

FOR
COMPREHENSIVE
DEVELOPMENT
AND PEACE
PROMOTION

TRANSFORMING SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT





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Organização
de Estados
Ibero-americanos

Para a Educação,
a Ciência
e a Cultura



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What is it for?

“Transforming school environment” (“Transformación del entorno escolar”) strives to strengthen comprehensive human development in order to reach coexistence in harmony among families and community members. To accomplish this goal, the project’s premises are based in the promotion and respect of human rights in order to move towards inclusive and safe environments, democracy consolidation, and peace achievement. The development approach underlies in the design and implementation of this project, located in a broader guarantee framework for the right to education, the right to self development and human rights global defence.

With whom?

- National Ministries of Education, Secretaries of education and culture, General Directorates of Education and Directorates of Teacher Training
- Educational establishments, institutes, child and youth care centres
- Community councils, youth participation groups, volunteering associations, community radios, among other institutions. New organisations continue joining every day, thanks to a logic that promotes and stimulates participation, dialogue, appropriation in pursuit of human rights promotion and respect.

This project was launched in 2017 by the Organisation for Ibero-American States (OEI by its Spanish and Portuguese acronyms), which has been promoted by its Instituto Iberoamericano para la Educación en Derechos Humanos y en Democracia - IDEDH¹ (Ibero-American Institute for Education in Human Rights and Democracy) and coordinated by its Secretary General, along with its regional offices in Colombia, El Salvador and Uruguay. This project aims to build schools as a violence-free space from a holistic approach to human rights. The pilot project started in 2016 in El Salvador and most of the participating countries joined the initiative throughout 2017.

This project is targeting children, young people, school teams, families, executive boards, management teams, teaching teams, parent organization, schools, school districts and the whole of the education community.

What has been achieved?

This project is impacting very positively in all schools and communities where it has been implemented; all located in high vulnerability areas which record high levels of violence and difficulties related to family life, school and citizen coexistence. Some of these communities are located in areas with a high presence of “Maras” within their surroundings in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.



¹ Opened in March 2014 in Bogotá, the Institute wants to strengthen, guarantee and promote human rights, good governance, civil and democratic value and pacific coexistence among member States for democracy consolidation and governability through training, technical assistance, research and dissemination.



17,705
DIRECT
BENEFICIARIES



68,175
INDIRECT
BENEFICIARIES



85,880
TOTAL OF
BENEFICIARIES



EL SALVADOR

TARGET

2,380 direct beneficiaries



Focused on improving the processes of change within educational centres, especially in pedagogical practices and the construction of citizen competencies, the pilot project in El Salvador has served as a model for the rest of the countries. Aspects such as inclusion, violence prevention and human rights protection, democracy and healthy coexistence were addressed on a set of workshops structured around 8 thematic axes. The topics respond to the specific needs of the different participating educational centres that were identified through participatory processes of the educational communities.

Yolanda has two children who go to the 2nd and 4th grade in El Salvador. **Positive discipline** and early warning identification workshops have given her the tools to learn on how to educate her children. She has been trying to address them without yelling and hitting in order to resolve their family life problems for several months. Instead, she tries to advise them and correct them. She knows it is difficult and she cannot always succeed, but when she does it this way, she can perceive the very positive results it has. She is now aware of her children's rights, as well as their responsibilities, and, from a basis of respect for **human rights** use of positive discipline she now sees herself as a different person: she tries to talk more to her children and vice versa.

Alejandra Guadalupe, her daughter, is a student at a secondary school in San Salvador and has attended several training workshops on **self-esteem, self-image** and on the use of dialogue and communication styles. She started very cautiously, but, at the end of the process, she feels that she has truly understood how to guide her life and how to dialogue with other people. She tries to value herself everyday as a unique and a different person, positively appreciating **diversity** in other people. She strives to reject communicative styles that attack other people and impede an open a dialogue based on **respect** to express what other people can think, feel and desire, and she is improving every day. She feels more confident and has a greater self-esteem, which has increased her motivation to attend classes every day. In addition, the school has greatly improved its environment and the **processes of dialogue** have been strengthened.

Emma has been working for 13 years in a school next to Alejandra's, which also receives a majority of students with low economic resources, poor schooling and family life problems.

Emma has been applying traditional pedagogical practices for years. She is strict and not very flexible. The workshops have helped her to understand that she must be flexible and less demanding with her teacher colleagues and closer to young people. Now, she is able to understand the negative consequences of repressive disciplinary measures at school.

In El Salvador, both teachers and young students have responded very well to training. Daniel ignored institutional discipline last year, showing little interest in school rules and boundaries. This year, thanks to **dialogue management** and educational leadership programmes, he has managed to improve his attitude towards school as well as his relations with other classmates and teachers. Today, with his studies almost finished, he has become part of the school board and the board of students after receiving the support of several of his classmates, who decided to give him an **opportunity**. This is a clear example of the positive impact of the programme on the process of building student leadership and the appearance of new opportunities.

Daniel's mother, Silvia, was unaware of the rights that she had as a person, as a citizen and as a member of the school community. The context of social violence that surrounds her led her to behave in a not very kind, sometimes violent, manner. However, the training has now made her understand that hitting and screaming cannot do any good, now she tries to relate to her children more respectfully. She knows and wants to make use of the rights and obligations of each member of the family. She does not always succeed, but she is making efforts to try every day. Thanks to this, she has been able to detect **possible dangers** that her children may face in the spaces where they interact, understanding that they can fight them.



CHILE

TARGET ■

150 direct beneficiaries
300 indirect beneficiaries

Many stories display that, through playful, artistic and sport activities, new competences and skills are acquired and, thus, internalized in a more efficient and sustainable way than through traditional means. This is the case of conducting bio-dance (biodanza) workshops in Chile, aimed at primary school students who present high levels of violence, along with their families. Elena affirms that, according to her experience as a teacher, these workshops have managed to involve more mothers than any other strictly academic activity has. The community has many unstructured and single-parent families, and the **involvement** of mothers in the school life of their children has increased since the last workshops.

Such is the case of Claudia Andrea, who attended the positive parenting workshops that took place in the district of Renca, thanks to which she understood that it is important to have more tolerance with Valeria, her daughter, as well as listening her; in the meantime, Gloria has decided to have a better relationship with her grandson. By learning new tools of positive parenting, they really feel that they are the target beneficiaries, they feel **empowered**, and they have understood that they must assert themselves as women. They have learned on how to transmit **values** to their children, to educate from a **positive parenting** model and to respect the **rights** of their children, as well as their own.

In this way, Daniel, a kindergarten student, has learned new ways of playing, communicating and expressing himself, beyond beating and kicking. Through caresses, looks and affection, he is now learning to **respect** his classmates a little more each day. This implies a paradigm shift that will allow him to relate to his peers in a different way throughout his childhood and adolescence.

Ana María, Daniel's teacher, feels that there has been a change among teachers in her school, a modification of the paradigms derived from the enabling of a **space for pedagogical and experiential reflection** amongst them.

Facing a problem of violence and mismanagement of emotions among students, they have been offered an innovative proposal emphasizing on the importance of **affective education**.

In Chile, the programme started at a key point where violence and problems with school coexisted. It produced a very positive impact on school environment.

It was also being experienced as a modification of pedagogical practices and a construction of citizen competencies. Focused on ages from early childhood to eighth grade, the directors of the centres assured that the programme responds to the requirements of the community for an inclusive and quality education.



GUATEMALA

TARGET

284 direct beneficiaries

900 indirect beneficiaries



In Guatemala, the project has given a very important role to teacher training and families. Spaces have been set up for dialogue and meetings among them. By approaching topics that respond to the specific needs of the different members of the educational community, aspects such as responsibility for positive parenting or disciplinary practices with a human rights perspective have been applied. Teachers have been able to train in key aspects such as self-care in school spaces, dialogue and peaceful coexistence in classroom, types of violence and techniques for conflict resolution, or how to prepare complaints. For their part, families have had the opportunity to receive training and strategies to understand the context and environment in which their children are growing, how their children learn, how to grow in communication, or how to support their children in the management of their emotions.

Yolanda is also a teacher in Guatemala, and through **dialogue and peaceful coexistence** workshops, she has become aware of the importance of educating and transmitting a **culture of peace**. She has acquired skills to acknowledge on how to deal with different cases of violence being experienced daily in her educational centre. It is a difficult process and she does not always succeed, but she tries to apply them every day. Along with the rest of the teachers team of her school, she is now part of a project that launches actions in the classrooms to avoid situations of physical violence, identifying the causes of the exercise of violence as a wake-up call in the classrooms, and diverting students' attention to other aspects by using dialogue, games, and constructing **citizen competencies**. What results striking is how the teachers mobilized and had this transforming attitude facing a school violence situation, which would usually be experienced as normal, and how they now have tools that will allow them to address this issue with their students and their respective families once the process is concluded.

Marnie is also part of the same group of teachers, she spends her time in the workshops in order to identify relevant information about research on the situation of violence in schools, and it has led her to understand the importance of self-identifying cases of violence in her own classroom. It has allowed her to reach a better understanding of her particular situation and will now be part of the design process for a **campaign to minimize all forms of violence** in school environments.

Through pacific coexistence and dialogue workshops, a culture of peace and the construction of competences have been transmitted.



PANAMA

TARGET ■

80 direct beneficiaries
975 indirect beneficiaries

A higher quality education favours school coexistence and supports students in vulnerable situation

In the same way as Marnie, Gabriela is a primary education teacher in Panama and has been monitoring the vulnerabilities and risk behaviours of children in her community for more than 20 years. She is convinced that the only way to redirect her future and to offer children new opportunities and alternatives is education: a **quality education** from a framework of **school coexistence** and a **culture of non-violence** and **respect for human rights**. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to involve teachers from the early childhood education level. The project has allowed this action to be carried out with teachers for the first time, motivating and stimulating in equal parts, where components have been integrated together with teachers, families and managers. It is therefore vital to ensure its continuity.

A work promoting a multi-year plan has been developed in these Panamanian schools (5 area plans and 13 school plans), which has improved competencies among students in diverse and complex environments by articulating, basically, intervention and empowerment with families and the community. Every school works based on its own characteristics and will develop those activities that correspond to the local socio-educational model. Schools within the same school zone share some of the objectives and work together certain activities. Twice a year, they prepare meetings in order to cooperate on certain topics that have been defined at the beginning of the school year. The themes respond to specific social challenges, which are significant, motivating, and important for the population in general.

The objective of the project in Panama is focused on improving the quality of education by creating support networks for students in vulnerable situations in order to promote both an improvement in learning outcomes and a comprehensive education for boys and girls. For this, a very important work has been developed in schools, but fundamentally with families and community.



COSTA RICA

TARGET

6,200 direct beneficiaries



In Costa Rica, the programme extends to boys and girls from 12 schools, in alliance with the “Con Vos” programme (With you), which aims to reduce violence in schools and generate educational spaces that will improve school success. These will be benefitted from safer and more comfortable school environments. In addition, it is expected to achieve a greater school participation in the classroom and an increase in the processes of inclusion, violence prevention and human rights protection by promoting a culture of peace and healthy coexistence, based on game promotion.

Violence prevention and human rights protection by promoting a culture of peace and healthy coexistence, based on game promotion.

The members of another team of teachers and directors, in a small school in San José, Costa Rica, have been able to identify recreational spaces in the school environment for implementing **inclusive structures** to be used for games focused on strengthening **citizen competencies** thanks to the diagnosis of the internal structure of each school. The areas for their transformation have been measured, dimensioned and photographed: green areas, gymnasiums and play areas which can be used for this purpose, taking advantage of the available resources, ensuring their **sustainability**, and establishing agreements and alliances between members of the team for the diagnosis of needs and available resources.

Thanks to the diagnosis of the internal structure of 12 educational centers located throughout the national territory, conducted by the national office of the OEI in Costa Rica and the Ministry of Public Education of the country (MEP), it has been possible to identify the schools who have entered into this process.

In 2018, the OEI will offer workshops with topics such as: “Living human rights by playing” for children of the fourth grade of basic education and “Tools for transmitting human rights to children” will be addressed to teaching staff of these 12 schools.



PARAGUAY

TARGET

765 direct beneficiaries
40,000 indirect beneficiaries

In Bañado Sur, Paraguay, a large group of teachers, social educators and representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations attended a training on “Healthy Environments for Early Childhood” (“Ambientes Saludables para la Primera Infancia”) taught by an international specialist. Marta is a social educator and, after acquiring the necessary skills to apply the **socio-emotional development** “10 factors” in a coordinated way among community spaces of education and intra-family scope, she has decided to transfer her knowledge to mothers and fathers in workshops, favouring thus the coherence and similarity in practices for both **family and school** upbringing. It is a complex process but they do it better every day, with effort and motivation.

Thanks to this, Graciela, mother in a family with a very low education level, has been able to actively participate in indentifying the necessary factors to ensure **comprehensive development of boys and girls**. In addition to feeling empowered as a woman and as a person, she has understood how to change the way she educates and talks to her son Marquitos. Now she tries to organize her time by establishing priorities, she tries to give a **pedagogical value** to everything she does and strives to value all his achievements from **affection** and security. She is aware of her **rights**, of those of her child, and of the **values** that she should and can transmit to him.

Also, in a neighbouring school in Paraguay, the process of making the storybook “Que los derechos no sean un cuento, cuento, cuento. Cuentos de niños paraguayos” (“May the rights not be a story, story, story. Stories of Paraguayan children”) has been the opportunity **to give the word and visibility to children** regarding their rights.

In Paraguay, a preponderant role is given to work with families, community leaders and the community as a whole. In this sense, a training plan aimed at families has been undertaken to strengthen capacities and parenting practices in children care from 0 to 6 years old, making use of the broadcast of radio programs, among other aspects, for ensuring a greater dissemination and better access. It is ensured at the same time training spaces and community action development that supports human rights promotion and full defense and development of citizen competencies.



NICARAGUA

TARGET

1,286 direct beneficiaries

10,000 indirect beneficiaries



The project in Nicaragua is focused on strengthening the capacities and skills of the Ministry for Education technical staff and consultants of Educational Community Councils to prevent risk situations related to school bullying, teenage pregnancy, addictions and sexual abuse. Processes have been undertaken to strengthen capacities and skills for counselors, technicians, directors and teachers for school bullying, sexual abuse, addictions and teen pregnancy prevention.

The same happened in Nicaragua, where students of 1st grade from primary school have composed several songs based on a list of norms and values related to **human rights** that they consider being the most relevant and whose construction has helped them to understand the sense of **responsibility and the value of education**.

Alexander is also a high school student in Nicaragua and has been part of the **teenage pregnancy and bullying prevention** actions that his school's teaching team has developed after being trained to do so. He affirms to have understood the importance of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases prevention. Although it is not always easy, he now feels a little more free and comfortable to talk about it with his classmates. His classmate, Emma, is able to think of a future in **equal conditions** with her male classmates, and not only in a possible and incipient motherhood as it happens to many adolescents in her community. She emphasizes that the respect of her peers towards women is being improved thanks to **promotion of values**, and now there is an improvement in terms of **companionship**. These are major transformations that are not observed from one day to another, but they all feel that they are following the right path.

Both are part of the 3rd grade class of secondary school, which, after receiving bullying prevention training, they did a consistent job of visiting other schools to raise awareness among primary school students on the importance of **preventing and combating bullying** by using ethical values.

At the exit of the school in this educational community of El Rama, M^a Lidia, who was a teenage mother like many other women in her community, is always present. The workshops for **violence and teenage pregnancy prevention** have given her the opportunity to receive something she did not receive as a child in her home. She is now aware of the importance

of having an open dialogue with her daughter Jessica on how to prevent teenage pregnancy and how to deal with risky behaviours during this stage. In the school for parents, she and the rest of the mothers and fathers in the workshop have understood how they can offer a **values education** to their children and grandchildren, in order to obtain a lower percentage of intra-family violence, fewer cases of teenage pregnancy, and a better **family coexistence**.

And in what is this translated from a point of view of educational advisers and teachers of these Nicaraguan schools? María has been an elementary teacher for 15 years and her classes have been attended by a multitude of students with different problems. For the first time, she has experienced a real change in the behaviour of her students: they do not arrive at the classroom shouting, they now look more confident, and they try to maintain an atmosphere for better coexistence and harmony. In the same way, it happens with their parents: it observes a **greater respect** and an effort to better understand what teachers work. Little by little, parents have become aware of the importance of **learning values** through meetings. They learn, unlearn and **exchange** experiences.

The execution of the program at the regional level has also highlighted the importance of **creating informal networks** among teachers, advisers, managers and all members of the educational community as a way to build and exchange experiences. Martín is a member of the Jinotega Education Council, Nicaragua, and during the processes of pedagogical updating. He has assisted in the creation of networks where the consultants have replicated the training with links and, at the same time, with directors and teachers. Thus, a very interesting **secondary training** process is generated, which will facilitate its geographical extension to rural areas and areas which are difficult to access.



URUGUAY

TARGET ■

560 direct beneficiaries

Emilia is the Director of a school located in a violent area in Uruguay. **Exchanging impressions** of what we mean by violence and what it means to care for and protect children and young people, as well as the differences among violence, crime and discomfort has allowed her to have a better understanding of what is happening at her school, how it is addressed in other schools, and how she can introduce **new pedagogical practices** to transform violence into attitudes **of care and responsibility** towards oneself and others.

In the same way, in Ignacio's opinion, a Uruguayan teacher in Paso Carrasco, **encountering with other teachers** has allowed him to identify necessary issues and skills to face the different situations of violence that he experiences in his school and his community. Understanding the dimensions and expressions of violence has enabled him to think about **strategies** for his approach and to propose specific **socio-educational actions** for his school. Alongside the other components of the encounters, he is trying to address **models to manage coexistence** in their respective schools and build learning communities among all of them.

***Strengthening educational
community and neighbourhood
for conflict and violence
manifestation treatment
by pedagogical treatment***

The program in Uruguay is aimed at executives, teachers, territorial leaders, community leaders and students, in order to facilitate the articulation of institutions and social actors to promote protective factors in educational environments. To do this, it is aimed to bring educational and neighborhood communities, theoretical approaches, methodological strategies and educational materials for pedagogical treatment of problems, conflicts and manifestations of violence that manifest in schools and neighborhoods. It also aims to generate the creation of a multi-agency network for a comprehensive approach and construction of violence-free education communities.



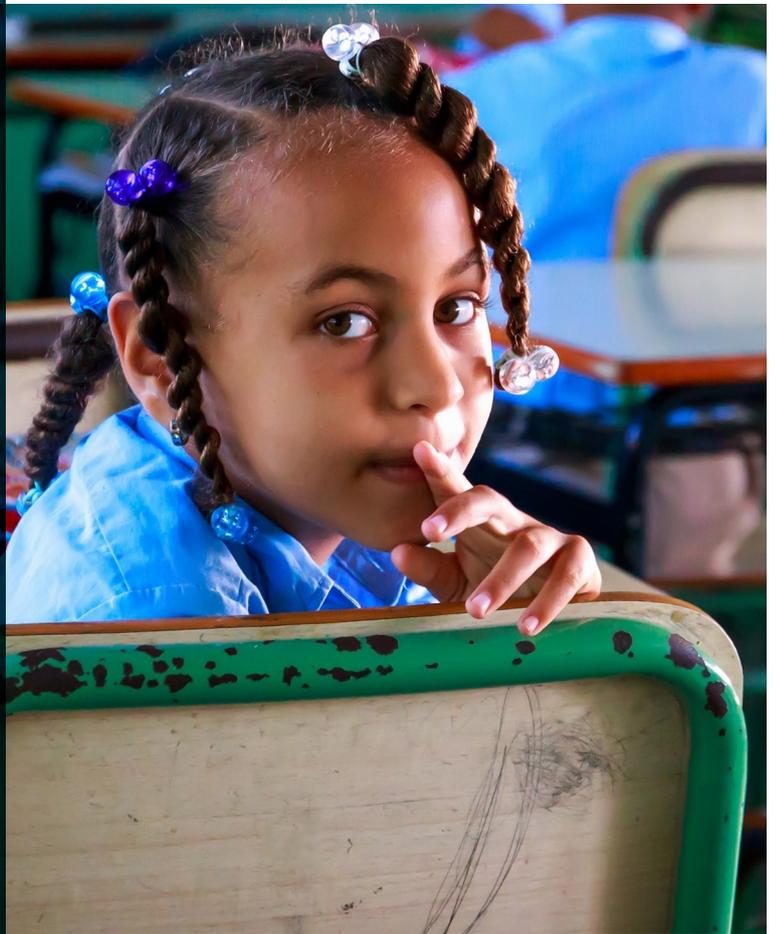
ECUADOR AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

■ TARGET ECUADOR

5,000 direct beneficiaries
16,000 indirect beneficiaries

■ TARGET DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

1,000 direct beneficiaries



Other schools, municipalities and countries will be added to such an important initiative to build new stories of new lives.

The project in Ecuador will focus on strengthening preventive capacities of teachers and administrators in situations of violence in school context, providing prevention tools through a MOOC training course (Massive Online Open Courses).

In Dominican Republic, the project is aimed at improving school coexistence and culture of peace by promoting an initiative on art, values, and citizenship construction in educational centres.

In Ecuador and Dominican Republic, after finishing the design phase, the entire educational community is working with a strong commitment to implement both projects through the design of a **mass training course in school violence prevention and care**, and the development of a training strategy with teachers and students for the **promotion of a school culture of peace through art**, respectively.

These and many other stories that exemplify the implementation of important processes of change are built based on national projects already ongoing throughout 2017. However, let's not forget that, starting in 2018, many other schools, municipalities and countries will be added to such an important initiative to build new stories of new lives, new opportunities, new achievements and new rights **to build educational communities as violence-free spaces.**

What is the expected impact of the project from a development perspective?

Both regionally and nationally, the project is oriented towards **the defense and promotion of human rights, education for peace and the transmission of values training**, promoting and ensuring violence-free school environments, that will guarantee the full exercise of the right to an inclusive and quality education. From an integral and multidisciplinary vision that takes its focus on rights as a starting point, aspects such as the rule of law, civic and democratic values, children's rights, participation in democratic life, education for peace are addressed, as well as education for citizenship, the peaceful coexistence rights of women and gender equality, inclusive education, and of course the right to education as a whole.

This approach responds and is oriented towards the achievement of the international development agenda objectives, fundamentally materialized in **the Sustainable Development Goals - SDG**, which has incorporated a firm and solid approach to human rights and mainstreamed into all the agenda, from goals to indicators.

Based on the integral approach to human rights and education, each of the projects has a direct or indirect impact on practically all of the aforementioned objectives. However, those to which it responds most directly are **SDG 3, 4, 5 and 16**, which correspond to the sectors of Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Gender Equality and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, respectively.

The OEI will materialize its commitment to **gender equality** by emphasizing non-violence towards women and girls in any of its manifestation (physical, sexual, and psychological, etc) as well as by improving access to opportunities.

Therefore, "Transforming school environment" highlights the role of the OEI as a relevant actor with regards to cooperation, which is aligned with the international development agenda by subscribing the globally agreed goals and objectives, with a firm commitment to human rights protection from all their action areas. This commitment is evident in the project **"Metas Educativas 2021: la educación que queremos para la generación de los bicentenarios"** (Educational Goals 2021: the education we want for the generation of the bicentennials), which incorporates a rights approach in a transversal way in its 11 goals. Hereby, it suggests more specific educational proposals as well to work in a path of education in human rights, education for peace, and the promotion of schools as violence-free spaces, through the programme of values and citizenship education that develops part of the previously mentioned proposed objectives.



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