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Evaluation of cooperation initiatives in support of the education system

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ACRONYMS

AICS	Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
ATP	Asistente Técnico Pedagógico (MINED)
ATPAI	Asistente Técnico Pedagógico de Apoyo a la Inclusión (Educaid)
BID	Banco Inter-americano de Desarrollo
CONAIPD	Consejo Nacional de Atención Integral a la Persona con Discapacidad
DAI	Docente de Apoyo à la Inclusión
DGCS	Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
DIGESTYC	Dirección General de Estadísticas y Censos (Gobierno de El Salvador)
Educaid	EducAid - O.n.l.u.s. - Cooperazione e Aiuto Internazionale in campo Educativo
EITP	Escuela Inclusiva de Tiempo Pleno
FEPADE	Fundación Empresarial Para El Desarrollo (El Salvador)
FIS	Fondo de Inversión Social
FSF UNIBO	Facoltà di scienze della formazione – Università degli Studi di Bologna
ILO	International Labour Organization
MAE	Ministero degli Affari Esteri
MAECI	Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MINED	Ministerio de la Educación (Gobierno de El Salvador)
OCSE	Organizzazione per la Cooperazione e lo Sviluppo Economico
ONG	Organizzazione non governativa
OPS	Organizzazione Panamericana per la Salute
PIL	Prodotto Interno Lordo
PNUD	Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TdR	Termini di riferimento
UCA	Universidad Centro-americana
UE	Unione Europea
UNESCO	United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization
UNIBO	Università degli Studi di Bologna
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar

MAP OF THE PROJECTS



SUMMARY

In autumn 2015, the DGDC (General direction of cooperation development) evaluation office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation launched the evaluation of three cooperation initiatives regarding inclusive education in El Salvador:

- "Support for the promotion of inclusive education";
- "Support for reform of the national education system. Strengthening full-time inclusive schooling";
- "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision in order to improve productivity in 12 departments within the country".

The first initiative was proposed by the University of Bologna - Faculty of Educational Science, and funded by a contribution in accordance with article 18 of Law 49/87 (training initiatives); the second was promoted and executed by El Salvador's Ministry of Education (MINED) and funded through reference to article 15 of Law 49/87 and the third and final initiative, was promoted by MINED itself and is funded through the "aid credit" method.

Although all these initiatives fall within the time period between the end of the last decade and the start of the current one, they are in different stages of execution: the first is completed, the second is currently in progress and the third is still in the startup phase. These differing circumstances are obviously reflected in the process of evaluation, which is carried out simultaneously as a "post", "ongoing" and "ante" evaluation exercise.

Another particular aspect of the evaluation is that it deals simultaneously with a series of initiatives which tend — in practice — to constitute a "programme" and the individual initiatives, each of which — albeit forming part of the same overall strategy — is characterized by specific objectives, specific resources and modes of implementation and by a different regulatory framework.

The evaluation of the three initiatives was entrusted to STEM-VCR and began officially on 15 February 2016. To evaluate the initiatives, a multidisciplinary team was established, which includes professionals in evaluation, education, local development and the employment market, and consists of both Italian and Central American experts. Interviews and document analysis were conducted from 25 February 2016. From 3 to 16 April 2016 a field mission was carried out, during which the main local stakeholders were consulted and a sample of educational centres involved in the initiatives were consulted.

The methodology employed is based on the use of multiple sources and technical tools (document analysis, semi-structured interviews with over 50 qualified interlocutors, questionnaires taken by 110 teachers in the schools involved, focus groups with the operators of the initiatives and those involved in their implementation at local level, direct observation of interventions put in place).

The evaluation was based on the use of the following fundamental criteria:

- Relevance;
- Effectiveness;
- Efficiency;
- Sustainability;
- Impact;
- Quality of planning;
- Visibility and communication.

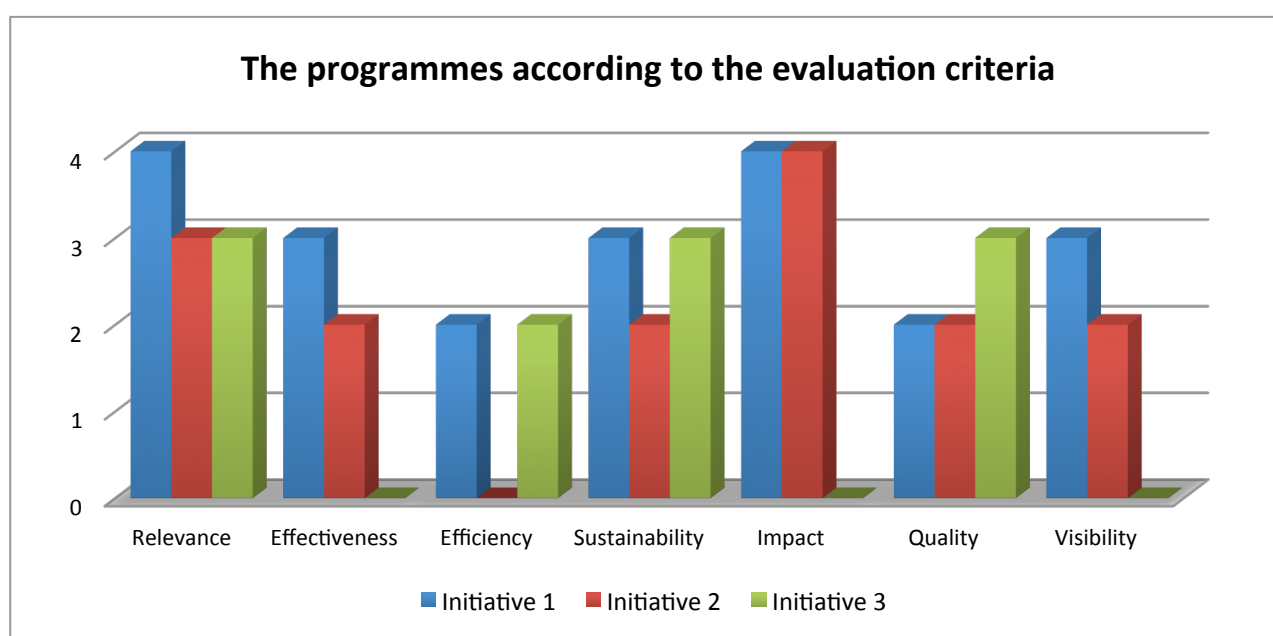
Indicators and questions for evaluation were defined for each criterion.

Based on consultation with the stakeholders and analysis of the activities and their results, the initiatives can be considered satisfactory overall; nevertheless problematic situations and issues have been identified in each one. In effect, the initiatives meet these various criteria to different degrees. A summary of the results is given in the following table, in which, to facilitate understanding of the whole and allow the progress of the initiatives to be immediately clear, reference is made to a simple system of indexes, allowing four levels of "performance" to be distinguished: (4) Extremely satisfactory performance; (3) Generally satisfactory performance: some problems

emerge but these do not compromise the initiative in achieving its results and objectives; (2) Unsatisfactory performance: problems exist which compromise the achievement of some results and objectives; (1) Highly unsatisfactory performance: problems exist which seriously compromise the success of the initiative.

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Impact	Quality of the project	Visibility
Initiative 1 - Support for Inclusive Education	4	3	2	3	4	2	3
Initiative 2 - Support for Reform	3	2	2	2	4	2	2
Initiative 3 — Strengthening educational provision	3	N/A	2	3	N/A	3	N/A

The overall success of the projects can be more easily understood by looking at their profiles, as in the following diagram.



It is clear that the three initiatives have similar responses to the various criteria.

- Satisfactory relevance.** The initiatives in effect respond to emerging issues and needs at national level, and are in line with both national policy and the policies of the Italian Cooperation. Moreover, they appear to be complementary to other Italian initiatives and those of key partners. A high level of relevance also exists with respect to the sectoral guidelines (regarding minors, disability and education) for the Italian Cooperation and the "SDG" (Sustainable Development Goals).
- Effectiveness is problematic** in the two initiatives already underway, although the final outcomes are relatively satisfactory. Although the activities were mainly carried out in a satisfactory manner, some essential activities have not been implemented, and others have only partially achieved their expected aims (for example, the accessibility of schools has improved only in a limited number of schools; effective adoption of the "inclusive school" approach is still limited; the identification of "best practices" which can be reproduced has not yet been fully activated; schedules for the implementation of "full-time inclusive school" actions have been drafted in very few schools; "full-time" schooling involves very low numbers of pupils; a large number of target schools are not yet involved in the activities, etc.). Despite the difficulties, the initiatives are generating the desired effects.
- Efficiency is extremely problematic**, to the extent that the entire outcome of the initiatives is affected. For all the initiatives evaluated, long delays are reported in the implementation of activities, mostly due

to bureaucratic and administrative difficulties. The problems that have arisen have not only necessitated the use of additional resources by the parties involved, but have also resulted in a reduction in the effectiveness of the initiatives themselves (for example, activities were blocked for very long periods, creating problems for the introduction of pedagogical "innovation", and some activities became fragmented, causing — particularly in the second initiative — a separation between "pedagogical" and "infrastructure" activities, and damaging the effectiveness of both). In the case of the third initiative, the delays meant that the project had not yet started at the time of the evaluation.

- d) **Problematic sustainability**, which in certain cases compromised some important components of the initiatives. The three initiatives are characterized by a lack of definite strategies for sustainability. In effect, only one sustainability mechanism is in place, namely the El Salvador government's ability and intention to provide continuity for the activities. The lack of different functional mechanisms to ensure the continuity of the activities and their results appears to be inherently risky and has already led to difficulties in the effective implementation of the "full-time" strategy (in fact the government has already proved unable to finance school meals).
- e) **Impact is satisfactory**. Where evaluation is possible, i.e. in the first and second initiatives, the impact has been very satisfactory. It has not been limited to experimenting with pedagogical approaches or to improving the quality of education in some schools (impacts that indeed still appear rather limited), but has also impacted on the formulation of medium and long term education policies in the country. Impact can also be discerned with regard to the policies of the Italian Cooperation (for example, in the definition of sector guidelines).
- f) **Quality of planning is problematic**. The formulation of funding proposals for the three initiatives is characterized by certain problems that are at the basis of deficiencies identified in the implementation of the initiatives. Specifically, these problems concern: the formulation of the logical framework and indicators relating to the results; logical relationships between the various objectives and between those objectives and the results; risk assessment and the identification of feasibility criteria; the actions chosen (in particular the lack of actions that would be necessary in order to progress to others); the lack of processes for the appropriate consultation and involvement of stakeholders; the choice of funding mechanisms and the indeterminacy of measures for the management of resources; the identification of resources in relation to the activities.
- g) **Visibility levels are problematic**. Despite the fact that numerous communication activities were carried out for the first and second initiatives, there was a lack of specific communication strategies, which impacted the effective visibility of the actions. Especially in the second initiative, the visibility of the contribution by the Italian Cooperation appears extremely limited, especially outside the relatively small circle of those directly involved in the activities.

The first and second initiatives (i.e. those concerned with the introduction of inclusive education and full-time school) proved to be valuable training grounds for innovation. Above and beyond the effectiveness and impact, they have allowed the identification of good practices and lessons learned in three contexts: (a) inclusive education; (b) the formulation and management of interventions in the education sector; (c) the formulation and management of development cooperation initiatives.

The evaluation also identified an "open question" regarding ways of involving minors in the formulation, management and assessment of development initiatives (the guidelines in fact require the active involvement of beneficiaries from interventions concerning children, but such involvement entails the resolution of methodological and legal issues). Finally, through the evaluation it was possible to assess the validity of the indicators used for the analysis and evaluation of inclusive education interventions, highlighting the need to move from indicators referring to the "projects" and their characteristics, towards the identification and use of indicators concerning the needs, the people involved and the ongoing processes in the contexts of the interventions (to avoid self-reference, both in planning and in the implementation of development initiatives).

On the basis of good practices identified and difficulties encountered, certain recommendations were made and addressed to the principal bodies involved in the three initiatives: MINED, the Italian Cooperation, the University of Bologna and Educaid:

- a) Regarding the **formulation of new initiatives for cooperation**:

- (a1) the adoption of a programme-based approach;
 - (a2) the correction of approaches to evaluation, using international standards; the inclusion of more substantial resources for monitoring and evaluation;
 - (a3) the identification and solution of legal and institutional pre-conditions for implementation during the planning phase;
 - (a4) the improvement of collateral measures;
 - (a5) the introduction of measures for knowledge management;
 - (a6) the strategic coordination and harmonization of approaches among donors;
 - (a7) the identification of communication strategies.
- b) Regarding the initiative of **support for the reform of the national education system**, which is already in an advanced stage of implementation:
- (b1) improved definition of the roles and functions of the parties involved;
 - (b2) the improvement of communication, especially in terms of the visibility of the Italian Cooperation;
 - (b3) the activation and improvement of the monitoring and evaluation system and the activation of the Observatory on inclusive education;
 - (b4) the improvement of the mechanisms for sharing knowledge and experiences among those involved in the intervention, among teachers and among school directors; also between people within schools and those "of the region";
 - (b5) the increased involvement of civil society organizations;
 - (b6) the harmonization of approaches to the issue of "inclusive education".
- c) Regarding the initiative **"Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision in order to improve productivity in 12 departments within the country"**, which is still in the start-up phase:
- (c1) to implement an updated planning operation for the start-up of activities;
 - (c2) to establish a programme for the consultation and engagement of relevant parties in the activities (including civil society organizations, youth associations, trade unions and business organisations);
 - (c3) to coordinate the planning of activities related to infrastructure with those relating to the pedagogical component;
 - (c4) to coordinate the actions stipulated in the framework of the initiative with those provided for in the support programmes for education and vocational training supported by the World Bank and USAID;
 - (c5) to identify new resources to support evaluation (external assessment) and communication/visibility, and more generally the participation of the Italian Cooperation in the initiative;
 - (c6) to formulate strategies and methods of communication.

INTRODUCTION

In autumn 2015, the DGDC (General direction of cooperation development) evaluation office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation launched the evaluation of three cooperation initiatives regarding inclusive education in El Salvador:

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The evaluation of the three initiatives was entrusted to STEM-VCR and began officially on 15 February 2016.

To evaluate the initiatives, a multidisciplinary team was established, which coordinated experience and knowledge of the evaluation tools for development initiatives, experience and knowledge of the political, social and economic context within which the interventions took place, and experience and knowledge specialized in the analysis and understanding of the various dynamics generated by the three initiatives. A team was therefore formed in which evaluation skills are backed by extensive knowledge and experience of the context and a specific ability to deal with issues related to the reform and development of education systems. Furthermore, considering the aims and specific objectives of the three projects, additional functional capabilities were introduced, in order to understand how and to what extent the projects interact with specific issues, such as gender issues, the development of economic and employment opportunities, and combating social exclusion.

Following a briefing meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 25 February 2016, a series of meetings took place with the stakeholders in Italy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs-AICS, University of Bologna, the NGO Educaid, etc.). A field mission took place from 3 to 16 April 2016, with the participation of three experts: Dr Serena Saquella, an expert in evaluation (with particular reference to the Italian Cooperation), Dr Milena Landaverde, a Salvadoran expert in education, and Dr Paula Leon, a Costa Rican expert on issues related to education. The field team was assisted by Dr Gianfrancesco Costantini, a sociologist and expert in the evaluation of cooperation projects, who also oversaw the management of all phases of the evaluation process.

The core team for the evaluation, consisting of these experts, was supported by additional professionals on specific issues: Dr Federica Floridi, a sociologist specialising in the methodology of social and evaluative research, collaborated in the development of methodology and technical tools; sociologist Dr Simonetta Bormioli contributed to issues of gender and the labour market, and Dr Andrea Floridi contributed to certain aspects regarding the impact of the projects on the underlying economic dynamics. Finally, Dr Maurizio Floridi oversaw quality control, both during the various stages of the evaluation process and the drafting of the final report.

This report, which outlines the results of the evaluation of the three interventions, is divided into an initial section concerning the context in which the projects were initiated and implemented, a second section

concerning the methodology applied in the evaluation, a third section describing the results of the evaluation and, lastly, a final section in which a series of conclusions and recommendations is put forward, based on the analysis completed and concerned with the management of the initiatives still ongoing, measures to improve the implementation of the initiatives at the start-up phase and recommendations for the identification and formulation of new initiatives in a similar geographical and thematic context.

Chapter 1 — The context and rationale of the initiatives

1. El Salvador and the Italian Cooperation

The Italian Cooperation has been active in El Salvador for several decades, both through directly managed actions and through initiatives promoted by NGOs and international organizations. Italian Cooperation projects were initially focused on the reconstruction of an environment of peace and development, following the end of the conflict that affected the country in the 1980s and early 1990s, and subsequently, on the consolidation of peace, the fight against social exclusion and the development of public services and favorable conditions for economic and social development.

Within this general context, several initiatives have also focused on education and the safeguarding of children's rights: the action for the development of "local education systems" in the context of the PRODERE Programme, run by the United Nations during the '90s with funding and high-level input from the Italian Cooperation in terms of planning and methodology; also support for the reconstruction of services and the rehabilitation of settlements after the earthquake that struck the country in 2000; and support in the development of a legislative framework to protect the rights of minors during the first decade of the current century.

Despite the fact that since the late '90s the country's political environment has seen a gradual consolidation of democracy, a progressive shift away from the situation of conflict which had characterized previous decades, and a strengthening of the local economy and economic growth, over the last decade and into the current period, El Salvador has continued to experience circumstances which are considered to be factors of a **state of crisis**:

- an **imbalance in demographic distribution**, with a marked concentration of population in major urban areas, particularly in the capital, which since the '80s has expanded to accommodate more than a quarter of the population of the entire country,¹ and with an age pyramid that shows approximately one-third of the population as minors (according to the national institute of statistics, in 2013, 35% of the population was aged 17 or below; furthermore, approximately 60% of these are resident in urban areas²);
- an **urban growth characterized by a prevalence of unofficial settlements** (which, alongside the unbalanced population distribution, results in problematic access to basic resources — including education — for a substantial section of the population);
- the persistence of an extremely high **crime rate**³ (the highest in Central America, amounting to six times the average world rate and 4 times the standard defined by the OPS as an "epidemic" of violence⁴) and forms of criminal organization such as the "maras," gangs with a marked youth component which are involved in both extortion activities and drug trafficking,⁵ with costs to the country, estimated in 2011 by the World Bank as approximately 2010 million US dollars, equal to 10.8% of the country's gross domestic product⁶;
- the persistence of **high rates of unemployment and inactivity among young people** (according to the ILO, as many as 46.2% are inactive and 24.8% are not engaged in either education and training or in employment; young people's access to the labour market is hampered — according to the ILO — by the accumulation of "short school careers" and a *mismatch* between the provision of education and training and the demands of employers).⁷ This is in spite of the economic reforms adopted since the early 2000s

¹ El Salvador has a population of 6,297,394 inhabitants and covers an area of 21,041 square kilometres. A quarter of the population resides in San Salvador.

² INE, Observatorio Estadístico, Resultados de Encuestas de Hogares de propósitos múltiples, (Avances y Desafíos en el Cumplimiento de los Derechos de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes.pdf)

³ More than 73,000 deaths between 1991 and 2014; 39.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2013.

⁴ Aguilar J. (ed.), La situación de la seguridad y la justicia 2009-2014, Instituto Universitario de Opinión Pública (Iudop) – UCA, San Salvador, 2014 (http://www.uca.edu.sv/iudop/wp-content/uploads/libro_la_situaci%C3%B3n_de_la_seguridad.pdf)

⁵ http://www.oas.org/dsp/espanol/cpo_observatorio_estadistica_slv.asp

⁶ http://www.oas.org/dsp/espanol/cpo_observatorio_estadistica_slv.asp

⁷ http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/sida/WCMS_234016/lang--en/index.htm ; ILO, Diagnostico del Empleo Juvenil en El Salvador 2013 (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ed_emp_msu/documents/genericdocument/wcms_231527.pdf)

and the significant decrease in the rate of poverty (from 38.8% in 2000 to 31.8% in 2014) — accompanied by **relatively low levels of human development** (for El Salvador UNDP has calculated an index of 0.666, which places the country in 116th position out of 187 countries⁸) and by a relatively high level of social inequality (the Gini index for 2013 was 48.3)⁹.

- the presence of **strong outgoing migratory movements** (20% of Salvadoran citizens living abroad) and the dependence of a large segment of the population on remittances from migrants,¹⁰ with direct consequences on family breakdown (the presence of effectively single-parent families, etc.).

All these factors have contributed to the fact that El Salvador was confirmed as a high-priority country by the Italian Cooperation for the three-year period 2013-15¹¹. In this context, three priority areas for intervention have been identified:

- education;
- safety and crime;
- economic development and local development through urban regeneration and social housing.

The initiatives considered in this evaluation are the main core of the Italian Cooperation's intervention in the first of these, and — as will be further analysed later — are characterized by objectives geared to impact the dynamics of social exclusion and poverty, as well as those affecting young people's access to the employment market. The initiatives were identified as part of the sectoral policies of the national government, briefly explained below. In addition to the three initiatives concerned, Italian Cooperation's support of education in El Salvador includes two other initiatives financed through credit aid: the "Programme of Prevention and Rehabilitation of young people at risk and in conflict with the law" and the programme for the "Socio-economic and cultural regeneration of the historic centre of San Salvador and its residential function through the cooperative movement", which also provides for training in the field of restoration and recovery of the housing stock.

2. The theme of education in the Italian Cooperation

Education is a priority sector for the Italian Cooperation not only in El Salvador. Besides being a long-term preferential policy area, education has been designated a priority sector by the Italian Cooperation, initially in line with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and currently with reference to its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the UN 2030 Agenda (2015).

In this context, the central role of **inclusive education** has been established as a tool to ensure the effective and full right to education for all.

In particular, inclusive education is "understood as a process geared to guaranteeing the right to education for all, regardless of the diversity of each, arising from conditions of disability and/or psycho-physical, socio-economic and cultural disadvantage."¹² The adoption of such an approach to education, in fact, allows the limits

⁸ PNUD, Human Development Report 2015 - Work for Human Development (2015)

⁹ The Gini index is lower than that of other countries in the region such as Guatemala and Honduras, but still high. Even more worrying than the persistent social imbalance is the strong dependence of the processes related to poverty on international economic dynamics. Although poverty decreased, calculated over a period of more than ten years, it showed considerable volatility during the decade; in fact, in 2008, the population living in poverty reached 40 % (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/elsalvador/overview>). The dependence is also evident in the dynamics of the gross domestic product, which after a decade of fluctuations suffered a major drop in 2009 before growing again in the years following, but without reaching the earlier levels, to then decrease again in 2012 (ILO, 2013)

¹⁰ It should be pointed out here although the main Salvadoran communities abroad are in the United States, Italy is also an important destination for Salvadoran migrants. Especially in the northern regions of our country, a migration primarily of women has, during the last decade, resulted in the development of real communities, within which there is a tendency to reproduce El Salvador's forms of crime and the spread of "maras". It should be noted that returning migrants have decreased sharply over the last decade. That decrease slowed in 2011 and 2012 but rose again in 2013 (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ed_emp_msu/documents/genericdocument/wcms_231593.pdf).

¹¹ DGDC, El Salvador. "Stream" Country Framework, 2015

¹² Inclusive education for persons with disabilities and development cooperation. Document prepared by the Work Group "Inclusive education" of the Italian Cooperation's Disability Action Plan, adopted by the DGDC Directional Committee in 2013, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation — DGDC, Rome 2015

of the "school" as the main or almost exclusive sphere of action to be exceeded and a wider social dimension to be involved. By accepting the "all-inclusive" approach, the school becomes a functional instrument for the community and society in general to become more inclusive. Indeed, with inclusive schooling, people with different types of needs (with or without special educational needs) can "interact equally", and diversity is considered as part of normal life and therefore as "of value, not only in school, but also in social, cultural and professional life" (cf. the previously mentioned document from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs — DGDC working group on inclusive education).

In this context, the adoption of an inclusive approach to education is considered in relation to three main aspects of the construction of educational environments: a) the structural quality of the school system (time, space, tools); b) the professional quality of the teaching and administrative staff; c) the quality of the pedagogical and cultural criteria that society assigns to the schools themselves. Therefore the promotion of inclusive schooling (and inclusive education) involves — and is largely synonymous with — the promotion of processes to improve the quality of schools per se. The involvement of civil society organizations is acknowledged as an essential element of such processes, with particular reference to associations of people with disabilities and community organizations.

3. El Salvador's policies in the education sector: educational reform programmes and the "2021 Plan"

The education system of El Salvador caters for approximately 1.8 million students in 6,263 primary and middle schools (2008) and, although the illiteracy rate fell between 2000 and 2013 (from about 7% to about 2% at national level, and from 12.1% to 2.9% in rural areas¹³), rates of school enrolment are still low: only 2% for infants, less than 60% for kindergarten, 62.4% for the third cycle and 39% for the middle cycle. Unlike the other levels, the enrolment rate at primary schools is 90.9%, indicating that children start school late and leave early: between the first and the third cycle of basic education, over 28.5% of pupils drop out of school, and a further 23.4% leave before progressing to the "middle" cycle (as expected, there is also a difference of more than 10% between urban and rural areas).

According to data published by El Salvador's statistics body DIGESTYC in 2014, the fact that more than a quarter of students leave school is due to several factors, the most common of which is "lack of interest" (almost 24%), followed by the perception of being over-age (almost 20% consider themselves too old for school) and the decision of parents (approximately 17.3%). For a further 16% of non-attendees aged between 4 and 17, there are specific economic reasons: the need to work¹⁴ or the cost of schooling. Geographical differences between regions are also important, especially for access to school: the worst rates of access — almost 20% lower compared to San Salvador, are found in the departments of the eastern and western regions furthest from the capital.

In response to the high dropout rate in schools, since 1995 the Salvadoran government has launched a series of plans and policies aimed at increasing the quality of education and the accessibility of educational facilities: an initial series of measures launched in the "1995-2005 Ten-Year Plan for Educational Reform"; and a further series of measures in 2004 (the 2021 Education Plan). Specifically, the plan, defined on the basis of commitments related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), has four key objectives:

- a) to promote whole-person education;
- b) to guarantee 11 years of schooling for all;
- c) to provide high-level technical and technological education in order to support industrial development;
- d) to support the development of science and technology for the welfare of society as a whole.

The four objectives are then translated into four main lines of strategy, geared towards:

¹³ DIGESTYC, *Avances y desafíos en el cumplimiento de los derechos de niñas, niños e adolescentes*, 2014

¹⁴ The average rates of child labour for the 2011-2013 period are approximately 6% in urban areas and just under 14% in rural areas. About 60% of children who work are between the ages of 14 and 17 years, but even in the younger age group (10-13 years), participation in the work force is higher than 35% in rural areas (DIGESTYC, 2014).

- 1) Access to education, through: the adoption of flexible modes of basic and mid-level education; the development of comprehensive basic education; the provision of nursery schools for all; building literacy for young people and adults, and the promotion of education for diversity (with the specific goal of combating social exclusion);
- 2) The effectiveness of basic and mid-level education through: the creation of appropriate physical environments; the development of an institutional climate able to facilitate learning; the presence of competent and motivated teachers; the definition of curricula geared to learning; the development of a system of credits and certifications;
- 3) Competitiveness, through widespread learning of the English language; the spread of technology and connectivity; the promotion of technical and technological specialization; the development of higher education in science and technology;
- 4) Good management practices, through the increasing leadership of educational centres, institutional and social participation and the promotion of a system for information, monitoring and evaluation.

This framework also includes the inclusive education approach adopted by the El Salvadoran Ministry of Education (MINED). In particular, this approach has been linked to the need for the educational system to take "student diversity" into account, partly through greater integration between special education (which is geared mainly to people with additional educational needs) and mainstream education. With this specific intention in mind, the programme "**Todos iguales**" (Everyone equal)¹⁵, was introduced within the "2021 Plan", involving a number of measures including:

- the opening of "Secciones Comunitarias" in kindergartens in order to facilitate literacy and the acquisition of basic skills among children entering primary school;
- the adoption of "flexible educational modes", which specifically target students who are "over-age" (i.e. attending schools at a lower level than that expected for pupils of their age) and the training of "tutors";
- the launch of a model of "Escuelas efectivas y solidarias" in communities with circumstances of social risk, with programmes supporting coexistence and extracurricular activities;
- the printing of new educational materials aimed at supporting the learning of skills using diversified methods that meet the students' various learning styles (Programa COMPRENDO);
- the development of "Redes Escolares Efectivas", particularly in municipalities with the highest levels of poverty;
- the increase of funding allocated to special education;
- the launching of pilot schemes for inclusive education¹⁶;
- the circulation of guidelines on diversity and raising awareness among school leaders;
- the definition of a prototype for "accessible" educational infrastructure.

This is the background against which the three development initiatives considered in this evaluation exercise were conceived and formulated.

4. The needs intended to be met by the initiatives

On the basis of the project documents for the three initiatives under assessment, it is possible to identify the problems they are intended to help solve, as well as the needs they aim to meet. The following table gives a brief indication of these problems and needs, highlighting those addressed by the series of initiatives as a whole, and those which are addressed by only one or two of them.

¹⁵ http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/elsalvador_NR08_sp.pdf

¹⁶ Including the one in Sonsonate, supported by the Italian Cooperation through a directly managed project, which is not included among the initiatives considered in this evaluation, but it is the main prodrome.

	Needs and problems	Support for the promotion of inclusive schooling	Support for the reform of the National Education System	Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision
1	Non-existence of social services and professionals to deal with cases of social exclusion and severe hardship and vulnerability			
2	Lack of a formalized partnership between the school system and the local area			
3	Lack of synergy between the healthcare, social and educational spheres			
4	Lack of coordination at regional level among public services, and between these and associations			
5	Lack of a real national socio-educational policy to promote inclusion in society and within schools			
6	Lack of theoretical research to identify solutions to educational problems			
7	Disconnect between universities and school inclusion programmes			
8	Lack of reliable data for the analysis of needs (in particular regarding special education)			
9	Need to strengthen the role of schools in society, in the face of challenges such as the prevention of early pregnancies, the phenomenon of street children, social conflict, violence and youth crime			
10	The presence of a traditional model based on fragmented learning and a welfare-based approach to pedagogy			
11	The presence of a knowledge and skills gap in the field of technology			
12	The presence of imbalances in the distribution of resources between educational establishments and departments			
13	The presence of limited support for the arts, culture and scientific research			
14	The presence of fragmentary and haphazard training provision for teachers			
15	The absence or limitations of spaces for workshops, research and creativity in schools			
16	The need to strengthen the role of the school in the creation of new occupations leading to inclusion in the labour market, with a view to combating migration and unemployment.			
17	The need to make effective links between the level of theoretical education and the practical needs of professional training			

There is clearly a high level of connection and overlap between the needs addressed by the second initiative (support for reform of the National Education System) and the third (Enhancing middle- and higher-level education provision) although in one case the emphasis is particularly on the various cycles of primary schools, and in the other on the secondary schools. Regarding the relationship between the needs addressed by the first intervention (support for the promotion of inclusive schooling) and the second, a kind of complementarity can be observed: the needs addressed by the first intervention are in fact linked to the possibility of building a "foundation" to address further needs, such as those concerning support for the reform of the education system.

Starting from a combined examination of the various needs formalized in the project documents and the views arising in the course of interviews, both with the Italian Cooperation staff and managers (DGDC — MAECI and AICS) and with the staff of the other bodies involved (MINED, University of Bologna, Educaid etc.), it seems to be possible to construct a more comprehensive "system of needs" which was referred to during the formulation of the projects.

The central aim of such a system is the creation of the institutional, pedagogical and infrastructure conditions which facilitate the social inclusion of El Salvador's school population, particularly the inclusion of children and young people at risk of social marginalization and/or physical and cultural discrimination (due to psychological, physical or social disabilities), so as to prevent youth violence, youth involvement in criminal organizations and the impact on children and young people of the multiple social exclusion factors affecting the country.

In this context, certain needs appear to be fundamental, namely:

- The improvement of the quality of educational provision (especially in terms of the competence of teaching staff and other strategic figures in the education system and the availability of new teaching skills);
- The exercise of the basic right to education for all boys and girls; including those with special educational needs;
- The provision of solutions to problems associated with low levels of education, school dropout rates and employment difficulties facing young people;
- The possibility of offering all students a consistent standard of curriculum provision and quality of teaching;
- The accessibility and availability of schools.

5. The rationale of the initiatives analysed

As is clear from an examination of the problems to which the initiatives are intended to respond, the three projects are linked by an extremely close bond, not limited to the two most apparent aspects: the fact that they involve largely the same individuals, and the fact that they run consecutively. Although each of the three initiatives has specific and distinct objectives (which will be explored in the next section), they can all be traced to a much wider process, namely the transformation of El Salvador's education system.

In essence, at the core of the three initiatives is the transition from an education system based on traditional approaches to knowledge transfer¹⁷ and unable to handle the challenges facing the country, to a new system, with greater ability to address these challenges, which can be attributed:

- on the one hand, to the process of economic modernization (El Salvador — despite ongoing imbalance and fluctuations in the growth of its GDP - is often referred to as "the Central American Tiger") and the process of democratization and consolidation of peace, and
- on the other hand, the persistence of serious imbalances, strong dynamics of social exclusion and widespread conditions of insecurity.

This is a process that requires not only improvement in the quality and accessibility of primary education and the strengthening of pre-primary schooling, and the establishment of links between individual schools and their surroundings, but also the modification of major elements of secondary education and the relationship between school and university (including a restructuring of teacher training).

Furthermore — as is obvious — this is not a process that can be realized solely by a handful of initiatives funded by the Italian Cooperation, albeit relatively large-scale (the total amount of expenditure by the Italian government was 19,258,125.38 million euro), but one which also includes other initiatives. Among these, major projects are "Education Quality Improvement"¹⁸ funded in 2011 by the World Bank¹⁹ — whose framework for

¹⁷ Approaches actually founded on a simple transmission of knowledge, which tend not to account for those involved in psychological, social, cultural and economic factors that affect the learning process.

¹⁸ <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P126364/education-quality-improvement-project?lang=en>

cooperation with El Salvador includes as one of its fundamental pillars support for increasing capacity, within which lie the issues of strengthening secondary education and improving "employability"²⁰ — and a USAID-funded programme to support inclusive education, in place since the start of the past decade²¹. Specifically, as part of this programme a five-year project was launched in 2013, costing 25 million US dollars, for the creation of healthy environments and the improvement of middle-level education in 750 schools²².

Effectively, within this broader context, the initiatives supported by the Italian Cooperation appear to be instrumental, on the one hand to create a "theoretical and strategic framework" for the whole process (by circulating the term and the concept of "inclusive education") and on the other to construct some conditions so that the process can actually take place: infrastructure for experimentation, infrastructure for teacher training and orientation; a series of concrete experiences which allow some important elements of the entire transition process to begin, become visible and to a certain extent, anticipate change.

The evaluation exercise carried out in the following pages will therefore also examine to what extent the three initiatives are consistent with this overall approach.

¹⁹ The project followed another, closed in 2005, which was called "EXO – Excellence and Education in Secondary Education", and was accompanied by projects dealing with involving young people in cultural activities as a form of resistance to organized crime (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/elsalvador/projects/all>).

²⁰ WB, Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of El Salvador, May 2015

²¹ <https://www.usaid.gov/el-salvador/education>

²² <https://www.usaid.gov/el-salvador/news-information/press-releases/usaids-launches-25-million-education-children-and-youth>

Chapter 2 - The cooperation initiatives subject to evaluation

1. The precursor of the initiatives under consideration: the scheme for the direct management of the "República de Haiti" school in Sonsonate

To clarify the overall logic of the three initiatives being evaluated, it is useful to bear in mind their immediate precursor. This can effectively be identified as an intervention of direct management, financed by the Italian Cooperation between 2005 and 2009 in Sonsonate, in the central region of the country (and in the peri-urban area of San Salvador), commonly known as "the creation of an experimental inclusive school — República de Haiti school."

The project — which involved MINED, the Faculty of Information Sciences of the University of Bologna and the NGO Educaid, besides the Italian Cooperation — was initiated following a request from the social association led by the country's First Lady regarding the refurbishment and adaptation of a rehabilitation centre for children with various disabilities. Following a fact-finding mission carried out by the Italian Cooperation in conjunction with the University of Bologna, the project — initially aimed at putting the infrastructure in place for the upgrading of a special education centre — became a broader intervention: a pilot project with the goal of transforming the school involved into an **inclusive educational centre** by means of removing architectural and cultural barriers, taking action both on the infrastructure and the pedagogical element.

The project, in fact, represented an initial experiment in change within the education system, through the transition from one type of welfare-based provision, geared simply to the integration of girls and boys in special educational activities, to an approach based on inclusion, by bringing together children with different characteristics and building new pedagogical skills capable of sustaining processes of social inclusion. The experiment conducted in Sonsonate school — as mentioned — was carried out with strong involvement from MINED, and therefore paved the way for the concept of inclusive schooling to be introduced in El Salvador's education system.

At the end of 2009, the main partners involved decided to continue and extend the experience, through:

- a) The inclusion of the inclusive education approach in the "Plan Quinquenal de Desarrollo 2010-2014" and the "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Educativo 2009-2014 — Vamos a la escuela", which defined the strategic and financial guidelines for development projects promoted by the Salvadoran government;
- b) the identification and planning of the university cooperation scheme "Support for the promotion of inclusive education", necessary to guarantee MINED the continued support of the University of Bologna and to allow further testing of the model introduced in Sonsonate, to be implemented in 18 schools (15 mainstream and 3 special), through the training of staff involved in teaching and school management.

2. Description and present state of the cooperation initiatives evaluated

Having introduced the context within which the three cooperation initiatives to be evaluated were launched, at this point — before proceeding with the evaluation itself — it is opportune to provide a description of the projects and outline the current status of their implementation.

2.1. *"Support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"*

The project was approved on 9 December 2008 and officially launched on 15 October 2009 and its activities were completed on 31 August 2014, giving an effective duration of 46 months compared with the expected 24 months.

The general objectives pursued by the project were as follows:

- To contribute to the improvement of the educational level of teachers in the education system in general and inclusive schooling in particular;

- To contribute to greater awareness among the institutions responsible for El Salvador's education system and the general public in the country, of questions of education geared to the encouragement of social inclusion;
- To facilitate access to basic schooling for disabled and socially excluded children.

And the following specific objective: "To contribute to a significant and lasting increase in educational provision for children with disabilities and the socially disadvantaged and vulnerable in El Salvador, in terms of both quantity and quality".

The project was primarily a training programme, and involved the following activities:

- the definition and trialling of a training programme for teachers at special schools in inclusive pedagogy, in order to plan and accompany transition pathways from special schools to mainstream schools;
- the definition and trialling of a training programme for teachers of "aulas de apoyo" or support classrooms;
- the definition and trialling of a training course for the re-qualification of teachers in regular classes;
- the training of school staff (heads, deputy heads, pedagogical advisors), in mainstream schools in the organization of school life and the coordination of the social aspect of the inclusive approach;
- the training of MINED staff with a view to developing an inclusive school model, and the definition and trialling of training provision to consolidate skills for coordinating the social dimension of the school;
- the development of a university training programme to include the teaching of special education in the curriculum of mainstream teachers;
- the drafting and planning of a training programme for professionals needed for the establishment of a National Observatory for school dropout and good practices in educational inclusion.

The pedagogical component of the initiative was carried out in 18 pilot schools, including three special schools, identified by MINED in conjunction with the University of Bologna and spread over the country's 14 departments. The following table shows the distribution of schools and teachers involved.

Schools and teachers involved in the initiative "Support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

No	Department	Municipality	School selected	Teaching staff	Teachers involved in the project		
					Primary school teachers	Support teachers	Counsellors
1	AHUACHAPÁN	Ahuachapán	Centro Escolar 1 de julio de 1823	26	5	1	0
2	SONSONATE	Sonsonate	Centro Escolar República de Haití	49	5	3	0
3	SONSONATE	San Julián	Cantón Petacas	3	2	0	0
4	SANTA ANA	Santa Ana	Escuela de Educación Especial Elisa Álvarez Díaz	25	2	0	1
5	SANTA ANA	Santa Ana	Centro Escolar Tomás Medina	48	5	1	0
WESTERN AREA TOTAL				151	19	5	1
6	SAN SALVADOR	Ilopango	Centro Escolar John F. Kennedy	49	8	2	0
7	CABAÑAS	Ilobasco	Centro Escolar Sor Henríquez	33	5	1	0
8	CHALATENANGO	Nueva Concepción	Centro Escolar Miguel Elías Guillén Nueva Concepción	29	3	1	0
9	LA PAZ	San Rafael Obrajuelo	Centro Escolar Profesor Rafael Osorio	24	4	2	0
10	CUSCATLÁN	San Rafael Cedros	C.E Florencia Rivas	26	4	0	1
11	CUSCATLÁN	Cojutepeque	Escuela de Educación Especial "Gral. Adolfo O. Blandón"	11	2	0	1

No	Department	Municipality	School selected	Teaching staff	Teachers involved in the project		
					Primary school teachers	Support teachers	Counsellors
12	SAN VICENTE	San Vicente	Centro Escolar Concepción de María	13	3	1	0
13	LA LIBERTAD	La Libertad	Centro Escolar Católico Inmaculada Concepción	20	3	0	0
CENTRAL AREA TOTAL				205	32	7	2
14	SAN MIGUEL	San Miguel	Complejo Educativo "Sor Cecilia Santillana Ahuactzin"	63	5	2	1
15	LA UNIÓN	El Carmen	Centro Escolar El Carmen	18	5	1	0
16	MORAZÁN	San Francisco Gotera	Centro Escolar San Francisco Gotera.	50	5	3	0
17	USulután	Usulután	Escuela de Educación Especial de Usulután	11	2	0	1
18	USulután	Usulután	Centro Escolar República Federal de Alemania	21	5	0	0
EASTERN AREA				163	22	6	2
OVERALL TOTAL				519	73	18	5

Besides the aforementioned delay in the activities (which added considerably to their expected duration), in the course of implementation, several major modifications were made to the initial project.

In particular, The training activities were executed by dividing the beneficiaries by type of teacher, as envisaged in the originally agreed project (mainstream classroom teachers, special schools and support classrooms), but bringing together different types of teachers and schools according to geographical area (East, West and Central)²³.

In the second year, the training activities were combined to form a single training course, namely the "Diplomado para docentes de Apoyo a la Inclusión" (DAI). This course was designed on the basis of MINED's requirement to encourage the training of a new professional figure intended to promote actions of "inclusive education" (namely the "Docente de Apoyo - DAI", whose professional profile was defined by MINED itself)²⁴ and also on the basis of the University of Bologna's proposal to certify the training course developed.

MINED's introduction of the Docente de Apoyo (Support Teacher) resulted in a major change in the education system. Previously, in fact, primary education was based on the direct relationship between individual teacher and pupils, without the intervention of any other figure to support the learning process.

The "Diplomado" training course was opened to teachers from an additional 55 schools, identified by MINED on the grounds that they were trialling inclusive education pathways.

2.2. Support for the reform of the national education system (Enhancing inclusive full-time schooling in El Salvador) — AID 9542

This initiative, currently underway, was approved by the Steering Committee on 8 November 2010. Its activities — implemented and managed by MINED — formally commenced on 1 October 2011. According to official documents, the initiative is to conclude in November 2016. MINED intends to apply for an extension. MINED plans to seek an extension which would postpone the conclusion to the end of 2018.

According to the project document, the **general objectives** of the initiative are:

²³ The change from the initial plan was proposed in the POA (Annual Operational Plan) and approved.

²⁴ It is important to point out that the change of the Salvadoran government during the implementation of the initiative (from a government led by the Conservative Party to a left-leaning one) resulted in some major changes in education policy, which was geared more to support processes of social inclusion. It is these changes upon which the changes in the activities are founded.

- to contribute to the development of the national education system of El Salvador at the primary school level through the trialling of a pedagogical model known as "escuela de tiempo pleno" or full-time schooling;
- to contribute to the development of the organizational and planning capacities of the partner institution (MINED) through the training of human resources involved in the initiative.

The **specific goal** of the initiative is to contribute to the adoption by the El Salvadoran education system of innovative pedagogy, by the drafting, trialling and validation of a comprehensive and sustainable system of full-time, inclusive models of education, including various types of informal and extra-curricular learning, and by qualifying the training of human resources and school organization, contributing to improved standards in school construction in line with the application of these models.

The activities planned within the intervention fall into two categories, pedagogy and infrastructure.

2.2.1. Pedagogical component

As part of the pedagogical component, the following are planned:

- the definition of a system of full-time school models to be trialled in the selected schools;
- the improvement of the knowledge and skills of human resources working within the education system;
- the improvement of services supplied by the National Observatory for Educational Inclusion;
- the improvement of 3 professional teacher training centres.

These activities were outsourced by MINED, through a technical assistance contract (awarded directly, without a tender), to the NGO Educaid. Originally the number of schools provided for in this initiative was 42. Despite the delay in the implementation of activities during the first year, involving 22 schools, MINED decided to extend the project to a total of 60 schools.

During the first year (which lasted fully 3 years, from 1 October 2011 to 30 September 2014), the project measures (mainly training and guidance for teachers) were implemented in 22 pilot schools spread over the 14 departments of the country's three geographical areas.

Of these 22 schools, 15 coincide with those involved in the initiative *"Support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"*, for which Educaid itself had carried out the training. Rather than involve new schools, it was decided to give continuity to the measures put in place by the previous initiative, increasing the number of teachers involved in each school. The additional seven schools involved in the project were selected on the basis of their relation to the full-time inclusive school model: with extra-curricular recreational activities, opening of the school to the community, motivation and commitment of leaders and staff, and adequate physical space for the development of the full-time schooling experiment.

Although the deadline for the second tranche of activities is set as November 2016, the educational component began in December 2015 and will end in June 2016 (thus running for only 7 months, of which less than 6 are effectively operational). During this period, training will take place for the teachers, deputy heads and heads of 38 schools.

The training is primarily concerned with teaching methods for inclusive education. The production of training schemes is not merely aimed at facilitating the transfer of knowledge, but rather to support the school staff in the preparation and subsequent implementation of a pedagogical proposal of Full-time Inclusive Education, with assistance from MINED pedagogical advisors and ATPAI (i.e. the "technical assistants" made available by Educaid). Specifically, the term "full-time" refers to the extension of the regular school timetable through the introduction of extra-curricular and recreational activities such as theatre workshops, dance, English, crafts, sports, etc.

As will be analysed in the following chapters, "full-time" activities were initiated in almost all the schools involved in the initiative; however, these usually involved a very limited number of students due to the lack of school meals (since to take part the afternoon activities, students must bring their lunch from home).

The schools involved in the "Support for the reform of the national education system" intervention, divided by tranche.

No	Schools	Municipality and Department
First tranche (October 2011-November 2015)		
1	CE Cantón El Zapote	San Francisco Menéndez, Ahuachapán
2	CE 1 de Julio de 1823	Ahuachapán, Ahuachapán
3	CE Tomas Medina	Santa Ana, Santa Ana
4	CE Rep. De Haití	Sonsonate, Sonsonate
5	CE Caserío Hacienda Santa Clara	Cantón Santa Emilia, Sonsonate, Sonsonate
6	CE Cantón Petacas	San Julián, Sonsonate
7	CE Miguel Elias Guillen	Nueva Concepción Chalatenango
8	CE Prof. Francisco Moran	San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango
9	CE Católico Inmaculada Concepción	La Libertad, La Libertad
10	CE John F Kennedy	Ilopango, San Salvador
11	Distrito Italia	Tonacatepeque, San Salvador
12	CE Florencia Rivas	San Rafael Cedros, Cuscatlán
13	CE Prof. Rafael Osorio Hijo	San Rafael Obrajuelo, La Paz
14	CE Sor Henríquez	Ilobasco, Cabañas
15	CE de San Isidro	San Isidro, Cabañas
16	CE Concepción de Maria	San Vicente, San Vicente
17	CE Rep. Federal de Alemania	Usulután, Usulután
18	CE Anita Guerrero	Usulután, Usulután
19	CE Sor Cecilia Santillana Ahuatzcin	San Miguel, San Miguel
20	CE San Francisco Gotera	San Francisco Gotera, Morazán
21	CE Marcelino García Flamenco	Torola, Morazán
22	CE El Carmen	El Carmen, La Unión
Second Tranche (December 2015-June 2016)		
23	CE Cantón Palo Verde	Apaneca, Ahuachapán
24	CE Cantón El Rosario	El Refugio. Ahuachapán
25	CE Cantón Penance	Atiquizaya, Ahuachapán
26	CE Lotificación El Rosario, Cantón Los Amates	San Sebastian Salitrillo, Santa Ana
27	CE Dr. Alberto Luna	San Sebastian Salitrillo, Santa Ana
28	Caserío Las Casitas, Cantón Santo Tomás	Texistepeque, Santa Ana
29	CE Caserío Sabanitas Cantón El Carrizal	Nahuizalco, Sonsonate
30	CE Hacienda Las Victorias C/ El Zapote	Caluco, Sonsonate
31	CE Caserío San Diego Cantón Cruz Grande Norte	Izalco, Sonsonate
32	CE Guarjila	Chalatenango. Chalatenango
33	CE San José Las Flores	San José Las Flores, Chalatenango
34	CE Cantón Arracaos	Nueva Concepción, Chalatenango.
35	CE Caserío El Almendro	Caserío El Almendro, Cantón La Lima, Huizúcar, Departamento de La Libertad.
36	CE Hacienda Florencia	Nuevo Cuscatlán, La Libertad
37	CE Caserío San Jorge, Cantón Obraje Nuevo,	San Pablo Tacachico. La Libertad
38	CE República de Alemania	San Salvador, San Salvador
39	CE República de Guatemala	San Salvador, San Salvador
40	CE República de Panamá	San Salvador, San Salvador
41	CE Católico Oblatas al Divino Amor (CECE)	Rosario de Mora, San Salvador
42	CoEd. Cas. Los Almendros	Suchitoto, Cuscatlan
43	CE Saúl Flores	Jucuapa, Usulután
44	CE Prof. Ireneo de León	San Juan Nonualco, La Paz
45	CE Manuela Minero de Mejía	San Juan Tepezontes, La Paz
46	CE Caserío Montecristo, Cantón El Rincón	Ciudad Dolores, Cabañas
47	C.E Jerónimo Abarca	Ilobasco, Cabañas
48	CE Cantón San Benito Piedra Gorda	Guadalupe, San Vicente
49	CE Caserío Santa Paula Cantón San Nicolás	Apastepeque, San Vicente
50	CE Cantón Llanos de Achichilco	San Vicente, San Vicente

No	Schools	Municipality and Department
51	CE Catolico Santa Gema (CECE)	Santiago de Maria, Usulután
52	CE José Amadeo Cedillos	Ozatlan, Usulután
53	CE Santiago Orellana Zelaya	Concepción Batres, Usulután
54	CE Cantón San José Gualoso	Chirilagua, San Miguel
55	CE Ingeniero Antonio Mejia	Lolotique, San Miguel
56	CE Rafael Severo López	Chinameca San Miguel
57	CE Henry Ortiz	Jocoaitique, Morazán
58	CE Juan José Guzmán	San Carlos, Morazán
59	CE Mirtala Yáñez de Jiménez	Nueva Esparta, La Unión
60	CE Ducado de Luxemburgo	La Unión/La Union

2.2.2. Infrastructure component

As part of the infrastructure component, the project focuses on improving the accessibility of the selected schools and upgrading the facilities of the school buildings to be used for the full-time school activities.

The measures included in this component also suffered severe delays, mainly due to the lengthy period of time which proved necessary for the definition and implementation of tendering procedures for the work.

To at least partially resolve the problems caused by the delay in the tender process, a direct transfer mechanism was adopted in May-June 2015. Known as the "transferencias", this allowed MINED to transfer a limited amount of funds directly to schools for the execution of the work (up to 55,000 USD). This mechanism was used by 22 schools (to the 18 schools in the original project, a further 4 were added, as increased resources were made available by the particularly favourable exchange rate when the second tranche of the DGDC contribution was received.

No	Schools	Municipality and Department
1	CE 1 de Julio de 1823	Ahuachapán, Ahuachapán
2	CE Tomas Medina	Santa Ana, Santa Ana
3	CE Rep. De Haití	Sonsonate, Sonsonate
4	CE Miguel Elias Guillen	Nueva Concepción Chalatenango
5	Distrito Italia	Tonacatepeque, San Salvador
6	CE Prof. Rafael Osorio Hijo	San Rafael Obrajuelo, La Paz
7	CE de San Isidro	San Isidro, Cabañas
8	CE Rep. Federal de Alemania	Usulután, Usulután
9	CE Cantón Pepenance	Atiquizaya, Ahuachapán
10	CE Dr. Alberto Luna	San Sebastian Salitrillo, Santa Ana
11	Caserío Las Casitas, Cantón Santo Tomás	Texistepeque, Santa Ana
12	CE Hacienda Las Victorias C/ El Zapote	Caluco, Sonsonate
13	CE Cantón Arracaos	Nueva Concepción, Chalatenango.
14	CE República de Panamá	San Salvador, San Salvador
15	CE Prof. Ireneo de León	San Juan Nonualco, La Paz
16	C.E Jerónimo Abarca	Ilobasco, Cabañas
17	CE Cantón San Benito Piedra Gorda	Guadalupe, San Vicente
18	CE Cantón Llanos de Achichilco	San Vicente, San Vicente
19	CE José Amadeo Cedillos	Ozatlan, Usulután
20	CE Santiago Orellana Zelaya	Concepción Batres, Usulután
21	CE Cantón San José Gualoso	Chirilagua, San Miguel
22	CE Mirtala Yáñez de Jiménez	Nueva Esparta, La Unión

In most of these schools, the work is completed (completion of works was planned for June 2016).

In addition to small works (ramps, toilets, etc.), the project also included some major works in 5 school buildings, which necessitated a call for tenders. After the solution of the legal problems which had blocked the tenders until June 2015, this took place and the work was eventually assigned in March 2016 (the MINED call for tenders closed in November 2015, but the contracts subsequently had to be approved and authorized by the Italian

Cooperation. MINED received approval from Rome on 22 January, along with the request to check the financial records of all the successful companies, including those accredited by MINED. During this audit it was found that one of the five successful companies had made false declarations, thus forcing MINED to discount it and, on February 10, to request the Italian Cooperation's approval and authorization for the second company in line. The definitive "No Objection" was communicated to MINED on 1 March.

The schools in which the tendered building and refurbishment work will be carried out can be seen in the following table.

The five school buildings where building and refurbishment work is planned are:

1	CE Profesor Francisco Moran	San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango
2	CE Marcelino Garcia Flamenco	Torola, Morazan
3	CE El Carmen	El Carmen, La Union
4	CE Sor Henriquez	Ilobasco, Cabanas
5	CE Florencia Rivas	San Rafael Cedros, Cuscatlan

Further interventions are currently being planned in 14 other schools, to take place during the third year of the project (this work will begin once MINED receives the third tranche of funding). By the end of the intervention, it is expected that work will have been executed in 41 schools, instead of the 34 originally planned.

2.3. "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision in order to improve productivity in 12 departments within the country".

This initiative, in the form of aid credit, is part of the programme for 2013 to 2015. The formal request for funding was submitted by the Salvadoran authorities in July 2012 and the project proposal was submitted by the Italian Embassy in San Salvador in September 2012. After the completion of the necessary administrative procedures in Italy and in El Salvador, the operational plan needed for the actual release of the credit was approved at the end of July 2015.

However, the financial resources have not yet been transferred, and the activities have not yet started. A major element in the current delay in the release of funds is the changeover from the Artigiancassa (which handled aid credits under Law 49/87) to the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (which handles aid credits under Law 215/14).

The MINED request for funding is linked to the need for additional resources to support the effective implementation of the policy for reform of the national education system and the Salvadoran Government's 2010-2014 Five-Year Plan for education. The purpose of the initiative is to promote the expansion of education provision in middle to higher level schools (age 15-19), facilitating the introduction of new vocational/professional pathways, which are useful for the improved integration of young people leaving education for the world of work, and also for the prevention of youth violence.

The **general objectives** of the initiative are:

- a) to contribute to the development of the national education system of El Salvador at high school level through the strengthening of vocational training aimed at integrating young beneficiaries into employment, with a particular emphasis on equal opportunities;
- b) to help prevent and reduce social marginalization among young Salvadorans, combating their affiliation to the youth gangs known as *maras*, and other forms of crime and juvenile delinquency;
- c) to train teachers in order to raise the quality of educational provision;
- d) to refurbish school infrastructure, providing the necessary tools for technical workshops;
- e) to provide low-income students with study grants to cover the costs of board, accommodation and transport, in order to reduce the dropout rate.

The specific objective is:

"to contribute to a significant increase in vocational training opportunities for Salvadoran beneficiaries, through increased provision of high-quality technical education in order to improve productivity in twelve departments of the country."

The operation has an expected duration of 36 months and involves 50 schools in 12 departments (29 municipalities).

The direct beneficiaries of the scheme include:

- school students, young people aged between 15 and 19;
- the leaders of the selected schools (50);
- at least 200 teachers from 50 schools.

The activities planned under the scheme can be organized into four main groups:

- a) Expansion of the provision of vocational training by upgrading and equipping 50 schools;
- b) Training of teachers and other staff within the education system;
- c) Improvement of educational environments, by carrying out work on the infrastructure;
- d) Study grants to cover board, accommodation and transport for disadvantaged students, to the value of approximately 400 USD, to combat early school leaving.

Chapter 3. Objectives and Methodology

1. Type of evaluation

In light of the different states of advancement of the three different projects, three types of evaluation were used. In particular:

- an ex-post evaluation for the project "Support for the promotion of inclusive education in El Salvador", started in October 2009 and concluded in August 2014;
- an ongoing evaluation for the project "Support for the reform of the national education system (strengthening full-time inclusive schooling in El Salvador)" still in progress;
- an ex-ante evaluation for the project "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision to improve productivity in 12 departments in the country", which has yet to begin.

Although the three projects have **different characteristics, they have a common purpose**, namely to promote the strengthening of the education system, through the construction of institutional, pedagogical and infrastructure conditions which encourage the participation of girls and boys (and generally of "minors"²⁵) who are at risk of marginalization and social exclusion from the economic, social and political life of their communities. The three projects, then, over and above their specific objectives and expected results, have a common framework: the involvement of different stakeholders (educational services, families, associations, social and healthcare services, local and national government) in the startup and implementation of processes of social inclusion, beginning with the acceptance into the education system (and schools in particular) of all children, including those with "special needs" arising from both social and economic circumstances and conditions of disability and difficulty, whether psychological, physical or social.

In fact, rather than three individual and separate actions, this is an ongoing action. In effect, there has been a gradual movement from an experimental initiative to one of consolidation of research and innovation and then - with the project financed through aid credit - to a programme geared to the diffusion of innovation and reform throughout the system.

The evaluation was therefore carried out on two distinct tracks: **a specific evaluation of each intervention and the overall evaluation of Italian action for the support and strengthening of the education system**. At the core of the evaluation, then, lies the need to assess how the actions supported by the Italian Cooperation have been able to influence the emerging issues concerning the reform of the Salvadoran education system, not only in an immediate and short-term perspective, but also in the medium and long term.

2. Approach and methodological principles

The methodology used is based on a combination of different approaches and techniques, both qualitative and quantitative. The reason for this integration is the need to combine the different moments at which the evaluation occurs (one ex-post case, one ongoing case and one ex-ante) and to respond to several categories of questions: on the one hand there is an interest in measuring the results obtained in relation to the objectives of the interventions, on the other a need to identify - over and above these objectives - the value of the projects, their intrinsic and extrinsic merits and any unforeseen positive and negative effects, and to identify any mechanisms that may inhibit or facilitate the process of change. Furthermore, the general context was taken into account, as an element common to all three interventions, as well as the specific context of the individual interventions, since these are essential elements for a full understanding of the dynamics of change and factors which may facilitate or hinder the implementation of the various activities.

The evaluation was conducted using some basic methodological principles, in particular:

- A **procedural approach**. Although the projects consist of a series of activities coordinated according to specific objectives and desired results, an attempt was made - as part of the evaluation - to understand

²⁵ In fact, the third initiative evaluated deals with the extension of the educational programmes offered to minors from 15 to 19 years old, as part of the National Education Plan "Vamos a la escuela".

to what extent they have been accompanied, supported and/or guided by the process of transformation (of administration and public services, on the one hand, and society, on the other) which is currently underway. If no account had been taken of the relationship between the projects' activities and the ongoing processes, it would not have been possible to either assess the relevance of the projects themselves, or evaluate their effectiveness (which concerns not merely the implementation of activities, but the development of new operational models in education) and their impact.

- An **approach geared to the recognition of the parties involved**. The actions of the three projects examined have involved and continue to involve a diverse group of individuals and stakeholders, including institutions and organizations, as well as informal collective subjects (such as groups of teachers or families). In the course of the evaluation, therefore, attempts were made to identify which of these are "affected" by the projects and to verify to what extent and by what methods the various subjects were involved. The lack of involvement of certain stakeholders could in fact result in a limitation of the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of the actions or even - in some cases - a reduction of their efficiency.
- A **participatory approach**. The education system is based on interaction between different stakeholders, each of which perceives different aspects of reality and is affected differently by the functioning of the system. This means that it is necessary to take into account the different perspectives and the different forms of involvement. Consequently, the active participation of the various stakeholders in the evaluation process was prioritized, not only as "sources of information", but also as carriers of needs, different interests and knowledge, pertinent to understanding the projects in their complexity.
- An **approach based on the reconstruction and analysis of factual events and elements**, rather than simply on the level of "satisfaction" expressed by the various participants. Although in some ways, the views and the degree of satisfaction with the activities and the overall projects are vital elements of the evaluation (in particular, providing important information on the projects' sustainability and impact), the complexity of the projects makes any assessment based solely on the opinions of those involved inadequate: there are many aspects of the projects which cannot actually be seen or perceived immediately, while there are also factors which impact on the degree of satisfaction and yet are extraneous to the projects themselves. During the evaluation, therefore, examination of the degree of satisfaction and opinions expressed by the various parties involved is supported by analysis of factual elements (data, infrastructure etc.) and events occurring in relation to the planned and executed actions.

3. The evaluation criteria and the evaluation questions

As defined in the terms of reference, for each of the 3 interventions the following was taken into consideration:

- the implementation processes;
- the organizational and technical capacity of the parties involved;
- the financial procedures and financial sustainability;
- external risks;
- the role and services rendered by local officials;
- the response given to local demands;
- the level of participation of local stakeholders;
- the means by which wider issues (human rights, gender equality, disability, children's rights, etc.) have been addressed.

Considering these different aspects, the three initiatives have been evaluated according to the criteria of relevance (or pertinence), effectiveness and efficiency, sustainability and impact, as well as the completeness of the project and its visibility. Finally, the evaluation also involved the identification of good practice and lessons learned.

The following table lists the evaluation questions in relation to each criterion.

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
Relevance / Pertinence	The extent to which the interventions meet emerging needs at the national level	The relationship between the needs to which the projects aim to respond and those identified by the beneficiaries and the other actors involved	- Project document - Documents on education and social inclusion in El Salvador - Interviews with key informants
	The extent to which the interventions are consistent with national policies regarding the education system and social inclusion	The relationship between the objectives of the projects and those established in national policies	- Project document - Documents relating to national policies - Interviews with key informants
	The extent to which interventions are consistent with Italian cooperation policy	Consistency between the project aims and the aims of Italian cooperation in El Salvador	- Project document - Documents relating to the DGDC strategies (including "country data sheet" strategies) - Interviews with key informants
	The extent to which the interventions complement other interventions by the Italian Cooperation and its key partners (the EU, UN organizations, BID, etc.)	- Complementarity with actions by other parties (considering: objectives, approaches and methodologies, actions, parties involved) - Elements in conflict with those of other development projects/actions (considering: objectives, approaches and methodologies, actions, parties involved) - Consistency with SDG	- Project document - Activity reports - Interviews with key informants - Documentation on the actions of other donors in the education sector - Country strategies of international donors
	The extent to which the projects take into account the dynamics of gender relations and the recognition and exercise of children's rights, full inclusion and social participation of people with disabilities, the mechanisms of social, economic and political exclusion, the conditions of the territory, etc.	The presence within the initiatives of measures and/or actions to: - promote equal opportunities and tackle issues related to gender - promote the recognition and exercise of children's rights - promote the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities - limit the incidence and intensity of processes of social, economic and political exclusion - take account of environmental conditions (environmental risks in the local area)	- Project document - Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
Quality of the project	Consequential logic between elements of the project	- The relationship between goals and expected results - The relationship between expected results and actions - The relationship between actions and resources - The relationship between conditions (assumptions), objectives and results - The existence of modifications to the original logical framework	Project document

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
	Identification of risks	Risks identified in the project documents / Risks encountered during the implementation of interventions	- Project document - Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
	The extent of involvement of the relevant parties in the formulation of the project (involvement of parties)	- Parties involved in the process of identification and formulation of the projects - Lack of involvement in the process of identification and formulation of a number of significant parties	Interviews with key informants
	The extent to which the roles of the various participants are defined (involvement of parties)	- Specificity of the roles identified for the various parties - Parties for which the role is not defined or is insufficiently defined	- Project document - Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
	The extent of adoption of planning methods functional to the identification of the overall dynamics affecting education	- Gender dynamics - Dynamics relating to children's rights - Dynamics related to disability - Processes of social, economic and political exclusion - Environmental and territorial dynamics	Project document
	To what extent practical measures have been taken to ensure the sustainability of the actions or their results	The presence of realistic "exit strategies"	Project document
Effectiveness	The extent to which the planned activities were implemented	The effective implementation of the activities envisaged in the finance documents	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants - Direct observation - Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	To what extent the activities implemented or planned involved the expected participants and beneficiaries	Parties and beneficiaries actually involved in the activities, compared to expectations	- Activity reports - Documentation relating to the activities carried out - Interviews with key informants - Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	To what extent the implementation of activities has achieved the expected results	Actual outcomes of the activities, compared to planned outcomes	- Activity reports - Documentation relating to the activities carried out

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
			- Interviews with key informants - Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	The extent of introduction of necessary measures for the appropriate execution of the activities planned for the continuation of the projects, also in terms of overcoming emerging obstacles and adapting to changes in the context	- Activities, organizational mechanisms and resources which are lacking, but considered necessary by the various stakeholders - Measures put in place to overcome obstacles to the realization of the interventions - The presence of obstacles "not dealt with"	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
Efficiency	To what extent the available resources were spent as planned	- The relationship between actual expenditure and financial planning - Resources utilized, compared to resources made available through funding agreements - Delays in the start of the initiatives - Delays in the implementation of activities - Delays in the management and utilization of financial resources - Delays in the provision of accounts and administrative management activities	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
	The extent to which the available resources are adequate for the tasks and objectives	The presence of activities not completed or objectives not achieved due to lack of resources	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants
Sustainability	To what extent have actions been carried out aimed at ensuring the continuity of the projects' activities or the durability of their outcomes	- The presence of initiatives regarding public policies - The presence of initiatives regarding legislation - The presence of initiatives regarding changes in organizational structures at different levels - The presence of initiatives regarding access to additional financial resources - The presence of initiatives to ensure the management and maintenance of infrastructure after completion of the projects - The presence of initiatives to ensure the continuance of training and the work of the observatory	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants - Documentation concerning the activities carried out - Documentation regarding current policies and activities of MINED and the Italian Cooperation
	The extent to which the activities were followed by forms of self-activation by local stakeholders	Initiatives by schools, training bodies, civil society organizations and local governments that have followed up on the actions implemented during the initiatives, run parallel to them or used their approaches, objectives etc.	- Activity reports - Interviews with key informants - Documentation concerning the activities carried out

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
			• Direct observation • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	The extent to which the activities are integrated with in the ordinary functioning of Salvadoran public administration	• Involvement of MINED staff and facilities and schools • Modifications or activities involving all the relevant public bodies (including those not identified as direct beneficiaries)	• Interviews with key informants • Documentation regarding current policies and activities of MINED and local government
	To what extent follow-up and scaling-up effects were generated	• Initiatives commenced after the projects supported by the Italian Cooperation and in continuity with them (e.g. projects proposed to other donors, organizational changes, policy formulation, publications, training, etc.)	• Interviews with key informants • Documents and activities of other donors
Impact	The extent to which the activities carried out resulted in long-lasting effects	• Changes in policy • Changes in legislation • Changes in organizational structures at different levels • Changes in practice at different levels • Changes in the availability of infrastructure • Changes in the availability of resources • Changes in staff qualification • Changes in staff motivation and behaviour	• Interviews with key informants • Documents relating to educational policies • Direct observation • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	The extent to which access to education has improved in the schools involved (cf. SDG)	• Changes in % of children enrolled, by gender, of the local child population (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • Changes in % of early school leavers (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • Changes in % of children with special needs (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • Attraction rate (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project)	• Interviews with key informants • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups) • Statistical data on the phenomena analysed, at national level, regional level and in the schools considered
	The extent to which the quality of education has improved in the schools involved and at regional level (cf. SDG)	• Changes in % of early school leavers (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • Changes in % of pupils who continue to the next school cycle (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar	• Interviews with key informants • Education statistics at national, regional and local level • Statistical data on schools involved in the project

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
		levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • Changes in assessment results (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project) • % of schools with quality monitoring mechanisms • Retention rate (comparison of national, regional and local statistical data at similar levels and those of the schools involved in the project)	• Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	The extent to which good practice in inclusive education and staff training have spread (cf. SDG)	• Best practices recognized by local stakeholders • Public and private schools that have adopted the practices • Donors and cooperation organizations that promote the good practices identified	• Interviews with key informants • Documents from the observatory on education • Documentation regarding schools which have adopted or trialed practices • Articles in the media (also web, radio and TV)
	The extent to which the projects have had an impact on other sectors of the education system (cf. SDG)	• Changes in the functioning of the universities linked to the interventions	• Interviews with key informants • Documents from the universities involved in the activities (Bologna, UCA, El Salvador University)
	The extent to which the programmes have had "local development" impacts (eg. integration between services)	• Judgments about changes occurring in the local communities due to the interventions • Participation of different local actors in school management • Changes in the participation of local actors in school management	• Interviews with key informants • Documentation regarding schools which have adopted or trialed practices • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)
	The extent to which the models proposed have been adopted by other organizations involved in the promotion of education (e.g. network of private schools, BID, World Bank, USAID, UNDP / UNICEF, UNESCO)	• The presence of components (approaches, etc.) of the interventions in the policies or interventions of other parties	• Interviews with key informants • Documents from donors
	The extent to which the interventions examined have produced unexpected effects, both positive and negative	• Events regarding partnerships between international cooperation agencies • Events regarding the operation and management of the Ministry of Education and other Salvadoran public bodies • Events regarding Salvadoran NGOs working in the fields of disability and education	• Interviews with key informants

Criterion	Questions	Indicators	Source
		• Events regarding relations between teachers and the community at local level • Events regarding relations between teachers • Events regarding relations between teachers and leaders of schools and administrative districts • Events regarding relations between teachers and students/pupils • Events regarding the participation of pupils in school and social life • Events regarding the recognition of the rights of children, the disabled and women • Events regarding the labour market and child labour • Other events that local people attribute to the projects	
Visibility	Visibility in national and local media	• Articles in newspapers • TV broadcasting • Articles in the sector press • References and discussions on the internet (blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).	• Interviews with key informants • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups) • Publications identified through internet
	Level of awareness on the part of local people	• Knowledge of the interventions by key informants interviewed and beneficiaries	• Interviews with key informants • Consultation of those involved in the functioning of the schools examined (structured interviews / focus groups)

4. Tools and Sources

4.1 The tools

The integrated approach to evaluation allows the use of a variety of tools and sources, and both secondary and primary data. A general logic of triangulation is used, not only of techniques but also of approaches, aimed at obtaining a thorough understanding of the interventions and the strategy from which they arise. In particular, the integration between quality and quantity allows the development of a unified logic of evaluative research which takes the two aspects into account simultaneously and gives a multi-dimensional representation of the object of investigation.

In order to formulate its judgements, the evaluation process took into account both primary data collected directly by the research team, and secondary data, both quantitative and qualitative.

Various methods of data collection were used to gather primary data. For the collection of information from qualified informants, 52 in-depth interviews were carried out with officials and staff of MINED, Italian Cooperation (MAECI - DGDC; AICS), Educaid, the University of Bologna, Italian NGOs and international organizations. These interviews were based on an "unstructured" format. The latter made it possible to obtain a basis for comparison between the different information collected, and at the same time allowed the emergence of issues which were latent or previously considered irrelevant.

In addition to in-depth interviews 2 focus groups took place, involving MINED staff and Educaid staff (education consultants - ATPI).

Regarding schools, visits were made to nine schools in the seven departments of Santa Ana, Sonsonate, San Salvador, La Paz, San Miguel, Ahuachapán and Cabañas. The schools were selected on the basis of criteria such as involvement in the initiatives, the possibility of holding meetings during the period of the mission, the presence / absence of infrastructural work, and geographical distribution.

The teachers of these schools were involved through the administration of a structured and semi-standardized questionnaire to 110 teachers and through their participation in 10 focus groups attended by approximately 200 people. As well as the teachers, the focus groups in each school involved the centre directors, students, parents and representatives of other associations active in the seven departments. The mixed composition of the focus groups allowed the team to observe the different opinions and perceptions of the various participants about the interventions. The focus groups followed guidelines which addressed some key issues, in order to encourage the emergence in group discussion of aspects and issues not previously considered.

Lastly, an observation grid was prepared to allow members of the team to organize their direct observation, which was accompanied by a photographic report.

The technical tools used are summarized below.

- **"Guide for documentary analysis "**, for the standardization and formalization of information collected by reading different types of documents;
- **"Phenomena database"**, for recording information observed through the analysis of documents, and using it in a structured and coordinated manner;
- **Interview Guide**, for in-depth interviews (the interviews were "unstructured" but were nevertheless facilitated by means of a guide that identifies themes and issues to be addressed);
- **"Observation grid"**, for the analysis of project infrastructure and sites (the grid was created in conjunction with school building specialists, so as to permit the analysis of infrastructure by "non-specialist" evaluators), accompanied by a guide to photographic documentation;
- **"Guide for the realization of focus groups"** (with the aim of simplifying the role of facilitator and containing a limited number of questions to which participants will be invited to respond);
- **"Structured questionnaire" for the direct beneficiaries:** teachers, technicians, ministry officials, school leaders, etc. (the questionnaire was self-administered in the presence of the evaluators, who were able to explain questions or items poorly understood by the respondents).

4.2 The sources

During the evaluation a diverse set of information sources was used, presented in the following table.

Type of source	Preliminary identification of the sources	Consultation / data collection tools	Information
Documentary sources	• Project documents (financing agreement and inception report / operational project) • Regular reports • Monitoring and evaluation reports • Documents produced by the projects (research reports, executive plans for specific actions, explanatory documentation, etc.) • Documents on the education policies of the El Salvador Government • Documents on education in El Salvador from other international bodies • Academic research reports (UCA, etc.)	Guide for document analysis	• Basic information on the projects and their current status • Information on the evaluation indicators and qualitative information regarding the evaluation questions • Information on ongoing changes in the education system • Information on the context, national policies and emerging issues (including statistical information regarding the ex-ante and ex-post situations) • Information on the parties involved and relevant parties
		Phenomena database	• Information on the evaluation indicators • Obstacles and facilitating factors • Best practices • Information on the impacts and changes taking place in the education system
Qualified informants	• Local experts and researchers (UCA, sector experts, FIS, etc.) • Education experts from UNICEF, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and other specialized agencies • Italian and local education experts and NGOs • Experts on the labour market at local level • CONAIPD • DGDC experts • Italian Embassy	In-depth interviews	• Qualitative information on the status of the projects and their actions • Information on the evaluation indicators and issues related to the evaluation questions • Information on the context and emerging problems • Information about policies and actions for the development of the education system undertaken by the various parties • Information on facilitating factors and obstacles to the implementation of projects
Key persons	• MINED • FSF UNIBO • EDUCAID • El Salvador Ministry of Foreign Affairs • El Salvador Ministry of Finance	In-depth interviews	• Information on the status and activities of the projects • Information on the evaluation indicators and evaluation questions
Direct observation	• Schools involved in the project • Resource centres to the various projects	Guided observation (observation grid) of a sample of educational facilities	
Direct and indirect beneficiaries	• Leaders and teachers of the selected schools	- Focus groups - Structured questionnaires	

5. Obstacles and difficulties

The evaluation exercise did not encounter any obstacles or difficulties, thanks to the willingness of the various participants to provide information and opinions in a climate characterized by a high level of collaboration and interest regarding the outcomes and the dynamics generated by the three interventions. This extremely positive climate applied equally to the interlocutors in Italy and the Salvadoran interlocutors encountered during the field mission.

However, it is important to mention a highly important methodological aspect which raised a series of questions for the team responsible for carrying out the evaluation, regarding the participation of boys and girls involved directly or indirectly in the three projects financed by the Italian Cooperation. In fact, although the involvement of children in the evaluation process is of great interest for the purpose of gathering information, the team felt it necessary to exclude their direct involvement for a number of reasons - technical, ethical, legal and methodological - partly with reference to recent developments in international debate on the subject. These reasons and difficulties are set out below.

- a) **Legal difficulties.** The involvement of children in surveys or polls is generally regulated by extremely strict legislation. Since these are minors in a school setting, it is likely that their involvement would require the permission (not possible within the time restraints of the evaluation) of families, teachers, schools and the Ministry itself. We might add that in any case such an authorization would have to be accompanied by a declaration of the parties mentioned on every individual question asked (in questionnaires or individual or group interviews).
- b) **Ethical and deontological issues.** Research or data gathering involving children comes up against issues of an ethical and deontological nature, as these kinds of research activities are all based on a considerable asymmetry of power between the adult interviewer and the child being interviewed. In fact, because of children's difficulties in understanding the research, including the evaluation process, many problems remain unresolved, such as that of informed assent, confidentiality of information and the imbalance of power in the relationship between adult researcher and child participant. To overcome such problems, many institutes carrying out social research into children's issues, in addition to training specialized staff, have drafted formal codes of ethical conduct, such as the Children's Research Centre at Trinity College, Dublin, which has developed guidelines based on the principles of respect for children and therefore admitting the possibility of the generalization of information collected, as referred to in the following paragraph. The outcome of these reflections is a form of self-restraint in the use of minors in the field of social research and, where necessary, strict protocols which must be maintained by highly skilled staff. It should be remembered that in any case no experience so far conducted has resolved the initial ethical problem of the imbalance or asymmetry of power between adult and child, evident not only in the latter's lack of awareness of the process in which he or she is participating, but also in his or her inability to comment, validate or challenge the way in which results are reported. Although engagement initiatives such as "children's parliaments" or "children's councils" (encouraged by some institutions and organizations such as UNICEF and Save the Children) can have a high symbolic value in terms of media, when it comes to processing the information derived from sources such as children and pre-teenagers, social research has not yet found a solution to issues regarding the reliability of such information, nor the ethical legitimacy of such operations, beginning with the problem of confidentiality in highly sensitive issues in children's lives (cases of exploitation of child labour, sexual abuse cases, cases of physical violence by parents and teachers, etc.), which would nevertheless remain unresolved and without adequate response from interviewers. These issues could become particularly serious in the case of interviewers without the skills and qualifications needed to address cases of this type (which are much more common than might be imagined), and in the case of spot consultations without the possibility of ensuring appropriate and prolonged psychological and social assistance after the consultation, which should not in any case be limited to a simple interview. Essentially, without adequate follow-up, any consultation, albeit with good intentions, runs the risk of being yet another form of "exploitation" of children based on manipulation and persuasive behaviours which have nothing to do with the intention, undoubtedly noble, of recording their viewpoints. Clearly, it is not desirable to state that it is impossible to record children's opinions, but a number of ethical and deontological issues must be respected, in order to address the underlying problem of the imbalance of

power and the question of fully informed consent. In other words, it is possible to carry out research with children, and not on children.

- c) **Representativeness of the sample of children to be interviewed.** Bearing in mind the number of children who are potentially beneficiaries of the projects and the differences in this group (age, gender, school cohort, family circumstances, residence, exposure to social risks, language skills and expression, to mention only the most obvious), to be representative, the sample would have to consist of several thousand individuals, which would be unrealistic in the light of the financial and time resources available to the team.
- d) **Comprehensibility of the issues covered by the evaluation.** The topic of interviews with minors in social research has been the subject of extensive literature, which has underlined the limitations of data collected in terms of its reliability. In fact, children's limited capacity for abstraction would not be compatible with the themes of the three projects, which are concerned mainly with questions of teaching methodology, education policy and the role and training of teachers (and not, for example, the offer of services, which would certainly be a more concrete subject and therefore more within the reach of children). Such issues, then, would appear incomprehensible, even taking into account that the age group of children affected by the interventions ranges from 6 to 13 years. In any case, this would require a separation into further subcategories - and therefore more technical tools - in line with the abstraction capabilities of each age group (at least 6 to 7 years, 8 to 10 and 11 to 13) . Furthermore, these age groups could not be the same for boys and girls, as children's physical and cognitive development shows wide differences according to gender.
- e) **Techniques for the collection of data.** To address the difficulties of abstraction in developing children (aged 6 to 13 years), certain specific techniques of data collection were used. The use of such techniques requires on the one hand specialized staff (in particular social psychologists specialized in social research on childhood and adolescence); this was not been provided for in the team, as the Terms of Reference did not express a need of this kind, and on the other hand a timescale difficult to reconcile with that of the evaluation in progress (cf. the following notes on technical tools and reliability of information).
- f) **Technical tools.** In theory, the tools within the reach of any research and investigation with finite resources are based on the questionnaire, the interview or the focus group. Regarding the questionnaire, the advantage of this is undoubtedly that it allows access to substantial samples, even though this involves collective administration, presenting not a few problems of reliability of information (see next paragraph). The alternative tool is the individual interview which, although more reliable, normally has an unsustainable cost in terms of time (and therefore the use of person / days for the interviewers). Lastly, the focus group is an extremely complex technique to use with children, necessitating highly skilled specialized staff.
- g) **Reliability of information.** Even assuming all previous obstacles have been removed, there is a problem of reliability in information collected from children. Indeed, children's typical tendency to joking and teasing behaviour (even when there is no true individual or collective "bullying") compels interviewers to a difficult task of validating each individual answer, especially when a questionnaire is used. We might add that in the case of group administration of questionnaires in class, there remains the problem of the spontaneity of responses, which would be affected by the presence of teachers, clearly mandatory given that the interviewer could not under any circumstances assume civil and legal responsibility for minors in the classroom.
- h) **The complexity of the questions.** This evaluation research is not about "liking" (which, as amply demonstrated in studies on the evaluation of services, tends to depend very often on factors independent of the service provided), but about the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the three development initiatives, whose sphere of action ranges from the determination of public policy to the construction / refurbishment of infrastructure. We believe that children attending the schools involved in the projects are not able to provide information on the multiple aspects of the evaluation. Furthermore, since the evaluation research involves a diachronic phenomenon and changes taking place over time, nor are they likely to be able to detect changes between the past and the present in a reliable way. All the more as in many cases the changes may have occurred during a period of more than 5 years.

Naturally, scientific literature on social research is fairly rich in examples of surveys and investigations involving minors (usually in adolescence, more rarely in childhood). These, however, deal with background information rather than evaluations, which, in order to be reliable, needs a very high number of respondents and is always limited to issues regarding daily life, compatible with the capacity of abstraction appropriate to each individual age group.

Regarding evaluation, considering the scant resources which are usually allocated, cases of in-depth research for children's responses to evaluative questions, as would be needed for the 3 El Salvador projects, are very rare indeed.

In the case of this evaluation exercise, while not envisaging a collection of first-degree data from children, there was nevertheless a collection of data concerning indicators of the change and impact caused by the projects in the schools involved. Of course, while for the finished project (article 18) a diachronic treatment of data was provided for (the situation before and after the intervention compared to a set of data and statistics on key indicators such as attendance, academic achievement, dropout, etc.), for the ongoing project (article 15) comparative data for these indicators will be more limited. As for the third project, not yet started, the possibility of collecting the opinions of those directly affected, in other words, the children, is more a task to be completed during the formulation phase or a feasibility study, rather than an evaluation exercise valid for ex-ante assessment.

Chapter 4 - The results of the evaluation

1. Relevance

For the criterion of relevance, the analysis was geared to understanding to what extent the initiatives taken individually and then together (considered effectively as a single programme) are consistent with the context.

1.1. The relevance of individual initiatives

Taken individually, the three initiatives show differing degrees of relevance.

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

The first evaluation question regarding relevance concerns the extent to which the initiative responds to emerging needs at national level. As already noted, the initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador" was identified and formulated on the basis of two main elements:

- the first is the observation that the Salvadoran school system, particularly at primary level, was unable to adequately take into account certain existing problems, such as exposure to a number of social risks by a large part of the population, with the resulting existence of "special needs" in terms of education; if not appropriately addressed, these tend to produce relatively high school dropout rates, irregular attendance and low attainment in terms of learning or - even, in some (relatively few) serious cases, of non-enrolment in school; this is the case, for example, with a large proportion of children with disabilities²⁶;
- the second is the decision not to immediately initiate a change that would involve the entire education system, but to start a process of gradual innovation through a threefold process, consisting of: a) the trialling of innovative tools in a limited number of schools ; b) the introduction of these tools through the training of teachers, and c) the documentation of successful innovations (good practice) with a view to their subsequent circulation (in particular through the creation of an "observatory for inclusive education").

Considering the issues highlighted in the first chapter of the report, therefore, the level of relevance of the strategies adopted at the start of the initiative is high. It is certain that this high level of relevance is partly the product of continuity between the initiative itself and the direct-management initiative previously promoted by the Italian Cooperation at the "República de Haiti" school in Sonsonate.

The initiative also appears to be relevant to interventions and policies by **other donors**. This is particularly true with projects by USAID and the World Bank, which are also involved in supporting education reform and the adoption of models of "inclusive education." Similarly, there is a degree of relevance to certain policies run by the EU, which is not directly involved in reform of the education system. In particular, the initiative can be linked to projects concerned with human rights and democracy, so that Educaid has identified in the opportunities presented by the European Initiative for human rights and democracy a possible source of funding for the expansion and consolidation of its operation in El Salvador.

In addition to a high level of relevance to the issues, there is also a high degree of coherence (and therefore of relevance) both with national policies (in fact the initiative pursues the objectives and the strategies of the educational and social plan 'Vamos a la Escuela' 2009 - 2014), and with the priorities of the Italian Cooperation with El Salvador and the more general policies to support education undertaken by the Italian Cooperation (both generally, in terms of the millennium goals, and in particular, in terms of promoting the universal right to education through the promotion of "inclusive education").

The evaluation also showed a high degree of relevance in terms of identifying specific needs (training and refresher courses for school staff; introduction of new teaching methodologies and expansion of education

²⁶ The progress report of the Plan Nacional de Educacion 2021 shows a figure from 2005, which is quite old but is used for reference; in that year there were 46,000 students with special educational needs. That number is small in terms of the total student population, but significant considering the number of schools (about 5000).

provision through extracurricular materials and activities; trialling, documentation and circulation of practices for innovation) and direct beneficiaries (i.e. teachers and school staff).

The high degree of relevance appears to be confirmed, both by the level of cooperation seen during the implementation of the project by the various parties involved (MINED, schools, Educaid, the University of Bologna), highlighted by all qualified and key informants consulted; and also by the high level of satisfaction expressed by teachers at the schools involved who were interviewed during the evaluation: in terms of their conditions in the school, 40% of teachers surveyed describe themselves as "very satisfied" and a further 33% say they are "completely satisfied." Similar rates of satisfaction were expressed regarding "cooperation between teachers" and relationships between teachers and others involved in education.

Another element of the initiative's relevance is the fact that schools identified for the implementation of projects were also involved in the broader process of creating "territorial networks." This has facilitated interaction between the schools, local government and local associations, whose involvement is necessary for the effective adoption of an "inclusive education" approach; this would not be possible with only the tools provided by the initiative.

Lastly, the high degree of relevance is confirmed clearly by MINED's decision to request the Italian Cooperation funding for the expansion of the scheme, continuing cooperation with the University of Bologna and with Educaid in a new initiative to support educational reform.

A considerably lower degree of relevance clearly emerges in certain central features of the initiative, in particular:

- the choice of methods of funding (i.e. funding through article 18);
- the choice of methods of involvement of Educaid, as a supporting body for the University of Bologna;
- the limited involvement of local civil society organizations, both during the formulation of the initiative and during its implementation (by reading documents, and also through visits to schools, it was observed that such involvement is occasional, although when it does occur, the impact is considerable);
- the lack - probably due to the type of financing - of effective measures to establish and develop the observatory for inclusive education.

As will become clear in the following paragraphs, decisions linked to these aspects of the initiative are at the root of many of the obstacles which emerged during their implementation.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

The second initiative considered is in direct continuity with the first, and constitutes an extension of it. The project moves from an experiment in a limited number of schools to the involvement of a larger number of schools in adopting the model of "inclusive education" and introducing some additional elements to support the model, such as upgrading school infrastructure, specifically with projects aiming to improve accessibility and increase the space available for new extracurricular activities.

Here too, therefore, a high degree of relevance can be observed, both in terms of policies and the individuals involved.

However, beyond the complete or very high level of satisfaction expressed by more than 70% of individuals consulted during the evaluation, in this case too, certain problematic aspects can be pinpointed, concerning the failure to identify - over and above training and pedagogical experimentation on the one hand and the upgrading of infrastructure on the other - necessary measures to make the introduction of the model of full-time inclusive schooling sustainable and effective in the long term.

As will be analysed in the paragraph on "quality of planning", the initiative as a whole appears **less relevant** with reference to some of the problems identified in the project document: in particular those concerning the combating of violence and juvenile crime (since it acts primarily "within schools" and with limited involvement by external parties) and those concerning the relationship between school and the labour market. Regarding both these issues, although logical connections can be seen (increased time spent in school makes young people potentially less likely to be recruited by the *maras*; the introduction of new teaching materials, in addition to

curricular ones, could facilitate their entry into the world of work), they impact only on certain aspects of the situation, but - in the absence of further supporting measures - cannot be considered decisive regarding youth affiliation to the *maras*.

The initiative also appears to have little relevance to cross-cutting dynamics: in fact, it does not include specific strategies to take account of gender dynamics, stigmatization of the most vulnerable social groups (if not actually the inclusion of disabled children in mainstream classes), and issues linked to material and social difficulties in access to schools. The lack of these strategies appears at least partly linked to the decision to focus primarily on pedagogical methods (assuming that these will result in greater consideration within teaching, of the dynamics of social exclusion).

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision..."

For the third initiative, it is only possible to analyse its potential relevance at the planning stage. Some particularly significant elements emerge here. The initiative's relevance appears to be high in terms of:

- a) national policy, as it responds to the priorities of plans for the reform of middle and higher education, particularly regarding the adjustment of education to meet the demands of employees;
- b) the priorities of the Italian Cooperation in El Salvador; the project is consistent both with priorities related to the education system, and with those regarding the fight against crime and youth violence;
- c) problems identified in the context of the project, in particular young people's difficulties in accessing work, which could be facilitated by improved vocational training and especially by the activation - envisaged in the project document - of improved vocational guidance services in schools;
- d) the ability to strengthen the effectiveness of reforms already begun, with schemes geared to the primary education system, improving the potential usefulness of attendance in schools which could provide access to middle and high schools better equipped to offer a route to employment (the likelihood of finding employment through enrolment and attendance at secondary school makes primary school more attractive);
- e) the need to take into account certain difficulties regarding the entry and continuing attendance of young people in the educational system (such as lack of income).

Looking at the components of the initiative, however, one cannot help but observe that it will fund the "ongoing training" of a group of teachers, but **not the implementation - at least on a trial basis - of some essential services**, such as those geared to:

- relations with businesses and the monitoring of employment demand;
- guidance for young people (except through action by the teaching staff);
- the construction of local networks;
- the mobilization of other parties (eg. associations, local development agencies, etc.).

In the absence of a proper determination of specific actions and models to support the creation and development of organizations which can implement them continuously and sustainably, responsibility for the introduction of innovations in the relationship with the business world, monitoring of labour demand, etc. - including careers advice - **is likely to fall exclusively on the shoulders of teachers and school leaders**, who do not necessarily have the necessary resources.

One cannot help but notice also **the absence of an adequate component of communication and awareness-raising** and the absence of mechanisms for coordination with initiatives supported by other donors, as well as a lack of specific mechanisms and measures to involve civil society. The lack of communication measures could lead to problems affecting the success of the initiative itself, which to actually succeed requires not only action by the schools, but also the mobilization of other parties (including youth organizations, which in interviews conducted during the evaluation showed very little interest in schemes for the improvement of vocational training).

1.2. The relevance of the "programme" as a whole

When the three initiatives are considered as a whole, the degree of relevance of the Italian Cooperation's action is greater. Indeed, there is - at least in theory - a high degree of coherence between the three initiatives and a high degree of consistency with national policy and with the policies of the Italian Cooperation and other donors.

Furthermore, while coherence between the issues identified in the context and the individual initiatives is not always satisfactory, it **it increases when the three initiatives are considered together**: the last initiative - the one in the startup phase - will (at least potentially) be able to take into account some of the dynamics in which the first two projects lack relevance, such as school dropout rates as the leaving age increases, young people's difficulties in accessing the labour market, and the involvement of young people in organized crime.

Even considering initiatives as a whole, however, there remain some **weaknesses regarding the appropriate analysis and consideration of the transverse dynamics linked to social exclusion** (and in particular the dynamics of gender). Another element which is evidently absent, both in the individual initiatives and when they are considered as a whole, is the **involvement of civil society and local stakeholders**: while the involvement and participation of such parties is considered important from an "inclusive education" perspective, the programmes appear to lack specific activities or strategies to support them.

2. Effectiveness

2.1. The effectiveness of the individual initiatives

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

The effectiveness of the first initiative seems to be high, but not excellent. **All activities were carried out successfully**. However, it is worth highlighting some emerging issues in this context.

- a) **The activities were modified in the course of implementation.** In fact, in the second year, the training activities which were designed to be differentiated for the different groups involved in school management, were incorporated into a single course geared to the training of the "DAI" and catered for different staff in one combined course. This can be considered as a factor of the initiative's effectiveness, since has allowed the activities provided greater adherence to emerging needs in the development process of the "inclusive school."
- b) **The creation of an observatory for inclusive education has not effectively been achieved.** This was envisaged in the description of the intervention strategy as a preliminary phase in the promotion of inclusive education (cf. "intervention strategy", page 16 of the Financing proposal ") and - more generally - the activities outlined in expected result no. 2 (the training of officials and operators at various levels to improve the identification, analysis and responses to phenomena of social / educational exclusion and inclusion and share good practice with other Latin American countries) have been only partially realized, and in particular have left very little legacy in schools and local authorities. This second fact, however, does not seem to be linked only to the implementation of the activities, but to reasons relating to the formulation of the project itself (and probably caused by decisions taken on funding, which only allowed for the implementation of training activities). In fact, the creation of an observatory for inclusive education, which was identified as a constituent element in the introduction of inclusive schooling (since it would help to identify practices to be circulated, thus avoiding prescriptive approaches or the definition of a-priori models) was later not listed in the "planned activities", and no financial resources were allocated for its creation.

The failure to set up the observatory was not without consequences. In fact, it has made the systematic collection of information about the introduction of innovations concerning the inclusive school impossible during and after the initiative. This type of information (essential for the management of a wider innovation process) is therefore mainly anecdotal (the cases of certain "eminent" schools are known) and collected during research carried out by the University of Bologna (in particular connected with the doctoral thesis of Dr. Arianna Taddei, who headed the project during the first year: 15 October 2009 - 31 March 2011).

The effectiveness of the initiative was also affected by the contradictory and paradoxical interruption of activities for a prolonged period, (due to **mechanisms of management**). This interruption of the activities:

- on the one hand, limited the ability of the teachers involved to access technical assistance and follow-up after taking part in training activities;
- on the other hand, resulted in an increase in the overall duration of the initiative (and consequently an increase in its appropriateness to accompany a process of transformation which by its very nature is slow and not reducible simply to a set of activities). As mentioned, the causes of the interruption in the activities are primarily administrative difficulties, particularly regarding the participation of the NGO Educaid in support of the University of Bologna (although the NGO was mentioned in the project document, its contractual relationship with the University of Bologna was challenged by the legal department of the DGDC - MAE). This also led to some efficiency issues, which will be analysed in the relevant paragraph.

Analysis of the documentation and field visits revealed some important elements concerning effectiveness, which are worth highlighting:

- The full involvement of the local counterpart (MINED), which is in fact gradually appropriating the initiative by actively participating not only in its management, but also in the leading and "ongoing planning" of activities;
- The involvement of a greater number of schools than originally envisaged (up from 11 to 18), also changes in the type of schools involved. The number and type of pilot schools have changed since the original project proposal, because the ministerial interlocutors put forward different selection criteria to those proposed by officials of the previous government. The criteria are as follows: 14 "mainstream" schools (some of which are spontaneous practitioners of inclusion), each acting as reference point for the school community in its own department for the development and dissemination of inclusive education; 3 special schools, each acting as a reference point in their respective areas of East, West and Central El Salvador, to develop processes for the transition of students with mental and physical disabilities from special schools to mainstream schools; the "República Haiti" School, as the the Italian Cooperation pilot school.
- A high level of participation by the "beneficiaries" (namely the teachers and staff of the selected schools), as reported by MINED in its Report of Activities for the first year - 15 October 2009 - 31 March 2011.
- The enlargement of the total number of beneficiaries in the second annual initiative (the "DAI" course was opened to teachers from 55 other schools).
- The activation of processes for the introduction of innovative activities and tools (non-curricular courses, full-time school, new methodologies), by the majority of teachers involved: more than 80% of surveyed teachers in 10 schools involved in the initiative said they had adopted new teaching tools, and more than 40% have also adopted new programmes).
- The occasional involvement of local civil society organizations and existing "local networks" (although these are considered a key element in an inclusive approach to education, as pointed out in documents covering theoretical reflection and systematization of experiences produced by Educaid and the University of Bologna).
- Another activity (supported and funded directly by MINED) has been added to those planned: an institutional mission to Mexico, with the aim of giving MINED officials and school leaders further experience of an "inclusive, full-time school" approach from which elements may be taken to promote the adoption of such an approach in El Salvador.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

The effectiveness of the second initiative appears to be more problematic. The activities of both the educational component and the infrastructure component were implemented only partially, and their results were only partially achieved.

The outcome of the **adoption, trialling and validation of the "full-time inclusive school" model** was effectively achieved in 22 schools during the first year (but 15 of these schools had already been involved in the previous

project) through teacher training and guidance. However, for the 38 schools scheduled for involvement in the second year, a total time of only about 7 months is available (December 2015 - June 2016), clearly insufficient to introduce and trial any teaching model.

Moreover, even in the 22 schools where the activities took place, **effective adoption of the model was affected and limited by the lack of resources for "full-time" schooling, i.e. the resources necessary to provide midday meals for the students.** These resources were not covered by the project, but should have been made available by MINED under the current reform²⁷. In fact, as is apparent from the questionnaires completed by 110 teachers, in 47% of cases the introduction of the full-time inclusive model of schooling involves a limited number of classes and pupils, in 18% of cases it involves most of the classes, and in only 24% it involves all classes.

In effect, there is a lack of actions essential to assure the feasibility of adopting the proposed model, such as, among others:

- those related to the development of a sustainable school meals system (without school meals, only a very limited number of students are able to actually use the opportunities made available outside school hours, in other words the "full-time" element which is the goal of the initiative);
- those related to the building of relations between the school and the surrounding area and the mobilization of civil society organizations (the measures implemented have only involved school staff and MINED, while an inclusive full-time school requires the active involvement of the local community: associations, local governments, businesses, etc.).

The lack of such actions has affected the effective adoption of the full-time model, which is currently only available in some schools. It is interesting that MINED itself is not in possession of reliable information about the total number. In the schools visited and interviews with teachers carried out, "full-time" is always achieved by extending the timetable by 2 or 3 hours daily. Students' participation in afternoon activities, however, is generally assessed by school leaders as low. For example, in the Centro Escolar Tomas Medina²⁸ in Santa Ana department, of 1506 pupils, only 7 - 8 pupils take part in full-time activities. There is only one case where the situation was totally different: that of the Centro Escolar Prof. Ireneo de León²⁹, in the department of La Paz, in which of 979 students, about half participate full-time.

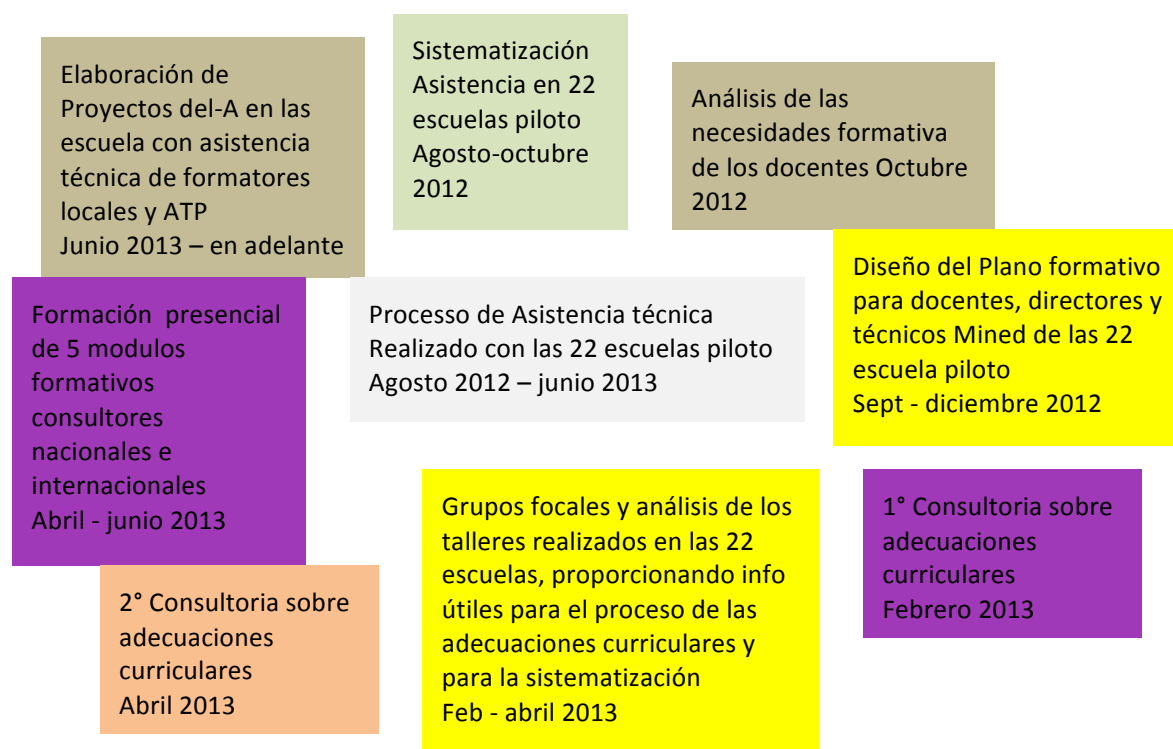
The **second expected result**, or rather the second activity (since in the project document there is complete correspondence between the direct output of the activities and results), namely the planning and implementation of training activities for school leaders, teachers, administrative staff and others involved in the education sector, like the first result, involved 22 schools in the first year (specifically, 363 people took part in training activities over a 13 month period). For the staff of the remaining 38 schools, a training period is scheduled with a total duration of less than 7 months (December 2015 - June 2016). This duration was judged by the leaders of Educaid and the University of Bologna as totally inadequate to achieve results in terms of innovation.

As an example, the following diagram shows a representation of the training activities identified and implemented during the first year of the initiative, taken from the "Documento sistematizado sobre las experiencias desarrolladas en cada escuela del piloto. Resumen Ejecutivo del trabajo realizado con las escuelas durante la consultoria, Educaid – MINED, Junio 2013"

²⁷ MINED made the resources available only for a very limited period of time. This period varies from school to school. For example, the Centro Escolar Jerónimo Abarca in the department of Cabañas received meals for only 3 weeks during the first year of the project; the Centro Escolar Prof. Ireneo de León in the department of La Paz received meals for 7 months during the first year.

²⁸ It is a "pilot" school that was already a beneficiary of the first project with the University of Bologna and of the training activities during the first year.

²⁹ It is an "Expansión" school, a beneficiary of the training activities during the second year. These activities are currently under way.



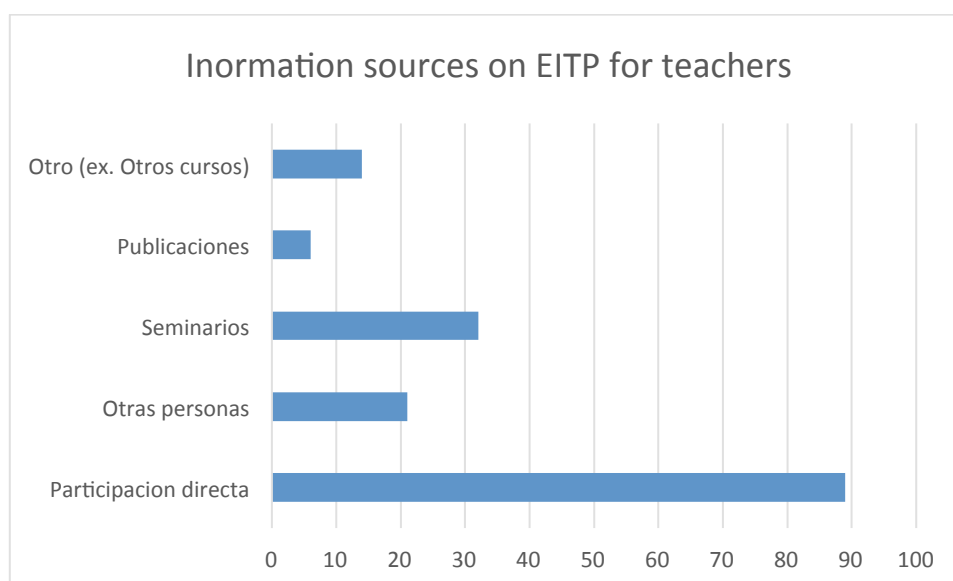
The second result also relates to the production of manuals and informational documentation intended for teachers and others involved in the management of educational processes (such as the "Guía de actualización metodologica para docentes con el enfoque escuela inclusiva de tiempo pleno", produced by MINED in 2013).

Regarding the second result of the intervention, the second year saw the introduction of ATPAIs, (Asistentes Técnicos Pedagógicos) as an element of Educaid's strategy for technical assistance. 18 ATPAIs were contracted, including three regional coordinators (eastern, central and western areas). The ATPAI are distributed at departmental level, each ATPAI providing technical assistance to 4 schools. The function of the ATPAIs is to conduct training in the schools assigned to them and to support the pedagogical assistants of MINED and the school staff in the development of a pedagogical proposal appropriate for the school involved on the model of "Inclusive Full-Time Education". The collaboration between ATPAI and ATP seems not always to work: in particular during the previous year there were problems of coordination between the two, both during visits to schools and regarding the consultation of MINED experts. These problems seem to be at least partly linked to an excessive workload, which does not allow the necessary time available for visits to all schools.

Although the development of "pedagogical proposals" for the adoption of inclusive full-time education in 60 schools is in progress, only in one school of those visited, namely the Centro Escolar Tomas Medina³⁰ activities were seen to be in progress. Even the visits of the assistants presented irregularities, especially in recent months (in particular, some leaders surveyed reported the limited presence in schools of the relevant regional coordinator).

As shown in the table below, the indication is clear, in this context, that the most effective method for dissemination of the "new approach", was the **direct involvement of teachers in the initiative**, while publications and seminars were less effective.

³⁰ At the time the proposal is being formulated, 53 teachers of the school are working together with the ATP and ATPAI to identify the school's weaknesses and methods of institutional organization and educational actions that will have to be strengthened so that inclusive schooling can be put into practice. The experimental activities planned will be launched in June 2016.



Regarding the table, it is noteworthy that only a limited number of teachers indicated "other teachers" and "publications" as sources of information. In fact these two elements reveal: a) a lack of effectiveness of the production of documents / publications (teaching guides, brochures, etc.); b) the fact that inclusive full-time education has not yet become a "subject of informal communication" in a way perceptible by teachers, probably due to the absence or insufficiency of mechanisms and structures that could facilitate the dissemination of the model through peer communication (such mechanisms and such structures, however, are not provided for in the initiative); c) the fact that "top-down" communication (which is actually both training activities in which there are "teachers" and "learners" / "technical assistants" and "beneficiaries"; and seminars) continues to be the perceived (and perhaps most effective) mechanism, even in a context such as reform which aims to mobilize teachers as the main drivers of change.

Regarding the **third result** (the creation and strengthening of support and monitoring services for the process of educational innovation and the creation, collection and dissemination of knowledge about that process), the activities planned were also only partially realized, and, at the time of the evaluation, the results have not been achieved. In particular:

- a) The training activities for MINED staff involved in management of the observatory at national and departmental level concerned only 7 people in the two-year period 2011 and 2012, who mainly worked on the planning of the observatory itself (which - as already noted - had been considered as part of the "preparatory phase" in the funding agreement for the initiative "support for the promotion and development of the inclusive school", but was not included among its activities);
- b) the provision of software for the collection and publication of data was carried out through a contract with a supplier, during 2013; subsequent to the provision of software, the activities ceased;
- c) for the management of the observatory, MINED appointed an official in 2012; and in February 2016, two people (1 computer expert and 1 expert in pedagogy) were contracted by MINED;
- d) at the moment, the observatory is not in operation; data regarding good practice was collected in a sample of 10 schools (MINED first yearly report), but this data is not publicly available, nor was it made available for the evaluation team.

All the activities of the pedagogical component are due to conclude in 2018, according to MINED's current schedule. This will result in new negotiations for the involvement of Educaid (in fact the current contract covers technical assistance activities until June 2016).

Regarding the **fourth result / activity** (the dissemination of Salvadoran inclusive full-time schooling on a national and international level), during the first year of implementation (in the first quarter of 2012) an international conference was organized, funded by MINED, followed by another in July 2013, entitled "El rol social de la escuela". The conference, organized by Educaid, saw the participation of experts and researchers from several

countries, as well as staff and representatives from MINED. An **additional international conference is scheduled at the conclusion of the initiative** (2018).

Results 5, 6 and 7 related to **school equipment and accessibility**. As mentioned, activities related to **infrastructure projects have been launched only in some schools** (22 out of 34); in the others, they must be carried out in the upcoming months. At the time of evaluation, the works comprise mainly small infrastructure projects to facilitate accessibility for children with disabilities (accessible toilets, ramps, etc.) and – as already mentioned – have been realized thanks to the transfer³¹ of funding to schools, which then contracted those who carried out the services.

In the 22 schools where infrastructure projects were launched, completion of the works is expected in May 2016. In addition to these schools where the works were made possible through *transferencias*, other projects have been planned:

- in five schools, where larger and more complex works are planned, for which – as previously noted – a call for tenders was concluded in November 2015 and contracts were signed (with final approval by the the Italian Cooperation in March 2016);
- in fourteen additional schools (four of which were not initially part of the plan, and were included due to increased availability of resources because of more favourable Euro/Dollar exchange rates), through the creation of additional direct transfers by MINED.

The following table shows the works scheduled in the five main schools.

Major works planned

No.	CODIGO	CENTRO ESCOLAR	MUNICIPIO	DEPARTAMENTO	INTERVENCION
1	10963	C.E. PROF. FRANCISCO MORAN	SAN MIGUEL DE MERCEDES	CHALATENANGO	DEMOLICIONES, DESALOJOS, CONSTRUCCION MODULOS DE SERVICIOS SANITARIOS DE LAVAR DE UNA UNIDAD EN PABELLON No. 4 Y 5, RECOLECTOR DE DESECHOS SOLIDOS, CONSTRUCCION DE OBRAS EXTERIORES (RAMPAS, INSTALACIONES HIDRAULICAS, ELECTRICAS, PISO EMPEDRADO FRAGUADO, ETC.)
2	12193	C.E. SOR HENRIQUEZ	ILOBASCO	CABAÑAS	DEMOLICIONES, DESALOJOS, REHABILITACION DE AULAS, READECUACION MODULO DE ADMINISTRACION, SERVICIOS SANITARIOS DE LAVAR, CONSTRUCCION DE OBRAS EXTERIORES (RAMPAS, INSTALACIONES HIDRAULICAS, ELECTRICAS ETC.)
3	11878	C.E. FLORENCIA RIVAS	SAN RAFAEL CEDROS	CUSCATLAN	DEMOLICIONES, DESALOJOS, REHABILITACION DE AULA Y LABORATORIO, READECUACION MODULO DE ADMINISTRACION, CONSTRUCCION MODULOS DE SERVICIOS SANITARIOS DE LAVAR, CONSTRUCCION DE OBRAS EXTERIORES (RAMPAS, INSTALACIONES HIDRAULICAS, ELECTRICAS ETC.)
4	13388	C.E. EL CARMEN	EL CARMEN	LA UNION	DEMOLICIONES, DESALOJOS, CONSTRUCCION DE MODULO DE AULA TIEMPO PLENO, SALA DE MAESTROS,

³¹ According to Salvadoran procurement law (LACAP), for amounts less than 54,000 dollars, transfers can be made to local parties and contracts for works carried out can be ascribed with a simplified procedure. Open tenders are required for larger contracts.

No.	CODIGO	CENTRO ESCOLAR	MUNICIPIO	DEPARTAMENTO	INTERVENCION
					MODULO DE SERVICIOS SANITARIOS DE LAVAR DE 8 UNIDADES, MODULO DE SERVICIOS SANITARIOS ANEXOS A PARVULARIA, CONSTRUCCION DE OBRAS EXTERIORES (RAMPAS, INSTALACIONES HIDRAULICAS, ELECTRICAS, PISO EMPEDRADO FRAGUADO ETC.)
5	13301	C.E. MARCELINO GARCIA FLAMENCO	TOROLA	MORAZAN	DEMOLICIONES, DESALOJOS, CONSTRUCCION MODULOS DE SALA DE MAESTRO, AULA DE TIEMPO PLENO, SERVICIOS SANITARIOS DE LAVAR PARA PERSONAS CON CAPACIDADES ESPECIALES, RECOLECTOR DE DESECHOS SOLIDOS, CONSTRUCCION DE OBRAS EXTERIORES (RAMPAS, INSTALACIONES HIDRAULICAS, ELECTRICAS, ETC.)

Source: MINED (2016)

Realization of works for which MINED has signed the contracts must begin by the end of June 2016. The transfers to the remaining schools are currently in the planning stage. The conclusion of the works is expected at the end of November 2017.

By the end of the initiative, implementation is planned for infrastructure projects in 41 schools, rather than the 34 included in the approved funding proposal. **There will be an increase in the overall efficiency in terms of works realized, though the delay in the projects has, according to some of the key informants interviewed, adversely affected the effectiveness of the activities of the educational component.**

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision..."

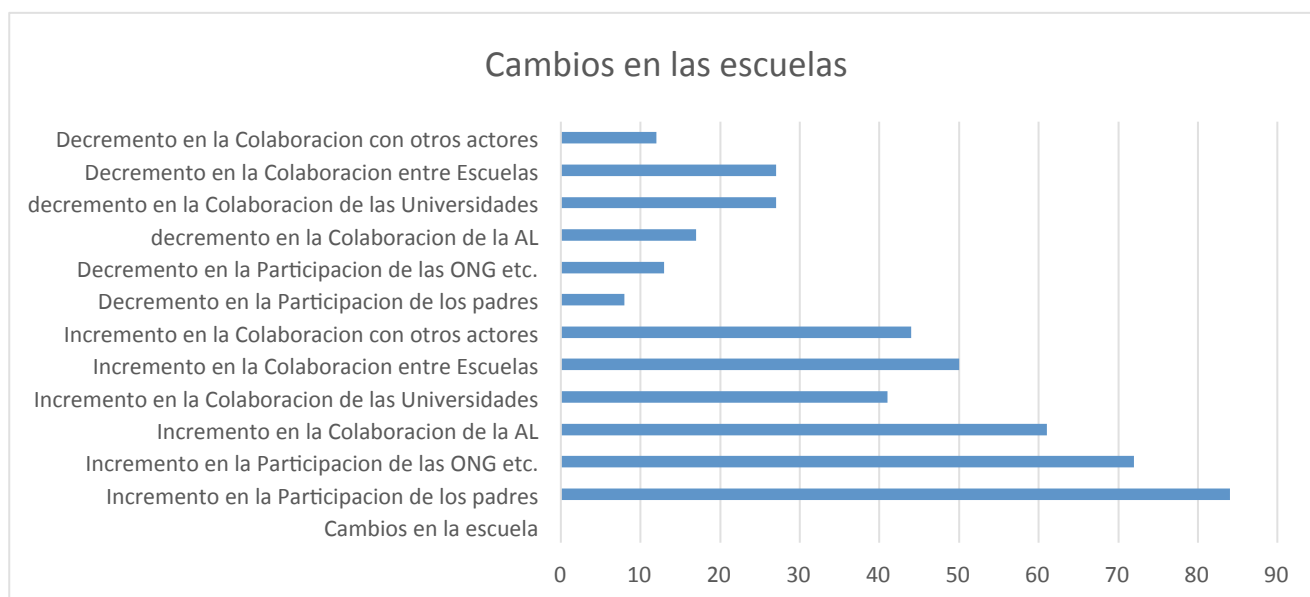
For the third, initiative it is not possible to carry out an efficiency analysis. In fact, funding for the initiative has not yet begun, although it was approved in 2012. Nor have structures organized for future execution of the initiative been observed in meetings with MINED.

2.2. The effectiveness of the "programme" as a whole

Considering the three initiatives not on a per-project basis but in a broader perspective as accompanying and supporting a process of transformation that involves the whole educational system in all its complexity, **a more positive assessment of the effectiveness can be made** than for the individual initiatives.

As is clear from the analysis of questionnaires conducted in schools, as well as by the focus groups with those involved in their operation, **there is widespread recognition of the ongoing process of change among those involved.**

Changes under way in schools according to the teachers surveyed



The process includes different aspects of the education system, but it is still under development. Not being able to be considered in the data (doing which, moreover, would not make sense given that of the 5000 educational centres in the country³² less than 1% have been involved), it is therefore primarily still an experimental and somewhat "anticipatory" action that will help construct the model that should then be applied more generally.

In this context, some particularly interesting aspects may be mentioned, as well as some potential weak points.

The most interesting factors include:

- the realization of experimental activities in schools of various departments and in all regions of the country, with results that the questionnaires show to be similar (In different schools and in different regions, the initiatives resulted mainly in changes to teaching methodologies, recognized by more than 80% of teachers interviewed), the introduction of new programmes (approximately 42% of respondents) and the inclusion of a greater number of students with disabilities in regular schools (approximately 40% of respondents), the introduction of the option of "full-time" (recognized as existing at least in some classes in the schools by over 47% of teachers interviewed and in all classes by about 24%, while only 11% of teachers do not recognize the existence of this option in their schools);
- training opportunities offered (more than 55% of teachers surveyed participated in training courses more than once per year, and only 2% have never been involved in any training course);
- increase in forms of cooperation with other local stakeholders (recognized by more than 70% of teachers surveyed) and between schools (over 55% of teachers);
- improvement in infrastructure and equipment available (recognized by about 60% of teachers);
- the formalization of the EITP model (Full-time inclusive education), with reference to experience and to the international literature and with the definition of functional logical paths to the model's adoption (cfr. the previously mentioned "Guia de actualización pedagógica..." and numerous other documents produced by MINED with the support of Educaid).

The most problematic elements in terms of the effectiveness of the three initiatives viewed as a whole are those concerning:

- **documentation of good practices and monitoring;** the lack of an effective monitoring mechanism for the actions carried out and their results and impact is evident and – in fact – makes it difficult to manage changes as they happen. The available information is fragmented and mainly collected in individual mission reports drawn up by the various parties who have intervened on a case-by-case basis. What is

³² Cfr. MINED data used in the financing proposal for the initiative "support for reform of the national education system" (2010)

almost completely missing is formalized knowledge about the entire process underway and about the obstacles and facilitating factors it has encountered. The same Educaid report "Documento de sistematización que contiene manuales de organización, procedimientos de evaluación y seguimiento para el modelo EITP de cada centro educativo" is focused on the "proposal" and the presentation of sheets for each school, but does not contain an analysis of processes under way in the territory or in schools as a whole.

- **Citizens' organizations** (and particularly those involved in supporting children experiencing difficulties and children with disabilities) are involved only occasionally and only as a result of specific local situations or the interest and willingness of individual teachers and school directors.
- The only occasional interaction with other **donors and their initiatives** has also allowed different **concepts of "inclusive education" to persist**, along with the consequent risk of confusion and conflict.

This lack may also affect initiatives still in the starting phase, as they may not take proper account of what is happening in primary schools and therefore not be – as would be expected – a complementary element in the overall construction of an "inclusive school".

3. Efficiency

3.1. Efficiency of individual initiatives

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

At the conclusion of the realization of the first initiative, **a major decrease in the cost of the initiative itself** was observed. Compared to the contribution made available by the DGDC (399,140.00 euro), the total expenditure reported is 302,612.54 euro. The cost was therefore almost 25% lower than expected.

This savings is mainly due to the fact that, for administrative reasons, the University of Bologna was able to use only its own teachers for the work. A more accurate reading, therefore, of **what could be seen as an element of "efficiency" reveals instead a "weakness."** On the basis of analysis of documentation and interviews with key informants (directors from Educaid and from the University of Bologna, AICS officials, etc.) it is possible to identify certain elements that have limited the project's efficiency (and have also influenced – at least partly – its effectiveness). These include, among others:

- The University of Bologna's difficulty in mobilizing external staff (and consequently the fact that only internal staff were used, with their limits in terms of availability and commitment).
- The University of Bologna's difficulty in directly managing logistical and administrative issues related to the activities carried out in El Salvador (all planned activities), which led to Educaid's involvement.
- The complexity of the administrative management of the university (which was a hindrance to Educaid's involvement; its identification in the project document as a "partner" created ambiguity regarding the conclusion of direct contracts and the transfer of resources between the university and the NGO), which led to delays and a long suspension of activities, linked to difficulties of functional reporting in disbursing the second tranche of the DGDC's contribution, which took more than a year.
- The fact that the regulation on art. 18 of Law 49, on which basis the initiative was funded, only allows for training activities; this made it impossible to include activities of research and "institutional support" (including support for the creation of the observatory on inclusive education) that would have improved the activities' relevance, effectiveness and impact.

In fact, **the initiative that was meant to last 24 months has actually lasted 46 months.** This extension generated additional elements of inefficiency in the initiative, such as:

- a financial commitment greater than planned for Educaid, which had to keep staff on site even during inactive periods;
- the need to replace the "project leader" and select a new one (also by Educaid);
- the necessity of renegotiating the initiative with local partners when a transition between different governments had to be dealt with because of the extension;

- the need to repeatedly rebuild a relationship of collaboration with the local office of the Italian Cooperation, which experienced staff turnover in the extended period of execution of the activities.

The different factors that hindered the management of the project and reduced its efficiency were overcome, however, partly through the collaboration and support of Salvadoran institutions, at both the local and national levels and partly through strong (formal and informal) ties between the Italian organizations involved: University of Bologna and Educaid. In particular, the close cooperation between these parties made it possible to: a) coordinate the initiative's staff (on-site personnel, University professors); b) continuously monitor the staff's work and activities from the University of Bologna; and c) promote the formation of a "Management committee" to take charge of resolving teaching problems as well as managing issues related to relations with MINED and with the Italian Cooperation.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

The second initiative also appears to be characterized by a low level of efficiency, related mainly to administrative and legal issues, which were not identified and resolved before the launch of the initiative itself. As we have already seen, this initiative too, which was to have a **duration of 36 months** will likely last much longer. According to MINED's current programmes, all activities should be completed in 2018, i.e. after **more than 80 months**.

Besides the delay in the start-up phase (financing was approved in November 2010 and activities began about 12 months later, in October 2011), the initiative underwent numerous changes in the costs and management of the activities. In particular, in October 2013 there was an amendment of the Bilateral Agreements on the conditions for requesting the second tranche. It lowered the minimum portion of the first tranche to be accounted for from 70% to 50%. This was done in view of the need to circumvent an administrative impasse which was keeping MINED from reporting the minimum 70% since about 30% of the costs corresponding to the execution of infrastructure projects had not received the 'no objection'.

These changes make it possible to identify a set of factors of inefficiency which include:

- a) **Delays and impediments in administrative procedures**, including the time to formulate questions and answers, on the part of both the Italian and Salvadoran administrations.
- b) **Different systems and regulatory mechanisms, with no "shared system" of reference established before the initiative was launched**, which made it necessary to repeat certain operations (e.g. contracts, calls for tenders, etc.), further complicating relations between bureaucracies (e.g. the Salvadoran administration's financial year is different from the Italian one). The MINED administration's calls for tenders were not initially validated by the DGDC. Only in June 2013 a solution was found that made it possible to use a shared format, and the first tender specifications for infrastructure were approved in 2013. The calls for tenders for audit services carried out in El Salvador were not initially validated. Payment of taxes on project expenditures by MINED resulted in a negotiation that involved the Italian Embassy, MINED and the Salvadoran Ministry of Foreign Relations and Ministry of Finance from April to December 2013.
- c) **Lack of decisiveness and a certain "confusion" in Educaid's contracting methods, as executor and manager of the activities of the educational component**. Two direct award contracts were signed between MINED and Educaid, but there were doubts about the legitimacy of a direct negotiation procedure (since Salvadoran law requires that services of that financial scale be awarded via tender procedures), which resulted in delays on the part of both the Salvadoran authorities and the DGDC. Educaid was in any case asked to formulate a technical proposal and financial proposal as if it were a call for tenders (which resulted in extra costs for the organization).
- d) **Administrative and organizational changes in the institution responsible for managing the initiative**. Since 2011, MINED has undergone three reforms, which resulted in a change in the structure of the ministry itself. Some departments were removed and others created, resulting in a loss of institutional memory and the need to identify new contacts for the activities.

Other problems identified in the course of interviews with officials of the MINED and those of the DGDC, relate to:

- The lack of decentralized cost control mechanisms (information is available at MINED about the financial resources transferred to schools, but not about the way these resources were used)
- The inadequacy of the coordination between Educaid and MINED, especially after Educaid's activities were interrupted and the manager in charge changed. This led to situations of conflict regarding the methods for implementing the planned services (specifically, MINED considers the Educaid's activities too "independent" and therefore intends, in the 3rd year of the project, to redefine the terms of the collaboration).

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision"

It is not actually possible to analyse the third initiative's level of efficiency. But considering the fact that funding was approved in 2012 and in May 2016 the activities had not yet started, the initiative certainly cannot be said to be highly efficient.

Two main factors have contributed to the overall inefficiency of the third initiative:

- a) The procedures necessary to launch the action proved complex and difficult, both in Italy and in El Salvador, and required a succession of administrative, technical and political approvals from various parties (Ministries, credit management institutes, parliamentary institutions, etc.). Furthermore, some of them – credit institutions, for example – are not directly involved in the realization of the activities and actually have little interest in the speed with which they are launched.
- b) The institutional changes under way both in El Salvador and in Italy, which led to additional steps between entities in the transitional stage, and consequently increased the time required. Transferring procedures and responsibilities to new parties really also meant that knowledge of the project's identity and meaning had to be transferred, which was more time-consuming than a simple transfer of responsibilities.

3.2. The efficiency of the "programme" as a whole

Even considering the initiatives as a whole, efficiency remains low. In addition, the use of different methods of financing has made it difficult to accumulate the knowledge that would improve the efficiency of the subsequent actions. In addition, the use of different funding arrangements does not appear to have been motivated by needs related to the planned activities, but simply by the presence of "opportunities" and deals. The first initiative, in particular, could probably have been completed more easily and efficiently if it had been funded as "art. 15" or as a "contribution to NGO initiatives in partner countries" (but this would have required the participation of a competitive process with an uncertain outcome).

Two other factors appear to have been significant in allowing the situation of inefficiency to endure for more than 10 years:

- **The absence of an "external" or permanent management unit, relatively autonomous from MINED** (and therefore not subject to changes in its structure), which made it impossible to maintain the same asset management approach or even to promote the accumulation of knowledge about the subject of the activities carried out, or to create an effective institutional memory about the Italian Cooperation's resource management methods.
- **The absence of an effective monitoring system in MINED and of a permanent and formalized support mechanism by the Italian Cooperation;** during the period under consideration, in both the Italian and Salvadoran administrations, initiatives were handled not only by different people, but by different offices and following different approaches and methods. Qualified informers, both locally and interviewed in Italy, have pointed out, for example, how support for initiatives had been neglected in certain periods, only to be taken up with enthusiasm at other times.

4. Sustainability

4.1. Sustainability of individual initiatives

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador" was financed as "training". The only activities provided for in the financing document which could have contributed to the initiative's "sustainability" and to its results were those included in **activity 1.7: creation of a technical and scientific committee for the definition of a university curriculum on special education**, meaning:

- the establishment of a "Scientific-technical committee" (made up of representatives from MINED, the University of Bologna, Educaid and certain Salvadoran universities);
- the creation of a workshop to draft a proposed curriculum and present it to MINED.

For the creation of the observatory on inclusive education (linked to expected result 2) no activities geared towards creating conditions for real continuity were provided for, except the training of officials and local staff.

In fact it was because of the lack of specific measures for the sustainability of the individual results that the results did not continue after the conclusion of the project.

However, thanks to the establishment of the Scientific and Technical Committee and the creation of ties between Educaid/University of Bologna and MINED, the result in terms of the **sustainability of the initiative was particularly high**; not only did MINED decide to ask Italy to support a second initiative on inclusive education, but – above all – **the Salvadoran government has made the inclusive education approach the pivot around which it defined the national education system reform, in both primary school and secondary school.**

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

For the second initiative too, it seems that sustainability should be evaluated in terms of government policy and the decision to centre education system reform on the inclusive education approach, rather than evaluated with regard to the individual activities (for which, however – at least in terms of the educational part – two important factors of sustainability can be identified, namely: the institutionalization of the professional and educational role of the DAI and the establishment of full-time inclusive education on at the two main local universities – Universidad Centro-Americana and Universidad de San Salvador).

The strengths and weak points of the initiative's sustainability should be assessed in terms of the reform, rather than in terms of the individual activities provided for in the initiative supported by the Italian Cooperation. Here some emerging elements can be pointed out:

- a) The government of El Salvador was able to employ other international resources to support the reform and improvement of the quality of the national education system. For example, the World Bank (programme for the improvement of the quality of education, with 60 million USD in funding), the cooperation of the US government (the FOMILENIO II programme, which involves 344 schools in coastal areas) and the Inter-American Development Bank, which is currently involved in formulating an initiative on the school system.
- b) The country's private resources have been employed to support the "inclusive education" programme (for example, in 2009-2010, the FEPADE – Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo – supported activities to introduce full-time inclusive education in 630 schools, involving 711 directors, 5311 teachers, 1236 students and their families and 400 technical and pedagogical counsellors - ATP, MINED³³).
- c) The government has linked adoption of "inclusive education" with adoption of the "full-time" mode, but does not seem able to financially support schools in maintaining this organizational method (in fact, after a brief period in which schools received the financial transfers needed to maintain school canteens, most schools had to close them due to lack of financial resources) and does not currently

³³ http://fepade.org.sv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=279

seem to have launched alternative financing mechanisms. Alternative financing mechanisms have not even been considered, however, for activities planned under the work supported by the Italian Cooperation, where it would have been possible to contribute to creating the conditions for obtaining resources from other local players). It is interesting to note, in this regard, that less than 50% of teachers interviewed during the evaluation noted an increase in relations between the school and other local entities (compared to nearly 90% who noted increased collaboration with parents) and a full 12% noted that in the past three years there has even been a decrease in cooperation with local stakeholders (local administration and other private and civil society parties).

- d) Other models of "inclusive education" have been experimented with during the initiative, through the introduction of new teaching tools in the main subjects (language, mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences) as well as in "extra-curricular" activities generally practiced in the afternoon. In addition, MINED has produced numerous materials in connection with the initiative. These are designed especially for teachers for the adoption of new methods of inclusive education, and offer many new possibilities. If one also considers the fact that the initiative is set to continue for almost two more years, it may therefore be possible in the course of new activities to increase the resources devoted to the introduction of "inclusive education" methods that are not full-time but an "extension of school hours".

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision..."

The sustainability of the third initiative, like the second, is linked to the government's ability to undertake long-term actions. Here too we must point out that the government has already implemented actions to strengthen technical, middle and higher education, and has already mobilized additional resources.

Italian funding will therefore tend to be essentially complementary to other types. The main risk to mention in this context relates to maintaining a distinction between the Italian Cooperation's project and those of other parties or of MINED as such. In fact, this problem has already been encountered in the "second initiative" in which Italy's contribution and presence essentially consist in the "involvement of Educaid" (the specifics of that involvement are currently the subject of strategic analysis by MINED, which is beginning an evaluation of the technical assistance and intends to redefine its strategy).

A critical element with regard to the initiative's sustainability is the lengthy period of time that has elapsed between the formulation of the initiative and its launch. The government policies according to which the initiative's feasibility and sustainability were initially evaluated actually pertained to the 2009 – 2014 period, and the project document was not updated following the 2012 financing decision. Four years later, with the planning period over, policy changes could come about which would also affect the sustainability of the actions. However, there are some encouraging elements:

- a) The fact that the initiative is based on financing and that the Salvadoran government, by requesting the disbursement of funds, is actually "confirming" its interest in the project's actions;
- b) The fact that the Salvadoran authorities consulted during the evaluation confirmed the government's interest in and commitment to promoting full-time inclusive education at middle and higher levels and their interest in introducing and/or improving vocational training in public schools;
- c) The fact that initiatives by other parties (both donors and private entities, such as the aforementioned FEPADE) exist along the same lines for development of professional education.

4.2. The sustainability of the "programme" as a whole

As seen for the other criteria, viewing the three initiatives as a whole does tend to improve the assessment, in terms of sustainability as well. First, each initiative in itself in some way constitutes an element of the sustainability of the previous one and, secondly, the initiatives taken together manifest the continuous and increasing involvement of the local government, which has gradually shifted from its role as a "beneficiary" in introducing full-time inclusive education to being an active promoter willing to commit its own resources.

Here too there are still issues regarding the Salvadoran government's ability to support the process in the long term, but some positive elements of sustainability can be observed:

- a) Other parties have joined the administration's efforts during the period of the initiatives, locally, nationally and internationally;
- b) Full-time, inclusive education has become an integral element of ordinary public action. It is not a temporary choice or a possibility associated with emerging opportunities, but the main policy on education around which the government encourages mobilization of internal and external financial resources;
- c) Full-time inclusive education has become a shared goal for everyone involved in promoting education in El Salvador. It is a term that both the World Bank and USAID see as synonymous with "quality improvement", while the University of Bologna has used it to refer to a specific approach and specific teaching tools. However, all are focused on supporting it.

5. Impact

Impact assessment in a case like that of the three initiatives is particularly difficult. Not only do the initiatives fit into a complex context, where there are a number of influencing factors and no easily identifiable "situation for comparison", but we must also consider:

- a) the **lack of "starting data"**: no baseline was defined at the start of the initiatives and even the data contained in the project documents are not of major significance to the initiatives and were, in some cases, out of date at the time in which they were included in those documents and obsolete when the initiatives were launched (even for the first initiative, the data was for the years prior to 2006);
- b) the **lack of consolidated and valid recent data**: there has been no real monitoring on what happened in the schools involved in the project and few national data on the processes considered; the data available from MINED, the Italian Cooperation and other stakeholders pertain only to the activities carried out and the number of direct beneficiaries (i.e. the number of teachers involved);
- c) **during the same period El Salvador saw the implementation of several other initiatives, for the same purpose as those** supported by the Italian Cooperation and **sometimes much larger** (See, for example, a FEPADE project involving 630 schools, more than ten times the number of schools directly and indirectly involved in the initiatives considered in this evaluation). The various initiatives even have similar characteristics; it would actually be impossible to separately identify their impact on the community and on the education system with an adequate degree of reliability.

5.1. The impact of the individual initiatives

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

Given the obstacles mentioned above, the impacts that can be attributed to the first initiative are mainly:

- a) the introduction in El Salvador of the concept and model of "Inclusive education" and the adoption of the concept by MINED, which has made it a basis for its policy development;
- b) the formulation of a set of teaching tools connected to that model (and therefore the development of various "possible" options);
- c) the formulation of a set of tools for the training of teachers and others involved in managing educational processes (particularly the formalization of the "course for support teachers").

The impact is therefore dual in nature:

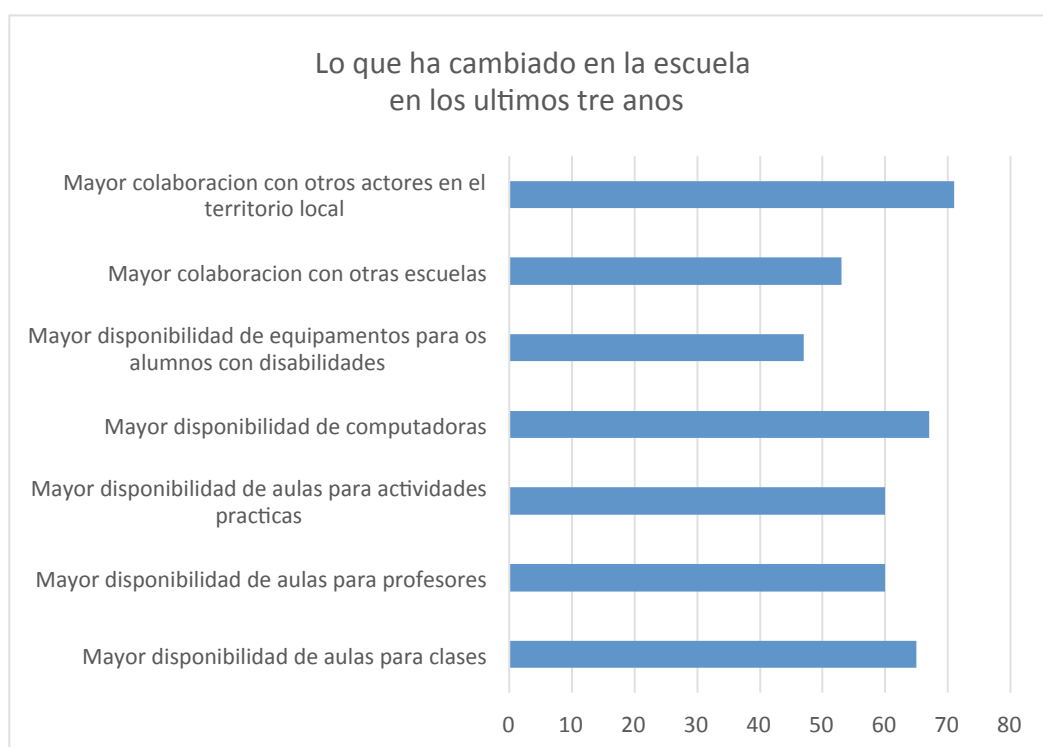
- **political and cultural** on one hand (i.e. the choice of the model that guided the reform of the national education system and the diffusion of an education approach based on social inclusion, rather than on assistance and placing pupils with difficulties in special education systems);
- on the other hand, and less directly, **economic**, i.e. the mobilization of resources from a large number of other stakeholders to support the introduction of inclusive education (FEPADE, USAID, World Bank, FOMILENIO II, etc.);
- a direct impact at the local level in improvement in the conditions and methods of instruction in schools directly involved in the activities and (as seen in the next section) in the active participation of pupils in the educational activities.

An additional impact produced beyond El Salvador's borders was the identification of important elements for the formulation of **the Italian Cooperation's guidelines on Inclusive education**.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

For the initiative of support for reform of the national education system, beyond consolidating the previous initiative's overall impact on the educational system, results at the local level can be observed through the changes recognized by the teachers interviewed in of a sample of schools:

Changes observed by teachers in their schools



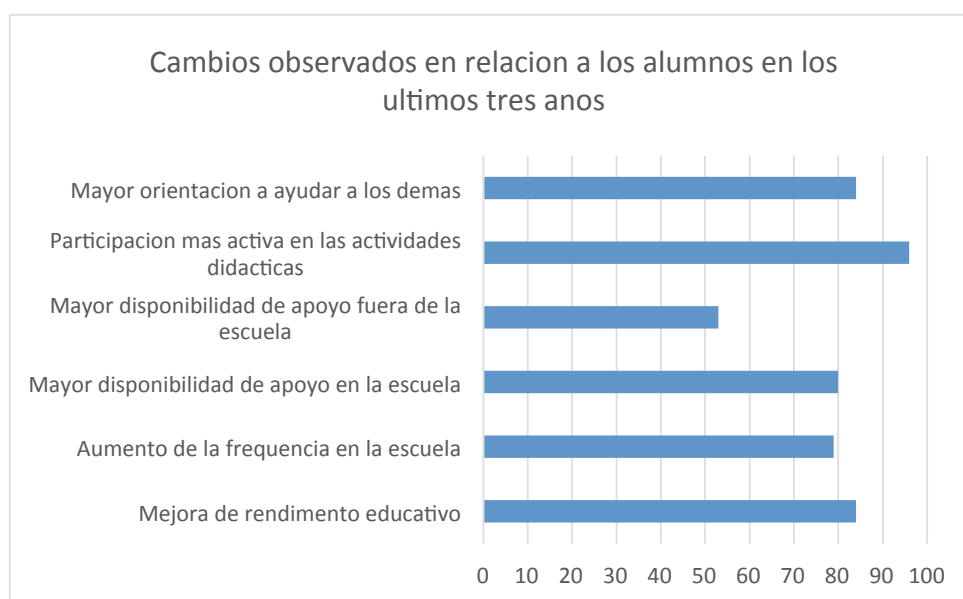
The impacts on the schools involved in the initiative therefore appear fairly pervasive and well beyond what could be recognized as direct effects of teacher training and of support for their experimentation with new teaching methodologies. They include:

- an increase in the availability of spaces and equipment (even before the works covered by the initiative were carried out);
- an increase in the availability of equipment for pupils with disabilities (in almost half of the cases).

The teachers' work was also impacted; as already seen, more than 80% adopted new learning tools and more than 40% adopted new programmes.

Teachers observed further impacts on their pupils:

Changes observed by teachers in relation to pupils



The most visible impact is in the improvement in active participation in teaching activities and educational performance (over 80% of teachers surveyed), followed closely by the greater availability of support within the school (80% of teachers – proof of the fact that the workshops in theatre, English, music and manual activities are not perceived simply as "extracurricular activities", but rather as elements of the "educational model"). A very significant impact also seems to emerge in terms of students' attitudes toward peer relations: about 80% of teachers pointed out an increased orientation toward "helping each other".

There was a slightly smaller, though still significant, increase in the availability of support outside the school (about 50% of teachers). Indeed, it is difficult to connect this change to the initiative's actions, which were concentrated inside schools. More likely it is the fact that the schools involved in the intervention are also involved in a wider process of quality improvement which also sees increased collaboration with those outside the schools (in line with one of the major positions of the reform policy).

Another element of impact to point out seems to be related to the construction of a "harmonious" school environment, where the level of conflict tends to decrease. In fact, as the following table shows, despite the fact that situations of conflict are not uncommon in Salvadoran schools (indeed, numerous cases have been recorded in which teachers were unsafe; they receive threats from parties outside the schools), the teachers surveyed still showed a high or very high level of satisfaction with their situation.

Teacher satisfaction levels

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low
Situation of the teachers	33 %	40 %	17 %	4 %	6 %
Collaboration among teachers	34 %	50 %	11 %	3 %	2 %
Collaboration between teachers and directors	40 %	42 %	11 %	3 %	4 %
Collaboration with parents	25 %	43 %	28 %	3 %	3 %
Collaboration with other parties	20 %	44 %	20 %	13 %	3 %
Training activities	29 %	41 %	19 %	6 %	5 %
Pupils' academic results	21 %	54 %	20 %	2 %	3 %

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision..."

Obviously, as regards the third initiative, it appears entirely inappropriate to speak of "impact"; it could, however, be relevant to look at existing expectations as a "first impact." Based on interviews with qualified informers and consultation with the various parties involved in the schools' activities, it does not seem possible to measure expectations for the initiative. Several factors may be contributing to keeping the expectation level lower than it ought to be:

- a) the fact that information about its launch has not yet been widely disseminated;
- b) the long period of time that elapsed between the identification and the formulation of the initiative: some of those involved in the identification and formulation changed roles in MINED, and in any case it is not known when the resources will actually be available or when the activities will begin;
- c) the fact that similar initiatives, also aimed at strengthening middle and higher education and professional training, are under way at the same time, so that the Italian Cooperation's initiative is difficult to perceive separately from the others.

5.2. The impact of the "programme" as a whole

It is even easier to highlight the impact on policies and on the "educational culture" if we consider the three initiatives as a whole. Beyond the impact which the individual actions have produced locally – and which, given the difficulties described at the beginning of this paragraph, are difficult to distinguish from the impact of other interventions, both in education and in other areas – the main and most important impact is the introduction of the inclusive education model and its adoption by MINED (and more generally by the Salvadoran government).

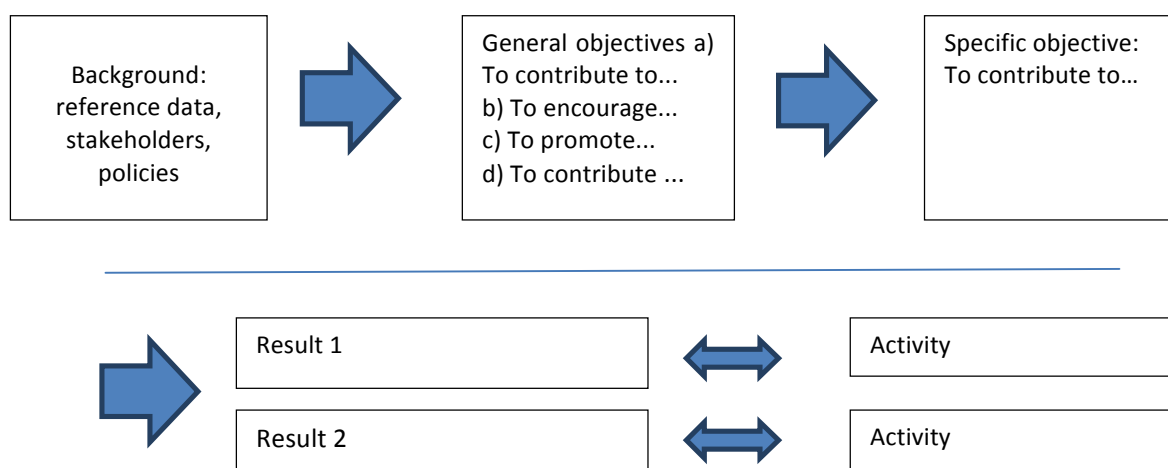
As already mentioned, the third initiative seems to break away from the first two in being a real opportunity to "concretize" the efforts. The items identified under "general objectives" for the first two initiatives – for example, limited youth participation in the labour market, youth violence and involvement in *maras* (gangs), widespread social exclusion etc. – may indeed be influenced only if initiatives for primary school education are followed up with initiatives for secondary schools. The processes generated through the first two steps, in fact, take place mostly "inside" schools, but the third initiative could generate processes that would necessarily create an "external impact" on the local environment surrounding schools as well as on policies .

Furthermore, if the three initiatives are not viewed as a whole, we would have to consider the political change itself to be incomplete; changes would be produced only in the first levels of the educational process, not in the higher levels, and therefore without achieving long-term changes in social and economical inclusion for the minors involved.

6. Quality of project formulation

The formulation of the project document for the three initiatives, as we shall see, is one of their main weaknesses. However, this weakness appears to be largely related to the planning methods in use at the DGDC at the time the initiatives were formulated. In fact, during the period when the projects were formulated, there was a widespread tendency to use a project formulation scheme which essentially relied on fragmented reasoning: the "background conditions" were considered and the general and specific objectives were formulated, more or less consistently, but results and activities were actually identified autonomously. The results themselves, however, were identified in connection with the activities rather than in relation to the specific objective.

The following diagram shows the planning template which was used in the three initiatives and which caused weaknesses.



Certain problems emerge from such a scheme: a) the description of the context is likely to be disconnected from the concrete determination of the initiative and from the determination of the reasoning behind the initiative; b) the general objectives are highly abstract (more or less linked to the context and the policies defined); c) the specific objective was defined via "reductio ad unum" of the overall objectives, which – necessarily – increased the degree of abstraction rather than reducing it, since a single goal "containing" several would have to be larger and more abstract than each of them and also potentially of their sum; alternately, the single goal might be an attempt to selectively summarize one or more of the general objectives, which would create more problems; d) it is impossible to identify "results" logically connected to such an abstract objective; these results, therefore, are defined on the basis of the activities identified, often simply translating the "product" of an activity or a set of activities into a (sometimes abstract, sometimes concrete) result, but one always completely reducible to the activities themselves.

Essentially, a gap is produced between the reasoning that underlies the objectives and the reasoning behind the results and activities. This gap is not likely to be bridged by the description of the "method" or the "strategy", which often has more to do with the way in which the activities will be carried out than the way in which the initiative as a whole will achieve the objectives.

It is no coincidence that in a project scheme of this kind the indicators for achievement of the specific objective and the expected results are the direct product of the activity.

There is a risk of producing a tautological scheme in which the results will necessarily be achieved if the planned activities are carried out, instead of a model or representation of the changes the initiative aims to promote. A scheme of this kind, in fact, makes it impossible to modify an initiative on the basis of the events and processes that it "encounters", and obviates any need for monitoring of the processes once begun, since what matters is only the "provision of services or realization of works". This is, in effect, as seen in the previous paragraphs, exactly what happened with the initiatives evaluated: no information was produced regarding real changes in the schools involved, but only about the "actions taken" and their direct results.

6.1. The formulation of individual initiatives

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

As mentioned, the project formulation of the initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education" was one of the weaknesses of the initiative itself. In particular, in the project document/request for financing:

- The **context** is defined very generally, and doesn't offer information about the situations actually involved in the initiative. Furthermore, the data presented refer to the entire educational system and a period rather far from the period in which the initiative was implemented (the most recent data are from 2006 and refer to the coverage of the educational system as a whole; nothing is known about the specific situations in which the initiative will be implemented). In defining the context, a lot of information is included which was not used in identifying and formulating the actions (for example, relating to the geographical distribution of schools or to school enrolment rates or even to the economic characteristics of the country).
- The agencies realizing the work and their counterparts are identified as part of the context; there is, therefore, no definition of "why" these parties are involved or how (in the end, some of them, such as CONAIPD and the health services, moreover, would not actually be involved in activities).
- An early definition of the **objectives** is given in the description of the project which, furthermore, precedes the definition of "problems to address", still as part of determining the context.
- The strategy – defined in the paragraph on the context – and the methodological framework are defined before the objectives are. In fact, some elements considered essential in the strategy for the project, such as "the national observatory on early school leaving and on good practices of educational inclusion" are lost in the definition of the activities and objectives.
- The intended results are not defined as a function of the problems identified or the strategies; the paragraph concerning intended results provides additional information to the definition of the context of the project.

- **The specific objective is broader and more abstract than the general objectives;** unsurprisingly, none of them offers a definition that can be evaluated or translated into "verifiable indicators".
- **The results correspond directly to the activities and do not involve changes in the conditions but the "realization of the activities themselves"** (e.g. "courses defined and tested" - "workshops to analyse curriculum possibilities proposed by UNIBO and a possible curriculum defined" + "search for an action to define the course" ... **as has been said, this tends to be a self-achieving mechanism** (if the activities are carried out, the results are achieved).
- The **external conditions and risks** were defined without connection to the actual potential for achieving the objectives; they were essentially identified in the emergence of political conditions that might hinder the realization of the activities. **And those things which eventually did hinder the activities were not among those identified.** It ought to have been possible to identify those risks, as there were "present" at the time the plan was formulated (i.e. the presence of different regulatory frameworks, which would have to be harmonized).
- Also the **factors of sustainability** are defined in a general way. Not only that, but most of the factors identified have to do not with sustainability, but with feasibility (e.g. the existence of coherent policies, socio-cultural aspects, the use of technology to carry out certain activities, etc.). **Sustainability is essentially not considered a problem** (nowhere is it pointed out that adopting a methodology for inclusive education requires additional resources). Furthermore, the factors of sustainability given include the definition of the way the initiative will consider **environmental and gender issues**. In both cases, specific strategies are not defined but it is simply indicated that the training activities will cover these topics. In both cases the result is that the initiative has not generated measurable or visible effects on environmental or gender dynamics.
- The **financial plan** was established for a two-year period, considering not only "cash" contributions but also the "in-kind" contribution from the University of Bologna and from MINED. In neither case was the method for calculating those values defined. In some cases, the calculation for the in-kind contribution appears quite high (e.g. 21,060 euro for the use of a server and a technician for the e-learning platform, plus an additional 20,000 in cash contributed by the University of Bologna and another 90,000 contributed by the DGDC, over a period of two years, which would imply that **the initiative's online platform — of which there is now no trace — cost 131,000 euro**).
- The management and coordination costs for the activities also seem very high (76,000 euro for activity coordination for a project with a total cost of around 570,000, accounting for over 13% of all costs, plus an additional 35,000 euro for the on-site organizational structure, 24,000 for a local assistant, and 43,200 euro for the organizational structure in Italy³⁴), **amounting to over 31% of the total cost and almost 45% of the contribution requested from the DGDC**).

In the Project Document (financial proposal) the rules and laws to which the various parties are subject were not taken into account (including, among others, those relating to sub-contracting, personnel contracting, etc.). **The failure to consider these rules made it impossible to employ the total financial contribution available and resulted in delays and setbacks that added an "unproductive", if not counterproductive, weight to the work of the various parties involved.**

Finally, still in relation to the financial plan, it should be noted that no rules were established regarding ownership of the assets acquired.

The financing proposal's flaws are reflected in the framework; in **particular, the results indicators correspond to the output of the activities**, and obviously **there is no mention of the conditions to make it possible to achieve specific results**. Conditions were, however, identified in relation to the activities (not normally part of the formulation of the logical framework; for the activities there should instead be a financial plan — absent in this case). **Given this background, it is unsurprising that there is no monitoring and evaluation system to collect data about the way the intervention has affected the context in which it is implemented.** The indications for monitoring and evaluation relate to a set of documents to be produced during the implementation of the initiative, but there is no information whatsoever on the phenomena and processes to be monitored, or on the characteristics required of the experts for the two evaluation missions called for.

³⁴ Curiously, these costs considered appropriate in Italy, taking into account the prior survey carried out by the proponent in cooperation with the local counterpart.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

The structure of the financing proposal for the second initiative is similar to that of the first, and presents similar flaws. In this case as well, the establishment of the context is separate from the establishment of the initiative's description. In this case the general objectives and the specific objective are defined tautologically (and with a logical short circuit). The former deal with a) testing the model and b) developing organizational ability; the latter concerns the adoption of the model through training (which in practice corresponds to a)) and the qualifications of the builders (which corresponds to b)). Remarkably, the general objectives already include the definition of the project's actions and the specific objective (of which there should be only one; here it is dual).

Given this background it is not surprising that the expected results are defined according to the components (in turn defined based on the type of activities that make them up) and not vice versa. Nor is it surprising that **as many as 7 results and some 38 different activities are identified, creating a structure that is unquestionably complex to manage and difficult to monitor**. In fact, it is easy to observe that the activities are defined in different ways: in some cases we see complex sets of activities and operations (for example, "training") and simpler operations in others (for example, "purchases of materials").

Other noteworthy elements include:

- For acquisition of goods and services, the relevant law is identified. However, it was not checked whether that law is consistent and compatible with the Italian and European regulations that provide the backbone of the initiative's funding.
- There is no analysis whatsoever of risks and conditions.
- As for elements of sustainability, it is merely mentioned that the initiative is consistent with the 2009-2014 Educational Development Plan, which is one of the priorities of the government's Five-Year Plan, and that the supporting materials produced in the context of the programme will be developed according to an "inclusive approach" (a term which is not defined) and that those materials will be collected by the Observatory on inclusion (which, as we have seen, has not actually been established). After offering some general guidelines on the use of information technology and the decision to intervene both in urban and rural areas (without, however, explaining why this constitutes a socio-cultural "element of sustainability"), it is specified that MINED "will, in the budgets of the selected schools, consider the resources needed for maintaining the infrastructure and human resources". **By which strategies such resources are to be made available and ensured (and further ensured to last beyond the duration of the initiative) is not defined in any way.**

Several problems can be identified in the formulation of the logical framework:

- a) There are definitions - quite generic - of the **indicators related to the general objectives**. In fact, even if the overall objectives were achieved (which would not be exactly logical given their abstract phrasing) it would be very difficult to demonstrate their connection with the "classic indicators of the education system" and with "indicators of the quality of learning" collected by national statistical sources and by UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, OECD and the World Bank. For the general objectives, the conditions are also identified (the fact that the government's five-year plan is to be implemented and that there is to be continuity in the reform).
- b) Indicators are also identified for the specific objectives, but they are not quantified. The objectively verifiable indicators are: the "availability" of a tested proposal (and this indicator could be an effective one) and the availability of MINED staff and facilities (and this indicator would obviously be rather difficult to measure without quantitative parameters). Once again, the conditions are essentially identified according to **political will**.
- c) For "results", the **indicators are simply defined by referencing the immediate "products" of the activities**. Nonetheless, in some cases quantitative parameters are avoided (and thus we have "number of participants", without any idea of when this number would be considered appropriate, or "level of participation" and "level of use", but without defining the conditions under which that level would be considered suitable. In this case, the conditions are more significant, but they concern events and processes that could be managed through specific actions (e.g. the level of interest of the parties involved or the fact that the teachers continue to work in MINED).

- d) For **infrastructure** results it is obviously simpler to identify the indicators, which are essentially the number of projects completed. A problem emerges in defining the conditions: the only conditions defined relate to the regularity of fund transfers, the availability of counterpart resources and the support of the schools involved. "Effective" conditions, that is, the presence of a regulatory system adequate for implementing the activity on time, was not even thought of.

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision"

The financing proposal for the third initiative was formulated following a similar scheme. Once again, therefore, problems emerge regarding the relationship between defining the context and strategies and determining the objectives and activities.

The specific objective is once again rather general, but could be redefined as: "to ensure an expansion of the range of good quality technical education in 12 departments, in order to increase overall economic productivity in the country, combat youth unemployment and modernize the agricultural and industrial sectors with a view to combating poverty." It would therefore be fairly simple to establish the indicators to evaluate whether it has been reached: expansion of courses offered; increase in overall economic productivity; decrease in unemployment; modernization of the agriculture and industry sectors; reduced poverty.

On the basis of the objective, it would also be possible to identify the strategy to adopt. However, in the financing proposal, this strategy was already defined in the previous pages (where the programme's objective was also actually revealed, in a less formalized way).

Once the objective is defined, the initiative's components and activities are defined immediately, followed by the expected results. These last are defined with quantitative parameters and they sometimes line up with the "product of the activities" (this is not true for component 1: expansion of education provided, with respect to which, however, the activities are not very specific: activity 1: definition of the needs of each school; activity 2: allocation of supplies).

These activities are generally less specifically defined than those of the second initiative (the four components of the initiative and the 11 activities identified are all described in a single page, totalling 36 lines, including titles and references). The generic formulation of the activities is continued in the formulation of the logical framework, where there are two indicators by which the quantitative parameters are defined; in any case, all the indicators deal only with the execution of activities, and **there are no indicators whatsoever for the specific objective and the results.**

A final element to point out concerning the third initiative is the fact that the Italian "contribution" in terms of knowledge and technical assistance this time is reduced to a donation, made directly by the Italian Cooperation, and earmarked for the expert missions for evaluation, communication and visibility (this component amounts to 50,000 euro, in an initiative totalling about 15,000,000 euros). It is unlikely that the amount allocated could actually be sufficient for both evaluation of the initiative and effective communication activities.

6.2. The design of the "programme" as a whole

Even viewing the initiatives together, project formulation seems to be a major weakness. In fact the projects were formulated by methods which fail to take advantage of previous experience. Moreover, while in the case of the first two initiatives there was continuity in the parties involved, making it possible — at least theoretically — to maintain a record of previously encountered problems and elements, this continuity ended with the third initiative (since there are no ties between MINED and Educaid or the University of Bologna).

If the three initiatives are viewed as a single process, it emerges that the quality of the formulation of the projects is somewhat irrelevant. In the case of the third initiative, the project document is extremely brief, barely more than a "project idea" or a "concept note" (aside from the introduction and the administrative part, just four pages are left for the entire description of the initiative, including the determination of objectives, activities, beneficiaries and strategy) and so one must wait for the real "plans" to be defined later. However, even in the case of the two previous initiatives of "support for the promotion and development of inclusive

education" and "support for the reform of the national education system", a series of modifications were made to the initial project documents during implementation, which radically changed their structure and contents.

This in itself would not be a problem; the changes in the realization of the activities and even the delays that arose actually allowed the initiatives to follow and better adapt to changes in the local educational system (certainly slower than the activities carried out under an initiative lasting 2 or 3 years could be). It is, however, is a problem when there are no adequate tools available to study the processes under way and monitor changes. In fact, for the initiatives subject to evaluation, this meant it was possible to evaluate impact in terms of "public policy" (although this is certainly a "spurious" impact, to which other actions unrelated to the initiatives also contributed), but impossible to effectively and adequately evaluate the impact and effectiveness on the actual operation of the educational system and the indirect beneficiaries of the initiatives: children, families and communities.

7. Visibility

7.1. *The visibility of the individual initiatives*

The initiative "support for the promotion and development of inclusive education in El Salvador"

Under the first initiative, visibility and communication were promoted through:

- The realization of a **final event** (closing ceremony);
- The production and distribution of **2,500 brochures** on the initiative (Cooperación e Inclusión Escolar. Proyecto "Apoyo a la Promoción y al Desarrollo de la Escuela Inclusiva en El Salvador") including a sheet about the initiative itself and a brief summary of the proposal for inclusive education (the main concepts, the educational dimension and the challenges). The brochure prominently features the logos of the University of Bologna, the Italian Cooperation and MINED;
- The production and distribution of **1,300 manuals on inclusive teaching methods**;
- The production and distribution, in August of **2014**, of a **book with the same title as the brochure**³⁵ and organized into the same three parts: (a) the project, (b) the University of Bologna's proposal on inclusive education and (c) the challenges of inclusive education. The book also contains photo documentation and a bibliography. The logos of MINED, the Italian Cooperation and the University of Bologna are on the back cover of the book;
- Publication on Educaid's website of the documentation on the various aspects of the initiative.

During the meetings held in El Salvador, all the participants from the Salvadoran government said they were familiar with the initiative. As expected, questionnaires — though primarily carried out in the schools involved in EITP initiatives — revealed that almost all of the teachers were aware of the initiative (even if they did not necessarily know the details). Of about 110 teachers surveyed, only one was not aware of the initiative.

The initiative "Support for reform of the national education system"

The second initiative considered definitely had high visibility as a government initiative. Not only are there murals, photographs, signs, symbols and writings about full-time inclusive education, in schools and even inside MINED, but several publications — some even available online — have also been produced on the subject of that approach, and they include the logo and the name of the government program. In addition, two international conferences were organized in 2012 and 2013.

The same cannot be said for the visibility of the Italian Cooperation. Although the direct beneficiaries of the initiative (i.e. the teachers who took part in training activities, and who have benefited from Educaid's technical assistance activities) are almost all aware of the fact that it involved the Italian Cooperation (at least in financing the activity), this awareness has not spread further. In fact, there are no indications in the schools, in MINED or in the publications to make it clear that the activities and works are carried out with Italian support.

³⁵ Cadin R., Guerra L., Taddei A., Cooperación e Inclusión Escolar, MINED, August 2014

In the documents produced during the project (e.g. Documento sistematizado sobre las experiencias desarrolladas en cada escuela piloto, Junio 2013; "Observatorio Nacional del Sistema Educativo", Enero 213) Educaid is sometimes listed among the authors, or its logo sometimes appears, but the Italian Cooperation is not mentioned, nor is its logo represented.

Notes about the initiative are present on the websites of both the DGDC³⁶ and Educaid³⁷, but to find them, it is necessary to "search" for the terms "Italian Cooperation" or "Educaid". Since the end of 2015, information has also been available on the page of the AICS website dedicated to San Salvador³⁸.

The already low visibility of Italy's contribution is further reduced by the presence of initiatives and publications from other international cooperation agencies (for example, USAID, which in 2005 had already worked with MINED to publish a guide to inclusive education which is still available online, UNICEF, whose logo is prominently displayed on the cover of the MINED document "Política de Educación Inclusiva" from December 2010, and the World Bank), in which the donor's involvement is particularly visible.

The initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision..."

It is not possible to evaluate communication and visibility for the third initiative. As already noted, in the financial proposal document, a donation was allocated to make it possible to carry out activities for the visibility of the initiative, but the amount seems very limited considering the needs that may present themselves. The figure is 50,000 euro and is also meant to cover external evaluation. It is worth remembering here that the financing proposal for the initiative "support for the reform..." called for more than 46,000 euro just to develop bulletins, posters and banners (A.3.6).

7.2. The visibility of the "programme" as a whole

Paradoxically, the visibility of the interventions seems to have gradually decreased from satisfactory visibility during the first initiative to "partial" visibility in the second and finally to the lack of a strategy for visibility in the third. In fact, none of the initiatives seems to offer a definite communication strategy; the first and second initiatives identify some tools, but none precisely identify the "targets" or the objectives, much less the content of the communication actions.

Consequently, the visibility of the three initiatives is limited, while the visibility of MINED and the programme for introducing "Full-time inclusive education" is much higher. The fact that other parties and other donors are involved in that programme and that they sometimes bring forth a concept of "inclusive education" that is different from the one proposed in the initiatives supported by the Italian Cooperation means that — as has been demonstrated in the focus groups conducted — there is some confusion about the meaning of the term "inclusive education".

It seems certain that the "inconstant" attention of the Italian Cooperation's offices to the initiatives contributed to their limited visibility as a whole and as a "strategic activity". This attention was certainly strong at first (during the implementation of the first initiative), then oscillated, and has become stronger again recently.

³⁶ <http://www.ambsansalvador.esteri.it/NR/ronlyres/3917272D-721E-481B-A938-57B14CA410DA/68769/Progetti.pdf> (sheet dated 2013)

³⁷ <http://www.educaid.it/progetti/rafforzando-la-scuola-inclusiva-tempo-pieno-salvador/>

³⁸ www.coopit-acc.org

Chapter 5 — Conclusions and recommendations

1. A synthetic look

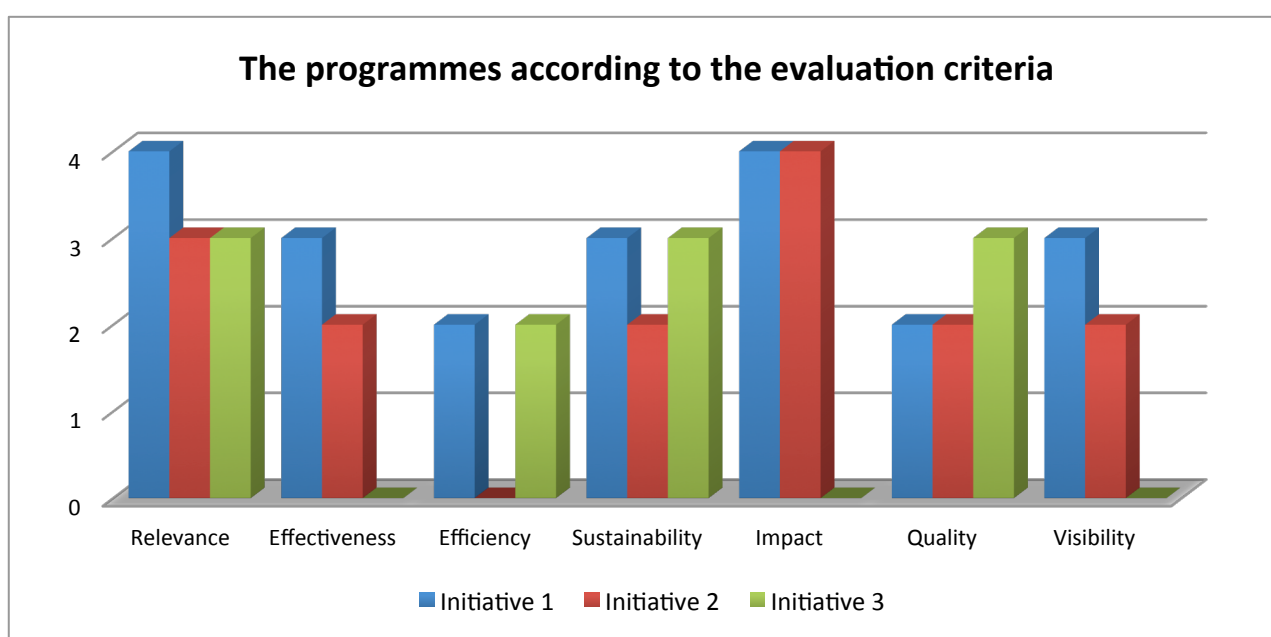
In the previous chapter, the three initiatives were analyzed analytically in terms of relevance, validity of the project design, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. The visibility of the initiatives was also considered. We can offer a summary analysis to facilitate understanding of the whole that would make it possible to quickly grasp a sense of how the initiatives went in terms of those criteria. We can use a simple indexing system that distinguish 4 levels of "performance":

- (4) Very satisfactory performance;
- (3) Generally satisfactory performance; some problems emerge but do not compromise the initiative's achievement of its goals and objectives
- (2) Not very satisfactory performance; the problems that exist compromise the ability to achieve some of the initiative's results and objectives
- (1) Completely unsatisfactory performance; the problems that exist seriously compromise the initiative.

These indices offer the following result

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Impact	Quality of the project	Visibility
Initiative 1 - Support for Inclusive Education	4	3	2	3	4	2	3
Initiative 2 - Support for Reform	3	2	2	2	4	2	2
Initiative 3 — Strengthening educational provision	3	N/A	2	3	N/A	3	N/A

The overall success of the projects can be more easily understood with a visual representation, as in the following diagram.



As we can see, the three initiatives have similar responses to the various criteria:

- satisfactory in relevance;
- problematic in effectiveness, although the final outcomes are relatively satisfactory;
- extremely problematic in efficiency, to the extent that the entire outcome of the initiatives is affected;
- problems in sustainability, which in certain cases compromised some important components of the initiatives (in any case, only one mechanism for sustainability is used, which in itself seems risky);
- satisfactory impact (where it can be evaluated);
- problems in the quality of the design, which is the root of some of the problems encountered;
- problematic in levels of visibility, although these vary.

Basically what emerges from the evaluation is that despite very high levels of relevance, **the initiatives suffered from design that was lacking** (in terms of both activities and the institutional and financial mechanisms) which often led to problems. In particular, it is worth pointing out the main shortcomings in the planning stage:

- the thinking underlying the project and the determination of the expected results (which made it difficult to notice certain problems in time to correct them);
- the identification of the parties involved (the lack of involvement of "supporting players", which could have made it possible to at least partly overcoming the issues of sustainability);
- the lack of consideration of practical issues related to implementation and institutional and legal mechanisms relating to the transfer/use of financial resources;
- the lack of consideration for sustainability issues (as if involving a public authority would solve the question automatically);
- the lack of attention to visibility and the complete lack of communication strategies.

2. Good practices and lessons learned

If we consider the first two initiatives, we can identify various sets of practices and lessons: the first set deals with inclusive education in itself (i.e. the numerous practices that were tested and trained in schools; these practices make up the contents of the aforementioned "Systematization document" published by Educaid as part of its collaboration with MINED). The second set relates to interventions in the education sector (including, for example, the use of a research-action approach and a training-technical assistance approach in the first and second initiatives, respectively). Lastly, the third set concerns the formulation/implementation of the initiatives of cooperation for development.

2.1. Good practices and lessons learned regarding inclusive education

During the first and second initiatives, good practices/lessons learned regarding "full-time inclusive education" were identified; these are described below.

- The necessity of **avoiding discontinuity in providing technical assistance**. Discontinuity produces confusion among stakeholders, problems in planning educational activities and problems relating to teacher rotation.
- The necessity of **defining the roles of the various parties involved** in introducing and experimenting with inclusive education, making it clear who has the tasks of promotion and development of EITP (i.e. methodological models), who handles educational support functions and who handles the identification and development of "specific practices". Otherwise, there is a risk that teaching assistants at various levels — national, departmental, schoolwide or programme-specific (such as those contracted by the organizations providing technical assistance) will "spread" different approaches that conflict with each other. It is also necessary here to clarify the role of the technical assistants "outside the education system" (like those provided by Educaid, for example), who may disagree with others involved in the introduction of inclusive education.
- The necessity of **preventing teaching assistants from taking prescriptive positions** toward teachers. Technical assistance should operate guided by an orientation and position of "guiding" and "supporting reflection", and not from orientations or positions oriented toward imposing new approaches.

- The necessity of an action to **"connect" the experimentation of schools working in the same territory**. Knowledge sharing has, in fact, been shown to be a fundamental factor in supporting the efforts of individual teachers and mobilizing school leaders. Teaching technical assistants can undertake the task of promoting and facilitating the "connection" and the exchange of knowledge and experience.
- The necessity of **actively involving school directors**. Beyond the commitment of the teachers, in all schools where the introduction of the new approach has been successful, there has been strong involvement and strong interest from the directors. The involvement of the directors is necessary because "inclusive schooling" is not founded solely on classroom activities and on the methodologies adopted by individual teachers, but on creating a suitable environment in the school (schedules, spaces, inter-class activities, exchange of knowledge and experience among teachers, etc.), and on building relationships with other entities, whether local, national or international (in some schools, for example, a strong enthusiasm for inclusive education has been achieved by organizing exchange visits and experiences with Costa Rican schools involved in similar initiatives).
- The necessity of recognizing the **centrality of collective learning processes** and the involvement of teachers as a "group", not individually. The new approach will not reach true adoption through the action of a single teacher, because it means not only adopting tools to help teachers and students relate to each other, but also adopting working methods dealing with the entire process of participation in educational activities. Thus, even potential mechanisms for rewards and incentives should not target individual teachers, but "groups" of teachers who work together and in a coordinated manner.
- The necessity of **integrating specific "full-time school" activities (laboratories, teaching of non-curricular topics, experimental activities, etc.) with the curricular activities**. Otherwise, attendance of afternoon activities is reduced, as is their effectiveness as tools for "inclusion in education". Integration involves not only the activities, but the teachers too. As observed by Educaid in the analysis of EITP pilot actions, many schools turn to teachers contracted ad hoc to create laboratories (which is also shown by the questionnaires, in which about 20% of teachers say they have experienced an increase in their working/teaching hours under EITP, while almost 90 adopted new teaching tools). If there is no real integration with internal teachers and with the curricular activities, assigning laboratory activities to "external" teachers is likely to result in a deconcentration of activities and a reduction of their influence (on the attractiveness the school, its ability to combat early school leaving and its ability to consider individual "educational needs").
- The necessity of **evaluating and considering the elements and factors supporting school activities, such as spaces, food and transport**. Experience from schools has pointed out that adopting full-time inclusive schooling does not depend only on the development of methodologies and the introduction of new activities (such as "laboratories"), but also on the availability of adequate spaces (most schools lack spaces for a canteen, kitchen, laboratories, etc.) and the involvement of third parties that can facilitate the construction of the minimum operating conditions for inclusive education (from municipalities to local development agencies, the churches in the area, businesses, etc.). This necessity, already observed in primary schools, will be even greater in middle and higher education. Here we must point out the **necessity of coordinating education-related actions and actions for infrastructure**. Education-related actions are likely to be useless (because it will be impossible to apply them) unless the infrastructure is upgraded. On the other hand, upgrades to infrastructure executed without, or too long before or after, the education-related actions is likely to have limited utility in the process of school change (during field visits, it was observed that in some schools the head teachers were only interested in the infrastructural actions, which would in any case allow access to new resources and improve available spaces, and had not actually committed to introducing new methodologies and an inclusive approach).
- A specific need that has clearly emerged in the initiatives has to do with the relationship between full-time inclusive education, the full-time dimension and the need to **identify mechanisms that make it actually possible to bring full-time into practice**. Beyond the adoption of new methodologies/curricula, the adoption of an inclusive education approach has often been made concrete in the launching of extra-curricular activities and the extension of "school-time" in the afternoon. However, when the schools lack canteens and cannot feed their pupils, it has often happened that only a few students are able to take advantage of the new activities and opportunities introduced. Thus a tool for "inclusion" can become one of "exclusion"; students with greater difficulties — such as those who don't have a family able to provide them with a meal outside the home — do not have access to opportunities only accessible to those who are better off. Therefore, for the model of "full-time inclusive education" to

work, **mechanisms to support school meals** must be begun. These mechanisms cannot realistically depend solely on government funding, but must be identified locally and, therefore, must be reinforced by activities of the schools' institutional capacity.

- An additional necessity observed during the evaluation has to do with relations **between schools and civil society**. Beyond the contribution that some civil society organizations can make in renewing education in terms of methodology and technical assistance, an important role can be played by local organizations, including the most informal ones, in actively supporting the adoption of innovations, offering opportunities, organizing local resources in support of inclusive education (consider, for example, that one of the "impacts" lacking in the initiatives was — according to teachers interviewed — improving care and support for pupils "outside school", a function that in many places is carried precisely by civil society organizations — even small or very small ones — and which is indispensable if they want to actually achieve reduced social exclusion for minors.
- The possibility of using **"extracurricular" activities in full-time inclusive education as opportunities to involve other parties working in the area**. In at least one school, parents and local artisans played a fundamental role in the management and implementation of laboratories, which made it possible to solve some problems related to the lack of resources to pay external teachers, thus maintaining continuity in the laboratory activities. The involvement of external stakeholders has also been observed to be of great importance in schools located in high-risk areas (for example, the one in Distretto Italia, built with the contribution of the Italian Cooperation after the 2001 earthquake). Support from external stakeholders actually tends to produce a protective barrier around the schools and those involved in their operation, protecting them from the pressures of organized crime and the *maras*. Thus, the involvement of stakeholders in the local community should be seen as a real necessity and as an essential element of the inclusive education model.

2.2. Good practices and lessons learned regarding interventions in education

As previously mentioned, the second set of good practices and lessons learned concerns measures for developing education. In this context, in fact, the two initiatives involving MINED and the University of Bologna made it possible to successfully try out two tools for promoting innovation:

- **The first consisted of the "research-action" methodologies and approach**. Rather than introducing a model built in advance (thereby effecting a mere transfer of skills and knowledge through training or dissemination of pre-defined manuals) or adopting a prescriptive model (perhaps supporting MINED in creating standards, regulations, programmes, management methods, etc., to be imposed on schools in a standardized manner), what was tested was the possibility of looking within "locally-generated" practices to identify the fundamental features of a set of models adapted to Salvadoran schools. In this process of "generating" knowledge, the various parties involved not only assumed the role of "beneficiaries" of the actions, but also took part in identifying and evaluating practices and then in applying them. It should be emphasized here that the research-action model implemented is unlike older research-action models which are not geared toward the production of effective (valid and scientific) "knowledge", but merely toward generating "awareness" among the parties involved (in fact reproducing a pedagogical approach, where professional researchers assume — sometimes surreptitiously — the role of teachers, while the other parties involved play the role of learners). It is important to point out how adopting an effective "research-action" approach also requires overcoming the obstacles related to the difference in levels of knowledge and of "power" among the various parties involved, obstacles encountered in any action of participatory research/consultation. As seen in the previous paragraph, the obstacle of assistants assuming a prescriptive approach should be avoided.
- The second is the adoption of a **methodology based on integrating training, technical assistance and supporting actions**. In this case, the effort applied is the effort of overcoming the naive conceptions about education and skill-building, recognizing, on the one hand, that the construction of the necessary capacity for innovation is multi-faceted (with dimensions that are individual, collective, institutional, connected to the relationships between the parties and/or within a complex context) and, on the other hand, how this process requires a long period of time, the interaction between different types of "cognitive systems" (representations, motivations, knowledge, information, abilities, etc.), interaction between different parties and therefore a diverse set of tools, including the creation of training courses, seminars and workshops, experimental activities, extended follow-up and assistance in managing

experimental initiatives, communication, etc. The adoption of such a method has not been without stumbling blocks. In particular, in the course of the initiatives, obstacles have had to be overcome relating to the discontinuity of the activities, the presence of differing perspectives and points of view and the lack of coordination of the actions and "timing" of the various parties involved. The adoption of such a method was possible because of the University of Bologna's involvement "as an institution", which made it possible to mobilize a number of university professors and researchers as well as the University's own resources. The adoption of an "integrated" approach would have been more difficult if the cooperation had only involved a teacher or a small group of teachers without the strategic commitment of a university institution.

It is precisely in connection with these two "good practices" that some key lessons that emerged with regard to the implementation of the initiatives can be identified. In particular these are:

- a) The **need for adequate systems for knowledge management, for monitoring and for evaluation.** Although some monitoring missions were carried out, within the implementation of the initiatives there was a lack of a functioning mechanism for continuous monitoring to make it possible to record and take account of occurrences both "system-wide" and in individual schools or individual experiments. This very knowledge that has been produced in each case has rarely generated information that can be used to improve management or to formalize the various models tested (even the systematization document, prepared by Educaid and previously mentioned several times, is more like a "mine" to exploit than a formalized body of knowledge to be used: the experiences of the 22 schools on which the report is based are actually still "case studies"; there is no concise treatment to identify and make use of the elements that come out of the set of experiences).
- b) The **need for continuity in training, reflection and support activities.** In fact, the interruption both initiatives suffered in the activities of training, reflection and support have reduced the activities' effectiveness, related to changes in the "places" and "people" during periods of discontinuity, to the fact that in many cases the managers and those involved in the actions changed and to the fact that confusion was created — and some knowledge was actually lost — about the concepts and knowledge developed out of the experimentation conducted.
- c) **Need for more time and for many coordinated actions that follow one after the other.** As has been demonstrated, the introduction of "inclusive education" was not simply an initiative. On the contrary, the processes of innovation required by the development of such an educational model are still ongoing and continue to require follow-up and assistance, as well as actions at different levels: from primary schools to secondary schools, to the organization of ministry, to the creation of training courses in universities and for teachers or the creation of local networks. In this sense, for the realization of projects for innovation and support in the educational system, it might be useful to adopt planning methods based on integrating different "projects".
- d) Yet another need is related to **communication and raising awareness, not only aimed at teachers and those directly involved in their educational, but also at external stakeholders.** This has already been said about the importance of local stakeholders, especially in areas of high social risk. Communication with the various stakeholders must function not only to make it possible for them to be employed in supporting actions (consider, for example, the importance of enterprises in vocational training and "experiential learning"), but also to promote the recognition of the changes taking place (crucial to make school more attractive, especially to individuals in whose lives school has to compete with other activities, such as earning income, and/or require an investment of resources often perceived as excessive, as is common in rural areas).
- e) We have already mentioned the need for civil society to be more deeply involved in initiatives to support inclusive education. This need also exists with regard to other initiatives in the education sector. Civil society organizations at various levels can play a number of roles, from participation in identifying and formulating initiatives (which happened only in a very limited way in the initiatives considered in this evaluation), in carrying out supporting actions (technical assistance, activities to support and reinforce, activities in the local territory) and in monitoring and evaluation.
- f) A final necessity is coordination, not only between the different parties involved in each "initiative", but between the various parties working in the sector. It is not simply a question of coordinating the actions from an organizational point of view, so as to avoid overlaps and conflicts in the use of resources, but also and above all **coordinating the methodological and strategic aspects, as well as the "adopted**

language". As noted in the visits to schools and focus groups carried out during the evaluation, the adoption of different and uncoordinated methodologies and strategies and the unwitting use of different languages (perhaps with different interpretations of the same terms or the same concepts) can easily result in conflicts, misunderstandings and confusion.

2.3. Good practices and lessons learned regarding initiatives of cooperation for development

The analysis of the three initiatives also made it possible to identify certain practices and lessons dealing with the formulation and management of initiatives for cooperation, in a non-sectoral context.

- The first lesson concerns the possibility and the advantages of adopting an approach oriented toward "supporting processes already under way" rather than toward "starting" or "introducing" new processes. As was demonstrated in the case of inclusive education — the introduction of which, as of the launch of the first initiative, was already the subject of other initiatives promoted by other donors and by some of MINED's partners — supporting an ongoing process has ensured that the initiatives were more relevant and more effective and had a greater impact, in spite of poor management. Supporting ongoing processes also implies the possibility to leverage resources, motivations and actions of multiple parties.
- A second lesson deals with innovation as the subject of cooperation, to avoid committing resources to simply provide services or extend access. While in the latter two cases the sustainability of the cooperation actions is particularly problematic (especially considering the weakness of public administration in "managing" works and services), in the first case the sustainability can be traced to a number of elements which may even be immaterial and can be created through the actions carried out. In the initiatives evaluated, an important factor of "success" was a question of assuming — although not always explicitly — a goal of innovation, looking to the approaches and the definition of "problems" and the related strategies of solutions, rather than simply the realization of actions of "improvement/development of services". Even with initiatives characterized by design problems and difficulties in implementation of the planned actions, it was possible to achieve major impact, in particular by contributing to defining policies and, therefore, to the ways various parties use resources. In the case of initiatives of cooperation for development (and policies for development) affecting the "cognitive dimension", i.e. the representations and interpretations of reality, the formalization of problems, the identification of standard approaches, usually makes it possible to create longer-lasting impacts than would be reached by an attempt to directly "intervene" in the situation.
- A third lesson concerns the possibility of switching from a "project" approach to a "programme" approach. As seen in the analysis of the three measures concerned, their performance appears better if they are viewed as a whole. Several factors affect this:
 - an effect of cumulative of results;
 - an effect of the timing of the "intervention" being adapted to the timing of the public organizations responsible for providing the services;
 - an effect of growing effectiveness and learning within the action itself;
 - an effect of progressive construction of the conditions of sustainability;
 - an growing effect of "leverage" on policies and other parties working in the sector/country.

Considering this, the shift from a "project approach" (in which initiatives are identified individually on the basis of a defined set of resources, a relatively short period of time, the involvement of a given set of participants, etc., with the aim of achieving a specific objective and certain specific results) to a "programme approach" (in which the focus is on broader objectives, to be achieved over a longer time, through a set of related actions, aimed at achieving different results, etc.) is an opportunity to improve the efficiency, the impact and the sustainability of cooperation initiatives.

- The need for a **revision of the planning methodology and approach.** As noted, somewhat inadequate planning was the source of numerous difficulties that the initiatives had to face. In particular, a certain lack of logical specificity led to difficulties in monitoring and assessment during the process and in defining a strategic management approach. Indeed, the approach used in the projects, instead of gradually transitioning from the general (overall project) to the specific ("expected results") was based on the definition of a "specific objective" which was more abstract than the "general objectives" and then a jump between the specific objective and the intended results as a product of the activities. As also shown by international practices, we should try to return to a focus on results, understood not as a

"product of the activities" (which involves what we might call a tautological approach to planning), but as "changes in the situation addressed, necessary to achieve the specific objective(s)". Thus it would also be important to redefine and re-evaluate the logical framework of the initiatives, defining a basic line of reference in terms of expected changes and identifying indicators for changes in the situation for the expected results, and avoid using the products of the planned activities as output indicators.

- An important lesson that emerges from the evaluation is the need to create harmony among diverse regulatory frameworks in cooperative projects. Especially in the case of the second initiative examined in the cooperative project, the lack of harmony between the regulatory systems in place in El Salvador and those of the Italian Cooperation resulted in a significant delay and partially compromised the effectiveness of the initiative itself. An analysis of legal requirements connected with the implementation of the initiatives and the formulation of agreements for the rules to be applied is an essential element in the process of negotiating and financing the initiatives. Analysis of the requirements and whether the legal conditions for regular implementation of the planned activities are actually met should be essential elements in both the formulation of the logical framework (conditions) and in the formulation (risks and assumptions) and in ex-ante evaluation of the cooperative initiatives.

3. An unresolved issue: participation by children in developing cooperative initiatives

As already discussed in the section on methodology, during the evaluation of the initiatives it was necessary to address the issue of the participation of minors (and, in particular, children) in cooperative initiatives and in evaluating them. In fact, to formulate the inception report for the evaluation, the possibility of "involving" the ultimate beneficiaries — namely, children — in the evaluation itself, was discussed, as was the fact that "consultation" with children who are the beneficiaries of the cooperation's actions is called for in several documents on initiatives for education and the rights of minors, both Italian and international.

Given the time and resources available for this evaluation and the methodological difficulties of direct consultation with children, the decision was made to adopt alternative strategies. However, it is worth pointing out that, even in the identification, formulation and implementation of the initiatives evaluated, there is no evidence that direct consultation of the "final beneficiaries" of the activities was used.

Essentially, there is still doubt over the identification of methods for consultation with the final beneficiaries of the interventions involving children and to some extent also teens. These methods would have to be effective, feasible within the context of relatively brief studies (as evaluations necessarily are) and respectful of the rights of minors. Therefore, experiences relevant to this issue should be identified and evaluated, and standards and possible methods for action should be defined.

4. Indicators for evaluation and monitoring of inclusive education projects

The formulation of indicators for evaluation and monitoring of inclusive education projects has been given attention during the evaluation of the three initiatives in El Salvador. During the evaluation, indicators to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, planning quality and visibility of the initiatives were formulated and put to the test.

On the basis of the experience, it is also possible to identify some elements useful to integrate the indicators set out in the "analysis and evaluation sheet", defined by the Work Group "Inclusive Education" of the Italian Cooperation's Disability Action Plan, in the formulation of the guidelines on "inclusive education of persons with disabilities and cooperation for development".

This sheet allows calls for four areas of analysis to be considered during the formulation of the project proposal and the implementation of the project and upon completion:

- The political dimension (considered a "criterion")
- The cultural dimension (considered a "criterion")
- The operational dimension (considered a "criterion")
- Partnerships and stakeholder involvement

Certain aspects have been noted as missing from the evaluation carried out. These aspects could be added:

- Processes and dynamics in which local stakeholders are involved;
- The processes and dynamics of social, economic and political participation that involve minors (and more generally those meant to benefit from the initiatives);
- The logic behind the planning (how the objectives, results and activities are logically connected).

Essentially, the "analysis and evaluation sheet" is formulated in a way that lends it to evaluation of the presence of specific elements in the initiatives, but may not be able to assess how effectively the initiative considered interacts with reality (and with local entities), nor to what extent the initiative is built logically and not simply through a process of adding or backing up actions or features. In essence, the "sheet" risks looking at what is "supplied" and not being able to assess the relationship between "supply" and "demand" nor the internal consistency of the supply itself.

5. Recommendations

5.1. *Recommendations for the formulation of new cooperation initiatives*

Starting by evaluating the initiatives and identifying lessons learned, it is possible to summarily formulate the following recommendations, addressed primarily to the relevant offices of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, regarding the formulation of new cooperation initiatives:

- a) Adopt an **approach focused on the programme** or sector, avoid identifying initiatives outside of defined programs and define programmes/policies that integrate several initiatives all focused on a single set of objectives.
- b) Correct the approach to **planning**, by adopting international standards, placing greater focus on the internal logic of the initiatives, improving risk analysis, and by adopting an approach founded on the identification of specific objectives and on the formulation of "expected results" that deal with changes in the real situation, not the planned activities. It also appears to be important to pay attention to the adequacy and consistency of the financial plans, promoting balance between the components, reduced overall operating expenses and the allocation of adequate resources for knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation, communication and visibility.
- c) Include resources for **monitoring** and **evaluation**, and insist that the methods by which monitoring and evaluation will be carried out, which may affect the management of the initiatives, be established during the planning phase.
- d) Identify and resolve the **institutional and legal pre-conditions** necessary for implementation of the initiatives during the planning and inter-government agreement phases, so that problems that could cause the activities to be suspended or abandoned will not be left to overcome later.
- e) Ensure that the initiatives are given constant **support** during implementation — technical support, oversight and political support. This is particularly a question of avoiding intermittent "presence" or "support", which may result in a reduction of the Italian Cooperation's influence on the initiatives, with effects such as changes in the initiatives (changes in the actual objectives), conflict between the parties involved and limited effectiveness of the cooperation initiatives as foreign policy tools.
- f) Introduce measures for **knowledge management** which would make it possible to identify and exploit the innovative practices identified in the initiatives and to encourage initiatives that mutually support each other, and synergies where results increase and are cumulative.
- g) Promote greater and improved **coordination** with other donors in the sectors covered by the intervention in order to harmonize approaches and activities and/or, if this is not possible, to cope with existing differences, so as to avoid situations of conflict or overlaps between cooperation initiatives.
- h) Promote uninterrupted **communication**, based on a defined strategy that identifies the targets, content and tools.

5.2. Recommendations for the management of the initiative of support for reform of the national education system

For the initiative to support reform of the national education system, which is already in an advanced stage of implementation, it is possible to formulate some recommendations which mainly regard MINED, but should also involve the Italian Cooperation, the University of Bologna and Educaid.

- a) Improve the definition of the roles and functions that the various parties (MINED, Educaid, departments and schools, etc.) play and the relationships between them, to better clarify the distinction between the roles and activities of the technical teaching assistants at the various levels.
- b) Improve communication, especially in terms of Italian Cooperation's visibility.
- c) Improve the system for monitoring and evaluation. Make the Observatory's work effective for inclusive education. Make the task of collecting and processing information about the processes of change under way in schools a systematic one. Switch from primarily administration-focused and "supply"-based attention to attention to the process of adoption of the inclusive education approach and to the transformations that that approach provokes in the real situation.
- d) Improve the mechanisms for sharing knowledge and experiences among those involved in the intervention, between teachers and head teachers, between those working in the schools and those in the local community.
- e) Increase the involvement of civil society organizations in supporting the actions under way (including through monitoring and evaluation functions). Greater civil society participation should be encouraged (including organizations of persons with disabilities) as a standard practised in all schools.
- f) Harmonize "inclusive education" approaches. Reduce the gap between the definition of this approach used in the Italian Cooperation initiatives and the definition used by other donors (in particular, by the World Bank and USAID).

5.3. Recommendations for the launch of the initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision in order to improve productivity in 12 departments within the country".

For the initiative "Enhancing middle- and higher-level educational provision in order to improve productivity in 12 departments within the country", which is still at the start-up stage, the recommendations concern the possibility of building on previous experiences. Here too, the recommendations concern, "together", both MINED — which will be directly involved in the management of the initiative — and the Italian Cooperation, which has a minor role.

- a) Considering the limitations of the "financing proposal" and the time that has passed since the "operational plan" was formulated, there should be an action for updating and operational planning at the launch of the activities, which should re-examine and better define the objectives, results and actions and the relationships between them. An important element to be defined in this context should be a plan for monitoring and evaluation, including an adequate definition of the indicators for evaluation of the expected results (which must not be the simple product of the actions).
- b) Considering the limited consultation when the initiative was formulated, initiate an action to consult and involve relevant parties in the actions (including civil society organizations, youth organizations, trade unions and business organizations) and define ways to effectively involve them during implementation of the initiative. Forms of involvement in the initiative should be provided both centrally and at the local level, where it is an indispensable tool to ensure the initiative's ability to continue as a supporting part of changes in the labour market and production activities.
- c) Coordinate the planning of infrastructure activities with education-related activities, to avoid recreating the split between the two that negatively impacted the initiative for support for reform of the national education system.
- d) Coordinate the actions stipulated in the framework of the initiative with those provided for in the support programmes for education and vocational training supported by the World Bank and USAID, encouraging a common approach to be defined and put into use.

- e) Considering, the limited resources currently available, identify new resources to support evaluation (external assessment) and communication/visibility, and more generally the participation of the Italian Cooperation in the initiative.
- f) Formulate strategies and communication methods that allow for adequate visibility to the initiative and the Italian contribution, as well as greater involvement of all the various parties concerned: MINED and other ministries (including the labour ministry), school teachers and head teachers, students and families, youth organizations, trade unions and employers' organizations, local development agencies, donors and specialized entities.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE



MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI E DELLA COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE

DIREZIONE GENERALE PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO

*Ufficio IX
Sezione Valutazione*

**TERMINI DI RIFERIMENTO
PER LA VALUTAZIONE DELLE INIZIATIVE
A SOSTEGNO DEL SISTEMA EDUCATIVO
EL SALVADOR**

MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI E DELLA COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE

DIREZIONE GENERALE PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO



“Sostegno alla promozione e allo sviluppo della scuola inclusiva in El Salvador” - AID N. 9227 –Art.18

PAESE BENEFICIARIO:	EL SALVADOR
LINGUA DEL PROGETTO:	Italiano, Spagnolo
ENTE PROPONENTE:	Università degli Studi di Bologna – Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione
CONTROPARTE:	MINED (Ministero dell’Educazione salvadoregno)
DURATA:	24mesi
BUDGET:	EURO 570.200,00
A CARICO DELLA DGCS:	EURO 399.140,00 (Art. 18 L. 49/87)
A CARICO DI UNIBO:	EURO 116.060,00
A CARICODELMINED:	EURO 55.000,00

“Appoggio alla riforma del sistema educativo nazionale (Potenziando la scuola inclusiva a tempo pieno in El Salvador)” AID N. 9542 – Art.15

PAESE BENEFICIARIO:	EL SALVADOR
LINGUA DEL PROGETTO:	Italiano, Spagnolo
ENTE ESECUTORE:	MINED (Ministero dell’Educazione salvadoregno)
DURATA:	36 mesi
BUDGET:	EURO 3.808.985,38
A CARICO DELLA DGCS:	EURO 3.808.985,38 (ex Art. 15 L.49/87)

“Rafforzamento dell’offerta educativa di livello medio-superiore per migliorare la produttività in 12 Dipartimenti del Paese” – AID N. 9929 – Credito d’Aiuto

PAESE BENEFICIARIO:	El Salvador
LINGUA DEL PROGETTO:	Italiano, Spagnolo
ENTE ESECUTORE:	MINED (Ministero dell’Educazione salvadoregno)
DURATA:	36 mesi
BUDGET:	EURO 15.000.000,00 (a credito d’aiuto)
	EURO 50.000,00 (fondo esperti DGCS a dono)

Premessa

Nel corso dell'ultimo decennio la Cooperazione italiana ha assunto un impegno maggiore a favore della promozione e della tutela dei diritti dell'infanzia e dell'adolescenza, sostenendo e realizzando una serie di iniziative multidisciplinari volte alla promozione dell'educazione di base attraverso l'accesso ai percorsi formativi, il diritto allo studio e il miglioramento dello status sociale del minore di età. Coerentemente con le Linee Guida della Cooperazione Italiana, il settore dell'istruzione rappresenta uno tra i settori prioritari d'intervento e l'America Centrale è tra le aree prioritarie (El Salvador e Guatemala) della Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo, in particolar modo per i bassi indici di sviluppo, la presenza del narcotraffico e l'aspra conflittualità sociale.

Tutti questi fattori si ripercuotono sulle condizioni di vita dei minori che, numerosissimi e in assenza di prospettive, aderiscono alle bande giovanili. Nel caso specifico del Salvador, la Cooperazione italiana ha identificato nella scuola inclusiva uno strumento utile per prevenire la violenza giovanile e il coinvolgimento dei giovani nelle organizzazioni criminali.

Il sostegno all'educazione inclusiva è finalizzato alla creazione di condizioni istituzionali, pedagogiche e infrastrutturali che favoriscano la partecipazione alla vita economica, culturale, sociale e politica della comunità da parte dei bambini e delle bambine a grave rischio di emarginazione sociale determinata da condizioni di povertà e da discriminazioni di natura socio- culturale e fisica (disabilità psicologiche, fisiche e sociali).

I processi di inclusione coinvolgono l'intera comunità, le famiglie, le associazioni, i servizi sociali e sanitari, nonché le istituzioni locali. L'inclusione si realizza a partire dall'accoglienza nella scuola di tutti, anche dei bambini con bisogni educativi speciali.

1. "Sostegno alla promozione e allo sviluppo della scuola inclusiva in El Salvador" - Art.18 – Valutazione finale

L'iniziativa si realizza sulla base di una partnership interistituzionale tra la Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università di Bologna, promotrice dell'intervento, e il Ministero dell'Educazione Salvadoregno(MINED).

La proposta di finanziamento è stata approvata in data 9 dicembre 2008 al fine di sostenere e promuovere un modello di scuola inclusiva in El Salvador per aumentare gli elementi che favoriscono la lotta all'esclusione sociale, attraverso la trasformazione di scuole "regolari" (pilota) in centri educativi inclusivi, distribuiti nei 14 Dipartimenti amministrativi del Salvador; attraverso la formazione e riqualificazione del personale docente interno, dei dirigenti e dei funzionari tecnici del MINED impegnati nell'implementazione di politiche educative inclusive a livello nazionale. Gli obiettivi generali dell'iniziativa sono: a) contribuire al miglioramento del livello formativo delle figure docenti nel campo dell'educazione in generale e di quella inclusiva in particolare; b) contribuire ad una maggiore sensibilizzazione delle istituzioni preposte al sistema educativo salvadoregno nonché all'opinione pubblica del Paese sulle tematiche dell'educazione scolastica volte a favorire l'inclusione sociale; c) favorire l'accesso ai servizi educativi di base da parte della popolazione minorile disabile e socialmente esclusa.

L'obiettivo specifico dell'iniziativa è quello di contribuire ad un significativo e durevole incremento dell'offerta educativa a favore della popolazione minorile disabile e con svantaggio e vulnerabilità sociale in El Salvador in termini quantitativi e qualitativi.

Le attività previste dall'iniziativa sono:

- la costituzione di un Osservatorio nazionale sulla rilevazione di "buone pratiche" educative nel sistema scolastico del Paese;
- l'organizzazione di un Convegno Internazionale, che consenta il confronto della realtà educativa salvadoregna con quella dei Paesi dell'area centro e latinoamericana;
- la definizione e sperimentazione di un percorso formativo per insegnanti specializzati in educazione inclusiva,
- la definizione e sperimentazione di un percorso formativo per il "sostegno diffuso" per minori con bisogni speciali nelle classi ordinarie,

- la formazione degli insegnanti delle scuole speciali e dei dirigenti scolastici,
- la formazione tecnica del personale del MINED per l'elaborazione di un modello di scuola inclusiva.

I beneficiari dell'iniziativa sono: 105 funzionari del MINED, i dirigenti scolastici, 14 consulenti pedagogici, gli insegnanti, 3.500 studenti e i loro familiari. I beneficiari indiretti sono gli studenti e i docenti che vedranno applicare un modello scolastico inclusivo in grado di rispondere i bisogni speciali di tutti, al fine di rendere esigibile il diritto di accesso alle scuole indipendentemente dalle diversità psichiche, fisiche e socio-economico-culturali.

L'iniziativa ha avuto inizio in data 15/10/2009 e a seguito di richiesta di proroga da parte dell'Università di Bologna, autorizzata dalla DGCS con la previsione di chiusura per il 31 agosto 2014. Il progetto, invece, si è chiuso formalmente nel dicembre 2013 con un residuo finanziario.

2. “Appoggio alla riforma del sistema educativo nazionale (Potenziando la scuola inclusiva a tempo pieno in El Salvador)” - Art.15 – Valutazione in itinere

Il progetto trae origine da una formale richiesta da parte del Ministero dell'Educazione salvadoregno (MINED) alla Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo al fine di contribuire al processo di diffusione del modello di scuola inclusiva su scala nazionale attraverso la formulazione, sperimentazione e validazione di un sistema di modelli di scuola a tempo pieno. La nuova politica educativa del governo salvadoregno (2009-2014) prevede la realizzazione di un sistema educativo centrato sulla persona umana, che contribuisca alla promozione della cultura e che sia sensibile nei riguardi delle fasce della popolazione minorile che si trovano in condizioni di marginalità ed esclusione (circa il 70% della popolazione tra 0-30 anni). A tal proposito, si segnala il *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Educativo 2009-2014*, presentato dal Governo di El Salvador per la riforma del settore educativo, che individua nell'educazione inclusiva lo strumento principale per favorire l'accesso e la permanenza nel sistema educativo nazionale ed offrire un prezioso contributo al fine di prevenire la violenza giovanile, il coinvolgimento di giovani nella criminalità organizzata e la marginalità sociale.

Gli obiettivi generali dell'iniziativa sono: a) contribuire allo sviluppo del sistema educativo nazionale salvadoregno a livello di scuola primaria attraverso la sperimentazione di un modello pedagogico cosiddetto della “*escuela a tiempo pleno*”; b) contribuire allo sviluppo delle capacità organizzative e programmatiche dell'istituzione partner (MINED) attraverso la formazione delle risorse umane coinvolte nella realizzazione dell'iniziativa.

L'obiettivo specifico è quello di contribuire all'adozione da parte del sistema educativo salvadoregno di una pedagogia innovativa, attraverso la definizione, la sperimentazione e la validazione di un sistema organico e sostenibile di modelli di scuola inclusiva a tempo pieno, che includa varie forme di educazione informale ed extra curriculare, qualificando la formazione delle risorse umane e l'organizzazione istituzionale, contribuendo ad un incremento degli *standard* dell'edilizia scolastica coerentemente all'applicazione di tali modelli.

L'iniziativa prevede una realizzazione per componenti (pedagogica e infrastrutturale), alle quali fanno riferimento una serie di attività. Relativamente alla componente pedagogica, l'iniziativa si focalizza sull'inclusione scolastica mediante la definizione di un sistema di modelli di scuola a tempo pieno da sperimentare all'interno delle scuole selezionate e il miglioramento delle competenze e delle conoscenze delle risorse umane che operano nel sistema educativo. Inoltre, l'iniziativa interviene al fine di contribuire all'aumento e miglioramento dei servizi offerti dall'Osservatorio nazionale sull'Inclusione Educativa e i tre centri di formazione professionale dei docenti. Relativamente alla componente infrastrutturale, l'iniziativa interviene sul miglioramento dell'accessibilità delle scuole selezionate e l'adeguamento degli spazi delle strutture scolastiche dedicati alla realizzazione delle attività del modello di scuola a tempo pieno. Inoltre, il progetto si focalizza sul miglioramento delle infrastrutture e delle dotazioni dei Centri di Formazione Professionale dei docenti.

I beneficiari dell'intervento sono gli alunni che usufruiscono direttamente delle attività previste, ma anche tutti gli alunni dei centri (60.000 circa) sono considerati beneficiari indiretti delle nuove attività scolastiche, delle pratiche pedagogiche e dell'adeguamento delle infrastrutture; i docenti, i 470 assistenti pedagogici, di gestione e il personale tecnico, oltre ai tecnici del MINED, ei professori universitari (formatori di docenti). Infine, l'iniziativa include come beneficiari diretti delle attività di sensibilizzazione e formazione, le famiglie che costituiscono l'organismo di amministrazione scolastica. L'iniziativa è stata approvata con delibera n. 143 dal Comitato

Direzionale della DGCS nel novembre 2010, mentre l'Accordo bilaterale per la realizzazione del programma è stato sottoscritto il 28 gennaio 2011.

3. “Rafforzamento dell’Offerta Educativa di livello medio-superiore per migliorare la produttività in 12 Dipartimenti del Paese”- Credito d’aiuto – Valutazione in itinere

L’iniziativa risponde ad una esplicita richiesta del Ministero dell’Educazione salvadoregno (MINED) in applicazione della politica di riforma del sistema educativo nazionale. La strategia della presente iniziativa è coerente con il *Plan Quinquennal 2010/2014* del Governo Salvadoregno in tema di educazione. Il MINED intende estendere l’offerta formativa del programma di riforma della scuola a livello medio-superiore nazionale, parte integrante del Piano Educativo Nazionale denominato “*Vamos a la Escuela*”, rivolgendosi ai ragazzi compresi tra i 15-19 anni e proponendo un’offerta formativa allo scopo di creare dei profili professionali potenzialmente richiesti dal locale mercato di lavoro per un inserimento più efficace nel mondo lavorativo, anche nell’ottica di prevenire il fenomeno della violenza giovanile. Coerentemente con quanto descritto, l’iniziativa intende accrescere il volume dell’offerta formativa qualitativamente e quantitativamente, investendo nel potenziamento di cinquanta centri di formazione specializzati e nel miglioramento qualitativo della formazione tecnica dei giovani beneficiari grazie ad un’accresciuta capacità tecnica del personale docente nelle sue funzioni di insegnamento.

Gli obiettivi generali dell’iniziativa sono i seguenti: a) contribuire allo sviluppo del sistema educativo nazionale salvadoregno a livello di scuola superiore attraverso il rafforzamento della formazione tecnica finalizzata all’inserimento dei giovani beneficiari nel mondo del lavoro con una particolare attenzione alle pari opportunità; b) contribuire a prevenire e a ridurre i fenomeni di marginalità sociale dei giovani salvadoregni contrastando l’affiliazione alle bande giovanili, conosciute come *maras*, e altre forme di criminalità e di devianza giovanile; c) formare i docenti per aumentare qualitativamente l’offerta educativa; d) riabilitare l’infrastruttura scolastica dotandola degli strumenti necessari per i laboratori tecnici; e) dotare gli studenti meno abbienti di borse di studio a copertura dei costi di vitto, alloggio e trasporti al fine di ridurre il fenomeno dell’abbandono scolastico.

L’obiettivo specifico è quello di contribuire ad un aumento significativo delle opportunità formative in campo tecnico rivolte ai beneficiari salvadoregni, attraverso un’accresciuta offerta di istruzione tecnica di buon livello qualitativo, al fine di migliorare la produttività in dodici dipartimenti del Paese.

I beneficiari dell’iniziativa sono i giovani, con un’età compresa tra i 15 e i 19 anni, i cinquanta direttori dei centri scolastici selezionati e almeno duecento docenti impegnati presso le scuole selezionate che usufruiranno di una formazione mirata ad un’offerta didattica di qualità. Il Piano Operativo è attualmente in fase di approvazione dal Parlamento salvadoregno.

4. Utilità della valutazione

L’utilità della valutazione dei progetti relativi al sostegno del sistema educativo in El Salvador è di accertare i progressi, valutare le prestazioni e lo stato di avanzamento delle attività dei progetti in corso in relazione agli obiettivi generali e specifici indicati nei documenti dei progetti.

Inoltre, la valutazione dovrà accertare il coordinamento e la complementarietà tra la Cooperazione italiana e le controparti coinvolte, la coerenza tra le politiche della DGCS e le priorità del Governo salvadoregno, nonché tra le attività promosse e i propositi internazionali nel settore dell’educazione. Il risultato della valutazione di medio termine dovrà fornire una relazione finale della valutazione compresi i risultati, le conclusioni e le raccomandazioni da presentare ai partner esecutivi e alla DGCS in modo da contribuire al processo decisionale per quanto riguarda lo sviluppo futuro dei progetti e inoltre la previsione d’impatto del progetto concluso.

Le conclusioni della valutazione saranno basate su risultati oggettivi, credibili, affidabili e validi e dovranno fornire alla Cooperazione italiana raccomandazioni utili e operative.

A questo scopo, la valutazione dovrà analizzare come, per i progetti considerati, il sostegno al sistema educativo salvadoregno da parte della Cooperazione Italiana ha influito o potrà influire:

sulle previsioni e l’implementazione delle politiche, delle strategie e dei programmi nazionali atte al raggiungimento dei MDGs e ad altre priorità dell’educazione inclusiva.

La valutazione dovrà essere lungimirante, tenendo anche conto delle più recenti decisioni politiche e di programmazione nel settore, delle valutazioni effettuate da altri donatori nel settore di riferimento, fornendo lezioni e raccomandazioni finalizzate alla continuità degli aiuti al settore educativo nel contesto attuale. A tal proposito si segnala che l'Accordo intergovernativo per la concessione del Credito d'Aiuto è stato stipulato nel febbraio 2014 e che pertanto la suddetta valutazione dovrà fornire elementi utili per la programmazione e la definizione della fase esecutiva dell'iniziativa.

5. Scopo della valutazione

Lo scopo del lavoro comprende - ma non è necessariamente limitato a quanto segue:

- Valutare i progressi attuativi dei progetti considerando le performance degli agenti attuatori. Valutare la capacità organizzativa e tecnica degli stessi partner in relazione al raggiungimento degli obiettivi dei progetti.
- Valutare le procedure finanziarie attualmente applicate (esborso dei vari finanziamenti) e la sostenibilità finanziaria dei progetti per il periodo rimanente.
- Individuare i rischi esterni che possono avere implicazioni durante l'attuazione dei progetti. Valutare il ruolo e le prestazioni dei diversi responsabili locali.
- Verificare le modalità in cui la risposta è stata responsabile per le esigenze locali e il livello di partecipazione dei bambini nel programma;
- Esaminare come i progetti hanno integrato le questioni trasversali come la promozione dei diritti umani, le parità di genere, la disabilità e i diritti dei bambini e fornire eventualmente raccomandazioni concrete e suggerimenti per riprogrammare le future attività.

Nel caso in cui si evinca che esiste sovrapposizione di attività dei progetti, sarà necessario valutarli singolarmente triangolandone i risultati al fine di evitare duplicazioni. Sarà fondamentale inoltre verificare che tutte le attività contribuiscano al reale sviluppo della scuola inclusiva.

La valutazione dovrà:

- esprimere un giudizio sulla rilevanza degli obiettivi e sul loro grado di raggiungimento;
- esprimere un giudizio su efficienza ed efficacia;
- esaminare i Progetti nella loro completezza, per identificare le buone pratiche e le lezioni apprese, in modo da usarle come base conoscitiva per sviluppare i futuri pacchetti d'assistenza tecnica nel territorio;
- analizzare le strategie e le modalità d'implementazione, come fornire raccomandazioni da integrare nel programma di rafforzamento del sistema sanitario;
- tenere in considerazione i fattori di previsione della sostenibilità e dell'impatto.

Infine, la valutazione terrà in considerazione:

- l'efficacia degli interventi tesi al rafforzamento delle possibilità di sostegno al sistema educativo e al relativo incremento qualitativo e quantitativo dei servizi erogati alla popolazione;
- l'analisi delle capacità gestionali degli enti coinvolti nei progetti.

Attraverso la valutazione del finanziamento italiano relativo al sostegno del sistema educativo in Salvador sarà fornita alla DGCS una matrice per la valutazione e il monitoraggio delle iniziative sull'educazione inclusiva e una matrice per la valutazione ed il monitoraggio dei progetti del settore educazione in ottica di *Result Based Management*. Tutto ciò si traduce nell'impostare un piano di monitoraggio a breve e medio termine e un piano di valutazione a lungo termine che ne stabilisca: la fattibilità, le azioni, i ruoli e le responsabilità.

Tali matrici potranno essere utilizzate ed applicate nei futuri progetti di settore. È estremamente importante per la DGCS stabilire e attuare processi sistematici di monitoraggio e valutazione sin dalla redazione e approvazione del progetto. Una corretta matrice di monitoraggio e valutazione può contribuire in maniera significativa al conseguimento degli obiettivi del progetto per valutare il livello di inclusione scolastica (o di educazione) a condizione che vengano seguiti indicatori predefiniti e mirati. Per inclusione scolastica si intende un processo volto a rimuovere gli ostacoli alla partecipazione e all'apprendimento e a garantire uguali opportunità senza

alcuna distinzione di genere, di provenienza geografica, di appartenenza sociale, di condizioni psico-fisiche. Si sottolinea come l'inclusione è un processo che coinvolge tutta la comunità scolastica, che ne condivide i principi e si attrezza per concretizzarli nella pratica didattica ed educativa.

6. Quadro analitico suggerito

Il *team* di valutazione può includere altri aspetti consoni allo scopo della valutazione. I criteri di valutazione si basano sui seguenti aspetti:

- **Rilevanza:** Il team di valutazione dovrà verificare il grado in cui i progetti tengono conto del contesto e dei problemi amministrativi del Paese. La valutazione riesaminerà la misura con la quale gli obiettivi dei progetti sono coerenti con le richieste e le esigenze dei beneficiari, anche alla luce delle linee politiche nazionali. La valutazione stimerà se l'approccio è strategico e in che misura la controparte locale sta usando le risorse per l'attuazione dei programmi. Nel valutare la rilevanza dell'iniziativa bisognerà tenere conto: a) in che misura gli obiettivi delle iniziative sono validi, b) in che misura gli obiettivi delle iniziative sono coerenti, c) percezione dell'utilità delle iniziative da parte del destinatario.
- **Validità del design del progetto:** La valutazione riesaminerà la misura con la quale il *design* dei programmi è stato logico e coerente.
- **Efficienza:** Analisi dell'ottimizzazione nell'utilizzo delle risorse per conseguire i risultati attesi dei Progetti. Nel valutare l'efficienza sarà utile considerare: 1) se i risultati sono stati raggiunti o saranno raggiunti con i costi previsti, 2) se i risultati sono stati raggiunti o saranno raggiunti nel rispetto dei tempi previsti, 3) se l'alternativa utilizzata è la più efficiente (minori costi o minori tempi) rispetto alle altre.
- **Efficacia:** La valutazione misurerà il grado e l'entità dell'eventuale raggiungimento degli obiettivi del programma. Nel valutare l'efficacia del progetto sarà utile: a) considerare se gli obiettivi, generale e specifico dei progetti, sono stati chiaramente identificati e quantificati, b) verificare se le caratteristiche progettuali dei progetti sono coerenti con gli obiettivi generali e gli obiettivi specifici.
- **Impatto:** Il team di valutazione dovrà definire le modalità operative di misurazione della previsione degli effetti diretti ed indiretti determinati dai programmi nel contesto di riferimento e, ove possibile, formulare raccomandazioni in merito alle modalità per incrementare la sostenibilità degli effetti positivi.

7. Outputs

Gli outputs dell'esercizio saranno:

- Un *inception report* di max 12 pagine, venti giorni dopo il primo incontro con gli uffici della DGCS.
- Un rapporto finale in formato cartaceo rilegato in broccia (10 copie in lingua italiana, 10 copie in lingua inglese) e su supporto informatico in formato Word e Pdf (max 3Mb).
- Un *summary report* di max 15 pagine, 10 copie in lingua italiana, 10 copie in lingua inglese e 10 copie in lingua spagnola, comprensivo di quadro logico, griglia dei risultati del progetto e sommario delle raccomandazioni.
- Documentazione fotografica (ad alta definizione), fornita su supporto informatico, sull'iniziativa valutata e suo contesto.
- Workshop di presentazione presso la DGCS.
- Workshop di presentazione del rapporto finale nel Paese.
- Una griglia di valutazione e monitoraggio per i programmi relativi all'inclusione scolastica.

8. Metodologia

La metodologia dovrà prevedere due tipi di approccio. In primo luogo, uno studio finalizzato a valutare la pertinenza, la qualità delle attività e la spesa in relazione agli obiettivi indicati nei documenti di progetto. In secondo luogo, uno studio sul campo con interviste qualitative ai coordinatori dei progetti, ai beneficiari e agli attuatori per meglio vagliare le aspettative e i risultati della attività espletate. Inoltre, per la valutazione finale, l'uso della metodologia che il team ritiene più opportuna.

Lo studio si propone di:

- valutare la capacità organizzativa e tecnica delle controparti utili al raggiungimento degli obiettivi;

- effettuare una analisi dei rischi esterni che possano eventualmente inficiare le attività del progetto.

Data Collection:

Il team di valutazione userà un metodo di approccio multiplo che includerà la revisione della documentazione, l'analisi dei dati derivanti dalle attività di monitoraggio, le interviste individuali, i *focus groups* e la visita delle zone interessate dai progetti.

Il metodo finale selezionato dal team di valutazione dovrà tenere conto degli obiettivi della valutazione e delle domande di valutazione che il team di valutazione formulerà.

A questo scopo, la proposta tecnica dovrà:

- Identificare la metodologia;
- Stabilire il livello di partecipazione degli *stakeholders* alla *valutazione*.

Validation:

Il team di valutazione userà diversi metodi (inclusa la triangolazione) al fine di assicurare che i dati rilevati siano validi.

Coinvolgimento degli stakeholders:

Sarà usato un approccio inclusivo coinvolgendo un ampio numero di stakeholders e di partners. Dovranno essere interessati rappresentanti di istituzioni coinvolte, di organizzazioni della società civile, del settore privato e, più importanti, i beneficiari del progetto tra i quali:

- Per l'iniziativa: *"Appoggio alla riforma del sistema educativo nazionale (Potenziando la scuola inclusiva a tempo pieno in El Salvador)"*
 - Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador (MINED)
 - Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (MRREE)
 - Departamento de Proyectos de Ejecución de Escuelas Inclusivas de Tiempo Pieno
 - Secretaria Técnica del Financiamiento Externo (SETEFE)
 - Comité de Coordinación y Control (CCC)
 - Comitato Tecnico di Coordinamento (CTC)
 - Unità di Gestione e Coordinamento (UGC)
 - Centri di Formazione professionale dei docenti (CFPD)
 - Escuela Superior de Maestros (ESMA)
 - ONG EducAid
 - Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università di Bologna
 - I beneficiari
- Per l'iniziativa: *"Sostegno alla promozione e allo sviluppo della scuola inclusiva in El Salvador"*
 - Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador (MINED)
 - Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università di Bologna
 - Consejo Nacional de Atención Integral a la Persona con Discapacidad (CONAIPD)
 - ONG EducAid
 - Associazioni Comunali per l'educazione
 - La Segreteria della Famiglia
 - Insegnanti e dirigenti scolastici delle scuole Integradoras e Speciali
 - Ministero della Salute
 - I beneficiari
- Per l'iniziativa: *"Rafforzamento dell'Offerta Educativa di livello medio-superiore per migliorare la produttività in 12 Dipartimenti del Paese"*
 - Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador (MINED)

- Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (MRREE)
- Ministerio de Hacienda (MH)

Profilo del Team di Valutazione

- La valutazione dovrà essere svolta da un team di valutatori con avanzata conoscenza in cooperazione allo sviluppo, nella gestione di progetti di cooperazione con particolare esperienza nel settore educazione e nella conduzione di valutazioni. E' richiesto inoltre:
- Laurea magistrale;
- Esperienza in interviste, ricerche documentate, redazione e scrittura di relazioni;
- Eccellenti capacità analitiche e di sintesi;
- Eccellenti capacità comunicative e di scrittura;
- Eccellente padronanza della lingua Inglese;
- Ottima conoscenza della lingua spagnola;
- Esperienza nella gestione e/o valutazione di progetti nel settore educazione;
- Esperienza nella gestione e/o valutazione di progetti nel settore dell'inclusione scolastica;
- Documentata esperienza professionale in monitoraggio e valutazione di progetti di sviluppo.

Disposizioni gestionali, piano di lavoro

Desk Analysis	Esame della documentazione riguardante il progetto. Dopo la firma del contratto il RUP fornirà al <i>team</i> di valutazione ulteriore documentazione relativa all'iniziativa oggetto della valutazione. Il <i>team</i> incontrerà il personale della DGCS e gli altri soggetti chiave che riterrà utile consultare per il completamento del quadro conoscitivo.
Inception report	Il <i>team</i> dovrà predisporre l' <i>Inception Report</i> con le domande di valutazione specifiche e dettagliate, i criteri e gli indicatori da utilizzare per rispondere alle domande, la catena di ragionamento logico per rispondere alle domande e il piano di lavoro delle fasi successive. L' <i>Inception Report</i> sarà soggetto ad approvazione da parte del RUP.
Field visit	Il <i>team</i> di valutazione visiterà i luoghi dell'iniziativa, intervisterà le parti interessate, i beneficiari e raccoglierà ogni informazione utile alla valutazione. Il <i>team</i> di valutazione si recherà sul campo per un periodo orientativamente stimato di almeno dieci giorni (la durata effettiva sarà determinata dall'offerente).
Bozza del rapporto di valutazione	Il <i>team</i> predisporrà la bozza del rapporto di valutazione, che dovrà essere inviata per l'approvazione da parte del RUP.
Commenti delle parti interessate e feedback	La bozza del rapporto circola tra le parti interessate per commenti e <i>feedback</i> . Questi sono raccolti dalla DGCS e inviati al <i>team</i> di valutazione.
Workshop presso la DGCS	Sarà organizzato un Workshop per la presentazione della bozza del rapporto di valutazione, per l'acquisizione di commenti e <i>feed back</i> da parte dei soggetti coinvolti nel programma, utili alla stesura del rapporto definitivo.
Rapporto finale	Il <i>team</i> di valutazione definirà il rapporto finale, tenendo conto dei commenti ricevuti e lo trasmetterà al RUP, per l'approvazione finale. Al rapporto saranno allegate le raccolte analitiche e complete dei dati raccolti ed elaborati, gli strumenti di rilevazione utilizzati (questionari etc.), i documenti specifici prodotti per gli approfondimenti di particolari tematiche o linee di intervento, le fonti informative secondarie utilizzate, le tecniche di raccolta dei dati nell'ambito di indagini ad hoc, le modalità di organizzazione ed esecuzione delle interviste, la definizione e le modalità di quantificazione delle diverse categorie di indicatori utilizzati, le procedure e le tecniche per l'analisi dei dati e per la formulazione delle risposte ai quesiti valutativi.
Workshop in loco	Sarà organizzato un Workshop in loco per la presentazione alle Controparti del rapporto finale di valutazione. I costi organizzativi saranno integralmente a carico dell'offerente. Le modalità organizzative di massima del seminario dovranno essere illustrate nell'offerta del concorrente e concordate in tempo utile nel dettaglio con la DGCS.

La bozza del rapporto di valutazione e la relazione finale sono sottoposti a controllo qualità e ad approvazione finale da parte della DGCS, richiedendo ove necessario opportuni miglioramenti.

FORMATO SUGGERITO DEL RAPPORTO DI VALUTAZIONE

Copertina	Il file relativo alla prima pagina sarà fornito dall'Ufficio IX della DGCS.
Lista degli acronimi	Sarà inserita una lista degli acronimi.
Localizzazione dell'intervento	Inserire una carta geografica relativa alle aree oggetto dell'iniziativa.
Sintesi	Quadro generale che evidenzia i punti di forza e di debolezza del progetto. Max 4 pagine, con focus sulle lezioni apprese e raccomandazioni.
Contesto dell'iniziativa	- Situazione Paese (Max 2 pagine) - Breve descrizione delle necessità che il progetto ha inteso soddisfare - Analisi della logica dell'iniziativa - Stato di realizzazione delle attività del progetto
Obiettivo	- Tipo di valutazione. - Descrizione dello scopo e dell'utilità della valutazione.
Quadro teorico e metodologico	- Gli obiettivi della valutazione - I criteri della valutazione - L'approccio e i principi metodologici adottati - Fonti informative: interviste, <i>focus groups</i>, <i>sites visit</i>. - Le eventuali difficoltà incontrate
Presentazione dei risultati	
Conclusioni	Le conclusioni dovranno includere un giudizio chiaro in merito a ciascuno dei criteri di valutazione (rilevanza, efficienza, efficacia, impatto, sostenibilità).
Raccomandazioni	Le raccomandazioni dovranno essere volte al miglioramento dei progetti futuri e delle strategie della DGCS.
Lezioni apprese	Osservazioni, intuizioni e riflessioni generate dalla valutazione, non esclusivamente relative all'ambito del progetto, ma originate dai <i>findings</i> e dalle raccomandazioni.
Allegati	Devono includere i <i>TORs</i> , la lista delle persone contattate e ogni altra informazione e documentazione rilevante.

ANNEX 2 LIST OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

Name	Function	Organisation
Consigliere di Legazione Stefano Pisotti	Ufficio IX	MAECI – DGCS
Ministro Plenipotenziario Cristiano Maggipinto	Ufficio V	MAECI – DGCS
Dott.ssa Anna Rita Caselli	Ufficio IX	MAECI – DGCS
Dott. Angelo Benincasa	Ufficio X	Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
Dott. Pietro Pacioni		Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
Dott.ssa Alessandra Piermattei		Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
Dott.ssa Mina Lomuscio		Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
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Lourdes Elizabeth Castaneda de Cordova	Unidad Coordinadora de Proyectos	MINED
Augusto Antonio Cornejo Huezo	Unidad Coordinadora de Proyectos	MINED
Oscar Orlando Delgado Galeas	Unidad Coordinadora de Proyectos	MINED
Jeannette de Lopez	Dirección Nacional de Educación Basica	MINED
Graciela de Salgado	Gerente de Educación Media Tecnica	MINED
Silvia Patricia Dheming Voss	Dirección Nacional de Educación de la Primera Infancia	MINED
Alex Granados	Dirección Nacional de Educación Media	MINED
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Guillermo Rodas	Alcade	CE Prof. Ireneo de León
Carlos Jacobo Palacios -	Pastore scuola evangelica	CE Prof. Ireneo de León
Oscar Armando Fugor	Genitore	CE Prof. Ireneo de León

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ANNEX 4 INFORMATION GATHERING TOOLS

Misión de Evaluación de los programas de educación inclusiva apoyados por la Cooperación Italiana en El Salvador

Cuestionario para el personal docente de las escuelas

Escuela _____
Ciudad _____
Clases de enseñanza _____

1. Conoce el proyecto de Escuela Inclusiva de tiempo pleno que se ha desarrollado acá en su Escuela?

- ☐ Sí Por que medio?
- ☐ Participación directa
 - ☐ Otras personas trabajando en la escuela
 - ☐ Seminarios e Conferencias
 - ☐ Publicaciones
 - ☐ Otro (especificar) _____

☐ No

**2. ¿Cuál de los siguientes aspectos de su actividadque han cambiado en los últimos tres años ?
(Se puede dar más de una respuesta)**

- ☐ aumento de las horas de trabajo
- ☐ Aumento de los encargos (especificar _____)
- ☐ nuove la carga de trabajo (especificar _____)
- ☐ adopción de nuevos programas de enseñanza
- ☐ adopción de nuevos instrumentos didacticos y nuevas metodologías
- ☐ Incremento en el numero de loestudiantes con discapacidad
- ☐ Decremento en el porcentaje de loestudiantes con discapacidad
- ☐ otro (especificar _____)
- ☐ nada

3. ¿Con qué frecuencia durante los últimos tres años ha participado en cursos de formación?

- ☐ nunca ☐ menos de 1 vez por año ☐ 1 vez por año ☐ varias veces al año

4. En esta escuela existe la opción de tiempo completo?

- ☐ no ☐ sì, en algunas clases ☐ sì, en la mayoría de las clases ☐ sì en todas las clases

5. lo que ha cambiado en los últimos tres años en la escuela donde enseña?

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Mayor disponibilidad de aulas para las clases | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| b. Mayor disponibilidad de aulas para los profesores | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| c. Mayor disponibilidad de aulas para actividades practicas, talleres y oficinas | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| d. Mayor disponibilidad de computadoras | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| g. Mayor disponibilidad de equipamentos para os o alumnos con discapilidades | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| h. Mayor colaboración con otras escuelas? | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| i. Mayor colaboración con otros actores en el territorio local? | ☐ sì | ☐ no |

6. En relacion a sus alumnos, que cambios usted ha observados en los últimos tres años ?

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Mejora del rendimiento educativo | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| b. Aumento de la frecuencia en la escuela | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| b. Mayor disponibilidad de apoyo en la escuela | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| b. Mayor disponibilidad de apoyo fuera de la escuela | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| c. Participación mas activa en las actividades didacticas? | ☐ sì | ☐ no |
| d. Mayor orientación a ayudar a los demás? | ☐ sì | ☐ no |

7. ¿Con qué frecuencia usted elabora informes sobre sus actividades y los resultados obtenidos durante las actividades de enseñanza?

- ☐ 1 vez por mes, o más ☐ varias veces al año ☐ 1 vez por año ☐ nunca

8. En los últimos tres años como han cambiado los siguientes aspectos en su escuela?

Participación de los padres	☐ aumento	☐ disminución
Participación de las ONG y otras organizaciones ciudadanas	☐ aumento	☐ disminución
Colaboración de la administración local	☐ aumento	☐ disminución
Colaboración de la universidades	☐ aumento	☐ disminución
Colaboración entre escuelas	☐ aumento	☐ disminución
Colaboración con otros actores (especificar) _____	☐ aumento	☐ disminución

**9. En una escala de 1 (nada satisfecho) a 5 (totalmente satisfecho) ¿cuál es su opinión con respecto a:
(una respuesta por cada elemento)**

	Nada satisfecho			Totalmente		satisfecho
El estado de los profesores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
La colaboración entre los profesores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
La colaboración entre los directores y profesores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
La colaboración con los padres	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
La colaboración con los otros actores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Las actividades de formación	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Resultados de los estudiantes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Comentarios adicionales

Guía para las entrevistas con los informadores calificados

- Conocimiento de los proyectos
- Comentarios Generales - en particular en lo que se refiere a la capacidad de los proyectos de identificar y responder a los problemas existentes
- Conocimiento - comentarios e observaciones sobre los impactos:
 - Acercas de los profesores y las escuelas
 - Acercas de las políticas de educación e del marco legal
 - Sobre la relación entre las escuelas y otros actores
 - Acerca de las dinámicas de la exclusión social en el ámbito local (incluyendo las dinámicas de género y las dinámicas de seguridad)
 - Acerca de la inclusión social de los actores vulnerables (personas con discapacidades; mujeres y niñas, familias de bajos ingresos, niños en situación de riesgo, etc.)
- Cambios concretos en las escuelas involucradas de una forma directa o indirecta
- Los actores implicados, en adición al MINED y a las escuelas (organizaciones de la sociedad civil; prestadores de servicios; servicios de salud; administradores locales, etc.)
- Actores que sería estado necesario involucrar en la formulación e implementación de las acciones y que no fueran implicados.
- Obstáculos y factores de facilitación
- Actividades que no fueran realizadas y actividades imprevistas (y los elementos causales)
- Otras iniciativas que se inspiraran en los proyectos o que utilizan sus resultados (por el MINED, la Cooperación italiana, los otros donadores, otras ONG, etc.)
- Buenas prácticas

Guía para los grupos focales

- cambios para la escuela y los actores implicados (maestros, alumnos, familias, barrio)
- cambios en las relaciones entre la escuela y la administración local
- nuevos actores que participan en la vida de la escuela y apoyan a los alumnos
- actores que sería estado necesario implicados en las actividades escolares y no han sido implicados
- obstaculos a la funcionalidad de la escuela
- factores que facilitan la adaptación de la escuela a las necesidades locales

Guía para la observación directa

- Presencia de Estructuras para facilitar o acceso de las personas con deficiencias
- Presencia de Laboratorios y talleres para las actividades practicas y de educación profesional
- Presencia de aulas para los profesores
- Estado de las infraestructuras
- Profesores y alumnos trabajando con metodologías innovadoras (juegos, grupos de trabajo, talleres, etc.)
- Presencia de padres/madres participando en las actividades didácticas
- Paneles de información sobre servicios y oportunidades para facilitar la participación a las actividades educativas (ex. talleres con los alumnos, actividades post-escuela, actividades de apoyo individualizado, servicios de transporte, asistencia a las familias, etc. – mismo si estos servicios son prestados por entidades privadas)
- Paneles de información e otros elementos que permiten identificar la presencia de una colaboración entre el Centro Escolar e otras entidades (administración local, otras escuelas, universidad, empresas, ONG e organizaciones ciudadanas, etc.)
- Paneles de información y anuncios concernientes oportunidades y cursos para la calificación de personal del Centro escolar (o del personal escolar mas en general)
- Presencia de alumnos con deficiencias físicas
- Presencia de alumnos en sovra-edad
- Elementos que visibilizan situaciones de conflicto entre los actores de la escuela (escritas en los muros, peleas entre personas, paneles anunciando huelgas, etc.)

Guía para la documentación fotografica

- Estructuras para facilitar o acceso de las personas con deficiencias
- Laboratorios y talleres para las actividades practicas y de educación profesional
- Aulas para los profesores
- Estado de las infraestructuras (situaciones de precariedad)
- Profesores y alumnos trabajando con metodologías innovadoras (juegos, grupos de trabajo, talleres, etc.)
- padres/madres participando en las actividades didácticas
- Paneles de información sobre servicios y oportunidades para facilitar la participación a las actividades educativas (ex. talleres con los alumnos, actividades post-escuela, actividades de apoyo individualizado, servicios de transporte, asistencia a las familias, etc. – mismo si estos servicios son prestados por entidades privadas)
- Paneles de información e otros elementos que permiten identificar la presencia de una colaboración entre el Centro Escolar e otras entidades (administración local, otras escuelas, universidad, empresas, ONG e organizaciones ciudadanas, etc.)
- Paneles de información y anuncios concernientes oportunidades y cursos para la calificación de personal del Centro escolar (o del personal escolar mas en general)