



PROJECT PROFILE

LAC Ed: Promoting Equal Access to Quality Education Across Latin America



PROJECT NAME

USAID Latin America and Caribbean Education Technical Support Services (LAC Ed)

CLIENT

USAID/LAC Office of Regional Sustainable Development (LAC/RSD)

PRIME CONTRACTOR

Resonance Global

COUNTRIES

Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Haiti

TIME PERIOD

Sept. 2014 – Sept. 2019

Challenge

Equal access to quality education is a key driver in a country's journey to self-reliance. Quality education leads to greater economic growth, improved health outcomes, sustained democratic governance, and more peaceful and resilient societies. In recent decades, the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region has made progress in increasing enrollment in pre-primary, primary, and secondary education. However, there are still significant gaps in access to and completion of education. Approximately 14 million children and adolescents are out of the education system in the LAC region, and those who do attend school often face serious learning gaps in literacy, numeracy, and other foundational skills. These educational gaps limit access to future employment and other socioeconomic opportunities.

In December 2018, USAID announced a new Private-Sector Engagement (PSE) policy, with a mandate to dramatically expand the Agency's collaboration with the private sector across its global development portfolio. USAID is deepening engagement with companies, investors, and diverse stakeholders to achieve more

sustainable development outcomes worldwide. For USAID, this is a major Agency-wide operational and cultural transformation – one that represents a fundamental shift in the design and delivery of U.S. development and humanitarian assistance.

Solution

Under the USAID Latin America and Caribbean Education Technical Support Services (LAC Ed) project, Resonance worked with USAID and LAC countries to strengthen the design, management, and evaluation of regional and bilateral education programs in the region.

Our key activities under LAC Ed included:

- **Design and Implementation Support.** Resonance conducted analyses to support USAID/LAC Missions to plan, design, and implement new education programs and activities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation of Education Programs.** Resonance led evaluations of the performance of education programs in the LAC region.
- **Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management.** Resonance supported the USAID/LAC Office of Regional Sustainable Development (RSD) Education Team to build the capacity of USAID Education staff in the region. We designed and hosted regional workshops on education and workforce development to bring USAID Missions and their partners together for organizational learning and the sharing of best practices. We also collected, analyzed, and communicated data about education programming in LAC.

Key Results

- Resonance recruited and mobilized expert teams for more than 20 – often concurrent – assignments in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Peru.
- For USAID/Guatemala, Resonance conducted the final performance evaluation of USAID's Lifelong Learning project in Guatemala. During the evaluation, the team identified project impacts and provided insight into challenges and opportunities for future education activities.
- For USAID/Dominican Republic, Resonance assessed the Dominican Republic Effective Schools Program's success in achieving performance goals, and its contributions to the country's primary education system.

- Resonance conducted a rapid education risk analysis for USAID/Nicaragua to inform the design, implementation, and program assumptions of the Mission's existing education portfolio and planned activities.
- Resonance also conducted document and policy reviews, key stakeholder interviews, and youth-led focus groups and interviews to assess the evolution of violence and security conditions in Nicaragua's Caribbean coast and border regions.
- We collected and analyzed data to contribute to USAID/Nicaragua's design of the Nicaragua Youth Employment and Workforce Development project.
- Resonance assessed the quality of and access to Honduras' public primary school reading and writing curriculum, textbooks, teacher guides, and supplementary reading materials. We examined the availability of textbooks and supplementary reading materials for schools in USAID programming areas; quantified use of textbooks and teacher guides and supplementary reading materials; and assessed gaps that existed in these reading materials.
- In Peru, Resonance implemented two, three-day reading and gender workshops to strengthen pedagogical approaches and technical knowledge and skills in early childhood reading and gender education. The workshops involved 45 participants and took place in locations where access to such opportunities are typically limited. As a result of these workshops, participants gained new skills and developed mechanisms to evaluate and monitor the implementation of new approaches in the classroom.
- Resonance supported LAC/RSD to implement an Education in Crisis and Conflict workshop exploring the role of education in mitigating crime and violence. The workshop included 86 participants from development organizations, think tanks, and academia from the United States, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.
- In Haiti, Resonance organized two back-to-school events to raise awareness of the importance of literacy, numeracy, and mother tongue instruction among regional Ministry of Education staff and other USAID partners under Haiti's National Cause for reading, writing, and math.
- Resonance organized a LAC Workforce Development workshop in Tegucigalpa, Honduras for six USAID workforce development projects across Central America. Resonance also organized and managed education and workforce development workshops in Miami and Washington DC, involving LAC/RSD and 10 USAID Missions with active education and workforce development programming. For USAID and its partners, these activities enhanced organizational learning for education and workforce development programming.