

Students, the beginning of an era

One quarter of the Mexican population is made up of students who had to change their routines after the sanitary contingency caused by the COVID-19. Many of them had to drop out of school as a consequence of the social and economic conditions that the pandemic left behind

CMT promotes actions to avoid students dropping out of school and to encourage their development in the country, specifically with the Program of Supportive Contribution to Technology and Connectivity, that has provided students with tablets, computers, and connectivity plans for mobiles and internet services. On May 23 we commemorate the Student's Day.

It was March 2020 when Jesús, who was five years old then, was studying the third grade in kindergarten. One month before that date, his mother enrolled him in the nearest school, however, after the Holy Week holidays, the little boy could not come back to school anymore. Currently, he has not even seen the elementary school where he is about to finish the first grade.

In total, 33.6 million students were enrolled in the school year 2019 - 2020, according to the Survey to Measure the Impact of COVID-19 in Education (ECOVIED-ED) 2020, developed by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI); unfortunately, they also had the same experience that Jesus did.

Each year on May 23 we commemorate the International Students' Day, and in the face of the sanitary contingency due to COVID-19, which caused the suspension of in-person classes, there are not so many things to celebrate as more than 700 thousand students had to drop out of school last year. Most of them had to do it as they did not have the technological resources to have their online classes taken.

Nevertheless, the negative effects of COVID-19 do not end here. In the school year 2020 - 2021, 32.9 million students were enrolled in Mexico at different educational levels, which represents 60.6 percent of the population from three to 29 years old.

The previous data means that 5.2 million people in school age did not enroll this year, especially for reasons related to COVID-19 or due to the lack of money and resources.

"Regarding the reasons related to COVID-19 for not getting enrolled this school year (2020 - 2021), 26.6 percent of people think that online classes are not functional enough for learning, 25.3 percent mentions that their parents or the ones in charge of them were fired, and 21.9 percent does not own a computer, another device, or connection to the internet" ECOVIED-ED highlights.



at home, and in 20.9 percent to get furnitures such as chairs, tables, desks, or organizing the areas to have a study room at home.

Most parents believe that suspending classes was a beneficial thing as their sons' lives were not at risk, with a 56.4 percent; while 22.3 percent of the families believe that online classes encourage family life; and 19.4 percent of the parents used this opportunity to save money as they did not spend on transportation or school supplies.

Nonetheless, the parents also became aware of the disadvantages of online classes, 58.3 percent of them think that the students learn less this way; while 27.1 percent emphasized the lack of follow-up in the learning processes of the students, and 23.9 percent mentioned the lack of techniques and pedagogical skills on parents so as to help the transfer of knowledge.

Since the very first moment this survey was developed last March, most students were willing or they had the responsibility to come back to school once the government allowed to do that; the range between 13 to 18 years is the one that shows more availability with 64.1 percent, followed by the group of people from 6 to 12 years old with 60.7 percent.

CMT and the students

The support that Congregación Mariana Trinitaria, A.C., (CMT) gives to education started 24 years ago when it was founded, however, after the suspension of online classes due to COVID-19, the solutions available at CMT multiplied.

One of the most famous cases was a product of the collaboration with a municipality in Durango, it was the program "Conéctate" (Get connected), that provided benefits to dozens of students who got tablets, computers, and connectivity plans for mobile phones and internet. This program has been so successful that a second stage is being implemented as soon as the students come back to in-person classes.

The Program of Supportive Contribution to Technology and Connectivity, promoted by CMT in its Welfare Ecosystem Model, within the Network of Education; became an engine for students who lacked basic technology to participate in their online classes.

Recently, CMT and Mrs. Marlet Rodea, a Councillor in the municipality of Toluca, in the State of Mexico, assisted 58 students in the Program of Supportive Contribution by subsidizing tablets.

Another action that CMT promoted was a collaboration with the municipality of Nava in Coahuila, where more than 300 elementary school students and 155 secondary school students got devices to facilitate their performance in their online classes. All the previous cases are just some of the actions that CMT has implemented for the students in Mexico.

In numbers



33.6 million people between 3 and 29 years old were enrolled in the school year 2019 - 2020 (62 percent of the total number).



32.9 million students enrolled in the school year 2020 - 2021 (60.6% of the population from 3 to 29 years old).



740 thousand (2.2 percent) were not able to finish the school year: 58.9 percent, owing to reasons related to COVID-19.



5.2 million people did not get enrolled in the school year 2020 - 2021 due to reasons related to COVID-19 or the lack of money and resources.

Technology, an essential issue for education

As mentioned in the ECOVIED-ED, most school dropouts during online classes were a consequence of the lack of equipment and internet connection. The survey also described specific characteristics of the use of devices by sector, for example, 55.7 percent of the population enrolled in universities used a laptop to have their lessons taken, while 70.2 percent of the students in elementary school used a smartphone.

For many families in Mexico, the simple fact of having access to the basic basket of goods seemed like something impossible; however, in order to allow students to continue with their classes, in 28.6 percent of the families with people from 3 to 29 enrolled that year, they decided to make an additional expense to buy smartphones; in 26.4 percent to get local internet services

Actions that give solutions

• **PROGRAM:** Supportive Contribution to Technology and Connectivity.

• **DATE:** September 22.

• **PLACE:** Morelia, Michoacán.

• **PARTNER:** Preparatoria Federal por Cooperación (PREFECA) "Melchor Ocampo".

• **BENEFICIARIES:** 700 students.

• **EQUIPMENT DELIVERED:** 700 computers and 100 tablets.

