

Classes suspended due to COVID-19, a permanent damage to this generation

It has been more than a year since in-person classes were suspended in Mexico as a consequence of the COVID-19 sanitary contingency, Campeche is the only state with a short-term plan for a comeback; the damage to a whole generation of students is irreparable

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria creates solutions to support students in vulnerable conditions, especially with infrastructure, equipment and educational staff. In these moments of pandemic, the work that CMT performs is indispensable, particularly in issues of connectivity and technology.

On March 14, 2020; the former Secretary of Public Education Esteban Moctezuma, informed that as a consequence of COVID-19 sanitary contingency, the holidays planned for the Holy Week would start on March 20.

It has been a year since that moment and the comeback to school for millions of Mexican students seems still far. Only the schools in Campeche are considering the fact of restarting in-person classes in a short term.

Into an analysis made by Centro de Investigación Económica y Presupuestaria A.C., it is mentioned that the suspension of in-person classes with the objective of stopping infections will leave behind massive expenses in learning issues for students, in the long-term graduation rates and incomes at work will also be affected.

The research called “COVID-19 and the comeback to school: An investment expenditure in sanitary infrastructure” they mention that in order to continue with the learning processes, the Secretary of Public Education (SEP) developed a strategy to learn at home using TV and online classes.

The strategy implemented by the Mexican Government showed several difficulties to reach the total number of students, because according to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), only 56.4 percent of the houses in the country have access to the internet, and only 44.3 percent of them have a computer.

Additionally, 10.7 percent of the internet users access to the internet outside of their house, and 52.3 percent of the population in rural areas do not have access to it. On the other hand, the records mention that only 96 percent of the houses in Mexico receive digital television signals.

Worldwide, it is estimated that after a year being in this pandemic, one out of three school-age children did not have access to distance learning while schools were closed, as informed by UNICEF.

Projections

- 7 percent of their total salaries will be lost approximately by every student in elementary and high school once they join the labor market, due to COVID-19 and the classes they lost.
- 4.5 percent of them would decrease the GNP in the country because of their undeveloped skills.

Campeche, a ray of light

According to the information provided by the President of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, on April 13, after the Holy Week break, Campeche would be the first state to reopen schools and start in-person classes, as this state did not increase its rates on infections caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2.

By the end of the year 2020, the Mexican Government announced that the states in green status would come back to school, which could not happen as the local governors refused. Currently, there are seven states in green status: Campeche, Chiapas, Jalisco, Nayarit, Veracruz, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas.

In Jalisco they decided that in-person classes will restart in August; Tamaulipas changed to yellow status, even the federal government said it was in green status; Veracruz and Nayarit informed that they would not restart classes until all the teachers get the vaccine, and Coahuila did the same.

Aspects to take into consideration to come back to school

- Guarantee social distancing in the classrooms
- Keep areas clean and sanitized



- Make sure that students and teachers get to school healthy and they keep that way at school
- Have enough water available in all the sinks



The Mexican government was expecting that private schools in those states would restart classes in March, however, they refused to do that and it did not happen. In all this context, the private schools in particular are the ones that really want to restart classes.

Last April 7, the Association of Private Schools in the State of Mexico announced that 200 private schools, in elementary and high school levels, would reopen and start in-person classes despite the fact that the state was in yellow status.

The future is at risk as classes are suspended

“Centro de Investigación Económica y Presupuestaria, A.C.” mentions that the population with more possibilities to continue with their learning process is the one that has a device with connection to the internet, parents with a degree and time available to assist their children on this process.

Considering that, the educational process of children and teenagers in conditions of poverty depends on going to school; as well as the possibility of participating successfully in the labor market so as to get better incomes in the future.

“Due to this sanitary contingency, we lost about 60 effective days in the school year 2019-2020. In terms of learning, this pause would have an impact for the generation of students enrolled in 6th grade in 2019-2020, and three years later, the graduation rate in secondary schools will reduce 2.5 percentage points, so the estimated rate for 2022-2033 of 88.3 percent would decrease to 85.8 percent”, as affirmed by the researchers.

Also, six years later, this pause would cause a decrease of 3 percentage points in the graduation rate in high school for that generation; which finally in a decade would mean a decrease in the incomes of those groups of students.







CMT and education

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria A.C., (CMT) through its Welfare Ecosystem Model, creates solutions in matters of education with the objective of helping students in vulnerable situations in areas like educational infrastructure, equipment and educational staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of in-person classes increased the necessity of having internet connection and computers so, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria developed programs with the objective of decreasing the impact of not having in-person classes.

By means of its programs of Supportive Contribution to Technology and Connectivity, CMT provides devices to students who do not have that resource, or internet connection to take their online classes.

Integral solutions CMT

Enough and high-quality educational infrastructure 	Basic sanitation facilities for each gender	
	Infrastructure for students with disabilities	
	Construction, maintenance, and improvement of classrooms and schools	
Equipment and educational supplies 	School materials for students	
	Transportation to schools	
	Scholarships	
Professionally trained educational staff 	Breakfasts	
	Continuous and constant training	
	Development of new technologies	