Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

   UNESCO-Malala Centers for the education of girls, adolescents, and indigenous young women of Guatemala Model

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

   Guatemala

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

   - ☑ Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
   - ☐ Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
   - ☐ Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
   - ☐ Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
   - ☐ Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

    Ministry of Education Guatemala
    National Literacy Committee of Guatemala
    Guatemala Radiophonic Institute
    Fe y Alegría Foundation
    Municipalities in San Andres Xecul and Santa María Chiquimula, Totonicapán.

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

    Strengthen educational policies for women's educational equality through the promotion of an Educational Policy for Educational Equality and the creation of two UNESCO-Malala Centers at the municipal level.

6. What makes it a best practice? *

    The creation of the UNESCO-Malala Centers responded to the real educational necessities of indigenous girls and young women in the highlands of Guatemala, who often lack of information on how to access the existing non-formal educational programs. Cultural and linguistic pertinence was incorporated to the existing programs, since previous experience has shown high levels of monolingualism amongst indigenous woman in the region.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)
   This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:
   i) Which population was affected?
   ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
   iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

   Access to formal education is still a challenge for many girls and adolescents in Guatemala. According to National Statistics, 11% of girls between 11 and 19 years have not had access to formal education. For that matter, female adolescents between 15-19 rank amongst the highest percentage of illiterate people in the country. A Guatemalan girl spends from 4 to 6 years at school, however in areas where indigenous population is predominant, a girl has access to only 2.6 years of formal education. In 2015, women, and mostly indigenous Guatemalan women from rural areas accounted more than 50% of the people who are excluded from formal education.

   Therefore, in 2018 with support of UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls Right to Education, the UNESCO-Malala Centers for the Education of Adolescent Girls and Indigenous Young Women of Guatemala project started with the objective to facilitate and promote the right to education of girls, adolescents, and young women, with a special attention to those who have been historically marginalized from the education system. The project aimed to have an impact on the national level, through the strengthening of educational equality policies for women, and the creation of an educational promotion model for women: the establishment of two UNESCO-Malala Centers in two municipalities of Totonicapán, Guatemala.

   The model of the Centers was based in three pillars:
   - The human rights approach, with special emphasis in the right to education and the principle of leaving no one behind.
   - The perspective of equal opportunities for women: to study, to work, and make responsible and informed decisions about their lives, and to participate in their communities in different roles.
   - Local alliances among several actors in the communities.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

i) What are the main activities carried out?

ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?

iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?

iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

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According to the model's implementation plan, activities started in January 2018 to achieve the main results of the project. Project's phase 1 enabled the development and implementation of an informed National Educational Policy on Gender Equality, as well as the participation of 639 indigenous women in non-formal education programs, as well as in two educational programs on economic autonomy and, health & well-being developed at both centers. This meant a unique opportunity for many women to have access to education and share with other women their inspiration and ideas.

The second phase of the project, which started during the first months of COVID-19 pandemic, in June 2020, required a general restructuring of activities where creativity became an essential factor to work with new participants, as well as in the adaptation of program's activities.

The confinement affected the traditional ways of communication between the local project promoters and participants, which led to the development of a strategy that consisted in working through small bubbles, led mainly by female literacy promoters from the National Literacy Committee. A new virtual training modality began to work on the training of trainees in the second phase of Economic Autonomy and, Health & Well-being, that using short videos and virtual platforms enabled the participation of 187 women in both training programs. This not only allowed participants to strengthen their virtual skills but promoted leadership amongst the female leaders in both municipalities.

In November 2020, UNESCO Guatemala signed a cooperation agreement with Huawei Guatemala to strengthen education on the country, through the provision of technological solutions and the creation of opportunities for the future which consisted in the provision of 150 tablets so that young adolescents start and continue their digital high school studies in administration, offered by the Guatemala Radiophonic Institute, another strategic partner of the project.

In 2021, two new training programs where developed: the science based sustainable development program: roads towards the future, where 93 indigenous women acquired knowledge on ecosystem resilience and the creation of family gardens. And finally, a pilot program on positive masculinities was designed and implemented with 43 male youngsters from both municipalities. Additionally, during the second phase of the project 253 girls, adolescents and young indigenous women were able to continue with their studies through the involvement in the programs offered by the Ministry of Education, the National Literacy Program and IGER.

This project was funded by the UNESCO-Malala Fund to Education and required US$384,937 for an implementation of 4 years.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

   To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

   i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);

   ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?

   iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

   > A national policy for educational equality for women was created and approved by educational authorities.
   > The creation of an educational and replicable model to enable girls, adolescents and young indigenous to access to non-formal educational programs, as well as to other competences for their lives.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

    To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

    i) What were the key triggers for transformation?

    ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?

    iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

    > Ever since the model's early planning stages, one of the main priorities of the project was the incorporation of cultural and linguistic pertinence in every educational intervention. Therefore, all the educational materials that were produced were available in Maya K'iche' and Spanish and aimed to reflect the cultural practices of the region. Additionally, the consultants that worked on the training programs and the project promoters where deeply familiarized with the area of intervention, including the language and culture.

    > To assist and support girls, adolescents, and young indigenous women of Totonicapán with cultural and linguistic pertinence, the need to hire local project promoters was detected during the first months of intervention. The bilingualism of the project promoters was essential to develop all the activities at the local level and allowed women to feel safe and express themselves in their own language, since most of the woman in the region are monolingual and only speak Maya K'iche'.

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a "best practice". What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented "best practice" or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

The creation of the UNESCO-Malala Centers responded to the real educational necessities of indigenous girls and young women in the highlands of Guatemala, who often lack of information on how to access the existing non-formal educational programs. Cultural and linguistic pertinence was incorporated to the existing programs, since previous experience has shown high levels of monolingualism amongst indigenous woman in the region.
By establishing local alliances with municipal authorities and educational institutions is a key factor to facilitate and guarantee indigenous girls, adolescents and young women's education.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the "best practice" for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17td8zV6HFzfcldP0KboyhTP3FadsqWDO?usp=sharing