



**Center for National Economic Research
(CIEN)**

Market Assessment of Non-state Education in Guatemala

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Prepared by:
Veronica Spross
María Isabel Bonilla
Luis Adolfo García Córdova

Acronyms

ACEM	Mayan Educational Institutions Association
ACERG	Evangelical Schools of The Republic of Guatemala Association
ACP	Private Schools Association
ACSI	International Association of Christian Schools
ANACC	National Association of Catholic Schools
APDE	Educational Development Association
BANRURAL	Rural Development Bank
BID	Inter-American Development Bank
CHN	National Mortgage Credit
CIEN	Center for National Economic Research
CNB	Basic National Curriculum
DIACO	Consumer Attention and Assistance Direction
DIGEACE	General Directorate of Accreditation and Certification
DIGEDUCA	General Directorate of Educational Evaluation and Research
EFAS	Agricultural Training Schools
EJEGUA	Jesuit Education in Guatemala
ENCOVI	National Survey of Living Conditions
FINTECH	Financial Technology
FOMIN	Multilateral Investment Fund
INE	National Statistics Institute
ISR	Income Tax
IVA	Value-added tax
MINECO	Ministry of Economics
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
PEI	Institutional Educational Project
PIB	Gross Domestic Product
PINA	Integral Protection for Children and Adolescents
SAT	Tax Administration Superintendence
SIB	Bank Superintendence

1. INTRODUCTION

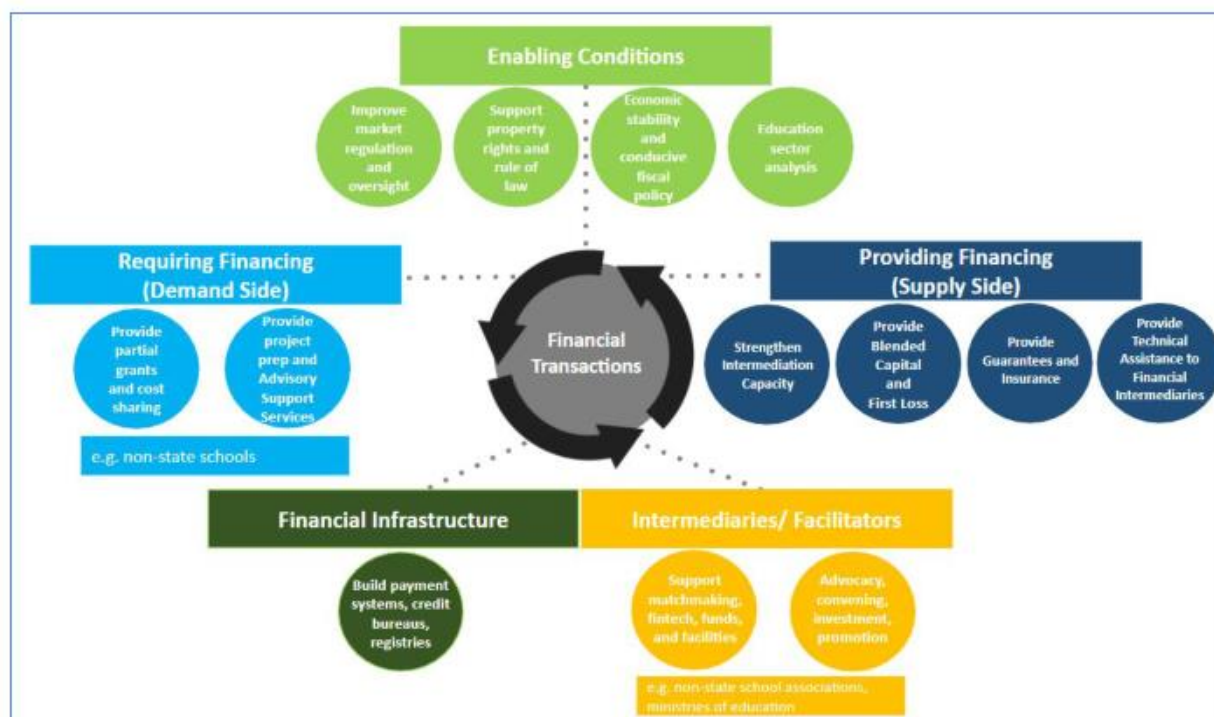
1.1 Objective

The objective of this market assessment is to understand the landscape of non-state education sector in Guatemala – including private and faith-based k-12 schools, pre-primary education centers and other education enterprises, and to identify potential opportunities and challenges for a blended finance activity in the non-state education sector. This assessment will inform the decision to pursue an education finance activity in Guatemala by CATALYZE LAC Edufinance. ¹

1.2 Scope and Methodology

This assessment was conducted over a 6-week period between September-October 2020 using the USAID five-point framework tool, adapted for education. ²

Chart 1: USAID Five Point Framework (adapted for education sector)



Source: Based on the original Five Point Framework developed by Deloitte

Interviews were conducted with Stakeholders from different relevant sectors in non-state education including:

- Private educational centers

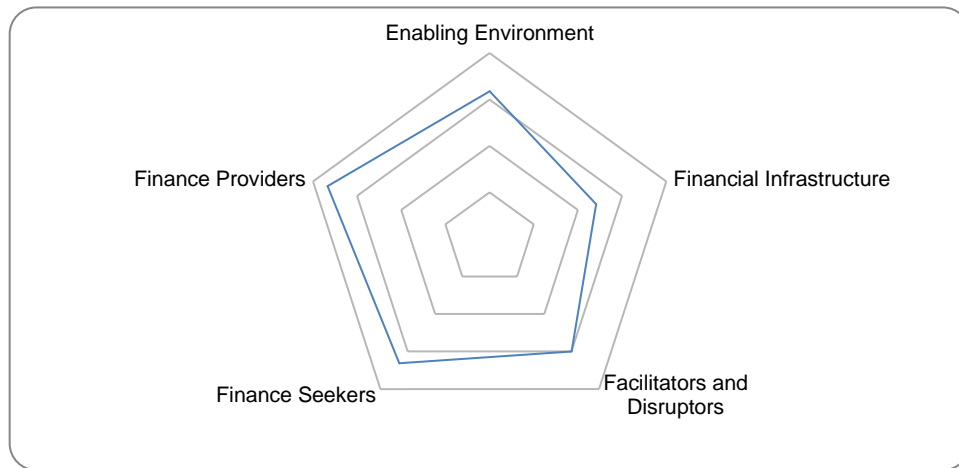
¹ For more information on CATALYZE Edufinance see here: <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/catalyze-edufinance-mobilizing-private-capital-education>

² For more information on the USAID five-point framework see here: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/MFD_Comprehensive_Introduction.pdf

- Service providers,
- International cooperation, experts,
- Associations of schools and
- Financial institutions.

Summary results from the five-point framework diagnostic are presented below - see **Annex I** for score break down. Guatemala earns a high score on Enabling environment, finance providers and finance seekers; scoring rationale is elaborated in the next three sections of the report.

Chart 2. Five-point framework summary for Guatemala



2. ENABLING CONDITIONS

2.1 Economic and political overview

GUATEMALA IN BRIEF ³

Demographic and Social characteristics:

Population: 17.6 million (2019)
Population, ages 0-14: 5.9 million (2019)
Population, ages 0-14, % of total: 33.9% (2019)
Population growth rate: 1.9% (2018)

Language: Spanish, Mayan, Xinca and Garifuna
Cultures: 56% Latinos, 42% Mayans, 2% Xinca and 0.13% Garifuna
Percentage of poor: 59.3% (national poverty statistics)
Capital: Guatemala city

Political and Macro-economic characteristics:

GDP: US\$ 76.71 billion
GDP growth rate: 3.85% (2019), 3.19% (average between 2016-19)
GDP per capita: US\$ 4,400 (2018)
Spending on education, % of GDP: 2.9% (2018)
Spending on education, % national budget: 23.7% (2018)
Inflation: 4.25%

Education sector:

Number of learners: 4.2 million
% learners attending private schools: 1.2 million (28%)
Net enrollment rate: 93.5% (primary), 49.1% (lower secondary), 25.7% (upper secondary)

Guatemala is the most populated country in Central America with an estimated population of 17.6 million, 51% of whom are women and 49% men. One-third of this total number are under 15 years old, and 62% are under the age of 30, making it a mostly young country. There are four cultures in the country. In the Population and Housing Census conducted on 2018⁴, 56% identified themselves as Ladinos, 42% as Mayans, 2% as Xinca and 0.13% as Garifuna. There are twenty five languages are spoken around the country, 22 of these are Mayan and the others are Spanish, Xinca and Garifuna.

GDP growth averaged 3.2% over last four years, but this year (2020) GDP is expected to shrink due to the COVID-19 crisis. The most affected economic activities have been housing and food

³ <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/education/country/guatemala>

⁴ 2018 Census: www.censopoblacion.gt

services, transportation and storage, construction and others. The Economic Expectations Survey to the Panel of Private Analysts estimates that the GDP as a whole for this year 2020 will have a reduction of 2.5% and on 2021 a growth of 2.8%.

Guatemala has a republican and democratic system of government with elections held since 1986. The current president, Mr. Alejandro Giammattei, and the Vice-President, Mr. Guillermo Castillo, won a four-year term from 2020-2024. Deputies and municipal mayors are also democratically elected for a four year term. In 1996, the Government of Guatemala signed peace agreements with the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity to end the armed conflict.

2.2 Education sector overview

Education in Guatemala is regulated by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC). Guatemalan education sector follows a 3-6-3-3 system: 3 years (Pre-primary), 6 years (Primary), 3 years (Lower Secondary or Ciclo Básico) and 2-3 years (Upper Secondary or Ciclo Diversificado). Education up to Ciclo Básico (Age 15 years) is a constitutional right for every citizen and an obligation for the State to provide. The Constitution recognizes education as a social right whose purpose is the integral development of the human, knowledge of reality, and national and universal culture.

Table 1. Education System in Guatemala				
Level	Preprimaria	Primaria	Básico	Diversificado
	Pre-primary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Years	3	6	3	2-3
Age, years	4 to 6	7 to 12	13 to 15	16 to 18
Grades	Stage 1, 2 & 3	Grades 1 to 6	Grades 1 to 3	Grades 4 to 6
Mandatory/voluntary	Voluntary	Mandatory for Government to provide service	Mandatory for Government to provide service	Voluntary
Source: MINEDUC				

*Many students attend one year of Pre-primary (called Preparatoria), as not every school has 3 years of Pre-primary.

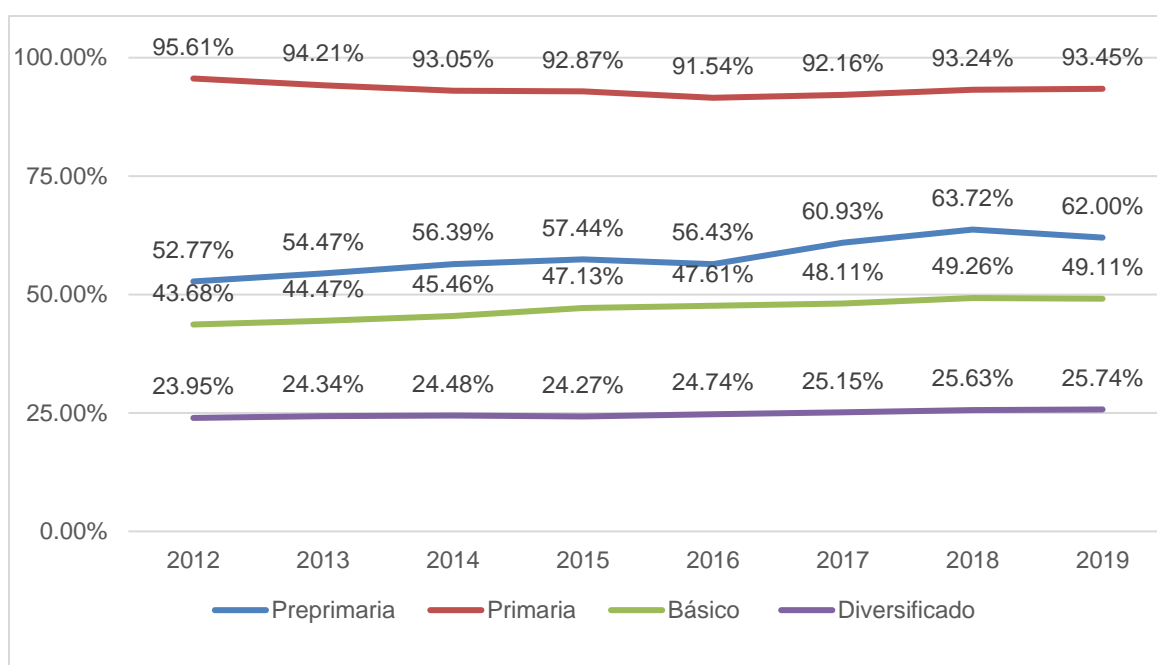
2.3 Enrollment and Education quality

Net Enrollment Rate

Guatemala has challenges in terms of enrollment, especially at the pre-primary and middle level (basic and diversified cycle) – see Chart 4 below. Lower secondary enrollment is due to both supply (lack of secondary schools) and demand factors - late enrollment in primary schools, also known as ‘red-shirting’, and high repetition rates lead to a higher percentage of over-age students whose academic achievement is usually lower) ⁵

⁵ Guatemala Education Sector, The World Bank, 2001

Chart 4: Guatemala Net Enrollment rate 2012-2019



Source: Prepared by CIEN based on data from MINEDUC and INE

Education Quality

In terms of educational quality in Guatemala, DIGEDUCA administers national tests to evaluate reading and math in first grade, third, sixth, third grade (basic) and graduating high school level. Results show student performance is deficient in both subjects. Latest evaluation results show that only 39 of every 100 students in private schools were reading at grade level, compared to 34% in the official sector, 27% in the cooperative sector and 20% in the municipal sector (DIGEDUCA, 2019). In mathematics, the data is even more alarming, though students from private schools again performed better. Only 15% of private school students performed at grade level in mathematics, 9% in public schools, cooperative schools 7% and municipal 3%. This difference between private and public student performance is almost non-existent when controlled for social and economic factors.

Education in Guatemala is mainly delivered in Spanish. This creates a huge barrier for children from indigenous population whose children do not fully comprehend Spanish. When these children enter first grade they are forced to learn in a language they do not fully understand. This limits their ability to learn and is one of the main sources of failure in the first grade.

Guatemala has also participated in international tests such as the Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study led by UNESCO and the Program for International Student Assessment for Developing Countries (PISA-D).⁶ Guatemala's results in PISA-D (2018) show that Guatemala

⁶ Guatemala uses PISA-D because more than half of 15-year-old students are no longer in school, are in primary school or do not attend secondary school regularly.

scored higher than average of participating countries, but there are still challenges in reading, mathematics and science.⁷

Guatemala has also participated in SERCE and TERCE, from UNESCO's LLECE initiative. The TERCE assessment results show Guatemalan student have improved their average reading and mathematics score, though Guatemala ranks in the lower half of the fifteen LAC countries participating in the assessment.⁸

National Education Law

In accordance with Article 5 of the National Education Law, the structure of the National Education System is composed of the Ministry of Education, the Educational Community and the schools. The schools are considered public, private or cooperative institutions – based on financing, and provision of education services.

Chart 5. Guatemalan Schools classification

		Provision	
		Private	Public
Finance	Public	Cooperative	Public
	Private	Private	

Source: Patrinos et al. (2009)

Public (oficial) schools are funded and operated by the State and free to attend

Private schools are funded through school fees and authorized by MINEDUC. They must offer educational services in accordance with the regulations and provisions approved by MINEDUC

Cooperative schools are considered non-profit and financed in a tripartite manner by the municipalities, parents and MINEDUC. These schools are only offer basic cycle and diversified cycle education. They were aimed at serving the rural communities in the country, but later expanded to the urban area. The Ministry of Education must provide the official school buildings, their infrastructure, furniture and other services for the operation of these institutes (Article 7). By 2019 there were 1052 cooperative schools across the country covering the basic cycle and 181 establishments covering the diversified cycle.⁹

2.4 Non-state education

⁷ Average results for countries that participated in PISA-D were 346 in Reading, Mathematics 324 and Science 349. Guatemala's results were in Reading 369, Mathematics 334 and Science 365.

⁸ TERCE, UNESCO, 2013

⁹ National System of Educational Indicators of MINEDUC 2016

The current Constitution ¹⁰ provides a general framework according to which all educational policy must be developed. It does not regulate how education should be provided, but it only recognizes the rights and obligations in relation to it. The Constitution establishes the State's obligation to facilitate education for its inhabitants without any discrimination (Article 71), and allows for education to be provided free by public schools (Article 74) or by private schools that are required to operate under the State regulations (Article 73). The Constitution also recognizes that the source of education is the family, and the parents have the right to choose what will be provided to their minor children. It also recognizes the importance of community participation in education.

The Political Constitution formulated in 1985 and which enters into force in 1986, as the supreme norm governing the entire Nation of Guatemala, firmly supports non-governmental education. Article 73 states:

" Private educational centers shall operate under the inspection of the Government. They are obliged to complete, at least, the official plans and programs of study. As cultural centers they will enjoy exemption from all kinds of taxes and fees".

2.4 RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since March 16, 2020, classes were suspended at all educational levels, from pre-primary to university education. As part of the response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Ministry of Education issued a document called the Response Plan, which includes strategies for continuity of education with modality of Distance Learning.

The Government, on the other hand, introduced several programs to help the economy after the reduction of activity and its impact for businesses. The cost of those measures is estimated to exceed Q20 billion by the end of 2020, having increased the gap between tax revenues and public spending, and therefore increasing the fiscal deficit. The level of indebtedness is rising, and it is likely that future taxes will increase to address the national deficit.

The government approved a package of measures to promote economic recovery consisting of support for small businesses, loans for small and medium enterprises, as well as investment in infrastructure. Credits were granted for the payment of benefits and for the maintenance of working capital. They were distributed through BANRURAL, CHN and Banco Inmobiliario.

Decree 12-2020 is the Emergency Law to protect Guatemalans from the effects of COVID-19, and includes, among others, the Capital Protection Fund and the Fund for Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, which grants loans at preferential rates. This decree also establishes regulations for payment compliance. During the state of public calamity and its possible extensions, decreed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the collection of fines, arrears, administered expenses or interest generated by delays in payment of fees corresponding to educational centers or universities is prohibited. Students shall not be subject to expulsion or other penalties. This situation will not affect their credit record or re-enrollment in the next educational cycle. The benefit

¹⁰ Article 74, political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala in force since 1986.

is applicable to those who are up to date with the payment of their fees, on the date this Decree becomes effective. Additionally, in the different educational levels and universities, the fees that are not paid during the sixty days following the beginning of the effectiveness of this law will be distributed proportionally in the remaining months of the year.

The existence of this regulation, Decree 12-2020, has made it difficult for schools and non-governmental educational centers to operate, since due to the pandemic it was necessary to defer payments to be paid in the second semester.

Actions in Education Sector

MINEDUC created an educational strategy to continue the learning process of students at home. This was achieved with the support of civil society, volunteers and the media. It is aimed at all students of different levels and modalities, with a pedagogy congruent with the basic national curriculum. To this end, the media has been used to disseminate the programming through social networks and through the telephone companies.

Learning sessions were implemented for pre-primary, primary, basic and diversified students through television, radio and mass circulation print media, video, audio and printed material production. This programming is broadcast on television -Channel 13- and government or MINEDUC social networks. The #AprendoEnCasa strategy focuses on three axes: educational delivery, psychosocial intervention and good use of time at home.

As part of the #AprendoEnCasa¹¹ strategy, the Ministry of Education implemented two portals to make available free digital resources, which various organizations provided for free, and platforms with self-learning guides in digital format. All of these resources are available to non-state schools, as well as to the public schools.

On September 29th, the Ministry of Education published in the Diario de Centro América the Ministerial Agreement Number 2762-2020, which makes official that during the 2021 school year a hybrid system of classes will be adopted. The Hybrid or Mixed model, refers to a form of educational delivery that combines learning in the classroom and at home, with the purpose that all students can continue with the educational process in a safe manner at the different levels of the National Educational System. The hybrid model will be worked according to the Guatemalan context established by the Health Alert System of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance.

The education authorities established with the ministerial agreement 2690-2020, the process of evaluation, registration, promotion and certification for the 2020 cycle in the official system. In this provision it is established:

- The evaluation methodology will be adhered to the strategies of the Aprendo En Casa initiative. The main evaluation tool will be a portfolio that each student will have to present, which consists of the compilation of the works, exercises and tasks carried out during the distance education stage.

¹¹ Aprendo en Casa website: www.aprendoencasa.mineduc.gob.gt

- All pre-primary students will be automatically promoted to the higher grade.
- For elementary through high school levels, the passing standard will be an overall average of at least 60 points, which will be determined based on classroom activities and Learning at Home strategies. Those who obtain less than 60 points will have the opportunity to recover on two occasions.

Finally, MINEDUC issued the Ministerial Agreement No. 3214-2020, dated on November 12 of 2020, in which it issued the Standards for the modality of virtual distance delivery for private educational institutions in the school education subsystem, at all educational levels. According to Article 2, this modality is a process that facilitates new forms of learning through digital technologies that favor communication to develop knowledge and at the same time, with a didactic methodology with strategies and resources. For this purpose, private educational institutions must request the authorization, operation and control of such educational delivery through the Departmental Directorates of Education.

SUMMARY

ENABLERS

- Guatemala's legal framework allows operation of private schools. The political Constitution firmly recognizes private schools, and gives parents the power to choose the school that best suits their family needs.

CHALLENGES

- Though private schools are recognized by the Constitution, there is lack of a clear public policy to include private schools into the national plan to increase enrollment and education quality, e.g. in the face of Covid-19 pandemic, smaller private schools that needed assistance the most could not meet Government's qualifying requirements.
- High primary enrollment rate not sustained at the lower secondary and upper secondary levels.
- Lack of preschool and early childhood initiatives hampers readiness to learn in elementary school grades. Children who don't speak Spanish as a first language face enormous challenges, since bilingual education is not readily available for all children who need it.
- Poor education quality as per national assessments

3. FINANCING NEEDS (DEMAND)

3.1 Private Schools

MINEDUC provides a code for each education cycle in a school – pre-primary, primary, basico (lower secondary) and diversificado (upper secondary). Thus, a school with three levels would have 3 codes and will be included thrice in the MINEDUC data. In 2019 the total number of codes (education cycles) across the country were 49,111 of which 28% were private, 69% public and 3% cooperative. Private codes are highest in Upper Secondary (81%) and Lower Secondary (48%). The Association of Private Schools estimates there 4,700 private school campuses, after accounting for code duplication.

Table 2a. Share of Private Schools in Guatemala						
	Private		Cooperative		Official (Public) incl. Municipal	
	# centers	% centers	# centers	% centers	# centers	% centers
Pre-primary	2,725	17%		0%	13,604	83%
Primary	2,915	15%		0%	16,508	85%
Lower Secondary	4,059	48%	1,052	14%	3,300	39%
Upper Secondary	3,927	81%	181	5%	740	14%

Source: MINEDUC 2019 data

In enrollment terms, private schools serve 1.2 million (28%) of the total 4.2 million learners across the country. In the case of pre-primary and primary education this percentage is 13% and in secondary education 63%. In other words, the initial levels are being attended mostly by the public sector and in the case of lower and upper secondary levels by the private schools.

Table 2b. Share of Private Enrollment in Guatemala			
	Private	Cooperative	Public
Pre-primary	16%	0%	84%
Primary	13%	0%	87%
Lower Secondary	37%	20%	43%
Upper Secondary	71%	7%	23%

Source: MINEDUC 2019 data

SCHOOL FEES

MINEDUC collects school fee data but this is not publicly available. Based on stakeholder interviews with school owners, parents and private school association (ACP) Table 3 summarizes fee-based segmentation of private schools

Table 3. School Fee Segmentation in Guatemala				
	Quetzales/ year	US\$/year	Fee/GDP per capita	% Private schools
Low cost	GTQ 3,500 / year	Up to \$450/year	< 10%	40% (1,880)
Medium cost	GTQ 6,000 / year	\$451-800/year	10-18%	45% (2,115)
High cost	> GTQ 6,000 / year	> \$800/year	>18%	15% (705)
Source: Interviews with School Association (ACP), school owners and parents				

In Guatemala there are a considerable number of children, adolescents, youth and adults who are out of school. The Read and Learn Project (2018) estimated that about 2.4 million people aged 13 and older were outside the system (see Table 4).

Table 4. Guatemalan children, youth and adults out of school, 2018				
	13-14 years old	15-16 years old	≥17 years old	Total
Total	258,613	291,830	1,833,980	2,384,423

Source: USAID Read and Learn Project (2018).

Private School Operations

In Guatemala, anyone can start a private educational center, once they comply with the requirements established by the MINEDUC. The operation is authorized for five years with renewal upon completion of each term. Regarding the fees, these are proposed by the school itself at the time of its creation and after its authorization they are regulated by the MINEDUC. This authorization is given for three years and increases of up to 15% may be charged during that time.

Number of students in Private schools

MINEDUC data provides number of students in private schools as per code, i.e. different education cycles (primary/lower secondary/secondary). This data can be used to estimate average number of students in a school once the number of cycles are known.

Table 5. Number of students attending private schools

Cycle	Number of students	Private schools- # of codes	Avg # of students/code
Pre-primary	98,316	2,725	36
Primary	296,290	2,915	102
Básico (Lower secondary)	292,141	4,059	72
Diversificado (Upper secondary)	293,017	3,927	75
Total	979,764	13,626	72

Location of Private schools

Majority (~40%) of the private schools are located in and around the Guatemala Departamento – Guatemala City, Mixco, Villa Nueva. Other prominent locations are Quetzaltenango and Escuintla. These areas are known to have higher crime rates and safety and security can be a challenge.

School Curriculum

Education in Guatemala is ruled by a Basic National Curriculum (CNB), established by the Minister of Education. It provides guidelines that should be achieved across the educational levels from pre-primary to middle level, diversified cycle. Private schools have the obligation to comply with the CNB and also have the freedom to add other subjects that they consider important for the students. In the same CNB the subject of languages is established, with three classifications, the local languages, the Spanish language and a third foreign language (mainly English language). Free of charge text books are available for the main subjects of the national curriculum for elementary school students.

Fees regulation

The MINEDUC authorizes the fees charged by private schools. Requests for fee increase may not exceed 15% over three years. A fee exceeding that limit, or any other charges in addition to the fee, are forbidden by law. A 2015 regulation unified all the fees schools can charge and gave parents clarity in the fee expectations.

Authorization and operation

Authorization and operation of private schools in Guatemala is governed by regulations revised and published in 2015 - "Regulations for the Authorization and Operation of Private Educational Centers". This authorization is issued by the MINEDUC through one of 26 Departmental

Directorates of Education across the country. The General Directorate of Accreditation and Certification (DIGEACE), a unit of MINEDUC, supervises the accreditation processes in the Departmental Directorates of Education. Article 24 mentions all the requirements that a private school must meet in order to be authorized. Schools are authorized to operate for five years; six months before this period expires they must renew their services for another five years.

Private schools must meet following requirements to operate:

- proof of geographic location;
- property or lease of building;
- risk mitigation plan;
- environmental impact analysis;
- sanitary hygienic conditions;
- building plans;
- human resource information;
- curricular and extracurricular project and
- school furniture.

In the case of the renewal of services, according to article 26, private schools must present:

- Progress reports on improvement plans
- Work reports
- Information on human resources
- Deed or lease of property
- Sanitary hygienic conditions and plans of the building
- A contract between the school and parents
- A complaint book authorized by DIACO

Additional quality assurance criteria applied at the time of fee authorization of private schools:

- a) Implementation of the National Curriculum
- b) Continuous Training of Teachers
- c) Profile of the Institutional Educational Project (PEI)
- d) Proposal for a school calendar that guarantees compliance with the minimum number of effective school days.

The regulations give departmental education directorate extensive discretionary powers to close down a private school found to be charging unauthorized fees. These powers are prone to abuse and can be a cause for concern among the school community.

Tax Exemption

The Income Tax Law under the Constitutions mandates that the income obtained by private schools is exempt from any tax. Private schools are also not charged any tax on registration, tuition, and examination fees. However, private schools are required to pay all fees and expenses related to registration of the establishment with the Superintendence of Tax Administration (SAT), updating of data, authorization of books, authorization and issuance of invoices in activities affected by ISR or VAT and acting as a tax withholding agent. The activities from which private schools are not exempted for taxes are bookstore services, transportation, stores, sale of shoes

and uniforms, use of the Internet, photocopying and printing services, tutorials and other extraordinary fees.

SUBSIDIES

The Political Constitution allows private schools to receive State subsidy so long as the subsidy is *"used for the activity or purpose for which it was granted, complying with the requirements established by the granting entity in accordance with the nature of the subsidy"*.

This type of subsidy is made for the benefit of the out of school population, children of limited economic resources, in conditions of vulnerability, discrimination, and social and environmental risk. These subsidies are granted by the Departmental Directorates of Education.

From 2016 through 2019, economic subsidies from MINEDUC have been granted to 13 to 14 institutions, with an average amount of Q104 million (USD13.2 mil). These are: Association Ak Tenamit; Association Centro Don Bosco; Association Comunidad Esperanza; Association of Mayan Educational Centers (ACEM); Association Futuro Vivo; Association Grupo Ceiba; Association Obras Sociales de las Dominicadas de la Anunciata; Association for the Integral Development of the Northeast; Foundation Adentro; Foundation Fe y Alegría; Foundation Futuro de los Niños; Foundation for the Development and Education of Indigenous Women and Foundation Pescanova.

Institutional Educational Project

The Institutional Educational Project (PEI) according to DIGEACE (2018) is a plan of action for the development of a school. Private educational centers (and public ones as well) must comply with the realization of the PEI. The purposes of the PEI are: a) To guide the necessary actions for the development, strengthening, and improvement of the educational center; b) To facilitate the participation of the educational community in the administrative and pedagogical processes, from the environment in which each one has an influence; c) To strengthen the institutional identity; d) To self-evaluate the educational center and to identify the strengths and weaknesses; e) To promote the constant evaluation and continuous improvement of the educational center; f) To promote the consolidation of information regarding the way in which the curriculum is implemented for the achievement of pertinent and relevant learning and g) To project itself to the community where it is developed.

Recruitment of Teachers

The hiring of teachers in private schools should be based on the provisions of the MINEDUC. The minimum requirements for the pre-primary education level are studies of Teaching in Pre-primary Education at the secondary education level. In the case of primary education, it is important for teachers to have a university teaching staff in education (Government Agreement 247-2017 and Ministerial Agreement 3452-2017) and at the secondary education level also university professors, but with academic specialties. However, this is not strictly enforced and there is no certainty that this is fulfilled.

Fees setting system

Private educational centers have the power to propose their own fees at the time of the request for their creation. Together with all the requirements, as mentioned, the Departmental Directorates of Education are in charge of receiving, reviewing and authorizing the applications for the opening of the centers and within this is the proposal of fees. A careful analysis of the proposal is key, since when it is approved, it initiates government control of the fees with respect to the subsequent increase(s). However, it is important to note that the Departmental Directorates of Education may interfere in setting the initial fee in accordance with what they deem appropriate.

There are a variety of schools according to what they charge in their fees in Guatemala City, the department and the province. Usually the lowest fees are found in the province where the standard of living tends to be lower as well. Similarly, in each municipality there are differences between low, medium and high cost centers. The fee levels in a municipality of the province are not the same as in Guatemala City, or even among the same provincial municipalities. These levels depend on the initial proposal that the school makes to the MINEDUC. Fees are generally charged on a monthly basis and sometimes parents may pay several fees in advance which generates discounted benefits. The school calendar in Guatemala for all schools, including private schools, is normally from January to October with some exceptions for schools with international calendar going from September to June.

School Fee Loans

As established in Article 73 of the Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, parents have the right to choose the education to be given to their children. In this sense, they can decide to send their children to a private or public educational center. There are no regulations to the contrary. In this sense, the decision of a parent to send their child or children to a low-cost educational center is their own unquestionable choice. However, it is common for these decisions to be based on the quality of education expressed in teacher training and educational content; compliance with class days; personalized attention; the ability to demand improvements and that these are heard more quickly, by the very fact that they are paying for them; curricular activities; extended hours or simply something aspirational, that is, there is a perception that private is better than public.

3.2 Other companies providing educational services

In Guatemala there are companies that provide educational services to private educational centers. The company Odilo offers the service of a Digital Library and Reading Plans. In the Library there are approximately 30 thousand resources among text books in different academic areas, English books, reading and others. Odilo also offers learning to read, guided readings and reading comprehension.

Edoo is a Guatemalan company that offers services to private educational institutions for learning management on a technological platform. One of the star services is the Learning Management System (LMS). This platform helps to improve day-to-day processes. It allows to take

attendance, generate assignments, grade, upload documents and others. It also has the component of administrative and financial support.

Another company is EduFuturo, which provides the services of a digital platform which stores in the "cloud" about 77 thousand digital resources distributed by educational levels. Other service providers such as Geducar, an educational and school management platform; Edoo, an ecosystem for educational management; Microsoft, with a series of applications; Google Classroom; Santillana Compartir and others can also be mentioned; Microsoft with a variety of applications; Google Classroom; Mc Graw Hill, Thompson and others.

Summary

Enablers to non-state schools

- Guatemala has a large population of learners (4.2 million) and private schools serve a significant share of this - 1.2 million, or 28%
- Private schools are the predominant education provider in the country at upper secondary cycle (81%), also significant at lower secondary (48%)
- Anyone can open a private school, with transparent regulations around school registration and setting school fees

Challenges to non-state schools

- The role of the government, specifically the Ministry of Education, has been mainly in matters of control over private schools, limited to authorizing the registration of new centers, expanding services, and controlling their fees. The Constitution and the regulations that follow speak of support for private educational centers and that they contribute to the development of the country, but the practice does not go beyond control and supervision.
- PINA Law ¹² forbids affecting students if parents do not pay for education. This creates a perverse incentive for parents who take advantage of this policy to not pay for a service they have voluntarily chosen by signing a contract.

¹² Decree Law 27-2003

4. PROVIDERS of FINANCE (SUPPLY-SIDE)

4.1 The Financial System

The formal Guatemalan financial system is supervised by the Superintendency of Banks¹³ and comprises different financial institution types: Banks, Financial Societies, Financial Groups, Storage Companies, Insurance Companies, Exchange Houses, Off Shore Entities; and Credit Card issuing entities. There are 17 banks¹⁴ in Guatemala (see Table 5). The three main banks in the country in terms of assets, loans and deposits are Banco Industrial, Banrural and Banco G&T. FICOHSA, ViviBanco and Banco Industrial have the lowest default rate compared to all the banks in the country. Globally, the banks' total assets in 2019 amounted to Q349,684 million, or approx. USD 45 billion.

Table No. 6
Local Banks or Banking Institutions according to assets, loans, deposits, profits and arrears and capitalization, in millions of Quetzals, 2019

Institution	Assets	Loans	Deposits	Utilities	Default	ROA	Capitalization
Banco Industrial	98,037	53,161	66,966	1,535	0.9%	1.8%	8.7%
Banrural	74,672	34,957	61,147	864	4.6%	1.3%	10.2%
Banco G&T	52,532	22,526	38,884	452	2.6%	0.9%	8.9%
BAC	29,950	22,414	24,215	586	2.3%	1.3%	8.9%
BAM	28,474	22,080	19,667	286	1.6%	2.7%	10.0%
Total	349,684	193,025	261,859	5,135	2.2%	1.6%	9.8%

Source: Elaboration based on a study by Zumma Ratings based on SIB data.

On the other hand, there is the informal sector which is composed of credit unions such as MICOOPE¹⁵ which groups 25 cooperatives around the country. In 2018 MICOOPE's total assets were Q15,938 million, loans Q11,701 million, savings deposits Q12,028 million and a default of

¹³ SIB: www.sib.gob.gt

¹⁴ Until November 8, 2020 the number of local banks had been 16. On November 9, 2020 Banco Credicorp, S.A. started its operations.

¹⁵ MICOOPE: www.micoope.com.gt

2.8%. In addition to the cooperatives that constitute MICOOPE, according to the National Institute of Cooperatives¹⁶, there are more than 300 credit unions in Guatemala's 22 departments. There are also Non-Governmental Organizations that provide microcredits, among them we can mention some such as Génesis Empresarial, FUNDES and FUNDAP.

Génesis Empresarial is a foundation that grants credits in the micro-finance sector. It is oriented to the segment of the population with scarce economic resources. It currently has 107 branches in all departments of the country. As part of their vision, they hope to reach 125 branches and one million customers, consolidating themselves as the leading institution in the local market. On 2019 its total assets were Q1,717.6 million.

Table 7. Average Interest rates in Guatemalan financial institutions	
Type of Institution	Average Annual Interest Rate
Microcredit loans	22.07%
Consumer loans	24.49%
Private schools or credits to parents (for education)	28-30%
Small Business loans (unsecured)	10.38%
Business loans (secured)	9.13%
Corporate loans	6.83%

Source: Elaboration based on SIB data.

4.2 Loans for private educational institutions

Table 8. Loans to private schools		
	Génesis Empresarial	Banrural
Number of loans outstanding	2,478	3,000
Average loan amount (Quetzal)	17,624.41	N/A
Average loan amount (USD)	\$2,250	
Annual Interest Rate, %	12% - 16%	10% - 20%
Garantía	No	Yes (Guarantor)
Maximum loan tenor	10 years	N/A
Repayment frequency	monthly	monthly
Delinquency rate (Total loan portfolio)	1.78%	4.60%

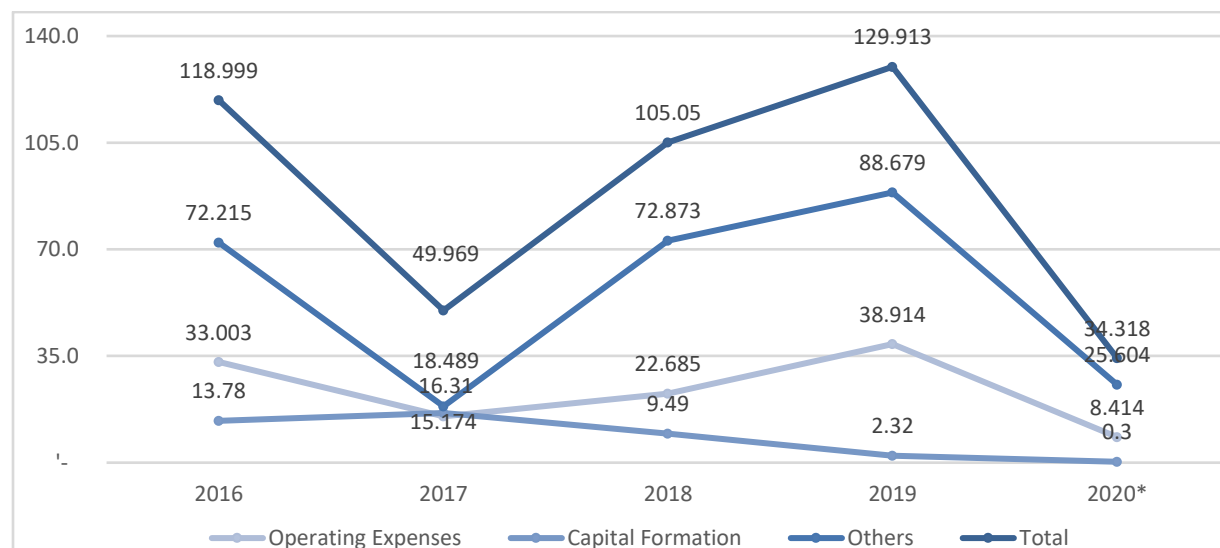
Source: Key stakeholder interviews

SIB DATA

¹⁶ INACOP: www.inacop.gob.gt

The Superintendency of Banks of Guatemala (SIB) periodically carries out the registration of credits or loans granted by local banks according to categories. One of these categories has to do with educational institutions and within these are schools and colleges or private educational centers. This is the registry available at the country level in terms of the financial market. Between 2016 and 2019 there was a 9% increase in loans, from Q119 to Q129.9 million (SIB, 2019), despite the fact that in 2017 there was a considerable decrease (see Chart 6).

Chart 6: Loans to schools and private colleges/schools, 2016-2020*



Source: SIB data.

*2020 data updated as of 08/31/2020.

Loans are mostly directed to the undisclosed "other" category, followed by operating expenses and to a lesser extent to capital formation. Private schools, colleges, or educational institutions apply for larger loan amounts mostly between the months of October, November, and December, which coincides with the following year's planning or year-end operating expenses. Other important loan requests are made in the middle of the year in order to obtain funds according to the needs that are considered. Otherwise, the way of operation is given mainly by contributions from their owners.

The Association of Private Schools –ACP- that brings together more than 120 private educational centers in the country and other low-cost private educational centers agree that at the country level, in general, there are no plans aimed at or that motivate credits to these schools¹⁷. Each school approaches local banks, cooperatives or micro-finance institutions according to their needs, and favorable interest rates are not always available. The average interest rate that is being charged in the third quarter of 2020 is between 28 and 30% annually, or 2.5% monthly.

¹⁷ ACP: www.acp.org.gt

In addition to the loans that education institutions can receive from the financial system, there are other providers of international financing such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB by its acronym in Spanish) and the Multilateral Investment Fund (FOMIN by its acronym in Spanish, now renamed as IDB Invest). The IDB Invest is an investor of micro-finance and entrepreneurial capital funds to small businesses¹⁸, its way of working is usually with local private partners providing grants, loans, guarantees, investments, quasi-investments and consultancies. Another important provider is the Catalyzer Fund, which receives support from IDB Invest. This fund was created for entrepreneurs and companies in the initial stages, which have social or environmental impact.¹⁹

4.3 Parent Loans

In addition to the loans granted directly to educational centers, institutions such as Banrural or Génesis Empresarial offer microcredit to parents to finance education. This financing is regularly included in consumer portfolios and does not represent significant amounts compared to the total, since they are usually small loans, for example, of Q3,000; Q5,000 or Q10,000.00 and are used to pay study fees or school supplies.

4.4 Remittances

Remittances or family transfers represent an important source for families in Guatemala. Remittances represent about 14% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2019 total inward remittances into Guatemala was US\$10.51, nearly 40% increase over 2016 (\$7.39 billion) (BANGUAT, 2019). Despite the crisis generated by the pandemic, remittances did not decrease this year, but continued to increase.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a Survey about International Migration of Guatemalan People and Remittances 2016, published in 2017. This survey includes the social investment that families make with remittance amount. Spending on education was only 3.4% of total remittances. This amount is used to pay tuition and monthly fees, school supplies, transportation, spare parts, language studies, art, music and others. Given this proportion, it is estimated that in 2019 about US\$357 million will be spent on education from remittances, for both students in both public and private educational institutions.

SUMMARY

Enablers/Facilitators

- Multiple Banks and Microfinance Institutions willing to lend to SMEs and private schools
- Growing loan portfolios and low delinquency rates suggest credit discipline in the market
- Microfinance institutions offer loans to parents, but these are usually small amounts. No financial institution offers a targeted loan product for schools
- Remittances are an important source for families in Guatemala looking to invest in private education

¹⁸ IDB Invest/FOMIN: <https://www.iadb.org/es/resources-businesses/fondo-multilateral-de-inversiones>

¹⁹ Catalyzer: <https://alterna.pro/fondo-catalyzer/>

Challenges or barriers

- COVID-19 pandemic likely to impact educational institutions revenues and profitability making it harder for financial institutions to appraise and make loans to private schools

5. Financial Infrastructure

Credit Bureaus

Credit bureaus are a tool help predict loan defaults. It improves the behavior of loan-takers, and motivates other financial intermediaries to share data which enables better decisions and risk reduction. Most prominent credit reporting bureaus in Guatemala is **Infornet**.²⁰ It is a system where people are registered and it compiles the data regarding credits the people might have.

There is another bureau developed by the Superintendency of Banks called Historial Crediticio.

²¹

Collateral registry systems

The Property Register includes in its activities the registration of collaterals associated to the land or properties. This register is autonomous and has integrated digital systems, which have helped the efficiency of consultation process. This information is widely used by banks and other economic agents interested in learning if collateral are included or not.

The Register of moveable collaterals was implemented 10 years ago. At the beginning it was not being used that much by small companies, but by large firms. It has a computerized system, and it is being consulted by more people, but needs updating.

6. Intermediaries and facilitators

Private School Associations

In Guatemala there are several associations such as the Association of Private Schools (ACP), being one of the associations that joins the largest number of schools in some sectors of the country, 125 schools in total. There is also the Association of Evangelical Schools of the Republic of Guatemala (ACERG); the International Association of Christian Schools (ACSI); the National Association of Catholic Schools (ANACC); Jesuit Education in Guatemala (EJEGUA); the Association for Educational Development (APDE) and the Guatemalan Chamber of Education mostly.

The most active in terms of advocacy and monitoring of educational policies related to the issue is the ACP. Most of them can be considered as associations of low-cost private schools. It is common that most schools do not belong to an Association, which is an opportunity to be part of these support networks.

The roles of the Associations have been particularly in sharing, maintaining and defending the values they pursue among their members, as well as ensuring the quality of education, training

²⁰ <https://infor.net/portal/>

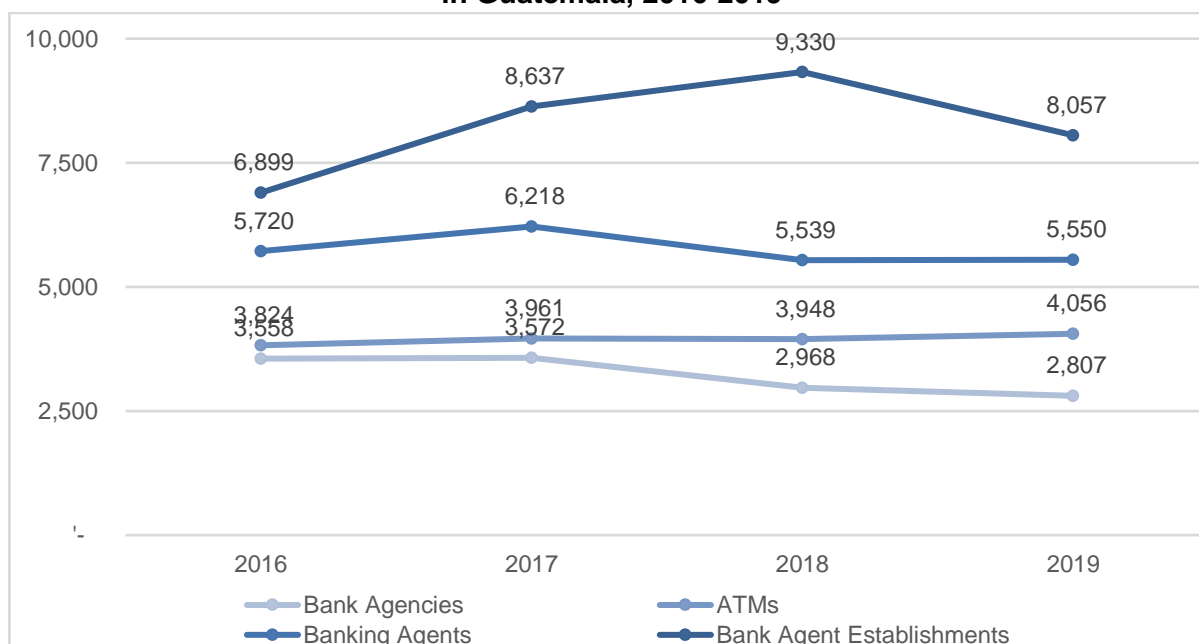
²¹ <https://www.sib.gob.gt/web/sib/atencion-al-usuario/record-credificio>

and exchange of good practices among them. On the other hand, some Associations such as the ACP have played a leading role in strengthening and promoting private education at different levels, especially directly with government agencies such as the MINEDUC. They seek to defend the right of parents to choose the education they want and to see private education as an ally for the development of the country as it is supported by the Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala.

Fintech/Mobile Banking

The financial system in Guatemala represented mainly by the banking system has a financial infrastructure around the 22 departments of the country. In each department you can find agencies or branches mainly of the largest banks in the country and ATMs, and a good number of agents and banking institutions.

Chart 7: Agencies, ATMs, agents and bank agent establishments in Guatemala, 2016-2019



Source: SIB data.

Mobile electronic banking has been increasing over the last four years. Deposit accounts and lines of credit affiliated with mobile financial services per 10,000 adults over 18 years of age increased by 53.6% from 2016 to 2020 (see Table 8).

Table No. 9
Deposit Accounts and Lines of Credit Affiliated with Mobile Financial Services, 2016-2020

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Estimated population ≥ 18 years old	8,974,028	9,261,973	9,554,930	9,857,320	10,162,183
Deposit accounts and credit lines affiliated to mobile financial services nationwide	1,400,816	1,619,403	1,874,873	2,175,531	2,436,359
Deposit accounts and lines of credit affiliated with mobile financial services per 10,000 adults	1,561	1,748	1,962	2,207	2,398

Source: SIB data

7. OVERALL SUMMARY and RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

Enablers

- Non-state education is allowed by the Constitution of Guatemala and the National Education Law.
- There is a large presence of private schools (28%), especially at pre-primary and secondary levels, with room for growth in all grade levels
- Guatemala's macroeconomic conditions reflect stability, low inflation, and free prices for the various economic sub-sectors.
- Land registry and credit bureaus are effective and market friendly.
- Diverse financial system with Banks, micro-credit companies, cooperatives – some are already offering loans to parents, there is potential to offer credit to private schools.

Challenges

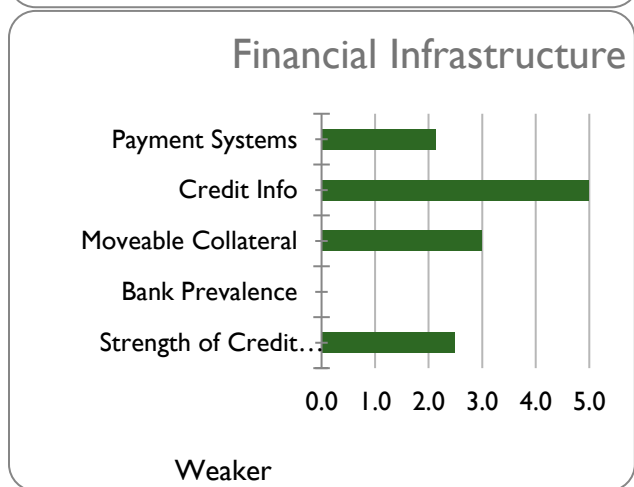
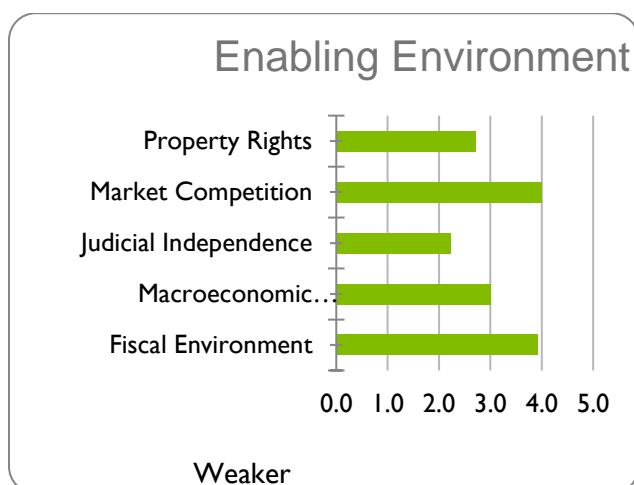
- The Constitution speaks of support for private schools but the enforcement of MINEDUC regulations does not go beyond control and supervision. MINEDUC role restricted to authorizing registration of new schools and controlling their fees
- PINA Law, DIACO and the Law on the Regulation of Fees do not seem to be oriented towards strengthening this educational sector
- PINA Law creates a perverse incentive for parents to not pay school fees.
- High primary enrollment rate not sustained at the lower secondary and upper secondary levels
- Poor education quality as per national assessments

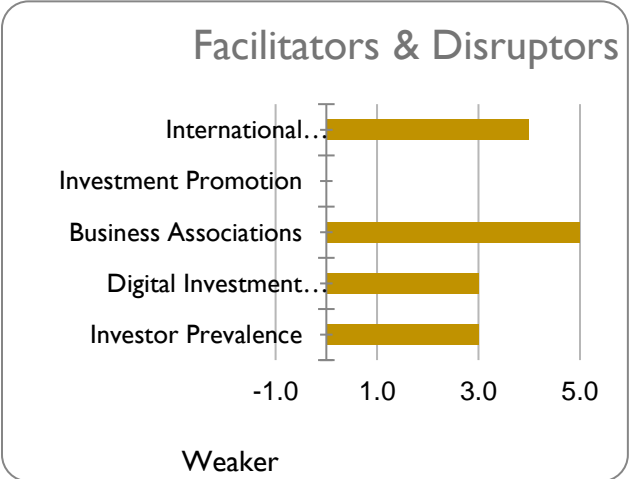
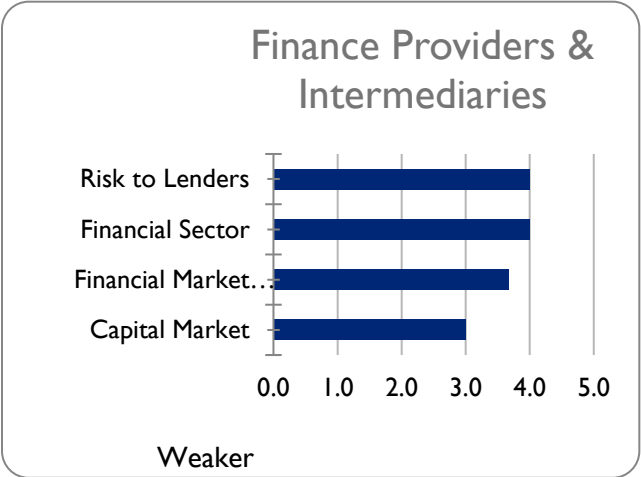
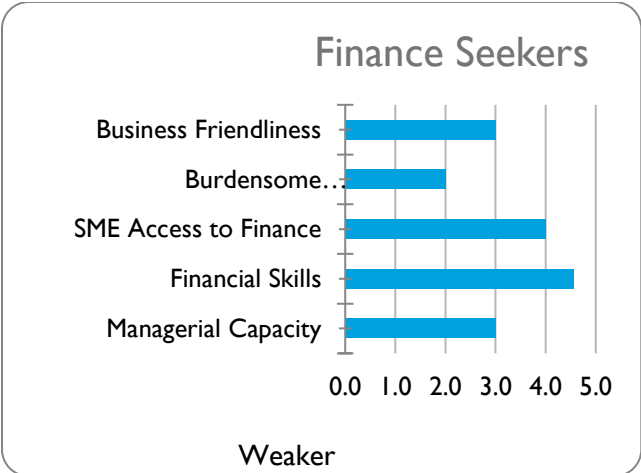
RECOMMENDATIONS

- To review the regulations, especially the mechanism for setting fees, the application of the PINA Law, and the role of DIACO.
- Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) supervision must be transformed from being purely monitoring and regulating to supporting better education quality
- There is opportunity to expand credit programs for private schools to introduce loan products for improving infrastructure, managing working capital needs, and invest in education technology and learning platforms

Appendices

Number of school codes in Guatemala				
	Private	Cooperative	Public	Total
Pre-primary	2725	50	13554	16329
Primary	2915	81	16427	19423
Lower Secondary	4059	1160	3292	8511
Upper Secondary	3927	253	668	4848
Tota	13626	1544	33941	49111





Appendix 3: Conducted interviews

Table No. 9
People interviewed

First name	Last name	Position	Instituton
Diana	Brown	Executive Director	Private Schools Association
Édgar	Carrera	Area Manager	Banco de Desarrollo Rural (BANRURAL) S.A.
Luis	Del Cid	Area Manager	Banco de Desarrollo Rural (BANRURAL) S.A.
Álvaro	Zebadúa	Manager	Génesis Empresarial
Marcel	Reinchenbach	Owner	Colegio Suizo Americano, Guatemala
María Isabel	Quezada	Owner	EDUFUTURO, Chimaltenango
Cynthia	Guerra	Owner	Colegio Activo Bilingüe y Biblioteca Digital Odilo, Guatemala
Daniel	López	Owner	Colegio de Ciencias Comerciales, Guastatoya, El Progreso
Fernando	Paiz	Owner	Colegio Inglés Americano, Guatemala
Lucía	Paiz	Owner	Colegio Inglés Americano, Guatemala
Andrea	Paiz	Owner	Colegio Inglés Americano, Guatemala
Alberto	Montes	Principal	Colegio Inglés Americano, Guatemala
Pablo	Melgar	Administrative Manager	Colegio Inglés Americano, Guatemala
Walther	Morales	Manager	Edoo
Bismarck	Pineda	Institutional Strengthening Specialist	FHI360
Liseth	Juárez	Education Director	Umbraal Program, PRONACOM and MCC
José	Moreno	Former Vice-Minister	Vice-Ministry of Design and Verification of Educational Quality of the Ministry of Education

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