

Updated Project Information Document (PID)**Report No: AB207**

Project Name	COLOMBIA-Cundinamarca Education Quality Improvement		
Region	Latin America and Caribbean Region		
Sector	Secondary education (70%); Primary education (30%)		
Theme	Education for all (P); Education for the knowledge economy (S)		
Project	P077757		
Borrower(s)	DEPARTAMENTO DE CUNDINAMARCA		
Implementing Agency(ies)	SECRETARIA DE EDUCACION DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE CUNDINAMARCA		
	Address: Calle 26 No. 47-73 Piso 4		
	Contact Person: Piedad Caballero		
	Tel: 571 4260309	Fax: 571 426 1616	Email: Piccab@colomsat.net.co
	pcaballerop@cundinamarca.gov.co		
Environment Category	C (Not Required)		
Date PID Prepared	August 6, 2003		
Auth Appr/Negs Date	May 27, 2003		
Bank Approval Date	August 19, 2003		

1. Country and Sector Background**National Context**

The present national administration is giving special emphasis to social programs, as reflected in the National Development Plan (*Hacia un Estado Comunitario*) and the National Education Plan (*Revolución Educativa*). The National Development Plan includes six broad programs: (i) Evaluation designed to improve the quality of students, teachers and institutions; (ii) Learning from best practices; (iii) Developing educational models to improve educational relevance; (iv) Expanding and improving the use of media and new technologies in education; (v) Strengthening capacity of the Department and Municipal education administration; and (vi) Developing a Management Information System. The latter two programs are designed to support decentralization and institutional strengthening. *La Revolución Educativa* emphasizes social development and economic competitiveness and further defines the national strategy to improve access to and quality of education and increase the internal and external efficiency of the education system by (i) transferring management responsibilities of the sector to the departments and the municipalities; and (ii) strengthening the capacity of the sector to operate in a decentralized environment. It is anticipated that decentralizing education will help in addressing issues of access, quality, equity, efficiency and accountability by transferring decision-making to the local level where local and regional needs are better known and can be more effectively addressed. Local management of education has been shown to enhance resource mobilization, cost sharing, and community and parental involvement.

Recent studies have shown that Colombia lags behind its competitors in both education coverage and learning achievement [Closing the Gap in Education and Technology. 2002. World Bank]. However, an increase in public spending to improve education is neither feasible nor desirable. Public sector spending on education over the last three decades has quadrupled in real terms while the school age population grew by less than one third. Currently, education spending as a percentage of GDP is 4.4 percent (Ministry of Education, 2002) which is higher than the regional average of 3.3 percent. Instead, to attain these objectives, the country needs to improve its efficiency in the use of education resources and reap the benefits of decentralization by supporting improved capacity at the local level, linking funding to

students, and promoting accountability. The Government of Colombia (GOC) recognized this and passed Law 715 (2001) which seeks to strengthen decentralization and efficiency by establishing a regulatory framework that would, among other improvements, allocate educational transfers to territorial entities on the basis of enrollment and allow public education authorities to contract with the private sector to provide education services in a more cost-effective manner.

To further strengthen the decentralization process the national government decided to support the provision of multilateral funds directly to local governments as a way to improve the efficiency of investments supported by international development organizations. These pilot projects, designed and implemented by local governments, were intended to provide lessons for a nationwide system. A Municipality (Pasto) and a Department (Antioquia) were selected to participate and the World Bank is supporting these innovative decentralized projects. Key criteria used for the selection of the participating local governments included: financial indebtedness capacity, regional and socio-economic representation, and political commitment. Financial sustainability was also weighted heavily since the central Government sought to encourage fiscal discipline at the local level.

General Characteristics of Cundinamarca

The population of the Cundinamarca Department is slightly over 2.2 million of which 1.3 million live in urban areas and 0.9 million live in rural areas. Of the 116 municipalities in Cundinamarca, only five have populations over 100,000, three have populations between 50,000 and 100,000, twenty-eight have populations between 14,000 and 50,000, forty-one have populations between 7,000 and 14,000, and thirty-nine municipalities have populations of under 7,000. Municipalities with populations below 100,000 (approximately 96 percent of all municipalities), have economies based primarily on farming and mining, giving the Cundinamarca Department a rural profile.

A recent national household survey revealed that 34 percent of families in Cundinamarca live in poverty, while 11 percent live in extreme poverty, compared to 67 percent and 26 percent of families on average in Colombia. In terms of individuals, 26 percent (587,726 persons) of the total population in Cundinamarca is living in poverty and 8 percent (178,098 persons) live in extreme poverty. Poverty is concentrated in rural areas which accounts for roughly 43 percent of the population. According to the national household survey, between 1966 and 2000, unemployment in Cundinamarca rose from 69,840 persons to 186,840 persons, representing 17 percent of the active population. In 2000, of the unemployed, 40 percent were between 12 and 24 years old and approximately 65 percent of the unemployed had completed secondary education.

The education sector in Cundinamarca is made up of 3,714 schools (69 percent rural and 31 percent urban), most of which are public (82 percent). In 2002, 537,432 students between the ages of five and 17 were enrolled in public and private schools, 30 percent in rural areas and 70 percent in urban areas. Enrollment in public school represents 76 percent of total enrollment; as far as enrollment in different levels of education, pre-school enrollments account for 11 percent- *including all ages*; primary enrollment, 51 percent; lower secondary, 29 percent; and upper secondary, 9 percent. The internal conflict in Colombia has had an impact on education in Cundinamarca. Due to the violence, between 2000 and 2002, 3,980 families (approximately 17,738 persons) have been relocated to 15 municipalities; about half of those were moved to the Municipality of Soacha, just outside Bogotá. While approximately 52 percent of those relocated were of school age, only 30 percent are enrolled in school. Those who have been displaced tend to be located on the periphery of medium sized cities where they have been severely marginalized and suffer from discrimination and social exclusion. The economic and social vulnerability substantially affect their quality of life limiting access to health, education, housing, feeding and recreation services. Because of these poor conditions the department is developing a comprehensive

strategy to address the specific social, economic and psychological difficulties facing this population.

The Department of Cundinamarca has been considered for this undertaking due to the following factors: (i) the Governor and the educational authorities have demonstrated an unusual political will to carry out profound changes to improve the education system in Cundinamarca. In fact, despite the economic crisis, the Department's own resources allocated to education represent, on average, 10.73 percent of the total budget; (ii) the National commitment with this project is strong as evidenced by the fact that the National Council of Economic and Social Policy has already passed a resolution (# 3174 issued July 15, 2002) authorizing the Department of Cundinamarca to borrow for the project; additionally, the Joint Committee of the Congress, which must approve all foreign loans, has also approved the project on November 12, 2002; (iii) the Department has elaborated a detailed Development Plan in which it underscores the importance of human development; (iv) the Department's good indebtedness capacity, excellent fiscal situation and responsible behavior in order to make significant contributions to the national product; and (v) as a have been fully recognized by the national Ministry of Finance; (vi) Cundinamarca recognizes that it must invest in human development in order to improve labor productivity and efficiency.

Main Education Sector Issues in Cundinamarca

The following main issues have set the context for project identification and preparation: (i) low quality in terms of academic achievement (outcomes) and the learning environment (education inputs); (ii) poor coverage at preschool and secondary school levels; (iii) inequities in the delivery of educational services; (iv) low internal and external efficiency; (v) weak management and governance capacity at the central, municipal and school levels; (vi) limited participation of the productive sector and civil society in the educational process; (vii) an inadequate assessment system to measure the quality of education; (viii) lack of a medium-term education plan to operationalize the education strategy; and (ix) incomplete compliance with Law 715.

Low Quality. The results of the National and Departmental achievement tests in mathematics and language show that while students in Cundinamarca perform near the national level, absolute scores are still low, with students achieving less than 55 percent of the prescribed educational objectives in both disciplines. In language, 24 percent of students in Cundinamarca achieved at the Superior level surpassing the national average of 20 percent. In mathematics, Cundinamarca is also performing better than the national average with 12 percent of its students scoring at the Superior level vs. 8 percent nationally. However, performance declines substantially in grade nine with only 2 percent of students scoring at the Superior level in math. SABER learning achievement test scores show that 5 percent of students in Cundinamarca achieve a superior rating on these tests versus 6 percent nation-wide, and only 1 percent of Cundinamarca schools reach the top level of achievement while 60 percent are at the lowest level of test scores. Another indication are the results from the ICFES test administered to 11th grade graduates in which almost 7 percent of students nationally achieve the highest scores compared to 5 percent in Cundinamarca.

The weak learning outcomes, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas, are attributed to several factors: (i) an over-emphasis on rote learning and frontal teaching that relies heavily on memorization, passive learners and individual-centered instruction rather than focussing on group learning and problem solving approaches; (ii) the lack of well trained teachers able to apply innovative methodologies in the classroom; (iii) the lack of clear learning objectives in the curriculum and the expected competencies to be achieved in each grade; (iv) under-utilized libraries, most of which have no internet access; (v) lack of school networks as a source of collective learning and exchange; and (vi) insufficient quantity and quality of education materials and learning aids.

Poor Coverage in Secondary Education. Net enrolment in secondary education in Cundinamarca is lower than the national average, 60 percent versus 66 percent (2002 data), and it is below regional and international levels of 62 percent for LAC countries and 91 percent for OECD countries. Insufficient coverage in Cundinamarca is more acute in rural areas where 27 percent of children have access to secondary education compared to 84 percent in urban areas.

Inequities in the Delivery of Educational Services. Available data indicate significant socio-economic disparities in terms of (i) academic achievement rates; (ii) deployment of educational resources; and (iii) average years of schooling. In rural Cundinamarca youth between 5 and 17 years old make up 26 percent of the total population while enrollment in these areas reaches only 17 percent. Low enrollment in rural areas leads to a net enrollment of only 61 percent while in urban areas of the Department it reaches nearly 102 percent. The gap is more severe in lower secondary education where enrollment of rural children is 27 percent versus 85 percent of children in urban areas. This reflects the lack of flexibility of the education model in terms of addressing the specific needs of low-income students in areas of the Department where child labor is an important economic necessity. Promotion rates in rural and urban areas of Cundinamarca also differ with rural promotion rates of 78 percent compared to urban promotion rates of 83 percent.

In terms of gender, although it is difficult to find reliable statistics, available information based on a recent World Bank study indicates that since 1980 gender differences in educational attainment have decreased. In general, males have lower enrollment rates and higher repetition and dropout rates than females in both urban and rural areas – a trend seen not only in Colombia but also in many countries in the region. Since the beginning of the economic crisis, rural enrollment rates for males have been increasing while those for females have been decreasing probably due to the ease with which girls and women can find employment in domestic and informal activities. Academically, females in rural areas are outperforming males and are attaining an average of 4.8 years of schooling compared to 4.3 years for males. In urban areas, males receive on average, 9.4 years of schooling versus 8.9 years for females.

Low Internal and External efficiency. Promotion rates in public secondary education (lower and upper combined) in Cundinamarca are good: 83 percent in urban areas and 78 percent in rural areas combined with low drop-out rates of 6 percent and 10 percent in urban and rural areas, respectively. Repetition rates are higher than the national average at most levels of education with the exception of primary education where repetition is 7 percent both in Cundinamarca and at the national level. However, in lower secondary the repetition rate, on average, is 7 percent in Cundinamarca versus the national average of five percent, and it is 4 percent in upper secondary versus the national average of just 3 percent. It is also estimated that 8 percent of primary school students drop out before reaching the end of the cycle compared to the national level of 7 percent; a relatively high proportion of students, 24 percent, are overage. In addition, there are large disparities in learning outcomes between urban and rural areas as well as among different socio-economic groups. As a result, many young people in the 15-24 age bracket lack the proper education and skills necessary to enter the labor market. A recent survey revealed that only 33 percent of youth in the 15-24 age group are studying full time while approximately 36 percent of the 15-24 age group are out of school and unemployed. This situation is particularly severe in rural areas.

Weak Management and Governance at the Departmental, municipal and school levels. At the Departmental level the SEC lacks the institutional capacity to implement efficiency, quality and equity improvements consistent with the national and departmental education policies and strategies and thus is unable to strengthen the decentralization process. Such weakness leads to deficiencies in:

- Planning, implementing and evaluating mechanisms which can lead to continual improvements in education quality;
- Defining strategies to implement proposed plans and the development of instruments to monitor and evaluate progress;
- Technical expertise and staff able to assist municipalities and schools in key areas such as drafting development goals and strategies;
- Specifications of administrative procedures that relate the department with municipalities, which are not regularly monitored to check for bottlenecks and are not efficiently communicated; and
- Managing the collection, selection, and analysis of information.

At the municipal level, the concept of educational management is new to most municipalities since prior to decentralization they did not have responsibility for or authority over schools, teachers or curricula. Most municipalities have just begun to collect, classify and use information about schools and teachers, and only a few of them have defined their own development goals or performance indicators. In addition, Municipalities need to begin to envision ways to effectively bridge schools with departmental plans and policies and to share with schools the responsibility in defining relevant curricula for their unique conditions and requirements.

Most schools have been working on their PEI (Institutional Plan) and have formally organized a school government as mandated by Law 715. However, most lack (i) the knowledge and the instruments to review the implementation of the PEI; (ii) the leadership to integrate the community and the productive sector into school government; (iii) a clearly defined pedagogical model; and (iv) the experience in financial planning and administration. In general, school principals and administrators are not prepared to carry out the new responsibilities assigned by law 715 - applying efficient school management practices, implementing innovative pedagogical methods, and utilizing participatory and supervisory management models. Special attention needs to be paid to the organizational implications of Law 715 that prescribes the merging of schools (preschool, primary and secondary levels) to guarantee a smooth progression of students and a more rational use of resources in sparsely populated regions.

Limited Participation of the Productive Sectors and the Civil Society in the Education Process. In general, schools are working in isolation from the surrounding community unaware of societal and labor market needs. In most cases the community (parents, community leaders, etc.) and the productive sector (farmers, cooperatives, industry) do not participate in defining the development goals for the institution or in defining the strategies to achieve them. The contribution of these two sectors is limited to assistance in social events such as school anniversaries and community fairs. However, some secondary schools are reaching out to their communities by organizing student social services.

In terms of educational content, there is the perception both in the productive sector and in the community, that the education being offered lacks relevance. Employers prefer general secondary education because they find graduates often lack the skills needed for employment such as basic reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills as well as personal skills such as assuming responsibility, making decisions and honesty. Parents voice a preference for diversified high schools where they assume their children will learn labor market specific skills, unaware that most diversified secondary schools train students on obsolete equipment and infrastructure. As a result, students leave schools without the relevant skills and abilities to find employment or start an enterprise. These factors contribute to a growing population of youth who are neither in school nor employed.

Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation. The current system is oriented towards the assessment of individual student skills and competencies and does not provide information on the overall quality of

education and the determinants of quality, such as school and teacher characteristics, that could be used by policymakers to develop guidelines aimed at improving educational outcomes. In addition, there is a need for timely and reliable data on: (i) school enrollment, dropout rates, repetition rates and completion rates; (ii) the distribution and the characteristics of school facilities; and (iii) the available furniture, equipment and learning materials in schools. The scope of these problems are magnified because the Secretariat of Education lacks a systematic and well organized method of collecting, processing, analyzing and disseminating data.

Lack of a Medium-term Education Plan to operationalize current policies. Education is one of the three priorities cited in the Cundinamarca Development Plan 2001- 2004. However, this plan describes only a general vision for the sector and an overall education strategy; it lacks the specific policies, targets, and actions needed to achieve the stated objectives. This contributes to the absence of a long-range plan making it difficult for policy makers to take proper decisions in the sector.

Incomplete decentralization. After the passage of Law 715, modifying the regulatory framework of education in Colombia (Law 115 of 1994 and Decree 2279 of 1979), the Department carried out a detailed study to assess the implications of supporting decentralization. Several of the new regulations are directly relevant to the proposed project, representing special challenges that need to be addressed. For example, budget resources transferred from the national government will be allocated on a per-student basis rather than the historical model of transfers based on teachers' costs. This new system requires the design and development of an information system and the training of school managers in order to ensure accurate and timely information. Additionally, the new law gives school principals greater responsibility for the overall management of their schools while the Department is required to provide technical assistance to ensure quality and efficiency standards are met. Therefore, the Department needs to prepare a technical assistance strategy which will strengthen the relationship between the Department and the municipalities and which includes a monitoring and evaluation system and an information system that will expedite the administrative and legal procedures required under the Law.

Government strategy of the Cundinamarca Department

Faced with these major constraints, the Cundinamarca Department has decided to concentrate its education development efforts on: (i) improving the quality, relevance and coverage of the education system with a focus on preschools and upper secondary schools; (ii) supporting decentralization; (iii) improving school management; (iv) increasing the participation of the productive sectors and civil society in schools; (v) reducing inequities in the delivery of educational services; (vi) improving quality measurements of education, especially student attainment; and (vii) reducing the number of out of school, unemployed youths.

Improving Quality and Relevance: In terms of quality and relevance, the emphasis will be on providing students with a balanced mix of basic skills (reading, writing and mathematics), developmental skills linked to labor market needs (capacity to visualize, to think, to reason, to know how to learn, to make decisions, to plan and to solve problems), and personal skills (ethics, self-esteem, self-control, responsibility, sociability and honesty). The Cundinamarca Department intends to improve education by focusing on the educational institutions through improvements in the administrative, financial and management practices of individual school management teams and by improving the quality and relevance of the learning process through continuous and comprehensive interventions with respect to the classroom pedagogical process and educational inputs such as: implementing an aggressive professional development program for teachers focusing on innovative methodologies; using

new information and communication technologies in the classroom including installing one science and technology classroom in each municipality; diversifying the curricula to offer new educational opportunities such as promoting cultural identity and stimulating creativity and inquiry as a source of knowledge; providing training opportunities in productive activities to facilitate employment; offering comprehensive education to children, youth, women and families including recreational activities, ethics, and environmental protection.

Increase Coverage: With respect to access, the Cundinamarca Department has already undertaken several initiatives to successfully address the issue of poor coverage: (i) Reorganizing the sector to increase the teaching load from six to eight hours creating the equivalent of 5,720 new places and increasing the teacher: student ratio by 0.5 percent at each grade level creating an additional 12,140 places in each geographical region; (ii) Providing direct subsidies to 4,000 students, using mining income, to cover education associated costs; and (iii) Providing transportation for 37,734 students and contracting with NGOs to improve the delivery of education to 6,104 students. Given other ongoing activities, access is not a major thrust in this project. However, the project will contribute to improving access to upper secondary education through improving retention and reducing repetition. Indeed, the project will impact upper secondary education (up to 11 grade) as well as basic and lower secondary education since all three education levels are integrated within the same unified institution and managed by the same principal regardless of the physical location.

Supporting Decentralization: The Government's commitment to decentralization is articulated in Law 715; the Cundinamarca Department's strategy is to enact the Law through implementing the new territorial competencies, reorganizing schools, introducing student based financing, professionalizing the teaching profession and increasing the internal and external efficiency of the education system. Law 715, articles 11, 12 and 13 will govern the flow and management of funds received.

Improving School Management: This will be achieved through the enforcement of articles 12 and 13 of Law 715 which govern the management of funds and provide principals and pedagogical directors with the management tools and practices to diagnose school performance, identify problems, and elaborate participatory plans to solve them.

Increasing the Participation of the Productive Sector and Society in Schools: This will be achieved through developing projects in partnership with the productive sectors, integrating schools into regional and local economic development plans, and providing educational opportunities through community colleges closely linked to industry.

Reducing inequities in the delivery of education services: Inequities will be reduced by providing better educational inputs in socially and economically deprived areas, creating continuing education opportunities for dropouts and graduates living in low income areas, and promoting the use of free time for extra curricular activities.

Improving measurements of student attainment: Achieved by expanding the student quality assessment system to include measures of school and teacher performance and improving education statistics and performance indicators.

Reduce the number of out of school, unemployed youths by providing fellowships to secondary education.

2. Objectives

1. Project Purpose: The purpose of the Cundinamarca Education Quality Improvement Project is to assist the Government of the Department of Cundinamarca to develop the skills in basic and secondary school students that will improve their productivity, competitiveness and overall social skills.

2. Project development objective:

The development objectives of the Cundinamarca Education Quality Improvement Project are to: (i) improve the quality and relevance of the education system and (ii) improve the internal and external efficiency of education at the department level, municipal and school levels.

The project would contribute to current policies and strategies of the Department of Cundinamarca by focusing support on the poor through targeting both the poorest municipalities in the Department and those schools with the poorest achievement levels as measured by standardized test results. The project will support enhanced quality and equity by: (i) targeting interventions to disadvantaged schools in rural and peri-urban areas and to students at high risk; (ii) complementing the goal of increased coverage as stated in the Departmental Development Plan 2001 - 2004; (iii) reinforcing the participation of key stakeholders by adding relevance to the educational content (process and management of schools); and (vi) upgrading the skills and competencies of both dropouts and graduates to facilitate their entry into the labor market.

3. Rationale for Bank's Involvement

The Bank's financial and technical assistance will provide a valuable contribution to project design and implementation for several reasons. First, the Bank has played a key role in the initiation of several education reforms in past years; Second, the Bank has substantial lending experience with projects focusing on quality improvement programs that ensure the maximum efficiency of educational investments in client countries, including Colombia at the national and local levels; Third, the preparation of this project is based on a strategy of progressive interventions in the education system applying the lessons learned in Colombia at the national and local levels and elsewhere in the region; Fourth, project preparation offers the opportunity to bring to the department global expertise associated with successful interventions in education quality improvement and decentralization; Fifth, the proposed project will in turn become an important laboratory for continuous learning by the department, the country and the Bank. It represents a step forward by advocating a comprehensive approach that benefits from the lessons learned in Pasto and Antioquia as well as adding a combination of inputs to improve the quality and relevance of education by changing school management and practices from the pedagogical, technical, administrative and financial viewpoints.

Several characteristics of the project make it particularly innovative, attractive and replicable in other departments, with necessary adjustments: (i) the concept of partnerships to mobilize private and community resources and commitment to education successfully applied in Pasto, Antioquia and the Rural Education projects is also used in this project by creating strategic partnerships which could be a model for the rest of the country in terms of joint ventures to improve labor competencies and skills capacities; (ii) Through upgrading the Department's Educational Improvement Plan at both the municipal and the school levels the project would be an excellent laboratory for introducing decentralized planning and operational practices which could conceivably be replicated in the overall education system; and (iii) this is the first project conceived within the framework of the new Decentralization Law (Law 715), which introduces substantial changes in the financing, organization and management of the decentralized system particularly at the school level and supports the evaluation of students, teachers and principals. Therefore the project could be a model for how to effectively support Law 715.

4. Description

The Project includes the following three components (i) Improving School Management; (ii) Institutional Strengthening; and (iii) Project Administration and Monitoring

Component 1. Improving School Management to Enhance Quality and Relevance (US\$16.5 million, 78% of total amount). The first component would support changes to school management and practices in accordance with new legislation and department development plans that seek quality and relevance improvements as well as the identification and implementation of school–community activities to support education for peace projects designed to mitigate the incidence of violence and conflicts. This component will provide technical assistance for the preparation and implementation of each school’s Improvement Plan (PEI). The PEI will be the basis for Municipal School Subprojects that will finance the activities undertaken by the schools under this component, such as training, technical assistance, maintenance, and investment. In addition to the TA to be selected in agreement with the schools, the project will finance: (i) “cross fertilization” activities such as study tours, fellowships, internships, etc; (ii) documentation, dissemination and discussion of case studies and best practices; and (iii) training in specific management, pedagogical, technical, financial and administrative matters.

The component consists of the following five sub-components: (i) improving the administrative, financial and management practices of participating school management teams; (ii) improving pedagogical practices; (iii) providing adequate instructional resources; and (iv) establishing strategic partnerships between the schools, the productive sectors and civil society; (v) financing of Municipal School Subprojects. All of the sub-components will be incorporated into the Improvement Plans (PEI) designed by the schools (with the support of TA) and each will seek to promote a comprehensive approach to the appropriate use of human, financial and physical resources as well as the formation of partnerships. Ultimately, the PEIs will impact all levels of education - from preschool to upper secondary education – because the Colombian education system is an integrated and sequential structure with all grades located in a single facility under the responsibility of a single principal. In summary, this component will finance: (i) the preparation and implementation of the PEI in the form of a school sub-project for improving managerial skills and teacher training and for providing resources and materials to improve the managerial and pedagogical practices at the 900 schools covered by the 50 targeted municipalities; and (ii) the approximately 75 demand driven partnership sub-projects to be selected by a competitive process that is outlined in the Operational Manual.

Component 2. Institutional Strengthening to Improve Internal and External Efficiency (US\$3.64 million, 17% of total amount). This component would strengthen the institutional and management capacity of the Cundinamarca Education Secretariat and the municipalities. The objective of this component is to improve the overall efficiency of the Cundinamarca education system. The component consists of the following two sub-components: (i) Strengthening Department and Municipal education management; and (ii) Designing and implementing a Quality Evaluation System at the Departmental level.

The first sub-component, Strengthening Department and Municipal education management, will be achieved through: (i) developing an evaluation system which would allow the SEC to define education policies and improvement plans, ensure that education meets social demands, and facilitate and improve education decision-making processes across the sector; (ii) designing and implementing a 10-Year Education Plan and strengthening decentralization law. The second sub-component, Strengthening the Administrative Capacities of the Municipalities will be achieved through: (i) providing technical assistance to municipalities to strengthen their administrative capacities and to improve the quality, efficiency and equality of the education provided through identifying methodologies and instruments

used for improving municipal education management; (ii) training of education management authorities and councils; (iii) evaluation of management and administrative practices in the targeted municipalities and (iv) designing, consolidating and implementing municipal strengthening plans (PEM).

Component 3. Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$1.06 million, 5% of total amount): This component would finance the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) operating within the Education Secretariat of Cundinamarca. The PCU would be responsible for overall project coordination working closely with the line departments within the SEC which in turn will have the responsibility for implementing the project components. The PCU will be responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluating the project. Specifically, the PCU will: (i) develop the administrative and technical procedures to assure quality improvements of education through the administrative, financial and pedagogical management of the schools and the decentralized operation of the education system; and (ii) be directly responsible for the technical aspects of the competitive sub-projects.

The PCU would also have responsibility for (i) planning and programming, (ii) monitoring project implementation, including disbursements and collection of expenditure documentation, (iii) carrying out the procurement of goods and services financed by the project (Loan and counterpart funds), (iv) coordinating technical activities of the project with the national Ministry of Education, the selected municipalities in Cundinamarca and the partners in the productive sectors and civil society, and (v) communicating with the Bank.

1. Improving School Management to enhance Quality and Relevance
2. Institutional Strengthening to improve Internal and External Efficiency
3. Administration and Monitoring

5. Financing

Source (Total (US\$m))

BORROWER (\$6.40)

IBRD (\$15.00)

Total Project Cost: \$21.40

6. Implementation

Project coordination and implementation arrangements

The Secretariat of Education (SEC) would implement the project. A Project Coordination Unit (PCU), already established under the SEC will be responsible for overall project coordination, management, and implementation. The PCU will include the staff necessary to carry out the coordination, procurement, financial management, accounting, and the monitoring and evaluation of the project. Financial Management and Procurement specialists have conducted assessments and both considered the respective arrangements to be acceptable. The training of procurement specialists will assist the SEC in establishing a procurement unit to manage all funds.

Project implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The project preparation team drafted a Project Operational Manual (OM) which was reviewed during project appraisal. The OM will provide full information concerning the general implementation and organizational arrangements of the proposed project and include a detailed implementation schedule, annual input, process and output targets, and a detailed procurement plan. The project components will be executed technically by the respective SEC units with oversight by the PCU. Implementation of the project will be guided by the OM, the Financial Management manual and a detailed procurement plan.

Accounting, financial reporting and auditing requirements

The usual accounting, financial, auditing and reporting procedures that Colombia has established for investment projects will be adopted for the proposed project, in line with Bank procedures and regulations. The PCU will be responsible for the financial management of the project including accounting, timely submission of Financial Management reports (FMRs), annual audits and disbursements). To facilitate disbursements a Special Account will be established and managed according to Bank guidelines as prescribed in the Disbursement Handbook. An independent auditor acceptable to the Bank will audit the project annually. Audit reports will be submitted to the Bank no later than six months after the end of each fiscal year.

Additionally this project will be coordinated with the ongoing *Institutional Strengthening Project* of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Bank's own *Rural Development Project* which promotes partnerships between municipalities and the productive sectors in several Departments, including Cundinamarca.

The Bank will conduct project supervision missions every six months, and the Government will prepare progress reports for each visit. There will be a Mid-Term Review mission, which will assess project implementation and adjust project timeline and thresholds to guarantee completion of development objectives by project completion.

7. Sustainability

Sustainability of the proposed project was analyzed along two dimensions: financial and institutional. As stated in section E2, a first draft of the financial requirements for project implementation, including long-term recurrent liabilities (financial sustainability) will be made available during the appraisal mission. This information will allow an assessment of the recurrent cost implications of the project on the SEC budget. Equally important as the financial sustainability is the institutional sustainability, including the legal, organizational and technical arrangements needed to ensure the continuation of the activities developed and financed by the project beyond the life of the project. It should be highlighted in this respect that implementation of this project will take place within the context of the regular structure, procedures and responsibilities of existing SEC departments. Other aspects contributing to project sustainability are: (i) the expansion of the decentralized responsibilities as result of the complete implementation of Law 715; (ii) the strengthening of the efficiency and effectiveness in management of the SEC, the municipalities and the schools that submit successful sub-projects; and (iii) increasing the participation of the community and the economic sector in the design of the PEM's and PEI's.

8. Lessons learned from past operations in the country/sector

The following key lessons based on international experience and findings from ICRs and impact studies of recent education projects in Colombia, as well as observations made from the supervision of ongoing projects at the national and decentralized levels, have been considered in the project design:

1. Focus on schools as the center of change. Setting the schools and the classrooms as the reference point for student development and learning creates demand for quality education and enhances accountability. To focus teacher training and student projects at the school level, the proposed project incorporates lessons learned from New Zealand "School Based Management" and its autonomous Board of Trustees, the Minas Gerias school-driven "Proqualidade" Project in Brazil, the South Australia "Partnership 21" model of local management whereby parents, teachers and communities work together to make sure that children succeed and the Uganda Teacher Development Management System which offers direct outreach support to teachers and school administrators through a decentralized network of coordinating centers. The proposed project focuses on change at the school level, thereby building on the success of two on-going innovative projects in Pasto and Antioquia, which have achieved gains in quality by bringing together teachers, school managers and community leaders to create innovative projects focused on local pedagogical issues.

2. Intersectoral Linkages. Because they span sectors and must be carried out at many different sites throughout the community, education projects like this one require close cooperation between the schools and the economic and productive sectors. This project will bring together a diverse group of representatives from the schools, the communities and the economic and productive sectors through the Partnerships sub-component (1.4) which will promote strategic partnerships between the schools and the productive sectors in order to promote improved quality and relevance of the education offered and better link schools and their graduates to the labor market.

3. Effective Teacher Training. The practice of sending teachers to university courses on pedagogy and methodology has not yielded great success in classroom effectiveness. Best results have been identified in those teacher training programs, such as in the regional model centers, that consist of observation, reflection, and hands-on practice. These programs are frequently accompanied with strong follow up and feed-back on practice.

4. Evaluation Culture and Mechanisms. Loosely controlled education investments have been replaced by evaluation mechanisms with accountability implications. The Santiago-based OREALC "Education Quality Laboratories" program has been pivotal in supporting evaluation agencies such as the System for

the Measurement of Educational Quality in Chile and the Educational Outcomes Measurement Unity in Uruguay. The Indonesia PEQIP and the UNESCO 27 country MLA exemplify good learning evaluation practices. The proposed project promotes tested evaluation and supervision strategies and builds on successful initiatives established during earlier projects such as the Pasto and Antioquia Education Projects, as well as the Human Capital Project in Colombia

5. The School Principal as a leader. The need for highly trained principals will become critical as the project moves ahead and planned and unplanned obstacles need to be effectively handled. Successful education reform projects in Costa Rica (early 1990's) and in El Salvador (1997) were preceded by graduate studies or seminars in Harvard University, while recent education achievements in Brazil can be linked to the upgrading of education leaders. The project intends to train principals and other high-level school administrators to ensure that informed leadership is the norm in participating schools.

6. Benefits for private participation. In many countries where the public education system cannot accommodate all of the needs of the community, the private sector will often establish the administrative networks necessary to bring essential educational services to the communities. Lessons learned from Pasto and Antioquia show that the planned participation of private schools in education projects can (i) reduce costs, (ii) increase coverage by meeting the communities demand for education, and (iii) stimulate improvements in quality and efficiency due to increased competition between the public and private schools for students. Successful pilot experiences took place in Bogotá, among them the "sub-contracting" of public schools to private ones.

7. Political support and project ownership are good predictors of outcomes. The overall political support and broad-based project ownership within the national government and the Department of Cundinamarca confirm their intention to use the new project in support of the ongoing education reform that is a key component to Colombia's social and economic development strategy. Additionally, the National Council on Economic and Social Policy has passed a resolution that allows the Department of Cundinamarca to borrow for this project.

8. Decentralized management. For improved decentralized management there is a need for: (i) strong leadership by school principals; (ii) clear goals that can be monitored; (iii) widespread ownership of the reform goals through participation of the beneficiaries and teachers in the diagnosis of the school problems and the design of the changes/solutions; (iv) empowerment of schools to implement their own pedagogical projects in connection with the needs of the local labor market; and (v) school accountability based on the use of continuous information and feedback on performance and ways to improve it.

9. Administrative changes. The political history of Colombia reveals that there are usually several changes of key government officials during any political term period. It is therefore important to anticipate the impact of frequent turnovers in the Education Secretariat and anticipate what type of contingency measures can be taken to minimize the impact of these frequent changes on project ownership and implementation.

10. Coordination with other Bank projects in Colombia. As indicated above, the project is incorporating lessons learned in Antioquia and Pasto within the framework of the Bank strategy to support decentralization in Colombia. During project preparation the task manager organized several meetings to exchange experiences as well as to identify and discuss further knowledge sharing activities during project implementation. This coordination includes not only the utilization of common procedures but is also consistent with the objectives and targets of the "Educational Revolution" program of the National Ministry. In the implementation of the Pasto Education project, the main strengths were the successful organization of a support network at the school level which guaranteed that every child would complete

the first cycle and have immediate access to the next level of school. The network also helped rationalize the use of available resources (human, physical, technical and financial) and promoted a community participation model. In the Antioquia Education project the main strengths were the technical assistance model and the enhancement of decentralization through the provision of technical assistance to build the capacity of the education sector at the municipal and school levels. In both cases, evaluation of student achievement was an important instrument for improving teaching practices and student learning processes. The two projects also strengthened school autonomy through the direct transfer of budgetary resources to the schools themselves to help them increase the quality and relevance of education. The projects witnessed significant improvements in school management and a greater participation of the private sector in increasing school coverage for children from under-privileged socio-economic groups, thereby piloting a viable and more cost-effective coverage expansion strategy. Because of their success, the Pasto Education and the Antioquia Education projects are being used as a model for the proposed Cundinamarca project.

Project preparation also included lessons learned from other projects such as the Human Capital project (including the model for carrying out an impact analysis) and the Rural Education project (partnerships with the productive sectors). With respect to the Rural Education Project (PER) the Cundinamarca Secretariat of Education plans to integrate the PER into this Departmental Project to ensure consistency between both operations as well as to optimize the use of operational, technical, administrative and financial resources.

9. Environment Aspects (including any public consultation)

Issues : The proposed project has been rated category C. Since the project will not finance construction or remodeling of schools, it is not expected to have a negative environmental impact. On the contrary, better education to deprived rural and urban populations should promote a more positive attitude towards the protection and development of the environment.

10. List of factual technical documents:

11. Contact Point:

Task Manager

Martha Laverde - ROOM JB3-100

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW

Washington D.C. 20433

Telephone: Resident Mission in Bogotá: 571 326 3600 Ext 226

Fax: 571 326 3480

Banco Mundial in Colombia

Carrera 7 No. 71-21 Torre A - Piso 16

Bogota, Colombia

12. For information on other project related documents contact:

The InfoShop

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20433

Telephone: (202) 458-5454

Fax: (202) 522-1500
Web: [http:// www.worldbank.org/infoshop](http://www.worldbank.org/infoshop)

Note: This is information on an evolving project. Certain components may not be necessarily included in the final project.