positions, including technical directors. MINED staff reflected on gender and social inclusion only when probed. Lastly, as noted previously, there are relatively few gender and social inclusion oriented education projects currently and, in MINED's annual reports, there have been no achievements reported with regard to gender and social inclusion.

2.4.5 Citizen Security Analysis

The PESE identifies security in schools among the first of the challenges of education. At the same time, it established as Result Number 1: safest school environments. In the Annual Report (2016-2017) to the National Assembly, MINED mentioned the actions related to "Programa de Prevención de la Violencia en el Entorno Escolar" and recalled that one of the Ministry's objectives is to guarantee schools as places free of all forms of violence, for a teaching-learning process of quality. In consequence, citizen security is presented as a MINED´s priority.

In this goal, in April 2017, with GIZ support, MINED has initiated a process of public consultations to develop a National Policy for Coexistence and Reduction of Social Risks. That process is presented as an achievement of PESE. In addition, MINED has elaborated, designed, and validated work plans and protocols for admission, acceptance, and follow-up of students with judicial measures.

As the Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) highlighted, "*despite its reluctance to formally address school-related violence as an education issue, MINED has long sought to work more indirectly on crime and violence prevention. Since 2010, it has initiated numerous crime and violence prevention-related strategies, such as values education, building a culture of peace, conflict resolution, and life skills training.*" In 2015, MINED added a new Direction of Prevention and Social Programs, which is responsible for violence prevention efforts and for providing school meals, uniforms, and supplies to the most vulnerable students, with the overarching goals of better supporting student access and retention, and improving learning (RERA, 2016).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Q4: What are the key priorities of MINED related to basic education?	
	Conclusions
Gender & Social Inclusion	
28. There are few projects targeted at gender and social inclusion.	14. Prioritization of gender and social inclusion takes place only at the written discourse level and fails to trickle down to implementation at the school level.
29. In MINED's annual reports, there have been no achievements reported with regard to gender.	
30. Gender and social inclusion are prioritized as a combined, cross-cutting theme in the PESE and in related policies specifically on gender equity and equality and inclusion, respectively.	15. Gender and social inclusion are not part of the awareness of MINED, whereas citizen security is.
31. In KIIs with MINED staff, gender and social inclusion were not identified as priorities unless key informants were specifically asked about these topics.	16. Awareness is linked to funding: when donors make an investment in an "issue" it gets the attention of stakeholders.
32. Security in school is a priority identified in the PESE.	
Infrastructure	

Q4: What are the key priorities of MINED related to basic education?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
33. Infrastructure (such as building classrooms) is identified as a priority in policy documents.	17. Rebuilding and strengthening school infrastructure is a major priority, but funding is limited.
34. Infrastructure is also identified as a priority by MINED staff.	
35. There is limited investment and spending on infrastructure; and, currently, infrastructure investment and spending only occur in areas of high crime.	
Teachers	
36. Teacher training is identified in KIIs as the top priority.	18. Strengthening teacher capacity is a priority identified by MINED and, while they are making efforts towards improving it, more remains to be done.
37. Teacher training is identified as a priority in the PESE.	
38. Improved teacher capacity is identified as an achievement in the period of 2016-2017.	
39. The law on teacher training is requires a revision and the outdated teacher training degree program also requires a revision.	

2.5 QUESTION 5: WHAT CHALLENGES DOES MINED FACE TO PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

2.5.1 Internal Challenges to Equitable Access to Quality Education

The review of literature and KIIs revealed several key challenges internal to the education system in El Salvador. Although these mostly impact quality of education, others also have a direct impact on access, notably related to retention and success. Reviewed literature and KIIs cited the following internal factors with the following frequency:

- Poor teacher capacity (52.4 percent);
- Weak institutional capacity (42.9 percent); and
- Education not inclusive (38.1 percent).[13]

In addition to weak institutional capacity, poor coordination is another challenge. According to UNICEF, "*The challenge is to be orderly, there are many initiatives. In the local area, they collide. There is saturation. It is a reflection of what happens in many schools.*"[14]

2.5.1.1 Non-formal education and flexible modalities

According to a MINED technical director, efforts are underway to further develop the five existing flexible modalities as well as the new "*extraordinary measures*" flexible modality created within the framework of PESE to be even more flexible in the regions most impacted by violence. However, this MINED director noted that "*in discourse, these [flexible modalities] are priorities but at time of allocation*

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[13] See Figure 21 with regard to institutional capacity.

[14] The MINED has more employees than any other state institution. Only at the central level are 1,276 employees distributed in addresses, national addresses, managements, headquarters, etc. These include:

Vice Ministry of Science and Technology
- National Directorate of Education in Science, Technology and Innovation
- National Directorate for Research in Science, Technology and Innovation

Vice Ministry of Education
- National Directorate of Early Childhood Education
- National Directorate of Basic Education
- National Directorate of Media Education
- National Directorate of Higher Education
- National Directorate for Prevention and Social Programs
- National Directorate of Youth and Adult Education
- National Directorate of Educational Management
  - 14 departmental directorates
- Directorate of Social Communication

of funds, they are not priority. The challenges are notable when considering the vulnerability that youth face in the education system."

The PESE diagnostic found several challenges related to the non-formal flexible modalities. They include:
- Insufficient coverage to cover needs of out-of-school and other at-risk youth, notably youth in conflict with the law linked to gang violence and crime;
- Unqualified and uncertified teachers; and
- Curriculum that does not respond to employment opportunities in the zones where the programs operate (CONED, 2016).

According to USAID ECY Activity performance evaluation, other challenges include:
- Short duration of classes;
- Lack of academic support outside the classroom; and
- Insufficient time for teacher feedback to students (USAID, 2017).

Interviewed key informants noted additional challenges:
- Absence of vocational and life skills in the flexible modalities curriculum;
- Adapted flexible modality curricula for working with indigenous communities and special needs populations;
- Limited access to computers and libraries particularly the youth and adults served by flexible modalities; and
- Absence of a specific observatory of the flexible modalities to complement larger MINED observatory.

A final challenge relates to testing within the flexible modalities. According to an interviewed MINED technical department director, if youth and adults in non-formal, flexible modalities want to achieve a high school diploma, they must pass the same test, PAES, that students in the traditional baccalaureate program must pass. There is no equivalent of a General Equivalency Development in El Salvador. Although the "sufficiency test" (prueba de suficiencia) exists in El Salvador, it only serves to show proficiency at different levels of both basic (grades 1-9) and secondary/high school levels. It is used to accredit a person's grade level proficiency for incorporation back into the different levels of the education system, whether in the traditional or the non-formal flexible modality systems (GOES, n.d.).

Text Box 7: Reflections on Flexible Modalities

If the education system can't absorb these [out-of-school] youth, then the country will never resolve the issue of violence and gangs. GOES Representative and Governance Expert

2.5.1.2 Curricula
The curricula at all levels of the system have deficiencies. Below are the key challenges related to each level of the education system, cross-cutting curricular content, and language of instruction.

Initial and preschool levels
At the initial and preschool level, MINED, with the support of UNICEF, has created standards and related manuals that are being implemented currently by public early childhood education programs.[15] However, curricular changes may be needed once inconsistencies identified by CONED (2016) among key policy documents related to Early Childhood Development - the National Policy on Education and Holistic Early Childhood Development, National Strategy of Early Childhood Development, and related policies from the health, protection, and other sectors - have been corrected.

Basic and secondary levels
At the basic and secondary education levels, the curricula continue to be based on the 1994 national curriculum document that is applicable to the public and private education sector. In 2007, a

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[15] For the purpose of this section, early childhood programs refer to initial education (0-3 years) and preschool education/parvularia (4-6 years).

competencies approach was added with development of key guidance documents. Edwards et al. (2015) found these and other curricular documents to be of good quality, but lacking full implementation by teachers because of limited teacher training and support on their use and implementation as well as absence of needed support material and equipment. According to interviews conducted by USAID with MINED, there is limited consistency regarding literature scope and sequence in grades 1-3 and standardized testing to evaluate reading at the early grades.

Cross-cutting curricula content
As for gender, the curricula were revised in 2013-2014 to include principles of gender equality and human rights, including incorporation of comprehensive sexuality education. However, only five percent of the teaching population has received training on these gender-related curricular changes and further curricular revisions will likely be needed to ensure consistent incorporation and application of these principles (MINED, 2016). The National Assembly passed the law to include Moral/Civic education but without funding.

Other identified problems include: insufficient training of life skills, social-emotional skills, and employment skills as mentioned by principals and teacher focus groups (USAID, 2016); co-existence and culture of peace education—mentioned in relation to the acute context of violence and insecurity in El Salvador; and coherency with the Salvadoran labor market (CONED, 2016).

The existing curricular model, in the PESE, at all levels incorporates the transversal axis of recreation, sport, art, culture, science, and technology. However, their integration in practice is inconsistent because of lack of specialized teaching staff, material resources, and sufficient budget allocation (CONED, 2016).

Language of instruction
Language of the curricula and, in turn, instruction is another challenge. Although El Salvador has long been considered a mono-lingual and mono-cultural country, the reality is that three indigenous cultures exist: 1) Náhuat/Pipiles (located in Ahuachapán, Santa Ana, Sonsonate, La Libertad, San Salvador, Cuscatlán, La Paz, Chalatenango, and San Vicente departments); 2) Lencas (located in departments of Usulután, San Miguel, Morazán and La Unión); and 3) Cacaopera, located in Morazán and the northern regions of La Unión. Náhuat /Pipiles have preserved their spoken language of the same name (Rodríguez Oconitrillo, 2013). Despite these diverse indigenous cultures with their own traditions, customs, history, and languages whether spoken or not today, the Salvadoran curricula fail to include them (World Bank/MINED 2003: 39). The language of instruction in El Salvador is exclusively Spanish with the exception of one intercultural bilingual initiative sponsored by the University of Don Bosco in 11 public schools to preserve the Náhuat language (Rodríguez Oconitrillo, 2013).

2.5.1.3 Teaching
Teachers are a key factor that determines quality of education. Their initial and in-service training and coaching, classroom teaching/didactic practices, and motivation, all play a part in how effective they are at facilitating learning among their students. El Salvador faces many challenges related to all three of these interrelated aspects of teacher effectiveness.

Teacher Training

The fifth article of the teaching profession law (Ley de la Carrera Docente) mandates that MINED plan and regulate teacher training. Furthermore, a National Plan of Public School Teacher Training 2015-2019 is currently being implemented by MINED. However, effective initial and in-service training of teachers still poses many obstacles to quality education in the country and contributes to issues of access, specifically related to retention and dropout.

Initial teacher training challenges include an inflexible three-year program concentrated in urban areas and run primarily by private higher education institutions or universities (Edwards et al., 2016). The program curriculum was revised in 2012 without a needs assessment or participation from training institutions and has unclear goals, objectives, and implementation guidance. Quality of instruction is lacking and the standard exit test of the program likely has reliability issues (Edwards et al., 2015). Initial teacher training programs still do not consistently include legally-required additions related to prevention of GBV and gender equality overall (MINED, 2016). Even though the pre-service curriculum

includes seminars on human rights, gender equity and prevention of family violence (MINED, 2012 pre-service plans), there is no promise that the skills and competencies on cultures of peace, co-existence, and life skills needed to address the violence plaguing schools will be taught-learned (CONED, 2016). According to Edwards et al. (2016), there is also growing consensus that three years of initial training is insufficient, paving the way for a focus on the existing five-year university degreed program. However, increased incentives are needed for teachers to assume this advanced program because as Hernández (as cited in Edwards et al. 2015, p.10) points out, career advancement is based on years of service, not ongoing professional development or performance.

In-service teacher training also faces many challenges. Hernández (2014, as cited in Edwards et al., 2015, p. 10) notes that efforts to streamline in-service training have been inconsistent and completed without any evaluation to assess impact despite this being noted a priority for MINED (Viquiz, n.d.). As one key informant from the NGO sector noted, however, only subjects such as math, language arts, and social studies were prioritized leaving out other integral subjects and themes neglected. To date, no formal course of study with academic credit has been established for teacher in-service training, thereby operating as voluntary and during teachers' free time—a factor which likely demotivates teachers to invest in continued professional development (Edwards et al., 2016).

Teaching Practice
Teaching practice in El Salvador is plagued by a reliance on rote learning approaches and pedagogical practice that does not focus on learning for all (CONED, 2016; Viquiz, n.d.; MINED, 2014). Consulted stakeholders stressed that the problem is not so much the content (i.e., curriculum) that is poor but the pedagogy used to teach the content is not relevant to youth of today. For example, a focus group discussion (FGD) conducted with MINED in 2016 found that teachers use instructional methods that are not motivating, particularly for reading, and had limited knowledge regarding how to teach children with learning and other disabilities such as dyslexia and dyslalia (Curtin, 2017).

Another deficient aspect of current teaching practice in schools is that related to classroom and student behavior management. Notably, expulsion continues to be a common practice that disrupts schooling and is associated with violence and delinquency (Olate et al., 2012). Expulsion often leads to other students dropping out of schools where mostly gang-affiliated expelled students re-enroll. Male students are particularly vulnerable to expulsion, exacerbating their vulnerability to gang affiliation if not already involved (Berk-Seligson et al., 2014).

Another challenge of teaching practice involves larger societal sexist and discriminatory attitudes by teachers reproduced in the classroom and school environment. For example, teachers tend to have differing expectations of girls' intellectual and physical abilities with respect to boys', believing girls are less intelligent than boys, and that men and women "*were not born to do the same thing.*" This is detrimental to girls' learning outcomes because evidence shows that teachers' expectations of student performance can lead students to fulfill these expectations (Speybroeck et al, 2012). Additionally, LGBTI people frequently face discrimination by teachers, often leading to drop-out (MINED, 2016). World Bank/MINED (2003) found that teachers in indigenous communities often come from non-indigenous backgrounds, thereby injecting Western biases into lessons that do not reflect the realities of indigenous children and often exhibiting overtly discriminatory attitudes towards them. A more recent study by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—Regional Office for Central America also found that discrimination of indigenous children and youth still continues (Rodriguez Oconitrillo, 2013).

A 2015 study recently conducted on education in El Salvador found that teachers commonly do not teach in their specialty subject area despite requirement outlined in the Teaching Career Law that establishes specialty area placement as a criterion for placement (Edwards et al., 2015). This study provides examples based on 2013 school census:

- Six percent of math teachers in the primary level have a degree in that subject; and
- Nearly 20 percent of elementary teachers are trained for secondary social studies.

Teacher Motivation
Teacher motivation is lacking for a variety of reasons in El Salvador. First, the perception of teachers in society is low (USAID 2016a; IUDOP/UCA, 2011). Teachers themselves feel unrecognized as

professionals working in difficult situations (Edwards et al., 2016). Second, difficult working conditions impact motivation. The RERA study found that difficult working conditions involve significant numbers of teachers falling victim to extortion, threats, and assassinations by gang members (USAID, 2016). Fear among teachers produced by gang-related violence has led to a disintegration of trust in the education community (CONED, 2016). Recognizing the important role that trust between teacher and student plays with learning outcomes, this fear has a direct impact on motivation and, in turn, quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. In rural areas, multi-grade classrooms drain teacher time and resources (Edwards et al., 2015). Low salaries that are not tied to performance or education attainment are further cause for low motivation among teachers (Edwards et al. 2015).

2.5.1.4 Assessment
Edwards et al. (2015) outline the key challenges of the three types of evaluation that the General Education Law contemplates: achievement, teacher performance, and education institutions/schools. For achievement assessment at the primary level, PAESITA test is only administered periodically and typically only conducted based on political will and resources at any given time. At the secondary level, the PAES test design has changed over the years, making longitudinal comparison impossible. The PAES is also expensive and requires specialists in standardized assessments, which is an expertise El Salvador continues to develop. Furthermore, El Salvador has not participated in international standardized tests since 2007, when it took part in the TIMSS, which found El Salvador in the low ranking among other countries for all tested areas and grades. The General Education Law mandates evaluation of schools and other education institutions but only secondary schools have been evaluated to date. Despite existence of a unit at MINED assigned to evaluation and monitoring, it often experiences restructuring with each new administration, causing inconsistency and follow through. The law also requires periodic teacher performance evaluations; however, these are conducted by principals without suggestions for improving practice.

Feedback and support is also limited to school-by-school principal or to network efforts as MINED's technical-pedagogical assistants (ATPs) do not play a pedagogical coaching role, but rather an administrative function (Edwards et al., 2015). Indeed, the ECY Activity Mid-Term Evaluation found that despite a current reorganization of the functions of ATPs towards coaching and pedagogical support:

- The extent and quality of support received from ATPs varied widely;
- MINED and ATP's primary role in the ECY Activity was that of gatekeeper for convening trainings, meetings among teacher networks, and other meetings (and allowing teachers to participate in those meetings);
- Lines of communication and accountability between MINED Department level and ATPs are weak or non-functioning; and
- ATP function is undergoing reorganization, making it even more difficult for schools to count on consistent support from the ministry.[16]

2.5.2 Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis
Please see Annex L for an in-depth analysis of Gender and Social Inclusion. It is essential for the reader to go to the last Annex in this Assessment in order to understand the intersectionality of gender and social inclusion with regard to access to quality education.

2.5.3 Citizen Security & DG Analysis
2.5.3.1 Citizen Security
Since 2012, CNE [17] noted that, in schools, a climate of fear, threats, and violence prevails, which affects the quality of education, both in terms of school performance and the learning environment. It also indicated that *maras* and gangs operating inside and outside of public schools use violence to coerce and cause fear among students, teachers, principals, parents, and other members of the educational community. Other phenomena identified by the CNE include: the rise of student recruitment by gangs

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[16] Text copied directly from Out-Brief: Education for Children and Youth Activity Mid-Term Evaluation.
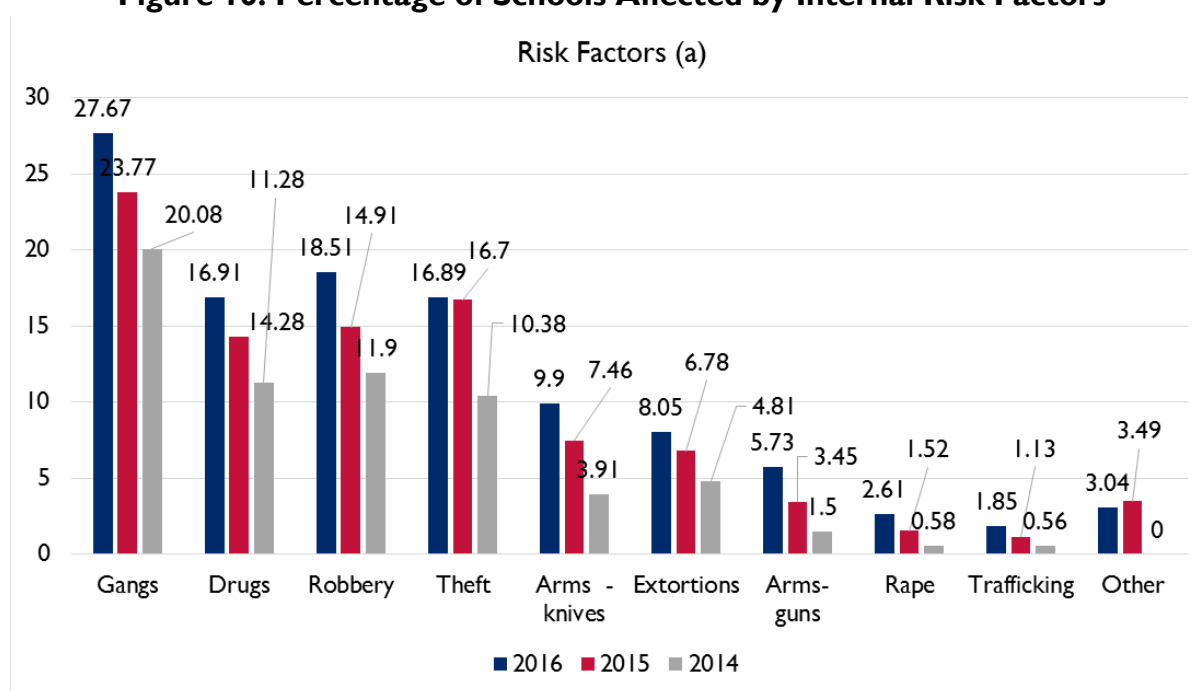[17] Institution part of MINED, created by Executive Order No. 97, published in Official Journal December 9, 2010. The last known activity of this institution was in 2012 with the publication of "Infome de Sistematización y Validación de los Resultados de la Consulta Nacional Educación para un país sin Violencia" and Manifesto to the Nation (January 2012). It no longer works, it was replaced by CONED.

and other criminal groups inside and in the periphery of education institutions; and the proliferation of the sale and consumption of drugs in schools (CNE, 2012b). This situation has direct consequences in lower enrollment rates, especially at the school levels where gang recruitment is most intense; gangs themselves are impeding many Salvadorans' educational opportunities. Children who rebuff gangs that are recruiting at school risk losing their lives (Miranda, 2015). According to the MINED Observatory, risk factors for the education community can be distinguished by their effect either on internal security or security around schools.

Risk factors: Schools' internal security

Some of the main factors that generate insecurity inside schools are: the *maras*, thefts, drugs, knives possession, extortions, firearms possession, rapes, human trafficking, and others (threats among students, alcoholism, etc.). Using the available data, approximately 30 percent of schools, equaling 1,420 total schools, are affected by gangs. The number of schools that suffer from this problem has risen by 37 percent compared to 2014. Generally, all of the identified risk factors have increased over the past three years.

Figure 16: Percentage of Schools Affected by Internal Risk Factors

Risk Factors (a)

Data by category (2016, 2015, 2014):
- Gangs: 27.67, 23.77, 20.08
- Drugs: 16.91, 14.28, 11.28
- Robbery: 18.51, 14.91, 11.9
- Theft: 16.89, 16.7, 10.38
- Arms - knives: 9.9, 7.46, 3.91
- Extortions: 8.05, 6.78, 4.81
- Arms - guns: 5.73, 3.45, 1.5
- Rape: 2.61, 1.52, 0.58
- Trafficking: 1.85, 1.13, 0.56
- Other: 3.04, 3.49, 0

■ 2016 ■ 2015 ■ 2014

Risk factors: Security around schools

The MINED Observatory notes the following risk factors that affect the community or school environment: the *maras*, drugs, thefts, knives possession, extortions, rapes, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation. Within the past year, over 60 percent of school centers were located in communities or areas affected by the *maras*, drugs, robberies and thefts. It is estimated that in 2016, a total of 3,270 schools were located in communities with a gang presence.

Figure 17: Total Schools Affected by External Factors

Risk Factors (b)

Bar chart showing schools affected by risk factors for years 2016, 2015, 2014:

Factor	2016	2015	2014
Gangs	3270	3327	2879
Drugs	3067	3121	2489
Robbery/Theft	2941	3188	2881
Arms	2542	2909	2015
Extortions	2133	2349	1716
Rape	941	1085	686
Trafficking	748	685	360
Sexual exploit	590	884	0
Other	171	207	0
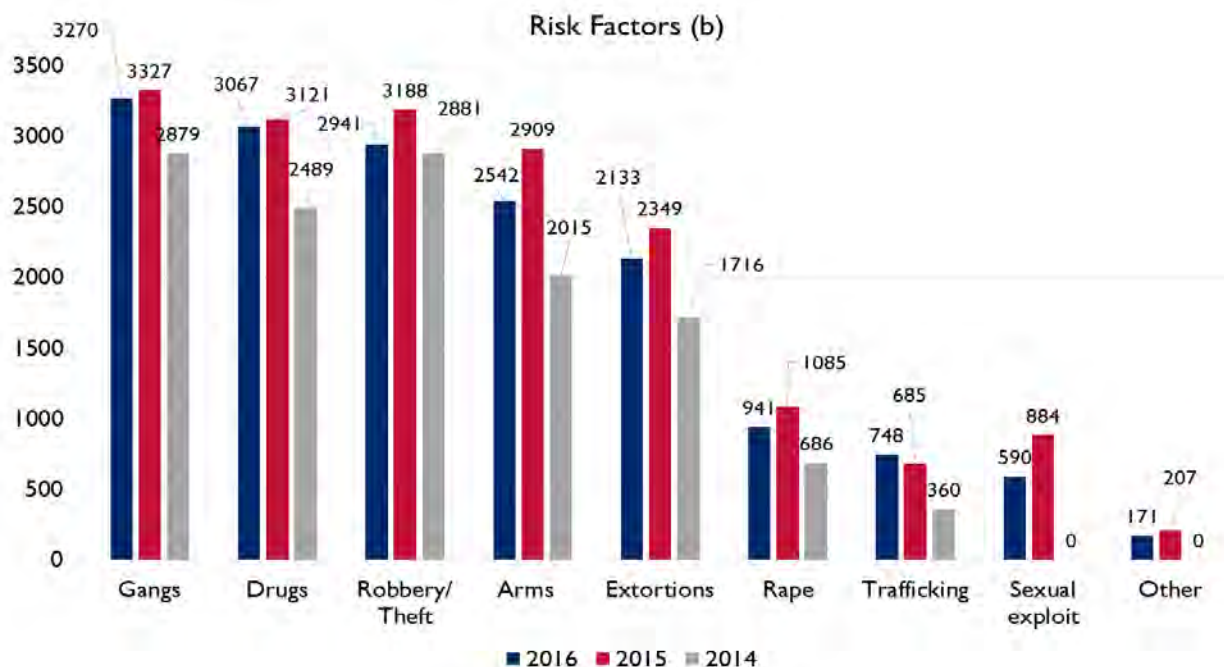
Violence has important consequences for the education system, particularly regarding the following phenomena: school dropouts; school absenteeism; a decline in enrollment; and teacher transfers. Thus, school quality, including aspects related to school achievement and school learning environment, is gravely conditioned by a climate of fear, threats, and violence that predominate in schools (CNE, 2012b). Another factor keeping some children away from school is that gangs like MS-13 and Barrio 18 often recruit children in schools (Miranda, 2015). In this case, the increase in student recruitment by gangs or other delinquent organizations inside or around educational institutions exerts an important pressure on student dropout or school absenteeism.

School dropouts and insecurity

There is no precise data on the impact of insecurity on enrollment and student dropouts. According to the MINED Observatory, on average, during the past three years, 26 percent of schools that reported students dropping out indicated they did so due to gang violence (MINED, 2016). The majority of dropouts occur at the third cycle level, which might be related to the ages and grades in which students are most likely to be associated with gangs (Alvarado, 2015; Hernández, 2016; Peñate, 2017). This would confirm the statements of the Vice Minister of Education, who indicated gangs are a fundamental factor for school dropouts (Alvarado, 2015).

According to a journalistic investigation by *El Faro*, dropouts due to insecurity increased by 120 percent from 2009 to 2014. The main factors for school dropouts that were identified in 2014 are: change in address (29,785 cases); emigration (15,806 cases); insecurity (13,402 cases); and change of school (4,600 cases) (Alvarado, 2015). However, it is possible that the other 20,000 students that indicated dropping out due to a change of address or a change of school did so for motives related to insecurity. In these circumstances, this would be a phenomenon that reached 3.5 percent of registered enrollment that year (Alvarado, 2015). This is equivalent to 68 students dropping out each day due to violence (Flores, 2015b).

Some studies indicate that dropout factors vary across areas with different violence levels for primary and secondary school students: "*mobility within the country and between schools and emigration are the main reasons why primary and lower secondary students drop out of school in El Salvador.*" This is by and large forced displacement because of threats, coercion, etc. (Kang, Castaneda, & Han, s.f.) Other sources indicate that in 2014, a total of 100,851 students in all grades abandoned school, which would be equal to 6.2 percent of the total initial enrollment for that year. According to consulted experts and principals, the majority of dropouts were due to poverty, migration, and insecurity. It is believed that violence has led to an increase in school dropouts in the last few years (Flores, 2015b).

It should be noted that according to the investigation by *El Faro*, the municipalities that were most affected by school dropouts were those which had a homicide rate higher than the national average. In this sense, there would be a direct correlation between homicides and school dropouts. The 50 municipalities that suffered from 66.46 percent of all homicides in El Salvador also saw 82.5 percent of all cases of student dropouts due to crime. Likewise, 27 out of the 82 municipalities that did not record any dropouts due to insecurity in 2014 also did not record any murders (Alvarado, 2015). In this sense, on average, one increment in homicide increases the tendency to drop out by 4.729. Consequently, "*homicides are more influential than any other form of violence*" related to drop out (Kang, s.d.).

Other challenges related to citizen insecurity

Classroom management in environments that are characterized by high levels of violence and insecurity is difficult for teachers and directly affects the quality of education. There are registered cases of teachers being coerced to give good grades to gang members' children, or to gang members themselves (elsalvador.com, 2017).

In this context, teachers act out of fear of reprisals (Picardo, 2016). According to an interviewed police investigator, "*In cases, teachers are extorted by students. This is common if a teacher does not want to give them the grade they need*" (Guzmán, 2017). For teachers in this situation, it is not viable to exercise their role with impartiality and objectivity. They are not able to hold back against the children or family of gang members, or to impose school discipline rules (López, 2017).

Additionally, one needs to consider the situation of young persons in conflict with the law. It is estimated that 5-6 percent of schools in the last two years received young people who have committed a crime. Only 23 percent of these schools have reported that they have specific programs to serve this sector of the student population (MINED Observatory, 2016). Between directors or teachers there is concern or dissatisfaction with having to accept in schools by legal imposition these students, most of which are gang members or have several problems to reincorporate in school (CNE, 2012). In general, teachers do not have the necessary training and schools do not have facilities to receive such cases (CONED, 2016). Some of the KIIs indicated that accepting a youth with criminal record, which is obligatory for schools, may represent 40-50 other students that leave that school. In many cases, the students with criminal responsibility have committed serious crimes, including inciting or interfering with other students to encourage them to join gangs or to commit offenses or crimes. An alternative proposed by a KII is the creation of transitional centers for young students with previous criminal responsibility rather than admitting them to school.

### 2.5.3.2 Democracy and Governance
Infrastructure
Despite the fact that schools are one of the only physical state institutions in communities surrounded by crime and violence, it is important to note that infrastructure remains a challenge. According to CONED (2016), coverage remains an important challenge for MINED at initial, preschool, basic education (7-9 grades), and secondary levels. At the initial and preschool level, 13,647 additional classrooms with capacity to hold 40 students each are needed.[18] At the secondary level, 15 municipalities in the country still do not offer secondary education. Another important challenge facing MINED is that only 64 percent of the 5,135 public educational centers possess a deed in favor of the Ministry; further, not all that do possess the favorable deed are registered in the National Records Center (CONED, 2016), placing the basic physical structures of public schools at all levels in a precarious situation should deed holders want to retake possession of the property. At the primary level, sufficient number of classrooms to meet the needs of the current school-age population exists. However, this level faces a specific challenge: 427 rural public schools are staffed by only one teacher teaching all grades (Carmen Cruz, 2015) leaving these schools vulnerable to frequent closure because of teacher absence and poor material support and physical conditions, according to one GOES representative.

The poor condition of schools also poses challenges to access to quality education as student learning, teacher motivation, and inclusion, especially for people with disabilities, can be adversely affected

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[18] The number is likely higher; best practice limits the total number of this age group of children in a classroom to no more than 6-12 (depending on age) for initial level and no more than 20 students at preschool level (NAEYC 2013: 1).

(Edwards et al. 2015; CONED, 2016). MINED reported in 2014 that only 40 percent of its schools are in good condition while another study conducted by Marchelli-Cuéllar in 2015 found 837 schools in vulnerable zones for natural disasters (Edwards et al., 2015). From a gender and social inclusion perspective, most schools also lack accessible and differentiated architectural design according to gender, physical abilities, disability, and age, and only 79 percent of public schools have access to safe drinking water (CONED, 2016). Related to gender specifically, a 2014 study by Save the Children found that 13 percent of interviewed girls reported missing school during their period pointing to discomfort among girls to attend school at this time of the month (UNICEF, 2017). Save the Children (2017), also found that most schools' latrines are in very poor conditions. The latter is likely a primary reason why girls do not feel comfortable attending school while menstruating.

Figure 18: KII Priorities – Infrastructure
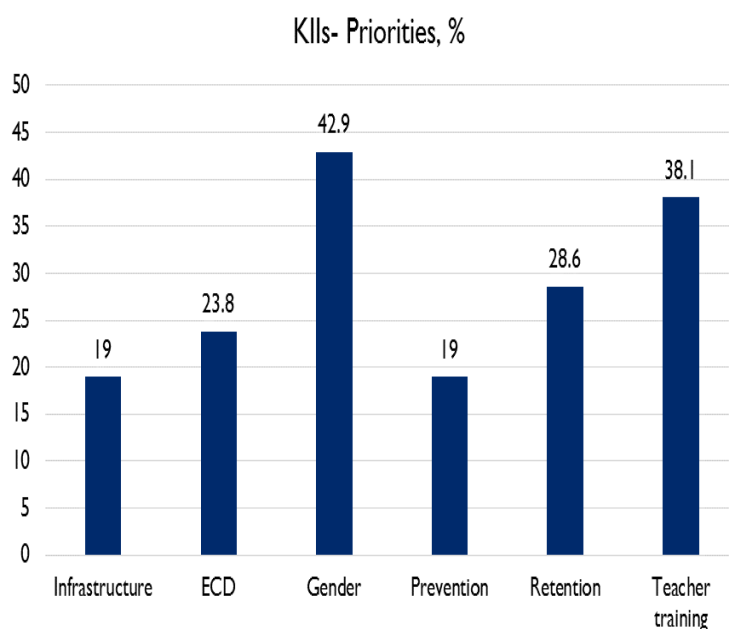
Schools also lack important didactic equipment and technology. According to MINED's 2015 school census, only 21.43 percent of schools have a computer lab, with 10 percent of those labs in poor and insecure condition. Only 28.8 percent of all schools in the country have a library; however, even when a school has a library, it does not necessarily employ staff who are trained to foster good reading habits among students (CONED, 2016). The latter likely has important implications for the poor state of literacy in the country at all levels and ages. The 2015 census also found that only 12.5 percent of schools have a science laboratory, and only 35.4 percent have basketball or soccer fields to practice some kind of sport (CONED, 2016).

Community Involvement[19]

Community participation and involvement outside of the school environment, i.e., citizen participation in schooling, is also a challenge. According to the CONED (2016), there are currently low levels of school organization and active participation of the different actors in the educational community noting that despite multiple participation platforms such as teachers' councils, school boards, student government, etc., parents and community members are often excluded from participation and decision making. FGDs with MINED in 2016 further revealed that families and communities are not involved in reading achievement among children (Curtin, 2017). Consulted stakeholders also noted a complete absence of a "reading community" in Salvadoran society whereby. Overall, limited information was found regarding community and parent involvement.

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[19] Although community and parents are external to schools, community and parent involvement is internal to the school and specifically relates to active and direct participation in the education of children. Therefore, it is included here under internal factors. A section on Families is included below under external factors, addressing issues of family dysfunction, abuse, and disintegration and its impact on the access to quality education for children and youth.

Funding

Despite spending increases in recent years, El Salvador still invests public funds on education at a below-average rate: 3.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) compared with 5.2 percent regional average (USAID, 2016). The plan to increase education spending to six percent has repeatedly failed (Curtin, 2017). A common theme heard among key informants and document sources is the creation of policies, plans, and programs without allocating sufficient resources to them. For example, according to a GOES representative, $12.573 billion is needed for 10 years to implement PESE, which means an additional $1.257 billion is needed each year above what is invested in education currently. Another notable example includes the Youth and Adult Education Policy, which has received only 1.08 percent of the MINED budget (CONED 2016) despite clear needs identified elsewhere in this assessment for youth education. The latter is also indicative of MINED developing unrealistic budgets in alignment with known gaps—another budgeting challenge revealed by Edwards et al (2015). According to CONED (2016), El Salvador also lacks a close link between the processes of budget development and those of planning. For this reason, the Ministry of Finance promotes a reform of the budget formulation model.

Poverty and Need to Work

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (as cited in USAID, 2016a, p. 14), in 2012, 46 percent of Salvadorans were poor, with 16 percent indigent. Furthermore, a World Bank study (as cited in USAID 2016a, p. 23) estimates that 25 percent of El Salvador's population are chronically poor (per capita household income $2.50/day from 2004 to 2012). The World Bank study further notes that these chronically poor households are also chronically deprived of access to basic services, among others, education. MINED reported that choosing to work was the fourth most common reason for drop out among 11,074 students who abandoned their studies in 2014 (Edwards et al., 2015).

According to the 2016 Multi-Purpose Household Survey [Ministry of Economy (MINEC) and the General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses (DIGESTYC), 2017], the second most important reason for leaving school among girls between the ages of 7 and 15 was because it was too expensive. For youth between the ages of 15 and 18, economic reasons for being out-of-school are "need to work" and "too expensive" as two of the top three reasons for boys, and "too expensive," "domestic and household responsibilities," and "need to work" as part of the top three for girls. From a gender perspective, "domestic and household responsibilities" are considered here because of the indirect economic impact they have on any given household despite social-wide disregard for remunerating this reproductive labor.

Data collected by the USAID ECY Activity found similar results. Per ECY participant reporting, work/job was the number one reason for school dropout, representing 33 percent of all participants who dropped out, yet only 33 percent actually worked (USAID, 2017). The latter is evidence of a growing phenomenon called *"nini—ni estudian ni trabajan/neither study nor work"* among youth not only in El Salvador but also in the region.

Poverty also has an important impact on where children and youth attend school and on weakening of the public education sector, particularly as it relates to neighborhoods impacted by gang presence, violence, and other crime. According to the International Crisis Group (2017), enrollment in private schools marginalizes public schools as violent spaces, including as gang recruitment sites, as families with economic means of over $500/month remove themselves from the most violent areas by paying for private schools and other services, allowing them the luxury of considering themselves neither part of the problem nor part of the solution to gang-violence and relationship to school and society.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

40. Infrastructure exists at the primary level but is less adequate at the upper levels.	19. At all education levels, there are not enough school buildings that are also: in good condition; adapted to the needs of all students; and equipped with necessary didactic material and equipment. This poses a key challenge to realizing universal quality education for all children in El Salvador.
41. Rural schools are largely characterized by one multi-grade classroom in deteriorating or poor condition (leaking roof, lack of water) and lacking needed material.	
42. There is an insufficient number of classrooms to meet needs (20-30 students per class) at the following levels: preschool; third cycle (grades 7-9) of basic education, and secondary.	
42. Most school buildings and classrooms are in poor condition and in need of repairs.	
43. There are not enough alternative programs (flexible modalities), including those for youth with criminal backgrounds.	20. Out-of-school children/youth are arguably the most vulnerable group in the education system, and society at large, and are not given priority.
44. Existing flexible modalities lack relevance and quality.	
45. Out-of-school children and youth are particularly vulnerable.	
46. At-risk youth are addressed prominently in PESS.	
47. PESE does not include a focus on at-risk youth education beyond traditional secondary education; only one strategic action in the plan focuses on at-risk youth to create additional flexible modalities.	
48. Out-of-school youth are the most impacted sub-group of the Salvadoran population in the context of violence, specifically related to gang violence. Nineteen percent of KIIs identified keeping children/youth in school as a priority.	
49. The number of out-of-school youth has continued to increase since 2012 to nearly 7 percent (and this is likely underrepresented).	
50. Curricula have been revised to include gender and competency-based learning, but effective methods do not exist for getting the curricula to the classroom.	21. The challenge of curricula is less about quality, but more the lack of relevant training and support for consistent, high-quality implementation of the existing curricula and recent revisions.
51. These curricula do not include any peace education content or methods.	
52. Some orientation documents exist for teachers on the use of the curricula, but they are not used consistently by teachers.	
53. There is insufficient training of teachers on the various revisions to the curricula (both in service and before service).	
54. Initial teacher training is a three-year program with a rigid curriculum with some recent revisions (that are not complete).	22. Effective teaching and learning in El Salvador faces acute challenges because of: poor and insufficient initial and continued professional development and support; teacher practices that reflect this deficient pre- and in-service training; and lack of teacher motivation.
55. Teaching practice is characterized to a large extent by rote learning, mono-cultural, discriminatory, and other exclusionary pedagogy that do not meet the gender-specific, culture-specific, and special needs of children and youth.	
56. Teacher motivation is low due to: low social prestige; limited incentives to develop themselves professionally; uncompetitive salaries; and difficult working conditions.	

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[20] Reading falls under language and literature. Edwards et al (2015) found curriculum to be of good quality.

Q5. What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable education for all?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
57. The primary-level curriculum lacks consistency related to literature scope and sequence and standardized testing to evaluate reading at the early grades (grades 1-3).	23. Challenges related to reading in the early grades cuts across curriculum, teaching practice, infrastructure, parent involvement, and culture.
58. Only 28.8 percent of all school in the country have a library.	
59. When a school has a library, it does not necessarily enjoy staff trained to foster good reading habits among students.	
60. A low percentage of parents are active with supporting learning and development, including reading, of their children. One example of a program in this area is GIZ's Escuela Para Padres.	
61. A reading culture does not exist in El Salvador.	
Gender equity-challenge	
62. Larger society-wide gender discriminatory norms, behaviors, and attitudes are transmitted in the classroom by teachers and into the system as a whole through sexual division of studies (e.g., math for boys).	24. Some understanding exists on the extent to which gender and education intersect; however, it is incomplete and requires further analysis.
63. Few studies have been conducted around the intersection of gender and education with the exception of early pregnancy and early union.	
School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV)	
64. The assessment team found no literature that specifically examines SRGBV in all its various manifestations, aggressors and victims, and the impact on victims.	25. Some data on SRGBV exist, but there are important information gaps to understand the full scope of the issue and all of its manifestations and impacts.
65. Existing SRGBV literature gives examples of the impact on girls and LGBTI students, but does not address the violence of gangs, specifically involving boys and young men, from a gender perspective.	26. LGBTI individuals and girls are particularly vulnerable to SRGBV.
66. No information was found on who are human trafficking perpetrators and victims, nor on what mechanisms are being used to traffic children and youth through schools.	27. Gang violence that involves predominantly boys as both victim and perpetrator is also a form of SRGBV, and has not been fully analyzed from a gender perspective.
Indigenous	
67. MINED neither disaggregates data by ethnic origin (i.e., three indigenous cultures in El Salvador) nor collects other relevant data of indigenous children and youth.	28. The education rights of indigenous children and youth are not prioritized by MINED and GOES despite evidence of need.
68. The last study conducted with primary data education of indigenous children and youth was in 2003. It found a situation of poor learning outcomes, discrimination, and learning environments not adapted to the cultural needs of indigenous students.	
69. To date, no special initiatives have been implemented by MINED to address the culture-specific needs of the existing indigenous communities.	
70. MINED's Policy on Inclusive Education makes only one vague reference to exclusion based on ethnicity.[21]	
Children with disabilities	
71. Data on children and youth with disabilities in the education system are limited and lack clarity as no existing formal system for identifying children and youth with special needs exists in the education system.	29. Children and youth with disabilities are largely excluded from the education system, leaving them marginalized and preventing them from receiving quality education and support for their success. This, in turn, increases the likelihood for them to drop out.
72. Teachers do not have the needed training and support to meet the needs of various types of children and youth with special needs.	

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[21] Although indigenous is identified 13 times in its education plan; which implies gains are being made.

Q5. What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable education for all?	
Findings	**Conclusions**
73. Enforcement of legal protections of special needs children and youth rare.	
74. Children and youth with special needs typically attend special schools and do not have the opportunity to be mainstreamed in public schools.	
Funding challenge	
75. Insufficient funds are allocated to education in El Salvador to meet the current needs (5-6 percent of GDP).	30. Available education funding is limited and could be more efficiently managed and better allocated.
76. Rigid budget development processes make allocation to certain areas of the education system difficult.	
77. Actual spending does not reflect what MINED identifies as priorities in policy documents.	
Gender inequality challenge	
78. Various manifestations of GBV are widespread and typically lack effective investigation, prosecution, and adjudication.	31. Deeply rooted gender inequality that cuts across class is as an underlying cause of more immediate contributing factors of dropout and/or low enrollment among children and youth.
79. The role of women and girls continues to be largely related to domestic or reproductive responsibilities such as housework, childrearing, etc. High rates of early pregnancy and early union exist among adolescent girls.	
80. Upper class men often support and/or perpetuate violence through support of extrajudicial and violent means of addressing the gang situation.	32. Socially constructed masculinity, by and large linked to hyper aggression and violence, cuts across class and applies not just to the poorer classes (specifically young, male gang members), but also to the male political and upper elites.
Poverty	
81. Poor children have lower rates of enrollment and attendance across the education levels and typically have relatively worse learning outcomes when compared with their urban and/or richer counterparts.	33. Poverty is a key underlying cause of limited equitable access to quality education in El Salvador.
82. Poverty and need to work rank as one of the most important factors contributing to dropout rates of girls and boys.	
Security	
83. Among children aged 7 to 15 that do not attend to school, the second most frequently identified reason for that is violence or insecurity.[22]	34. Violence and insecurity cause dropouts and low attendance.
84. In 2016, 34 schools were temporarily closed as a result of threats from gangs. Twenty-six percent of the schools that reported dropouts indicated that the reason was gang violence.	
85. Other causes reported for dropouts are internal and external migration due to violence (e.g., nearly 16,000 dropouts due to emigration).	

2.6   QUESTION 6: WHAT IS USAID'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE? RECOMMENDATIONS

This assessment is not a formal USAID evaluation. Nevertheless, there are aspects of USAID's evaluation policy and ADS guidelines on evaluation, which have been integrated throughout, namely consolidating findings and conclusions for each question. In this way, the AT is able to have an evidence base for making recommendations. Furthermore, within each recommendation, the AT identifies (to

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[22] The first is lack of interest.

the extent possible) the five R's associated with the program cycle: Results, Roles, Relationships, Rules, and Resources.

Recommendation 1: USAID should mandate institutional capacity building[23] (for decision-making) as part of all education activities; these requirements should be tied to measurable indicators as part of the project M&E plan and reporting deliverables
Conclusion 5: Weak institutional capacity and a lack of coordination exist among institutions.
Conclusion 30: Available education funding is limited and could be more efficiently managed and better allocated.
Conclusion 7: More data and transparency are required on out-of-school children and youth.
Conclusion 8: More data and transparency are required on teacher quality and performance.
Conclusion 9: More quantitative and qualitative gender data and disaggregated data are required (by ethnic origin, disability, and other characteristics).
Conclusion 10: Interpretations of data should be made with caution as much is unknown and assessments about insecurity are difficult.

2.6.1 Ownership and Sustainability

The only way to build institutional capacity and long-term improvements in basic education via projects such as ECY, is if MINED has a sense of ownership. One way to ensure ownership is if projects work side-by-side with MINED. This includes physically sharing MINED's office space. It also includes working side-by-side on the development of technical plans, trainings, and curriculum revisions, and material design, among other activities. This is only an option and possibly only technical teams would sit in MINED, not financial management or M&E. Research shows that simply by being close with other human beings people begin to see how similar they are and with this awareness trust can be built. It also provides insight on the challenges MINED faces, including lack of funding.

Recommendation 2: USAID should provide technical assistance to MINED to strengthen institutional capacity in integrating gender (via the new gender office within MINED). Specifically, this means writing teacher guides and creating student materials, which integrate gender awareness, and offering trainings on how to use and develop these guides/materials.
Conclusion 14: Prioritization of gender and social inclusion takes place only at the written discourse level and fails to trickle down to implementation at the school level.
Conclusion 15: Gender and social inclusion are not part of the awareness of MINED, whereas citizen security is.
Conclusion 9: More quantitative and qualitative gender data and disaggregated data are required (by ethnic origin, disability, and other characteristics).

Samoff (2003) argues that sustainability must be built into the design. Working side-by-side from inception helps build the capacity of MINED and, in turn, the sustainability of interventions. It keeps sustainability at the forefront of decision-making. These include MINED's decisions regarding how to spend valuable and limited resources. While new administrations will come to power, building capacity at the lower levels, including technical staff and teachers, makes turnover at the higher levels less of a threat. Building on past USAID's investment, especially teacher training and material design at the primary level, is an efficient way to sustain previous projects and activities.

KIIs with tenured USAID staff with extensive experience in the education sector reflected that this side-by-side approach (while attempted successfully in other parts of Central America, e.g., Nicaragua and Honduras) had not been attempted in El Salvador. That approach was similar to the way JICA works with mathematics, which allows MINED to provide a contribution to the project (i.e., electricity, space) and allows for them to be a part of technical planning and material development. Other functions should and could easily be kept separate, for example the accounting and finance as well as the M&E arms of the project.

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[23] Specifically, this should include strengthening the abilities to: plan and budget, monitor and evaluate, and manage the education tiers. This should also be done at the decentralized levels.

2.6.2 Use an Integrated Approach

Annex I includes a map and additional analysis on to how to efficiently select municipalities in which to apply the integrated approach. Linkages should be created with higher education institutions for teacher capacity building and MINED capacity support.

Recommendation 3: USAID should continue to incorporate violence prevention and peace building into education programs tied to measurable short and long-term outcomes, and a security specialist position should be incorporated into Request for Proposals (RFPs).
Conclusion 34: Violence and citizen insecurity directly impact education access, specifically on dropouts and enrollment of children and youth.
Conclusion 26: LGBTI individuals and girls are particularly vulnerable to School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV).
Conclusion 10: Interpretations of data should be made with caution as much is unknown and assessments about insecurity are difficult.
Conclusion 4: There is a cycle of violence affecting students and teachers, both outside the schools and within the schools, that is perpetrated by students and teachers.

Recommendation 4: USAID should support development of programs that tackle larger gender and social norms, practices, and behaviors that impact education of girls and boys and SRGBV. Specifically, this means writing teacher guides, which integrate gender awareness and SRGBV, creating student materials, which integrate gender awareness, and offering trainings on how to use and develop these guides/materials at the upper grades.
Conclusion 31: Deeply rooted gender inequality that cuts across class is an underlying cause of more immediate contributing factors of dropout and/or low enrollment among children and youth.
Conclusion 32: Socially constructed masculinity, by and large linked to hyper aggression and violence, cuts across class and applies not just to the poorer classes (specifically young, male gang members), but also to the male political and upper elites.
Conclusion 13: Gender and social inclusion specific projects are lacking compared to citizen security projects.

2.6.3 Conduct a Gender Analysis

Recommendation 5: USAID should conduct a gender analysis of the education sector and use results to inform future programming. The gender analysis should include equity, safety, and empowerment in education activities in El Salvador (see USAID's Gender policy/framework for specific domains).
Conclusion 9: More quantitative and qualitative gender data and disaggregated data are required (by ethnic origin, disability, and other characteristics).
Conclusion 24: Some understanding exists on the extent to which gender and education intersect; however, it is incomplete and requires further analysis.
Conclusion 25: Some data on SRGBV exist, but there are important information gaps to understand the full scope of the issue and all of its manifestations and impacts.
Conclusion 26: LGBTI individuals and girls are particularly vulnerable to SRGBV.
Conclusion 27: Gang violence that involves predominantly boys as both victim and perpetrator is also a form of SRGBV, and has not been fully analyzed from a gender perspective.

2.6.4 Build on Investment

Recommendation 6: USAID should continue to invest in activities to increase school coverage for out-of-school youth and other at-risk, marginalized, and/or excluded youth. This is related to Recommendation 3. Often recommendations are out of the box; however, here the team wants to recognize the importance of long-term investment in order to change education and the insecure context in which schools operate.
Conclusion 7: More data and transparency are required on out-of-school children and youth.
Conclusion 28: The education rights of indigenous children and youth are not prioritized by MINED and GOES despite evidence of need.
Conclusion 20: Out-of-school children/youth are arguably the most vulnerable group in the education system, and society at large, and are not given priority.
Conclusion 34: Violence and citizen insecurity directly impact education access, specifically on dropouts and enrollment of children and youth.

Recommendation 6: USAID should continue to invest in activities to increase school coverage for out-of-school youth and other at-risk, marginalized, and/or excluded youth. This is related to Recommendation 3. Often recommendations are out of the box; however, here the team wants to recognize the importance of long-term investment in order to change education and the insecure context in which schools operate.
Conclusion 29: Children and youth with disabilities are largely excluded from the education system, leaving them marginalized and preventing them from receiving quality education and support for their success. This, in turn, increases the likelihood for them to drop out.
Conclusion 33: Poverty is a key underlying cause of limited equitable access to quality education in El Salvador.

A two-pronged approach is required to address challenges related to citizen insecurity in the education sector and, conversely, the role of education regarding citizen insecurity. Inside the school and inside the classroom USAID can draw from experiences such as those of FEDISAL and ECY, among others, with regard to teaching-learning and monitoring the development of early literacy skills (for example Save the Children). Less work has been done in the context of the home and community about supporting children and youth, their social emotional learning and their academic learning, and against forms of violence (such as physical assault). One program is worth examining – the Strong Families methodology implemented by Caritas in El Salvador and described in the section below.

2.6.5 Home and Community

CRS currently implements the Strong Families methodology. According to KIIs with CRS, the program helps children determine if they will continue to study or start their own business and how their families can support them. Often the "family" is not the parents of the children, given the challenges presented in Q5. These "family members" are often a neighbor, a grandmother, or an older sister.

The family members have trainings (total of seven) on how to support their children. This is very important according to key informants because it bridges what the children and youth are learning in the learning center with what they learn at home. In El Salvador, Caritas El Salvador implements the Strong Families methodology. The methodology is evidence-based and is universally employed. It was started by the Iowa State in the U.S. and adapted to the El Salvador context.

In addition, GIZ has a tested approach with Miles de Manos, to work with parents in support of crime and violence prevention. They have been implementing it regionally and USAID has been collaborating with them over the last eight months to implement in project schools. They serve as another example of the type of relationships it is possible to create between school and home/community – especially with regard to promoting education and living together peacefully.

In order to enable spaces for dialogue and foster communication and the experience exchange between parents and teachers, Glasswing's focus is on non-formal education and immersing extracurricular clubs into the school experience. The program works with community schools and seeks to strengthen community relations by involving more actors for the benefit of students. Teachers are equipped with pedagogical tools, and increased opportunities for the community to become more involved with teachers are also encouraged.

2.6.6 Invest in Primary

Recommendation 7: USAID should consider investing in primary education, especially early literacy via improving teacher capacity, delivering quality materials, and M&E for learning. USAID has good examples from within El Salvador and the region, e.g., Honduras and Nicaragua, of basic education programs. These can serve as an example and be modified for the El Salvador context.
Conclusion 2: Primary is declining in terms of enrollment and internal efficiency.
Conclusion 3: Given available data, performance appears to be low in basic/secondary education.
Conclusion 8: More data and transparency are required on teacher quality and performance.
Conclusion 12: A base exists on which to build practices for out-of-school children and youth and literacy in El Salvador.
Conclusion 17: Rebuilding and strengthening school infrastructure is a major priority, but funding is limited.
Conclusion 18: Strengthening teacher capacity is a priority identified by MINED and, while they are making efforts towards improving it, more remains to be done.

Recommendation 7: USAID should consider investing in primary education, especially early literacy via improving teacher capacity, delivering quality materials, and M&E for learning. USAID has good examples from within El Salvador and the region, e.g., Honduras and Nicaragua, of basic education programs. These can serve as an example and be modified for the El Salvador context.
Conclusion 19: At all education levels, there are not enough school buildings that are also: in good condition; adapted to the needs of all students; and equipped with necessary didactic material and equipment. This poses a key challenge to realizing universal quality education for all children in El Salvador.
Conclusion 21: The challenge of curricula is less about quality, but more the lack of relevant training and support for consistent, high-quality implementation of the existing curricula and recent revisions.
Conclusion 22: Effective teaching and learning in El Salvador face acute challenges because of: poor and insufficient initial and continued professional development and support; teacher practices that reflect this deficient pre- and in-service training; and lack of teacher motivation.
Conclusion 23: Challenges related to reading in the early grades cut across curriculum, teaching practice, infrastructure, parent involvement, and culture.
Conclusion 11: Investment in education exists in El Salvador, but it is dispersed and does not concentrate on primary grades or literacy.

Teacher Development

The first comment made by leading academics and stakeholders when reflecting on the challenges faced by El Salvador is the poor quality of teachers. The quality of teachers requires an overhaul. This includes both at the preservice level and within the system via in service training. Furthermore, teachers require capacity development both in terms of content knowledge and pedagogy. This implies strengthening their content knowledge (e.g., spelling and grammar) as well as the methods for teaching. Lastly, it also requires revising the curriculum to become a teacher.

Revised Curriculum

Revising the primary curriculum goes hand in hand with improving teacher professional development.

The teachers, who directly implement curriculum with children and youth in schools, should participate in the process. This way they have a sense of ownership of the curriculum, rather than feeling it is imposed. Including their voice also improves the curriculum itself since teachers are the daily observers of the needs of children and youth in schools. The curriculum must be focused on hard skills and, at the same time, allow space for Social and Emotional Learning skill development, especially within the context of insecurity.

Education Materials

Research in El Salvador via Literacy Boost Assessment showed that the leading predictor of student performance in EGRS was the availability of reading materials. Other factors were: including teachers in the design of materials; and being able to draw from USAID's previous experience in designing education materials in El Salvador and within the region. The availability of reading materials, especially for the first grade, is essential. Early reading materials should be provided even prior to the first grade (i.e., during preschool) and teachers should be trained on how to use these materials, as indicated in the reflections from the Director of Basic Education below.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: SCOPE OF WORK

STATEMENT OF WORK

El Salvador Education Sector Review

PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The purpose of this Education Sector Review is to:

- Gain broad understanding of the current state of El Salvador's education sector across pre-primary, primary, secondary and non-formal education, including current and past initiatives of the Ministry of Education (MINED), donors, and other education stakeholders;
- Inform future USAID education sector programs; and
- Inform the future El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), planned for the summer of 2018.

The review will build on the recent El Salvador Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (2016) and the Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Assessment of El Salvador (2015).

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

USAID/El Salvador's interest in supporting a broad education sector review is to better understand past, current, and planned policies, programs, innovations, and initiatives targeted towards increased access to quality education. Active host-country dialogue in this regard is occurring between USAID/El Salvador and the MINED. MINED has articulated its commitment to improving the early grade reading programs, general reading programs, related teacher training, and finding ways to increase internal efficacy of the education system by decreasing the dropout rate and increasing retention rates. However, new policy directives and national education aspirations risk limiting achievement of these goals if sufficient resources are not available. More information is needed about the current state of education in El Salvador, the resources available to support El Salvador's efforts to improve education quality through reading and access, particularly for out-of-school youth, and the current gaps in education services and support.

This request for analytic data support from USAID is also informed by the Agency's strong commitment to working through government systems to achieve sustainable, measurable improvements in reading. Attention will be paid to how El Salvador might best support an evidence-based, scalable, and sustainable education program focused on reading, access and or youth education. The review will identify opportunities where programming can support, strengthen, and utilize existing national-, department-, municipality, and school-level institutions.

USAID/El Salvador current education activities are aligned to and contribute to the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America's (CEN Strategy) Prosperity and Citizen Security pillars and the Alliance for Prosperity for the Northern Triangle Countries by improving education and workforce development that will lead to youth participation in the economic growth of El Salvador. USAID's education and workforce development activities address the drivers of migration, crime and instability caused by gang related violence and youth unemployment. Basic Education activities improve education and workforce development by providing safe learning environments for children, increasing private investment in technical training for youth, and improving teachers' and principals' teaching methodology and management techniques in over 600 public schools in the country. Through these activities children and youth can access life-skills training, vocational and workforce readiness opportunities and academic reinforcement that enable them to return to formal schooling. Additionally, students and parents can take a larger role in school governance, contributing to a greater sense of responsibility and community ownership of the schools.

USAID/El Salvador is helping transform higher education in El Salvador to boost Salvadoran competitiveness and economic growth by creating strong linkages between Salvadoran higher education institutions (HEIs) and public and private sector partners to provide educational programs driven by industry demand for skilled labor, and research that contributes to economic growth. For

this, USAID/El Salvador has formed industry/higher education clusters around four key industries, with 11 HEIs as allies, which collectively represent approximately 70 percent of higher education students in the country. Through its activities, USAID/El Salvador has also promoted and built the capacity of Salvadoran HEIs to conduct applied research that addresses El Salvador's economic challenges, such as industry efficiency and productivity.

SECTOR REVIEW QUESTIONS

USAID has mapped out the following illustrative research primary questions, to be refined by the Sector Review Team, in order to meet the objectives of the sector review described above:

1. What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the state of: enrollment, service delivery, learning outcomes, student retention and drop-out, teachers and education personnel supply and qualifications, and sector planning and coordination across pre-primary, primary, secondary, and non-formal education?
2. What is the availability and quality of education sector data (examples include Education Management Information Systems or EMIS, Teacher Management Information Systems or TMIS, learning assessments, etc.)?
3. What education sector initiatives/activities are underway by MINED, education stakeholders, other donors, etc. (e.g., who is doing what where)? What are the gaps in the education sector?
4. What are the key priorities of the MINED related to equitable access to quality education?
   a. Where does the MINED need additional support to advance their education objectives?
   b. What does MINED see as working well and not working well? (e.g., Which MINED initiatives/activities are achieving its objectives as planned and which do not and why?)
5. What challenges does the MINED face in providing equitable access to quality education for all children and youth in El Salvador?
6. What is USAID's comparative advantage to respond to the opportunities and challenges in the education sector in El Salvador?

The goal of the first question is to map out the state of education in El Salvador in terms of service delivery and learning outcomes, student flows/internal efficiency, teachers and education personnel, and sector planning & coordination. This question is also intended to identify the current support provided to MINED for each of those areas. The purpose of the second question is to assess the availability of quality data, and inform future data collection efforts.

The third, fourth, and fifth questions seek to gauge political will of the Government of El Salvador (GOES) toward education, and highlight gaps/needs in the education sector that the MINED prioritizes for future education programming in the country.

The objective of the final question is to synthesize responses from the previous questions and to understand USAID's niche in approaching education programming in El Salvador. Opportunities for USAID to work in El Salvador are at the nexus of gaps/needs in the education system, political will of the GOES MINED, and USAID's comparative advantage.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

USAID/El Salvador asks that the Sector Review Team recommend a design an approach that will meet the overall purpose of this study and answers the sector review questions outlined above. USAID/El Salvador is open to having the Sector Review Team provide alternative wording to questions or adding additional questions that align with the overarching objectives of the activity to the degree it is feasible.

USAID/El Salvador encourages the Sector Review Team to draw primarily from existing data sources including existing data sets (EMIS data, student performance data, etc.), evaluation and research reports, and sector policies and planning documents, and other relevant documentation. The Sector Review Team may consider complementing the aforementioned data with primary data collection to help the Sector Review Team fill in gaps discovered during the analysis of secondary data sources.

Based on the findings gathered through secondary data sources, the Sector Review Team will develop appropriate tools and conduct key informant interviews to complete gaps in information and validate initial findings, in particular for question two and three on MINED and education stakeholder priorities, opportunities and challenges.

USAID/El Salvador expects this Sector Review to apply the guidelines and best practices from UNESCO's Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines using a fragility lens, per USAID's Conflict and Fragility Analysis Companion Guide.

In the Table 1 below, we have provided a sample design matrix and an example that the Sector Review Team may use to articulate the approach to answer the primary research questions. USAID/El Salvador encourages the Sector Review Team to use this matrix to develop the approach to the design.

Table 1: Design Matrix Template

Suggested Questions	Purpose	Data Type	Potential Data Sources
1. What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the state of: enrollment, service delivery, learning outcomes, student retention and drop-out, teachers and education personnel supply and qualifications, and sector planning and coordination across pre-primary, primary, secondary and non-formal education?	To understand the current situation of education in El Salvador.	Review secondary documents and MINED education system data	MINED documentation EMIS Data TMIS Data El Salvador Rapid Education Risk Analysis (2016)
2. What is the availability and quality of education sector data (EMIS, TMIS, learning assessments, etc.)?	To understand the reliability of available education data.	Small sample data spot checks Described methodologies for existing data	Secondary Data: EMIS Data TMIS Data Learning assessments Primary Data: Key informant interviews
2. What is the availability and quality of education sector data (EMIS, TMIS, learning assessments, etc.)?	To understand the reliability of available education data.	Small sample data spot checks Described methodologies for existing data	Secondary Data: EMIS Data TMIS Data Learning assessments Primary Data: Key informant interviews
3. What education sector initiatives/activities are underway by the Ministry of Education, education stakeholders, other donors, etc. (e.g., who is doing what where)? What are the gaps in the education sector?	To map out education sector actors and interventions and inform USAID programming priorities.	Secondary data Primary data	Secondary Data: Project reports Primary Data: Key informant interviews
4. What are the key priorities	To identify	Categorize	Secondary Data:

Suggested Questions	Purpose	Data Type	Potential Data Sources
of the Ministry of Education to increase access to quality education? - Where does the MINED need additional support to advance their education objectives? - What is working well and not working well?	opportunities for USAID support to MINED.	priorities listed in existing documents put out by MINED. Review past donor investments to see what has received funding most frequently to determine highest priorities.	MINED education strategy/plan MINED reports EMIS Achievement data Project/donor reports and evaluations Primary Data: MINED Personnel
5. What challenges does the MINED face providing access to quality education for all children and youth in El Salvador?	To identify opportunities for USAID support to MINED.	Secondary document/data review Key informant interviews	MINED education strategy/plan
6. What is USAID's comparative advantage/niche to address the opportunities and challenges education programming in El Salvador?	To identify opportunities for USAID support to MINED.	Secondary document/data review Key informant interviews	USAID Project Documents (USAID/DEC) RERA (2016) USAID DG Assessment Report (2015)

DELIVERABLES

1. *Planning meeting with USAID/El Salvador:* Within the first 5 working days of the assessment start date, the Sector Review Team will participate in a planning meeting. During this meeting, the Sector Review Team will work with staff from USAID/El Salvador, including representatives of the Democracy and Governance Office, especially the Education Team, and representatives of the Regional Program Office to understand the need for an education sector review, discuss the purpose of the sector review and possible approaches, and draft a preliminary timeline. USAID/Washington technical and regional staff may provide additional support.

2. *Draft Work Plan:* At least two working days prior to the planning meeting, the Sector Review Team will submit electronically in a Word Document to USAID a draft work plan which shall be completed by the lead researcher and presented to the USAID Education Team. The draft work plan must include at minimum: 1) a list of possible activities to be conducted by the Sector Review Team to achieve the purpose of this study; 2) the anticipated schedule and logistical arrangements needed; and 3) a list of the members of the Sector Review team, delineated by roles and responsibilities.

3. *Sector Review Design Report and Workplan:* Within 10 working days of completing the planning meeting, the Sector Review team will submit electronically in a Word Document to USAID a draft design report and workplan. The Evaluation Design Report should consist of the following sections:
   a. Purpose of the sector review and the primary review questions
   b. Methodology Section

- Approach to the sector review
- Justification for the approach
- Data needs
- Data collection
- Preliminary analysis plan
c. Reporting and Dissemination plan (including upload to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse based on approval by USAID)
d. Draft Primary Data Collection Instruments

USAID/El Salvador and relevant stakeholders are asked to take up to 5 business days from the date USAID receives the draft design report and workplan to review and consolidate comments and submit them to the Sector Review Team. The Sector Review Team must submit electronically to USAID a final Design Report and Work Plan within 5 business days after the date they receive the consolidated comments on the draft design and work plan.

4. *Draft Education Sector Review Report:* The draft sector report should be consistent with the guidance provided in Section VIII: Final Report Format. The report will address each of the questions identified in this SOW and any other issues the team considers to have a bearing on the USAID/El Salvador's future programs in El Salvador. Any such issues can be included in the report only after consultation with USAID/El Salvador. The submission date for the draft Sector Review Report will be determined in the work plan. Once the initial draft Education Sector Report is submitted, USAID/El Salvador will have 10 business days in which to review and submit consolidated comments on the draft to the Sector Review Team. The Sector Review Team must submit a revised report 10 business days hence, and again USAID/El Salvador will review and either send comments on this final draft report within 5 business days of its submission.

5. *Final Education Sector Review Report:* The Sector Review Team will be asked to take no more than 5 business days to respond/incorporate the final comments from the USAID/El Salvador office. The Sector Review Team will then submit electronically the final report to USAID/El Salvador. All data and records will be submitted in full and should be in electronic form in easily readable format, organized and documented for use by those not fully familiar with the intervention or evaluation, and owned by USAID.

6. *Final Presentation:* The Sector Review Team is must hold a final presentation in person/by virtual conferencing software to brief USAID/El Salvador, USAID/Washington Regional Bureaus and USAID/E3/ED on the summary of findings and recommendations to USAID. This presentation will be scheduled as agreed upon during the planning meeting.

RESEARCH TEAM COMPOSITION
All team members will be required to provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest or describing any existing conflict of interest. The team shall demonstrate familiarity with USAID's evaluation policies and guidance included in the USAID Automated Directive System (ADS) in Chapter 200. The Team will be integrated by a combination of national and international experts:

1. The **Team Leader** will lead the sector review, ensuring quality control and management oversight for the research team. The Team Leader will be responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of the sector review methodology.

   Requisite Skills and Experience: The Team Leader must have significant demonstrated relevant expertise on education in the region. The Team Leader should also have a minimum of seven (7) years of experience in applied research and secondary research analysis at least 5 years of this experience in the Latin America region (El Salvador experience preferred) including qualitative evaluation design, methods selection, management, and implementation. The Team

Leader must hold an advanced a Master's degree in a relevant field (Education, Economics, International Relations, Public Policy, Social Science, etc.). He/she should be fluent in both English and Spanish.

2. **Two (2) Education Specialists.** The Education Specialists will participate on the review team under the direction of the Team Leader. The Education Specialists will contribute to the development of the Education Sector Review methodology. While exact division of labor will be facilitated by the Team Leader, it is expected that the Education Specialists will be assigned secondary research duties such as desk reviews, secondary research compilation and analysis, and assist on the writing of all report documents. The Education Specialists may also conduct interviews and conduct qualitative data analysis.

   Requisite Skills and Experience: The Education Specialists should have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in assessing, monitoring, evaluating and/or planning in the education sector. At least three (3) years of this experience should be in the Latin America region and preferably have a broad network of contacts in the education sector that can assist in secondary research and expert consultations. The Education Specialists must hold   at minimum a bachelor degree in an education relevant field. Master's is a plus. He/she should be fluent or native Spanish speaker, and have at least professional fluency in English, or higher if he/she is expected to provide substantial writing assistance to the Team Leader.

3. The **Citizen Security Expert** will participate on the review team under the direction of the Team Leader. The technical expert will contribute to the development of the Education Sector Review methodology. While exact division of labor will be facilitated by the Team Leader, it is expected that the Technical Expert will be assigned secondary research duties such as desk reviews, secondary research compilation and analysis, and assist on the writing of all report documents, particularly in social areas that can affect the education sector outcomes, such as citizen security and governance. The Technical Expert may also conduct interviews and conduct qualitative data analysis.

   Requisite Skills and Experience: The Technical Expert should have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in assessing, monitoring, evaluating and/or planning. At least three (3) years of this experience should be in the Latin America region. The Technical Expert should hold at least a bachelor degree in a social science relevant field (Public Policy, Political Science, Governance, Citizen Security, Education, etc.). Master's is a plus. He/she should be fluent or native Spanish speaker, and have at least professional fluency in English, or higher if he/she is expected to provide substantial writing assistance to the Team Leader.

FINAL REPORT FORMAT

The final Education Sector Review Report must include an executive summary; background of the local context; the sector review purpose and main questions; the methodology or methodologies; the limitations to the review; findings, conclusions, and recommendations; and annexes.

The executive summary should be 1–2 pages in length and summarize the purpose, background of main evaluation questions, methods, findings, conclusions, and recommendations (if applicable).

The sector review methodology shall be explained in the report in detail. Limitations to the review shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the review methodology (e.g., selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).

The annexes to the report shall include:
- The Sector Review SOW;
- Any statements of difference regarding significant unresolved differences of opinion by

funders, implementers, and/or members of the review team;
- All data collection and analysis tools used in conducting the review, such as questionnaires, checklists, and discussion guides;
- All sources of information, properly identified and listed; and
- Signed disclosure of conflict of interest forms for all assessment team members, either attesting to a lack of conflicts of interest or describing existing conflicts of.
- Any "statements of difference" regarding significant unresolved differences of opinion by funders, implementers, and/or members of the review team;
- Summary information about review team members, including qualifications, experience, and role on the team.

In accordance with ADS 201, the contractor will make the final sector review report publicly available through the Development Experience Clearinghouse within three months of the approval of the final report.

I.   OTHER REQUIREMENTS

All primary data collected by the review team must be provided in machine-readable, non-proprietary formats as required by USAID's Open Data policy (see ADS 579). The data should be organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the education sector.

All modifications to the required elements of the SOW of the contract/agreement, whether in technical requirements, sector review questions, review team composition, methodology, or timeline, need to be agreed upon in writing by USAID/El Salvador. Any revisions must be updated in the SOW that is included as an annex to the Sector Review Report.

ANNEX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

KII Protocol MINED

      Name of Moderator_____

      Date_____

      Interviewee_____

Questions: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the availability of education sector data? What education sector initiatives/ activities are underway by MINED, stakeholders, etc.? What are the key priorities of the MINED related to equitable access to quality education? What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable access to quality education for all children and youth? What is USAID's comparative advantage to respond to the opportunities and challenges in the education sector in El Salvador??

I.   Introduction

Give an explanation

> *Good afternoon. My name is _____ and I am working to conduct an education sector assessment in El Salvador with USAID. The sector assessment will be used USAID and implementing partners to help make the programming more effective. Thank you for coming.*

Present the purpose

> *We are here today to talk about education sector initiatives, key education priorities, and current challenges. The purpose is to get your perception. I am not here to share information, or to give you my opinions. Your perceptions are what matter. There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.*

Discuss procedure

> *_____ (colleague) will be taking notes and tape recording the discussion so that I do not miss anything you have to say. I explained these procedures to you when we set up this meeting. As you know everything is confidential. No one will know who said what. The discussion will last approximately one hour. There is a lot I want to discuss, so at times I may move us along a bit. We will hold a validation workshop at the end of August to receive your feedback on our findings.*

II.   Interview

> 1. *What education sector initiatives are underway by MINED, stakeholders and/or donors?*

Probes: *Where?, Who? What are the gaps?*

2. *What are the key priorities of MINED to increase access to quality education?*

   Probes: *Where is additional support needed? What is working well/ not well?*

3. *What challenges does MINED face in providing quality access for all children and youth?*

    Probes: *Please tell me more about that.*

4. *How important is gender inclusion in the education system? What types of exclusion exist?*

5. *How does violence effect the education plans? Which measures are you taking to reduce the risk of violence.*

6. *Is there any additional information you would like to share relevant to the education sector?*

III.   Closure and Thanks!

KII Protocol Donors/ IPs

      Name of Moderator_____

      Date_____

      Interviewee_____

Questions: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the availability of education sector data? What education sector initiatives/ activities are underway by MINED, stakeholders, etc.? What are the key priorities of the MINED related to equitable access to quality education? What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable access to quality education for all children and youth? What is USAID's comparative advantage to respond to the opportunities and challenges in the education sector in El Salvador??

I.   Introduction

Give an explanation

> *Good afternoon. My name is _____ and I am working to conduct an education sector assessment in El Salvador with USAID. The sector assessment will be used USAID and implementing partners to help make the programming more effective. Thank you for coming.*

Present the purpose

> *We are here today to talk about education sector initiatives, key education priorities, and current challenges. The purpose is to get your perception. I am not here to share information, or to give you my opinions. Your perceptions are what matter. There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.*

Discuss procedure

> _____ (colleague) *will be taking notes and tape recording the discussion so that I do not miss anything you have to say. I explained these procedures to you when we set up this meeting. As you know everything is confidential. No one will know who said what. The discussion will last approximately one hour. There is a lot I want to discuss, so at times I may move us along a bit. We will hold a validation workshop at the end of August to receive your feedback on our findings.*

II.   Interview

> 1. *What education sector initiatives are underway by your organization?*

Probes: *Where?, Who? What are the gaps?*

2. *What are the key priorities of MINED to increase access to quality education and how does your organization support these priorities?*

   Probes: *Where is additional support needed? What is working well/ not well?*

3. *What are the challenges in providing quality access for all children and youth?*

    Probes: *Please tell me more about that.*

4. *How important is gender inclusion in the education system? What types of exclusion exist?*

5. *How does violence effect the education plans? Which measures are you taking to reduce the risk of violence.*

6. *Is there any additional information you would like to share relevant to the education sector?*

KII Protocol USAID

     Name of Moderator_____

     Date_____

     Interviewee_____

Questions: What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the availability of education sector data? What education sector initiatives/ activities are underway by MINED, stakeholders, etc.? What are the key priorities of the MINED related to equitable access to quality education? What challenges does MINED face in providing equitable access to quality education for all children and youth? What is USAID's comparative advantage to respond to the opportunities and challenges in the education sector in El Salvador?

## I.	Introduction

Give an explanation

> *Good afternoon. My name is _____ and I am working to conduct an education sector assessment in El Salvador with USAID. The sector assessment will be used USAID and implementing partners to help make the programming more effective. Thank you for coming.*

Present the purpose

> *We are here today to talk about education sector initiatives, key education priorities, and current challenges. The purpose is to get your perception. I am not here to share information, or to give you my opinions. Your perceptions are what matter. There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.*

Discuss procedure

> _____ (colleague) *will be taking notes and tape recording the discussion so that I do not miss anything you have to say. I explained these procedures to you when we set up this meeting. As you know everything is confidential. No one will know who said what. The discussion will last approximately one hour. There is a lot I want to discuss, so at times I may move us along a bit. We will hold a validation workshop at the end of August to receive your feedback on our findings.*

## II.	Interview

> 1.	*What education sector initiatives are underway by USAID?*

Probes: *Where? Who? What are the gaps?*

2. *What are the key priorities of MINED to increase access to quality education?*

   Probes: *Where is additional support needed? What is working well/ not well?*

3. *What challenges does MINED face in providing quality access for all children and youth?*

   Probes: *Please tell me more about that.*

4. *How important is gender inclusion in the education system? What types of exclusion exist?*

5. *How does violence effect the education plans? Which measures are you taking to reduce the risk of violence.*

6. *Is there any additional information you would like to share relevant to the education sector?*

III.   Closure and Thanks!

ANNEX C: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW LIST

Agency	Person(s) and Titles	Meeting Date
US Agencies		
USAID		
USAID		
USAID		
MINED		
National director of education in science, technology and innovation	William Mejía	August 16, 2017
National director of basic education	Xiomara Rodríguez	Ausgust 18, 2017
National Director of Youth and Adult Education	Angélica Paniagua	August 15, 2017
Deputy minister of education	Francisco Castaneda	August 22, 2017
Flexible modal manager	Gloria Evelyn Hernández	
Donors/ IPs/ NGOs		
FEDISAL	Joana Castaneda, M&E Specialist Hilda Rosales, Program Director Alfonso Viquez, Youth Specialist Jorge Arevalo, CoP	July 5, 2017
FUNPRES	Delia de Aviles, Director	July 5, 2017
Mendez and Associates	Margarita Sanchez, Gender Specialist	July 5, 2017
FUSADES	Helga Cuellar, Researcher	July 5, 2017
UNICEF	Martha Navarro, Education Officer Karla Rubio, monitoring and evaluation officer Sandra Aguilera, Protection Officer	August 15, 2017

ANNEX D: LITERATURE REVIEW TOOL

Document title:

Author:

Publisher:

Year:

Reader:

Fill in relevant information for each research question in English in bullet form; include quotes and page numbers.

Summary:

1. What is the current state of education in El Salvador? What is the state of: enrollment, service delivery, learning outcomes, student retention and drop-out, teachers and education personnel supply and qualifications, and sector planning & coordination across pre-primary, primary, secondary and nonformal education?

2. What is the availability and quality of education sector data (examples include Education Management Information Systems or EMIS, Teacher Management Information Systems or TMIS, learning assessments, etc.)?

3. What education sector initiatives/activities are underway by MINED, education stakeholders, other donors, etc. (e.g. who is doing what where)? What are the gaps in the education sector?

4. What are the key issues related to equity in El Salvador?

a. What are the key obstacles to equitable access (enrolment, attendance, and successful completion) in El Salvador? Specifically, what are the key internal factors (e.g. poor conditions of schools or unequal distribution of quality schools; irrelevant curriculum; etc.) and external factors (e.g. poverty and need to work; teen pregnancy; violence; gang recruitment, etc.) that impact enrolment, attendance, and successful completion?

b. Which specific groups of children and youth are marginalized in the system and face obstacles to equitable access at all levels of the education system in El Salvador? Where are the obstacles most notable for each group (i.e. enrolment, attendance, completion, or a combination of these three)?

c. How does the high level of violence and persistent insecurity in the country impact education equity and the system overall and vice versa?

d. What additional issues of exclusion, marginalization, and vulnerability exist in the education system?

5. What are the key priorities of the MINED related to equitable access to quality education?

    a. Where does the MINED need additional support to advance their education objectives?

    b. What does MINED see as working well and not working well? (e.g. Which MINED's initiatives/activities are achieving its objectives as planned and which do not and why?)

6. What challenges does the MINED face in providing equitable access to quality education for all children and youth in El Salvador?

7. What is USAID's comparative advantage to respond to the opportunities and challenges in the education sector in El Salvador?

ANNEX E: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berk- Seligson, S. et al (2014). Impact Evaluation of USAID's Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention Approach in Central America: El Salvador Report, Latin American Public Opinion Project

USAID engaged the Latin American Public Opinion Project from Vanderbilt University to conduct an impact evaluation of their Community-Based Crime and Violence Prevention Approach in Central America as part of the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). As in the regional and other country-specific (Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) evaluations, the El Salvador specific study employed a systematic, longitude, and treatment/control methodology that involved a mixed-methods approach using both quantitative data through household surveys and qualitative data through semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders that included community leaders, teachers and school directors, religious leaders working with you, at-risk youth, and implementers of CARSI initiatives (RTI/Creative). The impact study clearly revealed that a community-based crime and violence prevention approach works and that expected outcomes improved more (or declined less) in the treatment communities.

Keywords: Community-based crime prevention; community-based violence prevention; youth; education; gang prevention

Cox, C., et al (2014). Educación ciudadana en américa latina: Prioridades de los currículos escolares, UNESCO.

The paper analyzes the curricula of 6 countries in relation to citizen competencies. It is organized in four parts: State of the democratic belief in the region regarding the educational work in the area of citizenship. It describes the structural characteristics of the curricula of the six countries and the categories for analysis. The contents of the six curricula examined in relation to citizenship, in their civic and civil dimension, are analyzed. It offers some reflections oriented to the curricular development in the area. It does not provide an analysis of the situation in El Salvador, but its methodology could be used.

Keyword: curriculum

CONED (2016). Plan El Salvador Educado

The document reflects a summary of diagnoses of the education sector and six specific lines of action with their objectives in the themes of: Prevention of violence, quality teaching, Early childhood care, Twelve degrees of schooling, Higher education, and Infrastructure. See introduction of the Assessment for more information. Also, this document has been integrated throughout.

Keywords: Education Plan

Clemens, M. (2017). Violence, Development, and Migration Waves: Evidence from Central American child migrant apprehensions, Center for Global Development

A recent surge in child migration to the U.S. from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala has occurred in the context of high rates of regional violence. But little quantitative evidence exists on the causal relationship between violence and international emigration in this or any other region. This paper studies the relationship between violence in the Northern Triangle and child migration to the United States using novel, individual-level, anonymized data on all 178,825 U.S. apprehensions of unaccompanied child migrants from these countries between 2011 and 2016. It matches these observations to data on violence, economic conditions, and demographic conditions in their

municipalities of origin. It finds that one additional homicide per year in the region, sustained over the whole period, caused a cumulative total of 3.7 unaccompanied child apprehensions in the United States.

Keywords: child migration, violence, Central America, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, unaccompanied minors

Diaz-Aguado, M et al (2009). Prevenir la violencia de género desde la escuela, Revista de Estudios de Juventud

This article seeks to analyze the relationship between sexism and violence in general and the how adolescents overcome both. It identifies considerable advances and important limitations. It also analyzes important similarities between gender-based violence and bullying, two most frequent, daily forms of violence. Both are expressions of a model based on domination and submission, which represents the antithesis of democratic values. Violence prevention programs developed from a holistic violence prevention perspective based on the construction of equality and respect for human rights that includes rejecting sexism and harassment, include basic components such as the establishment of cooperative relations and the explicit construction of a curriculum oriented towards non-violence that includes activities on its most frequent manifestations. The evaluation of such programs implemented in schools with adolescents reflects its effectiveness in la reduction of sexism and harassment of peers both in and out of school and leisure, and the improvement in relationships with   teachers.

Keywords: School-related Gender-based violence, bullying, violence prevention, schools, youth, adolescents

Curtin, T (2017). Overview doc El Salvador Ed sector assessment

This document is an overview of findings from FGD with MINED in 2016 about reading (challenges and priorities), key documents, potential focus areas for the education sector review, and statistics that could be useful for answering the key research questions of the Education Sector Review.

Keywords: El Salvador, education, assessment, early grade reading, enrollment rates, literacy rates

DOJ BJA (2007). Guide for preventing and responding to school violence

The purpose of the document is to present different strategies and approaches for members of school communities to consider when creating safer learning environments. This document is not specific to El Salvador, rather it highlights school violence worldwide. It notes approximately 10 reasons for school violence including: exposure to violence in the home or community, peer pressure to engage, child abuse and neglect, prejudices based on race, religion etc., drugs and alcohol among others. The approach of the guide includes: ways to prevent violence, planning and training, how to respond during crisis, how to handle the aftermath of crisis, legal considerations and recommendations for the media.

Keywords: violence

Edwards, B (2016). Teacher education in El Salvador: Historical, political, and technical dimensions, International handbook of teacher education

This article argues that despite all that has been written about El Salvador's education system, there is a significant gap on teacher education. First the article characterizes the history and current system. Then it focuses on aspects of teacher education- development, aims and framework. It looks at programs, curricula and methods to train teachers. Challenges are discussed at the end.

Keywords: teacher training

Edwards, B. et al (2015). Education in El Salvador: Past, present, prospects

This article provides an overview of the education system in El Salvador. It starts with a description of the context and offers a historical perspective. Then, it provides a useful overview of the organization of the system. Specific themes are presented: enrollment, retention and dropout; multi-grade schools; curricula; teacher and principal training and job placement; decentralization and parental involvement; evaluation and financing. The final section presents the more recent context (2015), reforms and challenges. This article will be particularly useful with regard to current initiatives as well as current challenges.

Keywords: challenges, initiatives

FEDISAL (year unknown). Propuesta Pedagógica

This is a guiding document for the elaboration of the Pedagogical Proposal. It consists of three parts, the first describes the need for the pedagogical proposal, the second the elements it carries and the third how it is made operational.

Keywords: Guide

Kang, K. (2016). Dropout factors in El Salvador across different levels of violence, Working paper drafted with support from Korea University grant

"This study focuses on how dropout factors vary across low, medium and high levels of violence in different municipalities of El Salvador for primary and lower secondary education students. A logistic regression analysis is used to model dropout. The results show that dropout factors vary across areas with different violence levels for primary and secondary school students. For primary school students, poverty, gender, and repetition are the significant factors, and for secondary school students, marital status, involvement in agriculture, provision of school supplies, and repetition are the significant factors. Based on these results, this study recommends school retention policies according to the level of violence. These policies will have an important impact on the local, regional, and global economies." (Article abstract copied). A summary of past studies that show links between violence and dropouts in other countries is included.

Keywords: dropout, El Salvador, poverty, violence

Hoyas, R. de (2015). Out of School and Out of Work: Risk and Opportunities for Latin America's Ninis, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / World Bank

This study aims to provide policy makers in the region with analysis of the nini issue and options for addressing it in their countries. To do so, the study undertakes a comprehensive diagnosis quantifying the problem, develops a conceptual framework identifying the determinants of youths' choices, uses all the available data to test the theoretical implications, and reviews the evidence regarding interventions that have proven effective in keeping youth in school and helping them become employed. The study has five essential messages. 1. One in five youth aged 15–24 in Latin America is out of school and not working. 2. The typical Latin American nini is a woman with incomplete

secondary education who lives in an urban household in the bottom 40 percent of the income distribution. 3. At the same time, it is men who have accounted for all of the growth in the number of ninis in the region. 4. The most common path to becoming a nini, particularly for men, is through early school dropout into the labor market.5. There are effective interventions to reduce school dropout rates and improve the employability of ninis. Countries in Central America.

International Crisis Group (2017). Mafia of the Poor: Gang Violence and Extortion in Central

This report comprehensively explores the current state of gang violence and its links to extortion in the Northern Triangle Central American countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras). It outlines a historical background of gang proliferation, notably the civil wars and/or dictatorships in each country of the 1980s and 1990s, poor socio-economic conditions, and the later mass deportation of nearly 1000 people back to these counties following the 1992 L.A. riots, a large percentage who were deemed as criminal, including with links to MS-13 and B-18 gangs of L.A. The report describes how gangs survive economically principally through largely unlucrative extortion, particularly in El Salvador, thereby earning the denomination of "mafia of the poor". It outlines underlying causes of gang proliferation such as youth including poverty, marginalization of certain groups of youth, broken homes and limited family support, and socially-constructed gender roles that discriminate against women and girls and makes them vulnerable to gender-based violence as a recruitment mechanism. The report notes that the most common approach used by the three governments to combat gang violence is through a law enforcement approach through heightened security measures and criminalization of gangs despite evidence that points to this strategy's ineffectiveness.

Kluve, J. et al (2016). Do youth employment programs improve labor market outcomes? A systematic review, IZA

The study reviews the evidence of the impact of youth employment programs on labor market outcomes. It looks at the effectiveness of various interventions. 113 counterfactual studies are examined. The factors they examine include the country context, targeted beneficiaries, design and implementation. They find that one-third of youth employment programs offered worldwide show a significant impact on labor market outcomes. This is particularly the case in low and middle-income countries. In addition, in these countries skills, training and entrepreneurship programs have the greatest impact.

Lipsey, M. et al (2005). The effectiveness of school based violence programs on reducing disruptive and aggressive behavior.

This document serves two-fold- one it presents an excellent methodological approach for conducting a meta-analysis. They identify the parameters for the literature review and use 372 school based studies. One interesting findings was that larger program effects were achieved with relatively higher risk students, in other words there was more of a difference or impact of a school based violence prevention program when children/youth were more at risk. Furthermore, programs generally are effective at reducing common forms of aggressive behaviors- fighting, name calling, intimidation, and negative interpersonal behaviors.

Key Word: SBV

MINED (2014). Revisión nacional 2015 de la Educación para Todos: El Salvador

The document briefly describes the main advances the country has experienced in the 6 EFA goals in the period 2000-2013, reviews the challenges posed in these years and the strategies developed. At the same time, it presents evidences and data that show the temporal route and the country advances in educative matter; In addition, lessons, priorities and post 2015 perspectives are included. This is a very good summary of the data, projects and programs developed from 2000 to 2013.

MINED (2016). Política de Equidad y Igualdad de Genero: Plan de Implementación

Developed through a participatory, consultative process, the Gender Equity and Equality Policy and accompanying implementation plan is a comprehensive roadmap for El Salvador's education sector to integrate gender throughout the system as required by the 2011 General Education Law. It is based on both a philosophical and legal framework. The philosophical framework rests on the premise that "the educational system cannot maintain a "neutral" attitude towards gender inequality, and its responsibility is to be the motor of change in school and society." (p. 16). Additionally, this philosophical framework can be characterized by the following: "It is not simply that girls are included in a male model of education (androcentrism), but rather an education where there is a fusion of cultural patterns that have previously been considered gender specific." (p. 16).

Keywords: gender equity, gender equality, school-based gender-based violence, early pregnancy, inclusive education, non-sexist education, gender mainstreaming, El Salvador,

NREPP (2015). Literature review school-based violence prevention programs

The article begins by providing a definition for school based violence: "a range of activities including assaults with or without weapons, physical fights, threats or disruptive acts other than physical fights, bullying, hostile or threatening remarks between groups of students and gang violence." P.1 National Youth Violence Prevention Center Then the article goes on to explain the scope of the problem, risk factors, impacts and outcome evidence.

Keywords: school based violence

Olate, R. et al (2012). Predictors of violence and delinquency among high risk youth and youth gang members in San Salvador, El Salvador, International Social Work 55(3) 383–401

"Low future orientation, low empathy, educational difficulty, school expulsion, delinquent peers, gang membership, and low social support were found to be significant risk factors for violence and delinquency among a sample (N=174) of high risk youth and youth gang members in San Salvador, El Salvador." (Article abstract) A unique methodology, the study used surveys administered with gang-involved and non-gang youth in their shared communities in the Greater San Salvador Metropolitan Area. The risk factors for both violence and also delinquency were measured in five categories: individual, family, peer, school, and community using various self-reporting tools. The article includes a brief literature review on related previous studies.
Keywords: Central America, delinquency, El Salvador, gangs, youth violence

Park-Higgerson (2008). The evaluation of school-based violence prevention programs: a meta-analysis, Journal of School Health

This is a meta-analysis on school based violence prevention programs. Similar to other studies of this type it focuses on RCT designed studies in the analysis. This study is unique primarily because it did not detect an effect as a result of programs. Specifically, the study evaluated the characteristics of school based violence prevention programs. The article argues that youth violence and aggressive behaviors is an increasing public health issue with social, economic, psychological impacts and consequences.

Keywords: school based violence

Save the Children (2013). Literacy Boost El Salvador Baseline Report

This is a well written report. It has a strong design and executive summary. The main point of the report is that there are no differences between Literacy Boost intervention schools and comparison schools. Literacy Boost is a program by Save which includes teacher training, community reading activities, age appropriate local language material creation for early literacy. Compared to other international contexts children in the sample have stronger home literacy environments in El Salvador. The assessment is similar to EGRA and includes: letter identification, single word recognition, fluency, accuracy and comprehension.

Keywords: early reading

Taddei, A (2016). Modelo de Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno en El Salvador. Documento de sistematización, MINED.

It is a systematization of the implementation of the model of integrated system of full time inclusive school starting in 2009, which has summarized several investigations, interviews and field observations have been made. They are a number of reflections and generic proposals ranging from didactic aspects, to issues of school management in a very general way and without scientific basis.

Keywords: SI EITP

USAID (2016). Rapid Education and Risk Analysis El Salvador Final Report

As the name suggests, the Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) seeks to provide USAID program planners and managers with a with a fast and "good enough" situation analysis of the interactions between education and the multiple risks that may existing any given crisis and/or conflict affected environment, so that such contextual information can inform Mission policy and programming. In the case of El Salvador, the RERA specifically focused on risks associated with gang violence, general insecurity and, to a lesser extent, natural disasters, and their interaction with different aspects of the education sector, such as schools, education staff, learners, families, and school communities.

Keywords: El Salvador, youth, dropout, violence, gender, disaster risk, prevention, education

USAID (2016). Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Assessment of El Salvador
Author: USAID

The purposes of the document are to provide an analysis of the DRG problems in El Salvador and recommend a set of program ideas for USAID to strengthen the promotion of democratic governance and human rights. The researchers argue that institutional advances have occurred what help

consolidate democratic governance. On the other hand, there remain challenges regarding electoral procedures, transparency and anticorruption, fiscal and civil service reform. These challenges are compounded by limited financial resources, weak institutional capacity, mismanagement, clientelism and a tendency to address problems bureaucratically (p. 5). The document provides specific reference to gang related violence.   Citizen security and violence is discussed on p. 19, key groups including children/youth, people with disabilities among others are discussed on p. 55 and education reforms are described on p. 74.

Keywords: democracy, governance, rights, gangs

USAID (2014). Integrating conflict and fragility analysis into the education system analysis guidelines

The guidelines begin by articulating the reality of more than half of children living in fragile contexts and therefore the importance of addressing the issue in the international education community. In addition, it explains the "bi directional" relationship between conflict/ fragility and education. Specifically, the report- reviews existing approaches, methodologies and tools; analyzes a select sample of approaches, methodologies and tools and proposes a methodology to integrate conflict and fragility analysis. The chapter (6) on equity is particularly useful for the education sector assessment, it proposes indicators related to equity in enrollment and learning achievement, for example disaggregate all indicators for group characteristics and geography and specific questions (see page 33). It also provides questions regarding the relationship between equity and the distribution of public education resources (also see page 33).

Keywords: conflict, fragility, guidance

USAID (2017). PowerPoint/Out-Brief: Education for Children and Youth

This PowerPoint provides an overview of the current state of out-of-school youth in El Salvador, providing nationwide data from various data sources and also data collected through the USAID-supported ECY program. The PP provides data on number of OOSY ages 12-24 between 2012 and 2015, illustrating a steady increase since 2012. Other key data include number of OOSY capable of entering the school system at the third cycle or bachillerato, youth capable of entering third cycle but does no study or work, among other data. The PP also provides ECY project data related to the youth who applied to participate in the program. These include disaggregation by sex, last grade completed, and age.
Keywords: youth, El Salvador, out-of-school time, out-of-school youth, dropout

USAID (2015). CEN Strategy

A combination of economic stagnation, weak governance, and insecurity in some countries has placed Central America on a trajectory of decline. The recent surge in migration to the United States and Mexico from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala is just one product of Central America's inability to find solutions to the challenges the region faces. Current efforts by Central American governments, United States, and other regional governments have proven insufficient to achieve meaningful progress in addressing these challenges. Absent significant progress, security will continue to deteriorate, institutions will not be able to provide services to their citizens, millions will remain in poverty, and political instability is likely to grow. (page. 1)

Keywords: Strategy document

USAID (2012) USAID Youth in Development Policy

In response to more than half of the world's population being under the age of 30, this policy outlines how USAID will integrate youth systematically in programming across development sectors. The policy is guided by a results framework with one overarching goal, two specific objectives, and three expected outcomes. The goal to improve the capacities and enable the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities and nations. The specific objectives are (1) strengthen youth programming, participation and partnership in support of Agency development objectives and (2) mainstream and integrate youth issues and engage young people across Agency initiatives and operations.

Keywords: youth, USAID policy, resilience, participation, development

USAID- El Salvador (2013). CDCS El Salvador 2013-2017

The CDCs provides the development hypothesis and articulate the development objectives: citizen security and rule of law in targeted areas improved, and economic growth opportunities in trade expanded. Within each of these development objectives the intermediate results are identified, IR1:1- justice, transparency and accountability, IR1:2- crime and violence in targeted municipalities and IR2:1- business enabling environment improved and IR2:2- productivity of targeted business increased. The document provides a good background and challenges, in particular the challenge of criminal activity, it states" criminal activity, particularly gang related violence, has increased dramatically... El Salvador has one of the highest homicide rates in the world." P. 3

Keywords: education policy, high crime municipalities

UNESCO (2015). Safety, Resilience and Social Cohesion: A guide for education sector planners

This booklet is one in a series of six on education planning to promote safety, resilience and social cohesion in education. The introduction highlights the questions: how well does our education system protect students and teachers from the effects of disaster and conflict? Are our schools safe? What systems are in place to strengthen resilience of the system following a disaster among others. There are five clear take away points: conflict and disaster risk analysis plays an essential role in the security of the education system, the structure and questions to be included in a conflict and disaster risk analysis should be agreed on with a diverse group of stakeholders, existing information should be used (for example EMIS), additional information should only be collected as needed, and analysis should be creative.

Keywords: analysis, conflict, risk, disaster

Viquiz, A. (2016). Aporte de Especialista den Juventud ECY: Grandes Logros del MINED 2011-2015.

This document provides an overview of MINED's most important achievements during the period of 2011-2016. The achievements are divided into categories based on the time periods that corresponds to the GOES/MINED respective administrations, MAURICIO FUNES / HATO HASBUN-HECTOR SAMOUR (2011-2014) and GESTIÓN SANCHEZ CERÉN / CARLOS CANJURA (2015-2016. It concludes with the Youth Specialists reflections about MINED priorities and the achievements overall. Notable achievements from 2011-2014 include creation and consolidation of the SIEITP (Integrated

system of Full time inclusive schools) through extensive piloting throughout the country, training with school directors, and creation of a pedagogical model for this new system.

ANNEX F: ILLUSTRATIVE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Newspaper	Article [link]	Date
Dialogos por El Salvador	Presentan informe a un ano de emplementacion del Plan El Salvador Educado	June 22, 2017
Jaime Lopez (author), EDH	Pandilleros han asesinado a un maestro cada mes en lo que va del 2017	June 21, 2017
La Presna	Estos son los logros conseguidos en el primaer ano de Plan El Salvador Educado	June 26, 2017

ANNEX G: LIST OF REFERENCES

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ANNEX H: SUPPLEMENT

Citizen Security (infosegura.org)

Donor	Project	Institution	Counter-Part	Funding
USAID	Adopte una Escuela		FEPADE	USA
PNUD	Apoyo a elaboración de planes policiales para implementación del PESS	PNC		BM
PNUD	Apoyo a elaboración del diagnóstico y plan municipal PESS	MJSP		BM
FAO	Apoyo a familias mediante la implementación de agricultura urbana y periurbana	MINED, ALCALDIA	MAG	FAO
FAO	Apoyo a la implementación de la estrategia de compras públicas de la agricultura familiar como complemento al refrigerio	MINED		BRAZIL
FAO	Apoyo a la reactivación de los medios de vida de familias mediante la construcción de activos productivos: huertos familiares, sistemas de captación de agua y riego por goteo	MINED, ALCALDÍA	MAG	FAO
UNION EUROPEA	Apoyo a la rehabilitación de mujeres privadas de libertad a su inserción socio laboral, a la inserción de sus hijos e hijas en los departamentos de La Libertad y Cabañas, en El Salvador.	MJSP (DGCP), CONNA, MINED	ACISAM	
UNICEF	Atención integral a la Primera Infancia: i) Orientación a las familias en adecuadas prácticas de crianza e interacción familiar	MINED-Alcaldía	ISNA	UNICEF ES
USAID	Better Harvest Program		Technoserve	USA
PNUD	Desarrollar propuestas de acción para fortalecer la resiliencia de la juventud frente a la violencia, frente a violencia interpersonal y violencia basada en género (Proyecto IDHES)	MINED - Alcaldia	GOES-Vicepresidencia	PNUD / FAO / PMA / FIDA / UNICEF / BECIE / UNFPA
USAID	Desarrollo Juvenil y comunitario		Glasswing International	USA
USAID	Educación para la Niñez y Juventud	MINED	FEDISAL, Aso.Salesiana, FUNPRES, FUSALMO, Agape, Univ. Don Bosco, FHI	USA
USAID	El Salvador National Cacao Initiative		Catholic Relief Services	USA
UNICEF	Elaboración /actualización de diagnósticos y líneas de base locales sobre violencia contra NNA, y seguimiento de indicadores relacionados a factores de riesgo y de protección a nivel municipal	MJSP	CMPV, Comité de Derechos, Observatorio	Fondos SIDA
UNICEF	Estrategia de prevención de violencia y del reclutamiento de NNA, a través de la dinamización de espacios públicos por medio del arte, cultura y deporte	MINED, ALCALDÍAS	ISNA	UNICEF ES
UNICEF	Estrategias, protocolos e instrumentos para flexibilizar la educación en contextos de violencia.	MINED	Plan Internacional	Fondos Canadá UNICEF ES

Donor	Project	Institution	Counter-Part	Funding
AECID	Fortalecer a la sociedad civil desde la educación integral, garantizando a la niñez, la adolescencia y la juventud la participación plena en el ciclo de las políticas públicas para una vida libre de violencia.	Centros Educativos MINED, Sociedad Civil	Fundación de Ayuda contra la Drogadicción (FAD).	Gobierno de España
OIM	Fortalecer las capacidades de protección y asistencia a migrantes vulnerables en Mesoamérica (PRM). Fase VI, capacitaciones sobre protección y asistencia a personas migrantes dirigidas a gobiernos y sociedad civil	MJSP	MRREE, DGME, ISDEMU, PDDH, CONNA, ISNA, INJUVE, ACNUR	Oficina de Población, Refugio y Migración , EEUU
UNICEF	Fortalecimiento de capacidades de liderazgo y comunicación de las comunidades educativas	MINED ALCALDÍAS	ESEN	UNICEF ES
UNIÓN EUROPEA	Fortalecimiento de las capacidades de los gobiernos locales en los procesos de participación ciudadana para una cultura de paz.	MINED Alcaldía	Alcaldía	UNIÓN EUROPEA
USAID	Fortalecimiento del Sector de Justicia en El Salvador	PNC, FGR, CSJ, PDDH, UTE	Checchi	USA
USAID	Higher Education Project		Research Triangle Institute	USA
UNICEF	Identificación, reinserción educativa y seguimiento, de NNA y jóvenes fuera de la escuela, mediante la articulación de la oferta municipal	MINED	Alcaldías, CMPVs	Fondos SIDA, Comité Alemán de UNICEF, UNICEF ES
UNIÓN EUROPEA	Iniciativas integrales de prevención de la violencia en los municipios libres de violencia en El Salvador	MINED Alcaldía	Alcaldía	UNIÓN EUROPEA
UNICEF	Niñas, niños y adolescentes de 28 centros educativos de San Marcos, Santa Tecla, San Martin y Santo Tomás, protegiéndose de la violencia de Género	MINED	OXFAM	
COOPERACION ITALIANA	Niños protagonistas – Prevención de la violencia entre y en contra de los menores a través de acciones de empoderamiento y apoyo a las familias y comunidades	MINED - Alcaldia	ONG Elis	Gobierno de Italia y ONG
AECID	Participación directa de la juventud salvadoreña en la gestión, implementación, seguimiento y monitoreo de políticas públicas relacionadas con la prevención de la violencia.	Gobiernos locales, sociedad civil sector privad.	CESAL y Fundación del Valle	Gobierno de España
COOPERACION ITALIANA	Prácticas restaurativas y arte para el desarrollo de una cultura de paz en El Salvador	MINED, ALCALDIA	ONG Soleterre	Gobierno de Italia y ONG
OIM	Prevención de los delitos vinculados a la migración irregular en Mesoamérica Capacitación de agentes comunitarios para prevención, Campañas en medios de comunicación, en escuelas, capacitación a periodista	MJSP, Alcaldía	MREE, CONMIGRANTES OEA y ACNUR	UNION EUROPEA

Donor	Project	Institution	Counter-Part	Funding
UNPFA	Prevención del acoso y abuso en la comunidad educativa	MINED		UNFPA, Proyecto BA1 Fundación Ford
USAID	Prevención del Crimen y la Violencia		CREATIVE	USA
UNODC	Prevención del delito para la infancia en línea	MINED	PNC, UNICEF	Estados Unidos
PNUD	Programa de inserción productiva, educativa y habilidades para la vida en el marco de iniciativas integrales de gestión local de seguridad ciudadana	MJSP	Alcaldía	BM
COOPERACION ITALIANA	Programa de Prevención y Rehabilitación de Jóvenes en Riesgo y en Conflicto con la Ley	DGCP, CONNA, MINED	MJSP	Gobierno de Italia
PNUD	Programas de inserción productiva, educativa y habilidades para la vida en el marco de iniciativas integrales de gestión local seguridad ciudadana	MINED-Alcaldía		AECID
OIM	Regional para fortalecer las capacidades de protección y asistencia a migrantes vulnerables en Mesoamérica (PRM). Fase VI, capacitaciones sobre protección y asistencia a personas migrantes dirigidas a gobiernos y sociedad civil	MJSP	MRREE, DGME, ISDEMU, PDDH, CONNA, ISNA, INJUVE, ACNUR	Oficina de Población, Refugio y Migración (PRM) / EEUU
USAID	Small and Medium Enterprise Development		Chemonics International	USA
USAID	SolucionES		FEPADE,FUND EFUSADES, Glasswing FUSAL	USA
ONUMUJER	Creación de un fondo de crédito y garantía especializado para mujeres en condición de exclusión y asistencia técnica para el desarrollo de emprendimientos productivos		Secre. Inclusión Social, Ciudad Mujer Bandesal, Conamype	Cooperación Italiana

Education, Ministry of Education (per the Law, 2017)

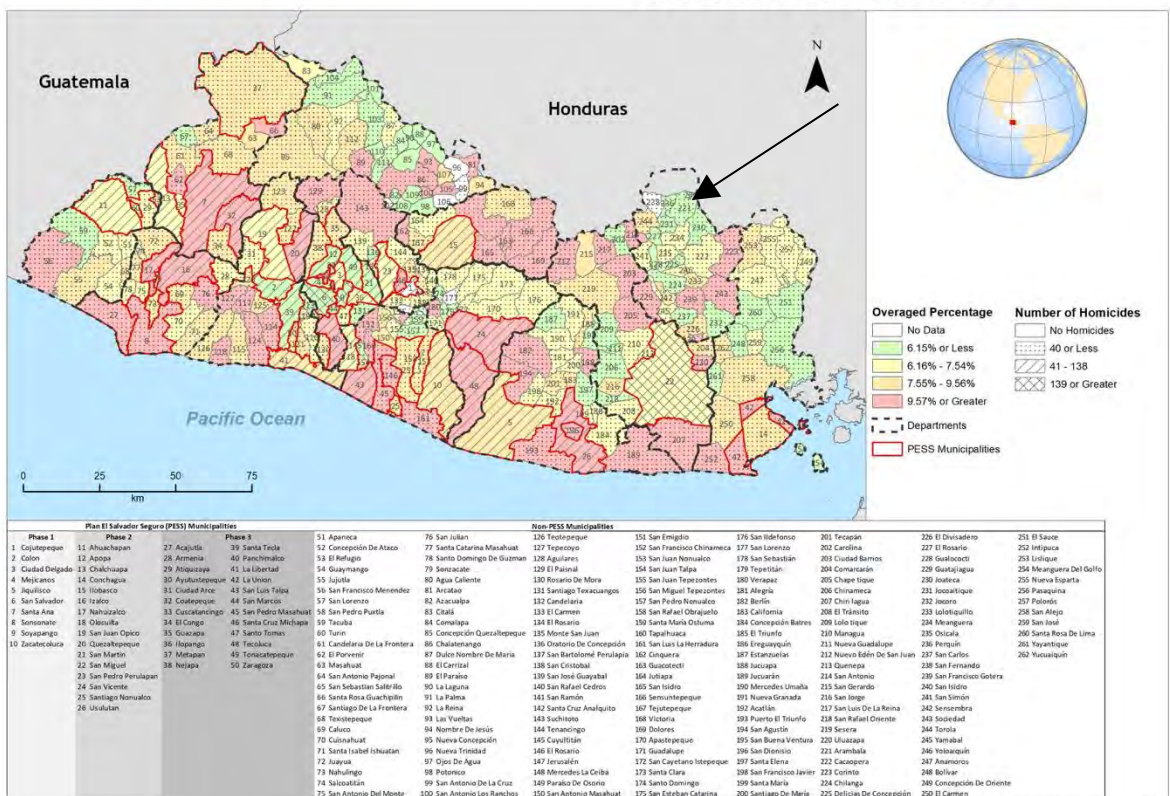| Cod.	Budget Unit	Responsable	General Fund	Loans	Total
01	Management and Institutional Management	Minister	24,325,030		24,325,030
02	Education Management	Vice Minister	18,715,140		18,715,140
03	Development of Science and Technology	Deputy minister	6,621,230		6,621,230
04	Early Childhood Education	National Director of Education	64,281,170		64,281,170
05	Basic education	National Director of Education	476,864,599		476,864,599
06	Middle education	National Director of Education	85,725,615		85,725,615
07	Support to Affiliated Institutions and Other Entities	Minister	121,063,965		121,063,965
08	Investment Programs and Projects	Minister	905,300		905,300
09	Improving the Quality of Education	Minister	2,000,000	26,784,290	28,784,290
10	Compliance Judgment El Mozote Case and Nearby Places.	Deputy minister	800,000		800,000
11	National Council for Science and Technology	Deputy minister	1,224,015		1,224,015
12	Development and Social Protection Programs	Minister	115,047,232		115,047,232
Total			**917,573,296**	**26,784,290**	**944,357,586**

ANNEX I: MAPS

Those municipalities with nearly 10 percent of the student population overage tend to have between 40 and 140 homicides per year. Similarly, those municipalities with nearly 5 percent of the student population repeating tend to have between 40 and 140 homicides a year.

Morazán appears to have between 3-5 percent repetition and largely 40 or less homicides a year it has the extremes of less than 3 percent repetition and greater than 5 percent repetition in some municipalities. Similarly, Morazán has the extremes of fewer than 6 percent overage as well as over 10 percent.
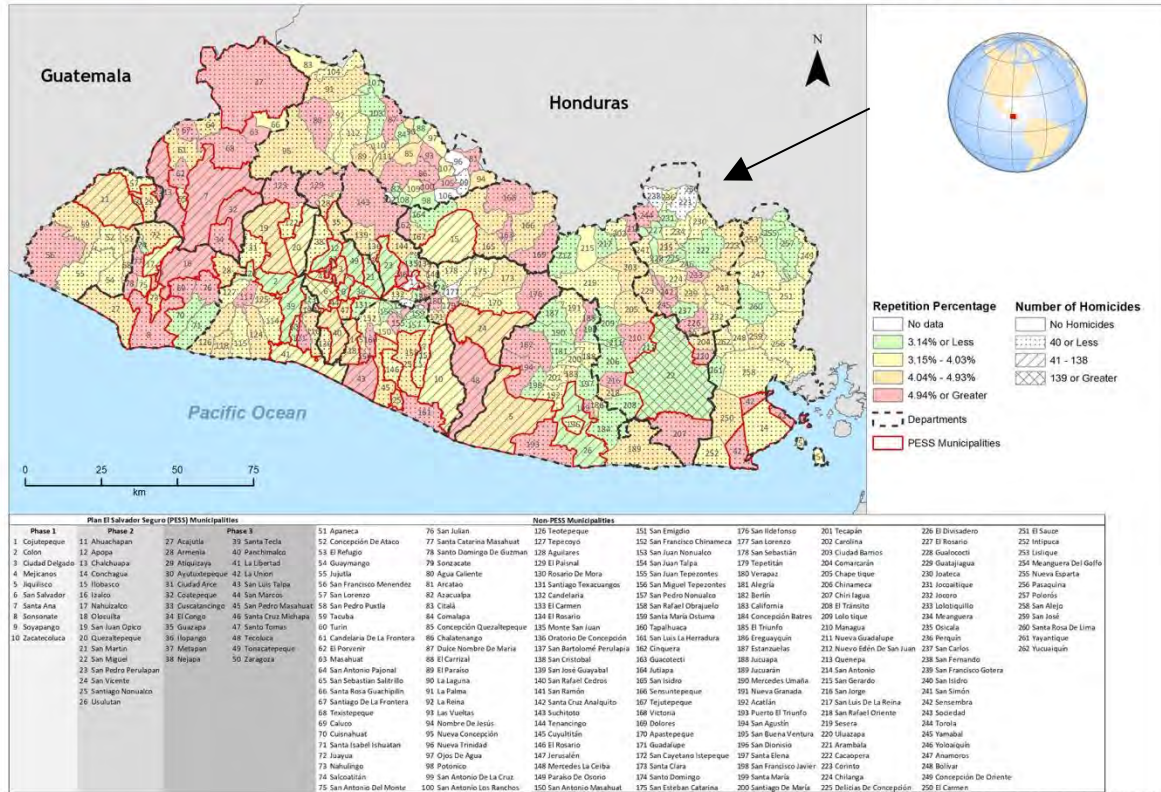
In terms of added value- USAID could capitalize on its experience in El Salvador and expand to areas such as Moron which have both the most challenging municipalities as well as those that should be targeted with prevention strategies before the insecurity and education situation becomes direr.

Source: IML & USAID/El Salvador, July 2017

NUMBER OF HOMICIDES PER 100,000 INHABITANTS AND REPETITION PERCENTAGE-2016

Guatemala

Honduras

Pacific Ocean

0 25 50 75
km

Repetition Percentage
- No data
- 3.14% or Less
- 3.15% – 4.03%
- 4.04% – 4.93%
- 4.94% or Greater
- Departments
- PESS Municipalities

Number of Homicides
- No Homicides
- 40 or Less
- 41 - 138
- 139 or Greater

Source: IML & USAID/El Salvador, July 2017

Comparative advantage implies that USAID could carry out a particular activity in the education space more efficiently than another activity as compared to other actors. USAID currently does not operate in Morazán. In very general terms this is because Morazán does not face the same levels of insecurity as compared to other departments. However, with regard to comparative advantage Morazán should be reconsidered. USAID will have to make cost effective decisions and trade offs when investing in El Salvador in general and in education specifically.

Clearly USAID cannot do it all. Why should USAID only focus on the "most dangerous" municipalities? What if the resources USAID has available to allocate are not enough to make a measurable impact in the "most dangerous municipalities", but they are sufficient resources to work in departments, such as Morazán, where there could be a measurable impact, i.e. an advantage. In other words, Morazán is on the cusp, both in terms of measurable crime rates- such as homicides and in terms of education statistics- such as repetition and overage.

Instead of supporting the fifty worst municipalities USAID should expand already invested in and developed strategies, such as APA and those in ECY to Morazán. See Annex H which presents maps and analysis on Morazán.

ANNEX J: POLICY GUIDANCE

Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Assessment of El Salvador

USAID's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Assessment of El Salvador provides an analysis of the sector and offers a set of program ideas for USAID to strengthen the promotion of democracy, governance and human rights. The assessment's authors argue that institutional advances have helped consolidate democratic governance in the country, while challenges with regard to electoral procedures, transparency, anticorruption, and fiscal and civil service reform remain. The limited financial resources, weak institutional capacity, mismanagement, clientelism, and the tendency to address problems bureaucratically compound these challenges (p. 5). The Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Assessment also describes citizen security and violence and especially gang related violence as they affect the education sector. This source was included in the literature review, coding, and analysis and is integrated throughout the Education Sector Assessment.

U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America

The U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America (CEN Strategy) suggests that a combination of economic stagnation, weak governance and insecurity in some countries has placed Central America on a trajectory of decline. It also argues that the recent surge in migration to the United States and Mexico from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras is due to Central America's inability to find solutions to the challenges within the region. In light of these challenges the strategy proposes the following lines of action: (1) promoting prosperity and regional integration (strengthening institutions, promoting trade facilitation, and creating links within Central America, and education and workforce development, among others), (2) enhancing security (via policy reform, improving community security, and continuing defense cooperation, among others), and (3) improving governance (via targeting corruption, investing in civil service reform, and improving fiscal capacity, among others). This document was included in the literature review, coding and analysis.

Country Development Cooperation Strategy

The Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) 2013-2017 describes USAID's strategy in El Salvador and presents the following two Development Objectives (DO): 1) Citizen security and rule of law in targeted areas improved; and 2): Economic growth opportunities in tradable goods expanded. Each DO includes Intermediate Results (IRs). For DO 1, the IRs are: 1.1) Justice, transparency and accountability; and, 1.2) Crime and violence in targeted municipalities. For DO 2, the IRs are: 2.1) Business enabling environment improved; and 2.2) Productivity of business increased. The CDCS provides a contextual background and description of challenges. In particular, it identifies the challenge of criminal activity, stating: "Criminal activity, in particular gang related violence, has increased dramatically." (p.3) The CDCS was included in the literature review, coding and analysis, and is integrated into this document. This document will also serve as a resource for the next CDCS, which is scheduled to be drafted in 2018.

USAID's Education Strategy

Two aspects of USAID's current orientation and policies figured decisively in the approach taken to conduct this assessment, both delineated in the USAID Education Strategy and Implementation Guidance (2011–2015). First, the Strategy indicates that education resources should be targeted to achieve measurable and sustainable education outcomes through enhanced selectivity, focus, country-led programming, division of labor, and innovation. The most significant manifestation of USAID's application of these principles is in its commitment to achieving the first goal of its education strategy: "Improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015."

Second, the Strategy indicates that based on projected resource availability and USAID policy principles, resources should be targeted to increase equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners by 2015. This assessment focuses on goals one and three, as described above, (goal two is outside of the scope of this assessment). It is also important to note USAID's commitment to goal two in El Salvador, which is to improve the ability of tertiary and

workforce development programs to generate workforce skills relevant to El Salvador's development goals, is addressed by the Economic Growth office at USAID/El Salvador.

Rapid Education and Risk Analysis El Salvador

The Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) provides USAID program planners and managers with a situational analysis of the interactions between education and risk in El Salvador. USAID's Education Conflict and Crisis Network conducted the RERA in March 2016. The analysis focused on risks associated with gang violence, insecurity, natural disasters and their interaction with the education sector. The RERA provided the following recommendations to USAID El Salvador: (1) review strategy and programming from the perspective that school can be the most local interface between citizen and state; (2) USAID should work in partnership with school-based community groups in high risk zones; and (3) support the MINED to better contextualize national planning and programs to high-risk realities, assist MINED to conduct an assessment of disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities, provide assistance to MINED to convene a donor meeting on the issue of violence, insecurity and education, and support the Ministry of Justice and Public security improve community policing. The RERA was included as a source for the literature review, coding and analysis.

El Salvador Security Plan

The primary guiding document to mobilize all stakeholders in an effort to address the security of El Salvador is the *Plan El Salvador Seguro* (PESS). The plan was developed in 2014 and published in 2015 by the *Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Ciudana y Convivencia* (CNSCC). The CNSCC is comprised of donors, state actors, civil society and other private and public entities. The purpose of the PESS is to improve the lives of people and reduce crime and violence, to create a system of criminal investigation, to eliminate the influence of criminal groups, and to provide a legal framework and institutional support that guarantees support to those affected by crime and violence. It is important to use the PESS in this assessment and also critically examine it especially with regard to evaluation question two which examines the availability and quality of data.

El Salvador Education Plan

The primary guiding education document for El Salvador is the *Plan El Salvador Educado: Por el derecho a una educación de calidad,* (PESE is the acronym in Spanish). The Plan was written in 2016 by the *Consejo Nacional de Educación* (CONED). The CONED consists of donors, other education stakeholders. The PESE outlines six priorities: (1) Schools free of violence and central for prevention (2) teacher quality, (3) attention for early childhood development, (4) twelve years of universal schooling, (5) higher education for a productive, competitive and innovative country, and (6) infrastructure for a quality integrated education. This document was relied upon throughout the assessment, especially with regard to the current priorities of MINED. At the same time, it is equally important to examine what topics are missing from the PESE, for example, out-of-school children and youth, as will be discussed further below.

Additional Important Guidelines, Guides, and Policies

Citizen Security Guides and Guidelines

There are two important guidance documents concerning security which are relevant to this assessment. The first is the Integrating Conflict and Fragility Analysis into the Education System Analysis Guidelines by USAID (2015). These guidelines include a review of existing approaches, methodologies and tools for integrating conflict and fragility analysis into policy design. These guidelines informed the Citizen Security questions and proposed data disaggregation included in the design of this assessment.

The second document is the Safety, Resilience and Social Cohesion: A Guide for Education Sector Planners by UNESCO (2015). There are important takeaways in the guide for this assessment with regard to citizen security, in particular (1) existing information should be used, (2) additional information should be collected as needed, and (3) analysis should be creative. We have included

these points in the assessment, for example the integration of visuals as a creative way to analyze the relationship between citizen security and education.

Interlinked Policies to Reduce Gender Inequality and Empower Women
USAID has adopted several interrelated gender and social inclusion policies and strategies to not only reduce gender inequality and empower women but also to facilitate social inclusion for all. The USAID specific policies and strategies are the *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*, the *Vision for Ending Child Marriage and Meeting the Needs of Married Children*, the *LGBT Vision for Action: Promoting and Supporting the Inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals*, the *Counter-Trafficking in Persons Policy*, and the *Disability Policy*. These interlinked guidance documents also include USAID's implementation of the *United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security* and the *United States Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls*. Each provides guidance to the El Salvador Education Sector Assessment's gender and inclusion analysis approach to ensure the specific needs and vulnerabilities of marginalized groups and other exclusionary aspects of the Salvadoran education system are identified and analyzed during the sector assessment process.

Notably, these directives guide the assessment's intersectionality analysis to better understand populations facing multiple and compounded forms of exclusion and/or discrimination. As applicable, the assessment's key gender and inclusion research questions are informed by USAID's five gender analysis domains of inquiry outlined in *ADS Chapter 205 Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle*: (1) Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices; (2) Cultural Norms and Beliefs; (3) Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use; (4) Access to and Control over Assets and Resources; (5) Patterns of Power and Decision-making. The *Integrating Disability into Gender Analysis: An Additional Help for ADS Chapter 205* guidance document provides additional orientation to incorporating an inclusion lens to this education sector assessment.

Youth in Development Policy
The Youth in Development Policy (2012) is included in this assessment because it reflects pressing issues worldwide and in particular in El Salvador. It states: "There are underlying dynamics that are affecting young people everywhere- changes in demographics and technology, economics and politics are bring together this unique moment in history. Young people are at the heart of today's great strategic opportunities and challenges, from rebuilding the global economy to combating violent extremism to building sustainable democracies." P. 1 Hillary Rodham Clinton 2012. This analysis is highly relevant to El Salvador.

Partnership for Growth
The Partnership for Growth is a joint country action plan between El Salvador and the United States for 2011- 2015. The purpose is to rapidly expand broad-based economic growth in El Salvador under an overarching commitment to democracy, sustainable development and human rights. The partnership illuminates the costs of crime and insecurity and low productivity in tradables and suggests how other donors in El Salvador might contribute to growth.

The Five-Year Development Plan
The five-year development plan (2014-2019) is the highest level public policy road map that orients the direction of El Salvador for the next five years. It documents the priorities for the medium and long term. It is a guide for the Government of El Salvador (GOES) to develop the country into a united, prosperous and inclusive nation. Furthermore, it is a plan as to how to offer opportunities for all people in El Salvador, by recognizing their different and specific needs.

ANNEX K: WHAT IS SI-EITP?

The SI-EITP reflects the General Law of Education. It also responds to the MINED's Social Education Plan, Vamos a la Escuela (2009-2014). On one hand the reforms associated with the SI-EITP have responded to changes in the moment or circumstance [KINT004]. On the other hand they follow a history of reforms in El Salvador, including EDUCO (see a review by Cellular-Marchelli, 2003).

Between 2006 and 2008 the first Inclusive Schools (EI by their acronym in Spanish) were introduced in El Salvador. The primary focus of these schools was to provide an inclusive approach to serve students with special needs.

Then in 2010, the approach encompassed a Full Time program. The title of the program became the Inclusive Full Time Schools (or EITP by its acronym in Spanish). At this time 22 schools were piloted, later another 38 were incorporated for a total of 60 schools. The approach was unique because it focused on active methods, classroom management, and four models (classic, by module, by grade and outside of school). Specifically, the EITP extended the academic day beyond the traditional day of schooling for a more inclusive approach.

By 2011, the program expanded to the SI-EITP. The programmatic expansion took the EITP to another level. It implied that via the system an inclusive education would be provided to students for all three cycles of the education system. Initially only three municipalities were piloted with eight integrated systems consisting of 85 centers.

Since 2012 the SI-EITP has continued to expand. By 2019, 57 municipalities, 159 SI-EITPs, and 1369 centers will be incorporated. The process includes three phases they include the: pedagogical phase, organizational phase, and consolidation phase.

ANNEX L: GENDER AND SI ANALYSIS SUPPLEMENT

This annex specifically analyzes gender and social inclusion dimensions regarding access to quality education.

Gender Inequality

Several sources consulted (MINED, 2016; CONED, 2016; MINED, 2014; UNDP, 2013) point to society-wide human rights violations in the form of gender-based discrimination and inequality through established gendered cultural norms, beliefs, roles, and responsibilities as well as GBV as an underlying cause of poor retention and completion among especially girls and LGBTI children at the third cycle and secondary. Furthermore, the DRG El Salvador report found that the tradition of "machismo" and gender discrimination leads to abuse of women and often forces women to assume full responsibility for the survival of their children and is a major force behind the "disintegration of cohesive cultural and social norms that produce strong family units" (USAID, 2016a). Similarly, the International Crisis Group (2017, p. 18) in their recent report on El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras noted that "Central American societies suffer high levels of domestic violence, and parts of the public harbor admiration for male virility and power, making it sometimes difficult for girls exposed to gang violence to recognize the crimes they are enduring." Indeed, rates of GBV in El Salvador are exceptionally high. For example, El Salvador has one of the highest rates of femicide in the world with impunity for femicide crimes reaching 77% of all cases. Furthermore, various manifestations of GBV are widespread and typically lack effective investigation, prosecution, and adjudication (USAID, 2016).

Stemming from the same gender-based norms that typically value "masculinity", the LGBTI community, notably transgender women, also suffer discrimination and violence in society at-large. For example, the USAID DRG report found that transgender women face many barriers to entry and humiliation from health care, education, housing, and employment as well in public places (USAID, 2016a). A survey conducted as part of Procurator for the Defense of Human Rights and the UNDP's "Report on the situation of Human Rights of the LGBTI population in El Salvador" in 2013 (as cited in USAID, 2016a, pp. 24-25) also found that 39% of LGBTI respondents reported discrimination in employment hiring which likely led to less motivation for studies.

The SRGBV discussed previously that takes place in and around schools, mostly targeting girls and LGBTI youth, directly mirrors the larger society-wide gender-based discriminations and violence described in the first two paragraphs of this section. These larger societal norms, beliefs, roles, and about men and women also play out in the lives of girls in other ways that adversely impacts their education. For example, Salvadoran cultural norms, perceptions, expectations continue to assign girls and women to the private sphere, responsible for what are sometimes called reproductive labor but without the respect and remuneration that reproductive work should have in a gender-equitable society. This, in particular, impacts adolescent girls at the secondary school level: the 2016 Multipurpose Household Survey found domestic-related responsibilities and work to be the third most important reason for being out-of-school (MINEC and DIGESTY, 2017). Even when girls are able to study, their free time is consumed by domestic responsibilities, including childcare, as found by data collected from ECY project around use of free time outside of school (USAID, 2017a) which likely leaves them with little time for homework and at-home study. International Crisis Group (2017, p. 17) also found that some women active in gangs had formed relationships with gang members "to escape a life of domestic drudgery"—a particularly disturbing consequence of the socially assigned roles to girls and women in El Salvador.

Another common belief among families, especially in rural areas, is that education of adolescent girls is not a worthwhile investment. MINED found that often families have a perception of adolescent girls as only capable of getting together with a man, having sex, getting pregnant, and having children (MINED, 2016). Indeed, early pregnancy and early union is very common in El Salvador and is a leading cause of dropout. Typically early pregnancy and/or union occurs at best reluctantly or through ignorance of prevention and at worst by force through sexual gender-based violence, including forced and/or coerced marriage or union. See 2.5.2.2.1 for a more-in-depth analysis of early pregnancy and early union.

The impacts on girls is just one side to gender-based norms, behaviors, and attitudes; boys and men are also subject to rigid notions of masculinity in El Salvador. These norms of manhood often, especially when they intersect with poverty, become deeply associated with violence—in the case of El Salvador gang-related violence, thereby playing out what Hume and Wilding (2015, pp. 2, 13-14, 18) coin as "everyday scripts of violence" which are socially constructed predominately by male class elites who do not associate themselves with this "bad" gang-related violence, while supporting and/or even perpetuating other types of violence themselves (e.g. extrajudicial killings of gang members). Consequently, it is important to analyze gang violence as gender-based violence. In doing so, it helps to de-normalize the association of masculinity with violence while also identifying an often-overlooked underlying cause of the violence—gendered norms, behavior, roles, and responsibilities in society. De-normalizing this association is important because as Yllo (as cited in Hume and Wilding, 2015, p. 2) observes, "male aggression is so closely bound to popular perceptions of violence that it has become a 'nonissue'. . . so thoroughly taken for granted that it is not regarded as requiring explanation." De-normalizing the link between masculinity and violence further helps to give the attention required to adequately and fully address gender-based violence, often thought of as "private violence" predominately impacting women and/or those perceived as feminine or who do not abide by mainstream gender identities (i.e. LGBTI individuals) since as Hume and Wilding (2015, p. 4) note that they are "often pushed to 'disconnect gender violence' or so-called 'private violence' from 'violence', as if they can be separated so neatly."

Returning to the issue of male class elites, Hume and Wilding (2015) point out that "*male domination (of women) crosscuts time, place, and social class [in El Salvador]*[24]. *The fact is that not only marginalized men "celebrate" or indeed benefit from misogyny and patriarchy. Without acknowledging the centrality of unequal gender relations to the reproduction of violence, we risk suggesting that male domination is a response to a particular economic climate, shifting the blame away from oppressive gender relations but also silencing the multiple ways violence is used by men who are not considered "marginalized*." From a social inclusion perspective, this "calling out" of violence used by men of higher social classes is an important step towards de-marginalizing these adolescent boys and men. Once all forms of violence linked with socially-constructed masculinity—whether committed by poor and/or gang-affiliate youth and men or by male class elites—is recognized as equally detrimental to social progress in El Salvador, the issue of eradicating the culture of violence can fully be addressed in a comprehensive way since all responsible parties will be held accountable.

In the context of education, understanding how the socially-constructed notion of violent masculinity acts as an underlying cause of gang-related violence can potentially contribute to development of more accurate and robust theories of change--that include tackling deeply rooted gendered norms--for preventing continued proliferation of youth involvement and leadership in gang activity and its related impact on dropout and the school environment overall in El Salvador. Furthermore, it may pave the way for increased and improved synergies among various strategic documents such as PESE, PESS, MINED Gender Equity and Equality Policy, and MINED for the purposes of tackling gang violence and its bidirectional relationship with education. For example, an analysis of the MINED Gender Equity and Equality Policy reveals that the way by which boys, especially those living in poor, gang-controlled areas, experience violence, discrimination, etc. is not addressed. This is an important gap and an example of what was discussed above as normalizing "violence" by and among men without looking deeper at the underlying gender discriminatory culture that has created what Hume and Wilding terms "scripts" about violence in El Salvador.

Lastly, the process of de-marginalization of poor and/or gang-affiliated men paves the way for naming them as legitimate members of society who have been socially excluded; in doing so, they are placed prominently in the education-related discussions and policies on inclusion in society (e.g. MINED's

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[24] Also, Brazil. However, the findings and conclusions outlined in the paper are applicable in both El Salvador and Brazil.

Inclusive Education Policy), as opposed to being relegated to the fringes of society as the "bad ones"[25]. Once all forms of violence linked with socially-constructed masculinity—whether committed by poor and/or gang-affiliate men or by male class elites—is recognized as equally detrimental to social progress in El Salvador, the issue of eradicating the culture of violence can fully be addressed in a comprehensive way since all responsible parties will fully be held accountable.

Early Pregnancy and Early Union

Early pregnancy and early union among girls are prominent manifestations of the underlying gender inequality in society and are phenomena fully normalized in society. Because of its acute impact on adolescent girls and their education, it is addressed as its own sub-section. Early pregnancy, motherhood, marriage or life as a couple, are major obstacles to girls and adolescents' ability to maintain and complete school, especially secondary education (CONED, 2016; USAID, 2016; USAID, 2017). For example, MINED's 2015 Observatory of Education reveals that early pregnancy is one of the primary causes of school dropout among girls in 538 of a total of 5,132 education centers with a total of 1,256 withdrawals of female students due to pregnancy (MINED, 2016). Of the over 420 pregnant girls and female adolescents interviewed as part a comprehensive survey on early pregnancy and union in El Salvador conducted in 2015, only 11% were attending school; the top two reasons for dropping out was pregnancy/maternity and marriage/union (UNFPA et al., 2016). Only 25% of girls and adolescents who drop out of school because of pregnancy return to study after the birth (UNFPA et al., 2016).

Both the latter study by UNFPA et al. (2016) and an even more recent study by UNFPA (2017) that involves a compilation of real life stories of girls who faced early pregnancy and union shed light on the various dimensions of early pregnancy and marriage including significant numbers of pregnancies resulting from sexual violence and abuse and incidents of forced and/or coerced marriage. The compilation of stories is particularly poignant as the issues come alive through voices of fourteen young women. Their stories illustrate deeply rooted gender-based discrimination, violence against women largely, and a culture of machismo that makes women's bodies, maternity, and even life itself property of men. The common themes that run through all the stories include sexual violence and abuse leading to pregnancy by family members or others, forced and coerced marriages, early union/marriage of adolescent girls with much older men, normalization of sexual abuse of minor girls by adult men, gangs that control a women's maternity, poverty, and dysfunctional families.

Another way that early pregnancy and education intersect is the potential role that the education system plays in prevention of both early pregnancy and union. According to MINED (2016), adolescent pregnancy is also related to factors of limited access to appropriate information, services, training and counseling services. However, despite revisions to the existing curricula that included addition of sexual and reproductive health education, it has yet to be mandatory in schools and is only taught if the teacher wants to teach it according to one KI. According to IPs, this is directly due to the influence of the Catholic Church on public education despite being officially secular. To date, religious images can be found in schools and even at the entrance of MINED. As one IP noted, advancing the technical development of integral sexuality education content was done so with a very low profile to avoid more obstacles than necessary due to opposing religious opinions.

As seen elsewhere in Section 2.5, the context of violence and citizen insecurity also intersect with early marriage and pregnancy. For example, a regional survey of victims of violence in the Caribbean found that one effect of gang violence and drug turf wars in parts of Central America, including El Salvador, was girls marrying or coupling with gang members and older men as a form of protection (Idris, 2016).

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[25] At the time of writing this assessment report in July-August 2017, a billboard campaign was taking place in San Salvador (and possibly elsewhere in the country) that had pictures of people we can assume to not be affiliated with gangs and violence with the logo printed above that said "Somos más, los buenos" (The good people are greater [in number]).

Family Disintegration/Dysfunctional Families

Families play a crucial role in the success of a child's education. However, a large portion of Salvadoran children do not benefit from the family support needed to succeed in school and beyond. What many consulted sources and interviewees called broken families, dysfunctional families, and/or the disintegration of families is also deeply tied to the underlying gender-based norms, behaviors, violence, and human rights violations that pervade Salvadoran society. It is treated separately, however, from this larger underlying factor due to its citation as a primary factor that directly impacts access, specifically retention and completion of education. In four different studies reviewed, dysfunctional families, broken homes, and family disintegration was cited as a major dropout factor for children, notably boys, and factor leading to gang affiliation and/or participation in some type of violence (Berk-Seligson net al., 2014; USAID, 2016; IUDOP/UCA, 2011; Hoyos et al. 2016)

Family disintegration and dysfunction takes on many forms. One form is the prevalence of intrafamilial violence and child abuse in society. It is estimated that 80% of households in El Salvador feature intrafamilial violence (USAID, 2016). Key findings from a recent study conducted on sexual and gender-based violence of refugee and migrant children from the Northern Triangle found that (1) *Sexual violence by family members is extremely widespread. Children are often very young when violence begins and experience ongoing abuse over an extended period of time*; (2) *Victim-blaming is widespread and prevents many children from disclosing sexual abuse to their family or other adults and from receiving support or protection from adults KIND & HRCFCM* (2017, pp. 6-7). According to the PESE diagnostic conducted by CONED (2016, p. 34), "Fostering practices that attempt to "solve" conflicts or differences through physical and psychological violence are a praxis in force in many Salvadoran families."

Ruptured family structure is another form that family disintegration and dysfunction takes in El Salvador. Examples include children living with grandparents as one or both parents have either emigrated or are simply absent. The DRG assessment found that large-scale emigration has weakened family ties as male migrants often fail to provide for families left behind while the departure of mothers "who in their absence—in cases for years—trust their offspring to relatives. Children are left to their own devices, growing up without effective parental support" (USAID, 2016a, p. 14). Important to note the intersection of mothers leaving their children behind because of emigration and gender-based violence, including gang-associated violence: the International Crisis Group (2017) report that threats and murders were the two main factors driving forced internal displacement in the country, with women making up the largest share of victims with gangs reportedly behind 86% of displacements. Berk-Seligson et al. (2014) finds that the type of family structure that presents the highest risk factor for children, mostly male, to drop out of school and joining gangs were those specifically from matrifocal-run homes with mothers who work and are not at home. The latter study finds an even higher risk when the mother takes on a new partner, which typically leads to intimate-partner violence and child abuse.

Even in absence of family disintegration and/or dysfunction as discussed above, evidence points to very limited parental participation in their children's development and education. According to the National Survey on Family Health-FESAL conducted in 2008 (as cited in CONED, 26, p. 34), only 60.4% of mothers play with their children, 52.1% of them take them for a walk, and 21.1% read or tell stories to their children. The situation of participation of fathers is starkly lower: 8.8% of the fathers play with their children, 6.9% take them for a walk and 4.2% read or tell stories. While figures are low for mothers and fathers, the acutely low participation of fathers in child rearing illustrates persistent socially constructed roles for women and men that place domestic responsibility on women. The fact that "no le interesa" (it doesn't interest him/her) was the number one parent-reported reason for children ages 7-15 and youth ages 15-18 being out of school according to the 2016 EHPM (MINEC and DIGESTYC, 2017) also points to a lack of parental responsibility for ensuring their children are getting educated.

Gender Discriminatory Education

In addition to gender equity and equality challenges identified above, many other aspects of the education system face challenges to being gender equitable resulting in gender-bias and discrimination towards girls and boys in distinct ways. For example, the diagnostic completed for MINED's Gender Policy (2016) reveals a sexual division of studies, especially at the secondary level, in which girls are concentrated in baccalaureate specialties that have limited labor market insertion with wage inequalities. The diagnostic also illustrates that boys who choose careers that are traditionally occupied by women face discrimination and ridicule. Overall, however, few studies have been conducted around the intersection of gender and education with the exception of early pregnancy and early marriage in El Salvador. This finding was confirmed by MINED in its gender policy, KIIs, and the present assessment teams' own research.

School-related Gender-Based Violence

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)[26] is part of gender-discriminatory education but is treated separately given its acute impact on education and human rights. Furthermore, it is placed under internal challenges because it takes place in, around, and to and from school; however, it is intimately tied to the larger external social context of human rights violations manifested as gender inequality and violence in El Salvador. According to MINED (2016), limited formal data on SBGBV exists. This assessment team's own research confirmed this, finding only emerging evidence of its existence but without enough information to understand the full scope of this challenge. Notably, insufficient data exists related to victims and perpetrators (e.g. region, gender, age, role in school environment, etc.) and the context of these human rights violations (e.g. time of day, where took place, etc.), and outcomes of allegations (e.g. investigation, consequences, etc.).

However, various documents and KII shed some light on how this important challenge impacts both quality and access, notably retention for certain groups of children and youth. MINED's 2015 Observatory of Education Centers (Observatorio de Centros Educativos del Ministerio) noted worrisome trends in SRGBV: "Out of a total of 5,132 schools surveyed, 123 educational institutions report cases of sexual violence among student peers; 16 schools have verified cases of sexual violence by teachers towards students and in 50 centers report allegations of sexual harassment. In addition, in 134 schools, rape is reported as a reason for dropping out." (MINED, 2016, p. 45). Indeed, one interviewed IP's prior research with an international NGO revealed that sexual abuse of younger [female] students by older [male] students at and in-route to school was common; specifically, the study found male students paying young girls 25 cents to pull down their pants.

Bullying, discrimination, and violence towards LGBTI youth is another form of SRGBV that emerged. For example, the same IP found in her prior research that many youth between the ages of 15 and 17, especially male, have questions and doubts related to their gender identity and/or already identify as LGBTI which in turn made them targets of bullying and discrimination. Teachers expressed not feeling prepared to handle these types of inquiries. MINED (2016) found that administrative and teaching staff often adopt discriminatory positions and attitudes towards LGBTI students and that these students face risk of physical, psychological, and sexual violence because of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation in the school environment. This commonly leads to dropout for these students. Similarly, a survey conducted as part of Procurator for the Defense of Human Rights and the UNDP's "Report on the situation of Human Rights of the LGBTI population in El Salvador" in 2013 (as cited in USAID 2016a, pp. 24-25) found that 48% of LGBTI respondents reported experiencing bullying,

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[26] USAID (2016b) defines SRGBV as "acts or threats of physical, sexual or psychological violence or abuse that is based on gendered stereotypes or that targets students on the basis of their sex, sexuality or gender identities. School- related gender based violence reinforces gender roles and perpetuates gender inequalities. It includes rape, unwanted sexual touching, unwanted sexual comments, corporal punishment, bullying, and other forms of non-sexual intimidation or abuse such as verbal harassment or exploitative labor in schools. Unequal power relations between adults and children and males and females contribute to this violence, which can take place in formal and non-formal schools, on school grounds, going to and from school, in school dormitories, in cyberspace or through cell phone technology. School-related gender-based violence may be perpetrated by teachers, students, or community members. Both girls and boys can be victims, as well as perpetrators."

violence, and exclusion from teachers and other school staff at educational institutions, as a result of their gender identity or gender expression and that only 36% of the respondents had finished high school as result of the harassment.

Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation has also been linked to the school environment. As reported by principals to MINED in 2015, of a total of 5,132 schools, 58 faced internal risks of trafficking and 685 faced external risks of trafficking (USAID 2016: 17). A recent study conducted by KIND/HRCFCM (2017: 17, 20) found that in El Salvador between 2012 and 2015, 75 percent of cases of trafficking reported to the Public Prosecutor (FGR) involved children, and 66.4 percent of cases reported to police involved girls. The study also found that in the Northern Triangle region, human trafficking, when run by gangs, often uses schools to forcibly recruit female students into sex trafficking operations. According to El Salvador's National Civil Police statistics, between 2009 and 2014 rape, sexual abuse and aggression were the crimes that most affected the student sector (Clemens, 2017).

Although MINED does have a protocol in place on what to do when SRGBV, including sexual violence, takes place and is reported, it is rarely used according to interviewed stakeholders. Key informants point out that an overall mistrust of reporting mechanisms exist related to lack of follow-up and fear of retaliation by perpetrators of the violence.

Marginalized Children and Youth
This section highlights those who are particularly vulnerable. Intersectionality, or multiple and compounded discrimination and vulnerability, is at the heart of marginalization and exclusion in the Salvadoran education system. Various sub-groups of at-risk youth emerge as the most marginalized in the education system. This marginalization not only take place in practice but also in written MINED discourse. At-risk youth's absence from the long-term education plan and central focus in the long-term security plan is yet another indication that these youths are left out of the education system even if only in discourse. As consulted stakeholders note, these at-risk youths continue to be in "education limbo", particularly those who are gang-involved and/or in conflict with the law. See the textbox next page on marginalized children/ youth and on indigenous groups.

Textbox 4. Marginalized children and youth

Poor children in rural areas: Children from poor, rural households face numerous challenges with typically lower rates of enrollment and attendance across the education levels and typically have relatively poor learning outcomes when compared with their urban and/or richer counterparts (CONED, 2016; USAID, 2016).

Poor out-of-school youth ages 12 to 24: Between 2012 and 2015, the number of out-of-school youth has steadily increased from 773,711 to 819,393 (USAID, 2017).

DRG assessment summarized results from GOES national study through CONNA to assess the conditions of children and youth and devise a strategy to promote their growth and found that youth are frequently denied the opportunity to make their voice heard and self-advocate and in some cases even judges dismiss them when voicing concerns about gang activities in their neighborhoods (USAID, 2016a).

Adolescent girls in gang-controlled areas: Adolescent girls are being increasingly targeted through brutal and forced and "voluntary" recruitment using gang rape, forced union and sexual relations (a.k.a. rape) by gangs. (International Crisis Group, 2017, USAID, 2016, KIIs). This forced recruitment and related GBV is cited as being a reason for school changes or school dropout among this group of teenage girls (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Male youth living in gang-controlled territories: The International Crisis Group (2017: 29) found that gang-related violence and forced recruitment has become so prevalent that many young people's, notably boys' coping strategy is to "lock themselves up in their homes, avoiding contact with *maras* and trying to stay out of trouble." The same study found that male youth face exclusion and stigmatization outsider their communities when applying for jobs once potential employers see they live in a gang-controlled neighborhood (International Crisis Group (2017: 22).

Adolescent girls who are pregnant, are mothers, and/or in union: As seen above, girls who are pregnant and/or in a union have high rates of being out-of-school. Furthermore, it is more common for out-of-school youth with children to be female (USAID 2017a: 19)

Male gang members: According to Olate et al. 2012: 384, "the majority of gang members are male, unemployed, live in urban areas, and have dropped out of school." As seen in Section 2.5.2.2., they are also marginalized in society with few education options given their criminal backgrounds (see Section 2.5.1.2.)

LGBTI youth: The previous sections have revealed the discrimination and marginalization that LGBTI youth experience in the education system in the form of bullying, physical, psychological, and sexual violence. They are at great risk of dropping out and never returning to complete their studies. Additionally, opportunities for self-expression is often not allowed in the education context and beyond in Salvadoran society (USAID 2016a: 55).

Children and youth with special needs: As Section 2.1.7. above points out, data on children and youth with disabilities in the education system is limited and lacks clarity.

Textbox 5. A Closer Look at Indigenous Children and Youth

Indigenous children and youth: Indigenous communities in El Salvador have historically been "invisible", lacking formal recognition of their existence. It was only in 2014 after years of advocacy and activism by indigenous community leaders that El Salvador recognized the first nations/indigenous communities in the constitution with an amendment. However, the constitution does not guarantee rights to ancestral land (USAID 2016a: 55-56).

The DRG Study found that 90 percent of indigenous Salvadorans live below poverty line, the majority in rural areas (USAID, 2016a). This assessment found three studies on existing indigenous communities in El Salvador, one by Mac Chapin (1989), one by the World Bank/MINED (2003), and another the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—Regional Office for Central America (Rodriguez Oconitrillo, 2013). The common theme among all three, despite a gap of twenty years, is marginalization of these communities through discrimination, poverty, and limited access to basic services. Only the World Bank/MINED (2003) (developed in collaboration with MINED) and UNHCHR 2013 studies have information about the education situation of indigenous children and youth, albeit very limited, with actual statistics are only available from the 2003 study.

The only other recent data on situation of education for indigenous children and youth comes from the USAID DRG study that found births of indigenous people less likely to be formally registered than those of mestizo/euro-descent counterparts which poses an obstacle to accessing education since a birth certificate is required to register for school in El Salvador. It also found that children with these ethnic backgrounds are frequently excluded from basic level of education and opportunities to exit poverty which is what the statistics from 2003 illustrate as well.

ANNEX M: BUDGET INFORMATION

The following information is from the Memoria de Labores (2016-2017). http://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/mined/documents/memorias-de-labores It includes broad spending categories.

EJECUCION PRESUPUESTARIA A DICIEMBRE 2016

CONCEPTO DEL GASTO / INVERSIÓN	PRESUPUESTO VOTADO (1)	MODIFICACIONES (2)	PRESUPUESTO MODIFICADO (3 = 1 + 2)	COMPROMETIDO (4)	DEVENGADO (5)	% DE EJECUCION (6)	SALDO PRESUPUESTARIO (7 = 3 - 5)
REMUNERACIONES	$624,560,125.00	$16,688,721.97	$641,248,846.97	$640,824,298.50	$640,824,294.02	67.50%	$424,552.95
ADQUISICIONES DE BIENES Y SERVICIOS	$68,909,265.00	$(16,332,259.35)	$52,577,005.65	$50,171,417.54	$49,918,617.72	5.26%	$2,658,387.93
GASTOS FINANCIEROS	$715,540.00	$50,279.84	$765,819.84	$765,772.75	$765,772.74	0.08%	$47.10
TRANSFERENCIAS CORRIENTES	$182,596,449.00	$3,802,952.06	$186,399,401.06	$185,318,697.67	$185,305,350.34	19.52%	$1,094,050.72
INVERSIONES EN ACTIVOS FIJOS	$15,647,035.00	$2,078,478.35	$17,725,513.35	$16,700,099.51	$16,689,533.62	1.76%	$1,035,979.73
TRANSFERENCIAS DE CAPITAL	$49,777,880.00	$854,172.13	$50,632,052.13	$49,554,807.21	$49,548,847.81	5.22%	$1,083,204.32
TOTAL	$942,206,294.00	$7,142,345.00	$949,348,639.00	$943,335,093.18	$943,052,416.25	99.34%	$6,296,222.75

EJECUCION PRESUPUESTARIA PROYECTADA A MAYO 2017

CONCEPTO DEL GASTO / INVERSIÓN	PRESUPUESTO VOTADO (1)	MODIFICACIONES (2)	PRESUPUESTO MODIFICADO (3 = 1 + 2)	COMPROMETIDO (4)	DEVENGADO (5)	% DE EJECUCION (6)	SALDO PRESUPUESTARIO (7 = 3 - 5)
REMUNERACIONES	$624,978,765.00	$31,606.46	$625,010,371.46	$247,791,886.72	$247,628,927.35	26.32%	$377,381,444.11
ADQUISICIONES DE BIENES Y SERVICIOS	$54,431,586.00	$(3,046,477.99)	$51,385,108.01	$24,247,991.97	$8,582,257.87	0.91%	$42,802,850.14
GASTOS FINANCIEROS	$1,017,220.00	$(35,575.23)	$981,644.77	$591,614.81	$463,521.97	0.05%	$518,122.80
TRANSFERENCIAS CORRIENTES	$188,423,105.00	$704,525.64	$189,127,630.64	$103,846,925.82	$102,242,249.06	10.87%	$86,885,381.58
INVERSIONES EN ACTIVOS FIJOS	$28,572,415.00	$(735,783.88)	$27,836,631.12	$20,647,841.79	$154,930.03	0.02%	$27,681,701.09
TRANSFERENCIAS DE CAPITAL	$46,934,495.00	$(300,150.00)	$46,634,345.00	$34,140,820.89	$33,753,010.89	3.59%	$12,881,334.11
TOTAL	$944,357,586.00	$(3,381,855.00)	$940,975,731.00	$431,267,082.00	$392,824,897.17	41.75%	$548,150,833.83