(a) Social Assessment:

1. CONAFE carried out extensive consultations with key stakeholders on the future of its compensatory education programs, with the aim to orient the design of PAREIB III and form the basis for a next stage of CONAFE’s compensatory education programs. In parallel, CONAFE reviewed the external evaluations of the program, carried out in recent years, to extract from them the most important lessons that could be incorporated in the design of phase three. Participants in the consultation workshops were asked to view the program in a timeframe of the next ten years, and to seek—within each group—to point out issues and suggestions for the development of the program over the medium term.

2. The following paragraphs summarize the main conclusions drawn from the external evaluations, and the key themes discussed during the consultations. Consultations were held with state level program coordinators, state education planning authorities, and national and international educational specialists and academics, in three separate workshops of two days each. A common feature of these consultations is that they demonstrated the excellent ability that CONAFE has to seek and receive feedback from civil society and from the principal actors involved in the program.

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3. Important lessons drawn from external evaluations (carried out during the 1994-2003 period) include:

a. **Targeting of beneficiaries** and schools requires more attention to continue ensuring that compensatory interventions indeed benefit the poorest and most needy schools. Targeting should be better connected to program interventions. In other words, the actual needs of each school should determine the program interventions in that school addressing those needs.

b. **Program monitoring** and the evaluation of its impact at the school level, should be strengthened. It is important to balance the equity orientation of the program with the effectiveness of interventions. It is also important to put in place a strategy for the continuous improvement of the program.

c. **Institutional Strengthening of SEPEs.** It is important to continue strengthening the institutional capacity of state secretariats of education to deliver quality education services; to the extent this goal is achieved, the effectiveness of the CONAFE’s compensatory interventions will also increase.

d. **The technical assistance provided to schools**—through a network of pedagogic advisors—needs to be strengthened to effectively support the work of teachers. More attention should be given to the learning/teaching process over the planning and control aspects of the education process.

e. **The initial education program,** in its pedagogic and operational models, should be improved to ensure the a positive impact of the program in the development and future school performance of the children.

f. **Parents Participation.** It is desirable that parent’s involvement be expanded from the current emphasis on care of school buildings and materials to substantive aspects of the education of their children.

g. **Teacher Incentives.** The amount teachers receive as incentive to stay in isolated rural and indigenous schools and dedicate more time to the teaching/learning process of the students, should be differentiated according to the actual difficulty of access posed by each school.

h. **Program evaluation.** The model of participatory evaluation used by CONAFE in its Community Education program should be applied also in the compensatory programs.

i. **Logistics.** Continue improving the distribution of educational materials to ensure their timely arrival at the schools.
4. The State Coordinators of the program suggested several ideas for improvements to the normative, administrative and operational aspects of PAREIB. These ideas include:

a. Targeting of Schools and Interventions: The targeting methods and criteria to select schools and to select interventions in each school, need to be publicly explained and disseminated. To succeed in doing that, the participation of states and municipalities is very important. It would be helpful to create a “school record” where the specific interventions made in each school are recording yearly. This “school record” could also include education indicators for each school, as for example enrollment, repetition and completion rates, to permit following the development of each school.

b. Monitoring. The program monitoring system should be redesigned to cover all components of the program and to incorporate—explicitly—the role of the state and municipal education authorities in carrying out each activity. This would lead to better integration between CONAFE’s compensatory program and state and local education systems.

c. State Level Administrative Structure. Because the education needs are different in each state, it would be desirable to modify the uniform structure of the State Coordinating Units (UCEs) so that each UCE could better respond to the education needs of the state where it operates.

d. Program Norms. Some new norms should be created and others made more flexible. In general, all norms must be updated and be amply disseminated. For example, a norm establishing physical standards for each type of school could be agreed upon; and the norms guiding the operation of AGEs could be applied in more flexible manner.

e. Technical Assistance to Schools. It would be desirable to develop a yearly technical assistance plan to better articulate the pedagogic assistance provided by the ATPs to help schools improve the teaching/learning process. For that, CONAFE should mobilize the collaboration of the UCEs and the SEPEs.

f. Institutional Strengthening. This intervention at state level could be greatly improved through simplification of administrative procedures for contracting and financing, as well as by ensuring the availability of a roster of specialists that could be involved in providing technical assistance and training at state level.
g. **Distribution of education materials** could be improved by the coordinated participated of federal, state and municipal levels of government.

h. **Incentives to teachers** would be more effective if the amount of the incentive is adjusted to the level of difficult in accessing the school.

5. The workshop with State Education Planning authorities generated valuable suggestions regarding the articulation of compensatory activities with the regular education program in each state. This workshop also proved an invaluable opportunity for the sharing of experiences among the states. The main aspects highlighted are:

a. **Targeting Strategy and Allocation of Resources.** The success of the CONAFE’s compensatory education program is largely due to the fact that it targets small rural communities that are very poor and have limited development potential. On the other hand, there is a risk that the program might be seen as rewarding the low performance schools. More intensive participation of state and municipal governments could help clarify and improve the targeting criteria. The formulas used to assign resources and the application of the targeting criteria in each state need to be reviewed to ensure the optimal application of compensatory resources, taking into account changes related to migration, poverty levels, and substandard school conditions in each state. Moreover, it is necessary to begin thinking about how to address the compensatory education needs in urban marginal areas.

b. **Evaluation of Program Impact.** Regarding this issue, it is important to clarify what is the main objective of the program. The multiple program objectives (improving education quality, equity, effectiveness, efficiency, reducing costs, and expanding coverage) do not allow for systematic impact evaluations. Second, it is important to introduce evaluation techniques that allow comparing performance of the same school at different points in time—i.e. comparing the school with itself. This innovation would greatly help to motivate schools to improve education outcomes. Third, education indicators need to be perfected and expanded to include the pedagogic and social conditions that children have as they enter the school; these indicators should be analyzed along with those measuring student’s learning progress. Finally, the large number and dispersion of the compensatory interventions, increases the difficulty of measuring the overall impact of the program, especially since not all schools receive the same compensatory support.

c. **New forms of institutional coordination.** In a number of areas—such as the distribution of educational materials—new forms of coordination between federal, state and local education institutions are needed to
improve performance. Also, the information required by CONAFE at the central level (provided by state level institutions), should better balance pedagogic and administrative aspects.

d. **Incentives for Teachers.** To control of actual number of hours teachers work in each school is a difficult task and the available information is not fully reliable. Furthermore, to the extent teachers became depend on the incentives one can say incentives might have a perverse effect. Nevertheless, isolated rural communities now see their teachers more frequently—even though this does not necessarily mean better education outcomes.

e. **Social Participation.** The AGEs have a direct positive impact on social participation, on the motivation of the community, and on the mobilization of resources in support of the school. The use of funds transferred to parents’ associations could be made more flexible, taking into account that some school needs cannot be anticipated.

f. **In-service training of teachers.** The training and technical assistance initiatives to help teachers improve the teaching/learning process is poorly articulated with other federal and state programs aimed at development of teachers. In general, teacher-training activities can have more impact in the classroom if integrated into a global training program under the administration of each state.

g. **Labor Relations.** It is important to move towards improving relations between the teacher’s union and the education authorities, eliminating perverse linkages between the two, and instituting new, results-oriented modes of interaction that are more transparent and accountable. In particular, it’s important to redefine education supervision, stressing its pedagogic function over administrative and union functions.

h. **Preschool and Initial Education.** The out-of-school initial education program helped men accept that women participate in workshops, and contributed to improved child-rearing practices within the family—such as better hygiene and activities that stimulate growth—that contribute to the development and education of children. With respect to preschool, the legal obligation to provide this level of education poses planning and financial challenges and calls for education innovation.

6. In the workshop with national and international education specialists and federal education authorities, the driving questions were: (a) To what extent the design and operation of the compensatory education programs ensure the desired impact on education outcomes and in equalizing education opportunities? (b) How to foster education demand and improve the social underpinning for learning? (c) How to improve the synergy of initiatives at federal, state and local levels directed
to improving education outcomes? And (d) what new directions should compensatory education programs take, given the present national, regional and global contexts? The consensus of experts on these issues is summarized below:

a. **Reorientation of Compensatory Education Programs.** The interaction between the goals of justice, equality and equity form the core of the restructuring of compensatory education programs. In this respect, equality is understood as respect for diversity. What is needed is a compensatory policy that ensures equality of opportunities within diversity. Programs should move from an approach of “adding inputs” to an integrated concept of resource allocation that combines formal and informal education.

b. **Targeting populations and schools.** Often the targeting process is unduly complex and passive to pressures from local and state authorities. Targeting should be jointly done by all levels of government according to shared criteria.

c. **The Impact of Compensatory Education Programs.** The evidence indicates that compensatory programs have been successful in improving the image of the school, extending education coverage, and improving education indicators, especially at the primary school level. On the other hand, in some cases they have also had some perverse effects—participating schools are often “tagged” as inadequate and almost stigmatized; expectations regarding the development of students is sometimes very low, reflecting permissive pedagogic attitudes of teachers; participating schools are sometimes over-burdened because the compensated schools became the targets and preferred settings for experiments with multiple policies and initiatives.

d. **Social Participation.** The Mexican State has taken over the function of providing education services as a way to achieve social equality and national integration. This resulted in the exclusion of policies to foster the responsible participation of civil society in the educational process. Main social actors—parents, students, teachers and directors—have been largely marginalized in a centralized, authoritarian state education system.

e. **The Future of Compensatory Education Programs.** Informally the federalization of compensatory programs has been discussed. If that occurs, it should be done as a gradual process, taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of each component. Some important considerations include:

   i. If the administration of compensatory programs is federalized carelessly, there is a risk that the programs might not be effectively implemented. On the other hand, to better articulate the three levels
of government around compensatory education activities, requires strengthening education management at all levels, involving the key individuals concerned.

ii. Indigenous populations require specific forms of compensatory education programs that recognizes the fact that only one third of indigenous children are in the bilingual subsystem (indigenous schools) and two-third are enrolled in regular schools. Although intercultural/bilingual education is now recognized as high priority objective, the education strategies to achieve better education outcomes for indigenous children are not yet developed.

iii. The focus of compensatory education should return to the school and their teachers. Education backwardness can be seen as the result of the poor operation of schools and as a reflect of the national education system. The compensatory strategy should place more emphasis on the professional development of teachers and on the pedagogic and administrative management of the school. In that sense, the compensatory programs can be useful experimental points of reference to improve current school teaching and management practices.

iv. The delivery of materials inputs to disadvantaged schools is important but does not, by itself, produce the teaching/learning transformation that needs to take place with the participation of students, teachers, directors and parents. If the goal is to improve student learning achievements, interventions should be centered around and on the school.

v. The program is weak in its efforts to establish a network to provide pedagogic assistance to the schools. Technical support at the school level must use different strategies and focus on specific problems of the day-to-day education practice. It also should be better integrated as part of the professional development of teachers and directors.

vi. Preschool education policies require further development and that goes beyond what CONAFE can do with compensatory programs. Preschool is primarily a preparation for life, and should have a broader objective than simply making children ready to enter primary school. Although it is clear that disadvantaged children tend to benefit more from preschool than other 3-5 year olds, positive results of preschool education improve performance in primary school only to the extend that preschool education is of good quality.
vii. The initial education program should build upon what parents know and value. The program needs to be continuous and comprehensive: one year is not sufficient to affect child-rearing practices. The program should also be closely related to nutrition and health programs that operate in the same community. In general, it is important to sustain and expand the nutrition and health policies that succeed in improving the social conditions conducive to learning. Clear inter-institutional mechanisms to coordinate these programs is the key not to over-burden schools with ancillary activities.

7. Enriched by the ideas generated from this process of consultation, CONAFE expressed its commitment to reorient its compensatory education programs along the following policy lines:

a. Continue contributing to raising education equity by expanding access to schooling, increasing the permanence of children in school, and enhancing the opportunities for success among the poorest children who are marginalized and disperse in isolated communities throughout the country. Similarly, aim to achieve a better fit between the education services provided and the needs of the poor, helping realize their right to access quality basic education.

b. Make the program more transparent, disseminating to civil society and institutional partners the criteria that orient the targeting of beneficiaries of compensatory interventions. Emphasis will be placed on compensatory programs as a mechanism of social justice that is the shared responsibility of the three levels of government under the vigilance of society interested in achieving education equity.

c. Give more emphasis to monitoring and evaluation of the program as a whole and the impact of its components on the schools. In doing that, CONAFE recognizes that compensatory initiatives lead to new forms of interaction between social actors in the education process and that transforming these relationships is as important as increasing academic learning achievements of students.

d. Improve the management of compensatory programs with the aim to initiate and sustain the federalized mode of operation. This will be done through continued strengthening of cadres at state level in order to guarantee the success of the program for its beneficiaries.

e. Balance better the educational and administrative functions of program operations, giving priority to generating the conditions that maximize student learning achievements supported by an efficient administration.
f. Continue strengthening social participation in basic education, understanding this goal as an exercise in citizen’s rights and as the development of a culture of individual and collective responsibility among parents and school communities with respect to education outcomes. Work with parents will focus on activities that strengthen the school and enhance the value of education of the children.

g. Contribute to redefining the relations between teachers and the community, moving towards higher levels of accountability.

h. Improve program targeting and ensure the correct application of the targeting criteria, by carrying out the following priority tasks:

   i. Review actual targeting practices in order detect difficulties and ensure that resource allocation gives priority to those who have the most need, according to the education conditions of each state;

   ii. Adopt, on the short run, national targeting criteria and incorporate state-specific mechanism to monitor these criteria, introducing more flexibility in the targeting process. In doing so, CONAFE will take into account the view of education authorities in each of the 31 states, and the accumulated experience of the UCEs.

   iii. Explicitly link the new targeting methodology with the monitoring and evaluation procedures used to assess the operation and impact of the compensatory programs.

8. The design of PAREIB III incorporates the main lessons learned from these consultations and introduces changes in the strategies used to implement the program. These adjustments and innovations are described for each component of the program in the main text of the PAD.
(b) Indigenous Peoples Development Plan

Summary. This annex presents the Plan for Indigenous Peoples Development for Phase III of Basic Education Development (PAREIB). The Plan first reviews Mexico's legal framework for indigenous development and education; second, it provides baseline data on indigenous people; third, it presents results of stakeholder consultations and quantitative evaluation of CONAFE's impact on indigenous students and communities; fourth, it outlines the strategy for local participation in PAREIB III; fifth, it profiles CONAFE's institutional capacity; sixth, it summarizes plans for monitoring and evaluation; finally, it reviews risks and strategies for mitigating risk. This assessment generally finds that an effective program with extensive consultation and responsiveness to indigenous peoples is already operating, and that the successful prior performance of CONAFE bodes well for the future education of indigenous students.

Plan Overview. CONAFE's compensatory education programs target schools in disadvantaged and isolated rural communities, including all indigenous primary schools. During the preparation of PAREIB I, specialized staff identified local preferences early on through direct consultation; subsequent consultations have been held for the second stage of PAREIB. A recent social assessment prepared for PAREIB Phase III found that indigenous people held quite positive opinions of CONAFE's compensatory programs. Stakeholders supported expansion of several aspects of CONAFE's programs, in particular the AGES component. CONAFE designs culturally appropriate learning materials and plans educational strategy in conjunction with School Associations of indigenous parents. CONAFE offers didactic materials in indigenous languages, in addition to recognizing both indigenous and mestizo cultural heritage in educational content. CONAFE's strong institutional capacity, based on over 30 years of operation and 13 years implementing programs of the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, ensures its ability to execute this Indigenous Peoples Development Plan. CONAFE collects annual data on indigenous student test performance, dropout, repetition and failure rates. An evaluation of the entire PAREIB program, to be financed by PAREIB III, will expand on already-existing monitoring and evaluation structures.

I. Legal Framework

Constitutional Framework. The Constitution of the United Mexican States recognizes that Mexico has a multicultural population of indigenous origins. It affirms that a duty of the law is to promote the "development of [indigenous] language, culture, customs, resources, and social organization, and to generally guarantee to indigenous peoples full access to the states' jurisdiction." In April, 2001, Mexico's Senate unanimously approved the Law of Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Communities, which amended Mexico's constitution to further emphasize the right of indigenous people to "preserve and enrich their languages, knowledge, and all elements that constitute their culture and identity." The Law also declared it the obligation of Mexican authorities to improve indigenous
levels of schooling, favoring bilingual intercultural education, literacy and productive training (Diario Oficial de la Federación de México 2001).

**Legislative Framework.** In 1993, Mexico approved the General Education Law (Ley General de Educación), which explicitly set guidelines for bilingual education and declared that in the first years of schooling, indigenous education should use an indigenous language and then use Spanish only second (Diario Oficial de la Federación de México 1992). Several states of Mexico – particularly Chiapas and Oaxaca – have legally recognized the obligation to offer bilingual-intercultural education to indigenous students. Mexico’s General Education Law of 1993 guides current developments in Mexican education. That law emphasizes two national strategies for increasing the effectiveness of indigenous education. First, it directs Mexico’s General Directorate of Indigenous Education (DGEI) to emphasize teacher training and to create opportunities for in-service training of current teachers. Second, it directs the federal government to embrace decentralization and to expand bilingualism by incorporating local culture into pedagogical content (Moya 1998).

**Federal Government Strategies.** Recent federal plans have further emphasized the importance of indigenous peoples in Mexico’s development. Mexico’s Comisión Nacional Para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (National Commission for Indigenous Peoples Development (formerly National Indigenist Institute), a division of the federal government, has published an indigenous development plan for the years 2001-2005 (INI 2001). President Vicente Fox begins that plan, “It is a priority of my government to construct a new relation between the State, indigenous peoples, and Mexican society, founded in the recognition of cultural diversity, in dialogue between cultures and in the respect and recognition of differences.” Mexico’s Secretariat of Public Education, in its plan for the years 2001-2006, emphasized the central importance of providing good-quality education to vulnerable populations including indigenous peoples (SEP 2001).

**II. Baseline Data**

**Indigenous Demography.** About six percent of Mexico’s population lives in a household where the head speaks an indigenous language, and Mexico’s 6 million indigenous language speakers fall into one of 62 indigenous language groups. The Náhuatl, Maya, Mixteco, Zapoteco, Otomí, and Tzeltal are the largest groups with 24 percent, 13 percent, 7 percent, and 7 percent of Mexico’s indigenous population, respectively. The states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Puebla and Yucatán account for over 60 percent of Mexico’s indigenous language speakers. Over 60 percent of Mexico's indigenous population lives in a household where the head speaks an indigenous language, and Mexico's 6 million indigenous language speakers fall into one of 62 indigenous language groups. The Náhuatl, Maya, Mixteco, Zapoteco, Otomí, and Tzeltal are the largest groups with 24 percent, 13 percent, 7 percent, and 7 percent of Mexico's indigenous population, respectively. The states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Puebla and Yucatán account for over 60 percent of Mexico's indigenous language speakers. Over 60 percent of
Mexico’s indigenous people live in a locality of fewer than 2500 residents (INEGI, 2000 Census). While the indigenous population of Mexico has grown rapidly from 2.4 million in 1950 to 6 million today, the portion of Mexico that is indigenous has dropped from 11 percent in 1950 to 7 percent today (Figure “Indigenous Population”).

**Indigenous Communities in Mexico**

![Map of Mexico showing indigenous communities](source)

**Indigenous Knowledge of Spanish.**
Almost 80 percent of Mexico’s indigenous people identify themselves as Spanish speakers. They learn much of this Spanish in schools—among indigenous children aged 5-9, 60 percent speak Spanish; among indigenous children aged 10-14, 85 percent speak Spanish, and among indigenous children aged 15-19, over 90 percent speak Spanish. In 2000, about 360,000 children aged 5-14 were monolingual in their indigenous language (INEGI 2000). From 1950-2000, the portion of Mexicans that were monolingual in an indigenous language relative to the portion that were bilingual in an indigenous language and Spanish progressively decreased (Figure “Bilingual indigenous”).
**Indigenous Educational Achievement.** About 84 percent of Mexico’s indigenous people aged 6 to 14 are enrolled in school, and about the same portion of indigenous people aged 8 to 14 can read and write in Spanish. Literacy rates decrease with age, and of the indigenous population aged 15 and older, only 66 percent are literate. In Chiapas, Chihuahua, Guerrero and Sinaloa, less than 60 percent of indigenous people aged 15 and older are literate. Nearly a third of indigenous adults have no schooling, and 40 percent of indigenous women have no schooling; only 10 percent of Mexican adults nationally and 12 percent of Mexican women nationally have no schooling. A ranking of municipalities by educational underachievement showed that while a fourth of municipalities nationally had low or very low educational underachievement, not one indigenous municipality did. Indigenous adults have an average 4 years of schooling, though that average ranges from 3.0 years in Chihuahua to 6.4 years in Mexico City. Nationally, all Mexicans have an average of 7.6 years schooling, nearly double the indigenous average (INEGI 2000).

**Bilingual Education.** Bilingual education began informally in the Chiapas highlands in 1920 but did not become a formal federal program until 1951. At that time, the National Indigenist Institute (INI) received funding from the Secretariat of Public Education to oversee bilingual education (Modiano 1988). Bilingual instruction has rapidly expanded from 46 teachers in 1952 to 3,800 teachers in 1970 and over 50,000 teachers today. Oaxaca, where 37 percent of residents speak an indigenous language, offers a good example of that expansion. In the 1980s in Oaxaca, the number of students in bilingual programs grew by 50 percent, the number of bilingual schools grew by 32 percent, and the number of bilingual teachers increased by 55 percent. Even with this growth, however, by 1991 only 22 percent of Oaxacan indigenous students were enrolled in bilingual programs (Hernandez 1993).

**Federal Oversight of Education.** In 1978, the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) created the General Directorate of Indigenous Education (DGEI) to oversee education for all indigenous students. Since 1983, staff hired at DGEI have been fluent in both an indigenous language and in Spanish (Varese 1990). In 2002, DGEI oversaw 50,000 teachers – 2,000 in initial education, 14,000 in pre-primary, and 34,000 in primary school – who taught 1.15 million indigenous students, giving an average distribution of 24 students per teacher (DGEI 2003).
**Bicultural and Intercultural Instruction.** Bicultural education instructed indigenous students in content from both their own and from mestizo history. Intercultural instruction, which emphasizes the linkages between indigenous and mestizo traditions, began in the 1990s. Intercultural education focuses on relationships between social groups such as equity, overlapping social identities, shared cultural traditions, and mixing of social values and norms (Hornberger 2000, López and Viveros n.d.). Instruction today occurs in an indigenous language for the first two years of primary school. Teachers introduce Spanish in the third grade, and by sixth grade instruction is primarily in Spanish (Schmelkes 2000).

**III. Technical Identification of Development or Mitigation Activities**

**Overview.** Participatory stakeholder assessments in the early planning stages of PAREIB I identified local needs and designed project components to respond to those needs. A series of quantitative evaluations of CONAFE’s effectiveness, using indicators on school participation and test scores, have found that CONAFE improves the quality of indigenous education and generates measurable results in improving indigenous student learning. Generally, these qualitative and quantitative assessments have shown that indigenous students have benefited from CONAFE’s compensatory programs, and that PAREIB has no adverse effect on indigenous people.

**PAREIB I Consultation Arrangements.** In the preparation of PAREIB Phase I, Bank and government staff interviewed about 500 stakeholders in Oaxaca and Chiapas including students, teachers, parents, government ministers, education researchers, members of Congress, and representatives of local NGOs. In Oaxaca, these consultations covered, *inter alia*, education authorities and members of the education committees of Mixteca, Mixes, and Zapoteca communities. They also covered community-based organizations of Mixtecos, Zapotecos, Chochochtocos, and Chinantecos. In Chiapas, consultations were held with supervisors of Escuelas Bilingúes Federales Tzeltales and Tzotiles, among other stakeholders. Throughout implementation of PAREIB Phase I, CONAFE carried out consultations with indigenous peoples through the Parent School Associations in indigenous primary, and through the education authorities that are responsible for indigenous schools.

**PAREIB I Consultation Findings.** Interviews found that students leave school because of (a) economic reasons, such as the cost of transportation and uniforms or necessity of work; (b) family migration; (c) parents who place higher value on work than on the education of children; (d) health problems, and (e) teachers who are monolingual in Spanish and hence unable to communicate with indigenous children. Parents who were monolingual in an indigenous language felt that indigenous education should be bilingual, but considered that learning Spanish was essential for their children. Many also felt that education was equally important for male and female students, and that existing gender inequality in education attainment should not obstruct efforts to further help
female students. Parents often offered their time to support local schools. Respondents generally held positive opinions of CONAFE, in part because of its emphasis on community participation.

PAREIB II Consultations. During the preparation of PAREIB II, the Indigenous Peoples Profiles (World Bank 1999) and a study on indigenous peoples in urban Mexico (World Bank 2001) were a primary source of information on indigenous education, needs and priorities. Results of those consultations found that basic education is a high priority for indigenous peoples. Indigenous children are not absent from schools due to lack of value for education, but due to poverty or to inadequacies of the school system, which PAREIB seeks to address.

CONAFE Consultations. CONAFE also maintains a permanent dialogue with the School Councils of indigenous schools. Based on consistent recommendations from those Councils, CONAFE makes adjustments to strategy as needed during project implementation.

PAREIB III Consultations: Methodology. During preparation of PAREIB Phase III, specialists visited six indigenous communities in the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Michoacán to better understand the perspectives of indigenous people towards CONAFE’s compensatory programs. Interviewers spoke with preschool students, primary school students, telesecundaria students, parents of students attending schools supported by PAREIB and teachers in schools supported by PAREIB. In Oaxaca, interviewers visited communities in Tlaxiaco; in Michoacán, interviewers visited Purepecha and Nahuatl communities.

PAREIB III Consultations: Summary Findings. All groups of stakeholders expressed very positive opinions of the compensatory programs and emphasized their satisfaction with the achievements of CONAFE. Members of the Parent-Community Associations repeatedly noted the importance of the AGES support and sought expansion of the program to provide them with more resources. Community members noted that CONAFE’s activities cause increased local involvement with schools, though women more often participate than men do. Communities with telesecundarias noted that students extensively used the materials that CONAFE had provided to the telsecundarias.

PAREIB III Consultations: Suggestions for Expansions and Modifications. Surveyed stakeholders also suggested several areas for expansion of CONAFE’s work, especially in its support to AGES. Some affiliates of initial education programs suggested the convening of regional workshops to learn from other communities’ experiences. Others interviewed noted that when children enter schools supported by PAREIB and begin learning to read and write, illiterate parents often want to become literate, so the entrance of CONAFE into a community creates strong demand among adults for literacy education. Some participants in AGES noted that in emergency cases of urgent need to spend funds, required processes for spending money can be obstacles. Other interviewees emphasized the positive effect of AGES in strengthening community involvement in schools, and so requested expansion of the AGES program. Additionally, some
community members expressed desired to know more about CONAFE’s activities, and suggested that CONAFE might distribute more informational materials about its work in local languages. Finally, some AGES members requested that the AGES program integrate training on monitoring of program effectiveness.

PAREIB III Consultations: Other Comments. Interviewees – particularly teachers in schools that receive support from CONAFE’s compensatory programs – commented on several aspects of schooling that are not direct targets of CONAFE’s work. Some non-CONAFE teachers had poor information on the work of CONAFE’s compensatory programs and had varied reactions to the presence of CONAFE promoters. Some AGES members sought remedy for the periodic absences of unionized teachers. Other school affiliates noted the poor conditions of many bathrooms in their local schools. Other teachers requested improvements to their housing units. Additionally, some interviewees noted that learning materials had in some cases arrived late. Finally, some CONAFE promoters had experienced delays in processing of payments, and they requested consistent timely disbursement of remunerations.

PAREIB III Consultations: SEP and CONAFE. CONAFE’s compensatory programs provide infrastructure and finance support to several elements of schools and to members of the communities in which those schools are located. Many of the suggestions offered by stakeholders focused on work areas supported by SEP and not by CONAFE. One potentially useful suggestion in this regard was to offer more extensive information in local languages on which activities are overseen by CONAFE and which by SEP.

Early Bilingual Education Evaluation. Before CONAFE began, Modiano in 1964 (Dutcher 1982) evaluated the effects of bilingual education in Chiapas using a matched experiment with two groups of Mayan students. Modiano identified similar Mayan students in bilingual and monolingual education systems considering background factors such as principal family income sources, community isolation, health, diet, size of locality, and local acceptance of public schooling. In third grade, Modiano gave a Spanish aptitude exam to the 1600 identified students. Mayan students in bilingual schools performed significantly better on the exam; they also declared their preference for learning from teachers of indigenous backgrounds.

CONAFE Evaluation. A World Bank evaluation (2002) compared CONAFE-supported schools between the years 1992 and 1995 in four marginalized Mexican states with similar schools in Michoacan, which at that time did not receive CONAFE support. The evaluation found that CONAFE increased test scores of indigenous students by 25 percent. Full implementation of CONAFE, the evaluation concluded, could cause indigenous student performance improvements on exams of 45 to 90 percent. CONAFE was also found to lower dropout rates.

PARE Evaluation. Another evaluation (Paqueo and Lopez-Acevedo 2003) examined the effectiveness of the Program to Reduce Educational Underachievement (PARE), a predecessor of PAREIB, on improving test scores. That evaluation showed that
improving and increasing school supply in Mexico could substantially improve education quality.

**Additional Evaluations of CONAFE.** A separate evaluation (World Bank 2002) compared indigenous student performance on the Evaluación de Educación Pública mathematics and Spanish exams between 1996 and 2000. That evaluation did not control for relevant background differences between indigenous and non-indigenous students, but it found that indigenous students were catching up to their non-indigenous peers by about 10 percent per year. A more recent evaluation (Shapiro and Moreno-Trevino 2003) used propensity score matching to identify the effect of CONAFE on test scores. Unavailability of sufficient background data made results represent a lower bound on the positive effect of CONAFE. That study found that CONAFE caused significant improvements in primary student math scores and in repetition and failure.

**IV. Strategy for local participation**

**Coverage.** The project consists of a compensatory education program supporting initial education, preschool, primary and lower secondary schools located in disadvantaged and isolated rural communities. A total of 250,000 indigenous children will benefit from the preschool program, and approximately 1 million indigenous students will benefit from the primary school program. Indigenous students at the lower-secondary level attending telesecundaria schools will also benefit. In telesecundarias, content is delivered via satellite television to remote communities.

**Funding to Community Associations (AGES).** The Mexican government has developed a program called Support to School Management in which CONAFE provides a small cash grant to a local School Parent Association. The Association has discretion to spend the grant on routine school maintenance; Associations are also entrusted with purchasing complementary school materials. Often the Parent Associations also execute school infrastructure improvements under separate agreements with CONAFE. Associations also participate in the School Council, where they contribute to the overall planning and administration of the school. PAREIB’s institutional development component strengthens government oversight of AGES. AGES, which has existed since 1995, has proved to be an effective instrument in building deeper involvement in schools and in improving relationships between school officials and indigenous parents.
Response to Needs Assessments. PAREIB has incorporated several components that specifically respond to needs expressed in consultations with indigenous peoples. Those components include:

- Trained bilingual teachers;
- Bilingual teacher guides;
- Special attention to indigenous migrant students; and
- Special attention to indigenous students attending general schools.

Program Scalability. CONAFE developed several initiatives to address these needs; those initiatives have now been streamlined as part of Mexico’s national basic education policy. They include:

- Textbooks in 33 indigenous languages and 52 variants, covering the first three grades of primary school, are now provided at no cost by SEP through DGEI.
- Teachers are trained to develop teaching materials appropriate to local languages.
- SEP supplies regionally-specific books to school libraries at no cost to the school.
- SEP and CONAFE continue providing in-service training for primary school teachers. Such training is particularly important when instructors in remote rural areas are unable to access teacher training through normal means.
- A PAREIB I pilot program for migrant children has become part of SEP’s policy for basic education and has become a core component of CONAFE’s community education program.
- The special attention to indigenous students attending general primary schools that was piloted under PAREIB I helped generate a multicultural approach to basic education, which was formalized in the National Education Program as a guideline for basic education policy.
- The post-primary lower-secondary program, adjusted to rural communities, has become part of CONAFE’s regular community education program. Evaluation of that post-primary program by indigenous parents, education promoters, and external scholars has been positive.

Specific interventions. PAREIB III will train promoters and teachers, provide appropriate didactic materials, and support School Parents Associations at the preschool level in indigenous schools. At the primary level, indigenous students and schools will benefit from a variety of project interventions:

- Infrastructure improvements, including additional classrooms, sanitary services and complementary facilities for school supervision and teacher training;
- Equipment, consisting in school furniture and sports equipment;
- Didactic materials, including student packages of school utensils and basic didactic materials for the classroom;
- In-service teacher training in multi-grade pedagogical techniques in bilingual education, and in a multicultural approach to teaching and learning, in addition to training in selected national and regional courses. Teacher training is also supported with technical assistance to teachers in the classroom provided by technical pedagogical assistants;
- Improvements in school management through modernization of supervision and assistance to supervisors and sector chiefs to facilitate frequent school visits;
- Performance incentives for primary teachers provided for teachers who (a) attend the full school calendar and keep specified class hours, as certified by School Parents Associations; (b) prepare jointly with the advisor specific learning activities for resolving specific problems; (c) provide remedial education to students who are lagging behind peers, in after-school hours at least three days per week; (d) participate in training programs; (e) collaborate with parents associations, and (f) development education activities with the community;

- Institutional strengthening and implementation of the Basic Education Innovation Fund by the states, which will improve basic education for indigenous and non-indigenous children indirectly through development of more effective and efficient local school systems.

V. Institutional Capacity

CONAFE. As early as 1971, CONAFE began developing innovative programs for reaching isolated rural and indigenous students. CONAFE has extensive experience with indigenous education, and has produced didactic materials with culturally appropriate content and linguistically appropriate materials. CONAFE now operates in every state of Mexico and has received financial support and technical assistance from the World Bank since the First Primary Education Project (PARE) began in 1991. CONAFE is a decentralized institution of Mexico’s Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) and has the publicly declared support of Mexico’s educational and political authorities. CONAFE’s capacity has also been demonstrated through the successful implementation of the previous phases of PAREIB.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring. SEP oversees Estándares Nacionales, a national exam of reading and math performance, at the primary and lower secondary levels. Results from that exam are comparable between 1998 and 2002, and results will continue to become available each year through 2006. SEP also collects information on dropout, repetition, failure and terminal efficiency rates by school, including data for indigenous schools. Those statistics are all disaggregated by indigenous and non-indigenous schools. Data are also available on the backgrounds of students and their communities by schools, to allow rigorous evaluation of the effect on CONAFE on indigenous students.

Evaluation. PAREIB III will finance a complete independent evaluation of the entire PAREIB program, 1998-2006. Test data will be available for all of those years. Also, since the PAREIB program encompasses eight years, the evaluation will be able to follow a cohort of students through primary and lower secondary school. That evaluation will also ascertain the sustainability of the program upon completion of the third phase. These efforts build on previous and continuing impact evaluations determining the effect of CONAFE on indigenous students.
VII. Risk Assessment

Legal and Institutional Risks. Mexico’s federal and state governments have passed extensive legislation recognize the central importance of indigenous peoples development. That legislation explicitly identifies good-quality bilingual intercultural education as an important development tool. CONAFE has extensive institutional capacity, demonstrated through over 30 years of compensatory education experience and 13 years of work with the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

Additional Risks. A risk early in the PAREIB program was the scarcity of bilingual instructors with sufficient educational background and indigenous language experience. In order to mitigate this risk the Government of Mexico has recently taken various initiatives such as the creation of specific indigenous teacher training courses at the Universidad Pedagogica Nacional, the creation of the Bilingual Intercultural Education unit of SEP, and the enactment of the Linguistic Rights Law. An additional early risk was the potential hesitance of indigenous communities to form Parents Associations and work in tandem with CONAFE. Indigenous peoples have embraced those Associations and eagerly worked with CONAFE on many aspects of their local schools. To give one example, when the Zapatista indigenous movement in 1994 rejected most services of the federal government, the Zapatistas sufficiently favored CONAFE to allow CONAFE’s teachers to continue working in all of Chiapas.

VII. Expenditure

VII. Designation of Project Funds for Indigenous Peoples. CONAFE estimates that, of total project expenditure of US$235 million in 2003 on preprimary and primary schools, US$50 million was spent on indigenous schools. So approximately 21 percent of CONAFE’s expenditure on preprimary and primary schools is allocated to indigenous peoples, which is far higher than the 6.5 percent of Mexicans aged 5 to 14, according to INEGI, who are indigenous.

References


. 2001. “Decreto por el que se aprueba...” 14 August.


