

# Is the Human Right to Education a reality in Honduras?

Findings in the Right to Education Index in Honduras, 2016



Foro Dakar-Honduras

## What is the Right to Education Index?

It is a global index designed to monitor national progress to assure the right to education. In order to construct the index of each country, the necessary information is gathered on a wide variety of topics and indicators, with the help of civil society, research institutions and government, so that the progress that has been made in this human right can be identified. Once the index is constructed, the findings are used to hold governments accountable for their commitments and to increase government and political support to obtain the right to education. The Index will be conducted every two years to measure progress, identify trends and support efforts to improve the right to education.

## Results of the Right to Education Index in Honduras

The effort of researchers, reviewers and government, contribute to generate the General Index and the index for five specific topics: Governance, Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility and Adaptability. In 2016, Honduras achieves the following result:

### **Total Index of the Right to Education 77**

<b>Governance Index</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Availability Index</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Acceptability Index</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Accessibility Index</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Adaptability Index</b>	<b>65</b>



## Findings

The Index reveals the themes and sub-themes that need to be considered by the authorities. Honduras scores below 70 in the following categories:

- Enrollment
- Availability of classrooms.
- Availability of toilets and potable water.
- Results of learning outcomes.
- Qualified teachers.
- Adaptability to deliver education to :
  - a) Students with disabilities.
  - b) Students belonging to minorities.
  - c) Students who are outside the system.
- Gratuity and Equity.
- Education beyond 6th Grade.
- Safe learning environments.

Among the results that require more attention, according to the Right to Education Index, three themes are identified below, which must be part of the educational agenda of the country. Government, private enterprise and civil society in general must be vigilant to take into account not only the issues reported here but also all those aspects that ensure

meeting the sustainable goals of the education sector.

- a) **Adaptability of the system to attend to numbers of people who are not having the opportunity of education. The system is not providing an educational response to the truly economically disadvantaged, minorities, people with disabilities and people outside the system.**

Honduras has a compulsory basic education that goes from 1st. to 9th Grade. According to the data revealed in the research on the Right to Education Index, the country still does not respond to the challenge of incorporating and providing an education with equity. Although Honduras reaches the best levels of enrollment between 1st. and 6th grade, there are a lot of children and young people who cannot reach the classroom, and the dropped out rate increases dramatically after the 7th. Grade, the gross enrollment rate for secondary school is only 68.38% according to the National Institute of Statistics. The availability of education for those with disabilities and those deprived of liberty remain pilot initiatives and projects that do not respond to the commitment of the country to guarantee the right to education to all who are in this situation. According to FENAPAPEDISH, the National Federation of Parents of Children with disabilities, 2016 was the year to begin with inclusion initiatives but in just some schools. Efforts with educational attention to people belonging to any of the nine indigenous group have had better results, and at least they have been able to incorporate their mother tongue into part of the curricula. The National Education Statistics System of the Ministry of Education for 2015 reported that 47,154 students out of 117.104 enrolled in minority bilingual schools, already have additional instruction in their mother tongue.

- b) **Results of Learning evaluation**

- **Supply of qualified teachers:** With the compulsory basic education, it becomes necessary to have clear parameters of what a qualified teacher means to attend to the work entrusted to him. The supply of qualified teachers must be in accordance with the requirements of the different educational levels and with the enrollment initiatives, all to guarantee a quality education. The Government now has a double challenge, teacher's initial training and continuing education for teachers. The Ministry of Education, must implement as soon as possible initiatives to improve the teacher's profile. The requirement of a higher level of training, professional practice of 500 hours, (instead of 100 hours as it used to be), and a consistent and timely evaluation of the teaching performance, will contribute to have a better student/qualified teacher rate.

For continuing education, the large number of teachers who are already part of the staff of the Ministry of Education should benefit from an appropriate system of ongoing training to improve their profile and to respond to current educational needs that teachers are facing now that basic school goes up to 9<sup>th</sup>. Grade.

- **Evaluation:** In recent years in Honduras, Ministry of Education conducts a standardized assessment for the subjects of Spanish and Mathematics. With the results obtained in the Right to Education Index, on the evaluation of learning, is clear that Honduras has an opportunity to expand the subjects evaluated, and improve the results that the students are obtaining in Math and Spanish. Evaluation itself does not improve educational performance, but it is a necessary condition for defining and adopting measures aimed at improving the quality of education. So far,

assessments have not provided a comprehensive picture of educational quality, but they have helped to identify strengths and weaknesses, and above all, they have come to feedback teachers who are in charge of students. It is worth mentioning that it is imperative to review:

- The Studies carried out in Honduras in recent years about the factors associated with learning process.
- Actions taken to improve student performance in relation to teacher training, provision of materials, promotion of literacy and math, and pre-test preparation, both by teachers and by the students.

c) **Safe learning environment:** In Honduras, an important aspect reflected in the results of the Right to Education Index is the need to improve safety conditions in educational settings.

Very few official statistics exist regarding the insecurity and violence to which some schools are exposed. 100 cases of bullying are reported every day, however the International Committee of Red Cross reported that "Organized violence in Honduras threatens the security, integrity and dignity of young people", in schools located in high risk places.

The problem that exists in Honduras is the low reported situations of delinquency and discrimination, and this becomes a problem to generate statistics. School authorities have the challenge to encourage the population to report irregularities, document and disseminate what is happening and act appropriately to protect the student population.

#### **Availability of information in Honduras.**

During the construction of the Right to Education Index, it was evident that there is a clear need in

Honduras for the information to be on the websites. In government offices, they have extensive information that is simply not available to the public. It was also possible to determine that depending on the source more than one data is available. This aspect highlights the need to articulate and unify the information data, both nationally and locally. In addition, It was evident the difficulty of finding, information even in government offices, about persons with disabilities, statistics on tertiary education, and statistics on qualified teachers.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Honduras must improve its educational enrollment, especially after 6th. Grade where attendance rates decrease alarmingly.
- It is necessary to systematize the process of inclusion of people with disabilities, and of all those that are outside the educational system for different reasons.
- The country needs to contemplate gratuity and equity so that the State assumes its role as guarantor of the right to education of the entire population.
- The learning outcomes must respond to the improvement of the quality of education and to feedback to teachers, rather than becoming an instrument of exclusion.
- Teacher's evaluation should be systematic and the supply of qualified teachers should increase, to achieve an appropriate ratio of student / qualified teacher.
- With regard to the safety of schools and the student population, authorities should determine mechanisms that encourage students to report irregular situations, and the schools should duplicate efforts to keep safe learning environment.
- As a right of the population, the Sectorial Strategic Plan for Education must specifically state that the data collection process must be reliable and timely and that all information must be available to the public.