Developing pedagogical and democratic citizenship competencies:
"Learning by Participating" Program

Chapter 10. Developing pedagogical and democratic citizenship competencies:
"Learning by Participating" Program
Cárdenas, M. in García, B., Sandoval, A., Treviño, E., Diezgranados, S., Pérez,
M.G (Eds.) (2017) <u>Civics and Citizenship: Theoretical Models and
Experiences in Latin America</u>. Sense Publishers, Netherlands, pp. 207-240.

MARIALI CÁRDENAS[1]

DEVELOPING PEDAGOGICAL AND DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP COMPETENCIES: "LEARNING BY PARTICIPATING" PROGRAM

"[A good citizen] is that person who has a clear view of what is happening and thinks about what is good for everyone. The person knows that a better world is possible, grounded in values: someone who worries for others and tries to improve things, not someone who just stays seated and waits for the answers to arrive."
--Participating student, 8th grade

GENERAL OVERVIEW

It is well known that the teaching and learning of democratic citizenship requires strategies that go beyond the acquisition of factual knowledge to include the development of skills, attitudes and civic dispositions that enable the individual to effectively contribute to the construction of a more democratic and just society.

Both researchers and practitioners have asked how this can best be achieved. How can teachers generate the pedagogical conditions that enable their students to develop competencies that may help them become active citizens?

This chapter describes a program that has been successful in strengthening teacher pedagogical practices in order to effectively accomplish that objective with elementary and middle public school students.

The program considers that teacher and student competencies for democratic citizenship are interrelated, and that as teachers improve their teaching skills, the students will have better opportunities to develop competencies too. The central strategy is a conceptual framework, a set of tools and a participatory methodology that enables both teachers and students to design and implement a community project based on the analysis of their reality, focused on improving the quality of their own lives and that of their communities. Through this methodology, democratic citizenship competencies are developed and exercised -such as democratic deliberation, sense of belonging, social participation, self-efficacy, and search of a common good. In this way, the program generates learning opportunities that support a paradigm shift with regard to democratic participation from a passive to an active disposition by developing a sense of agency.

The program was designed by Vía Educación[2] and originated in 2005 from a participatory action-research approach and has been implemented in Mexico with more than 700 public school teachers in different socio-economic contexts, including marginal urban schools, rural and indigenous communities. The program has been evaluated, with a formative and summative approach, to improve the model and expand the effects. A quasi-experimental study published in 2014 (Reimers F., Ortega, M.E., Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E.) indicates that the program

succeeded in significantly improving teacher practice and regarding the students it also had a statistically significant positive effect on the dimensions of civic knowledge and skills and on active participation in school, compared to a control group.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter has the objective of sharing a teacher professional development program that originated as a response to different contextual circumstances such as the level of inequality in the Latin-American region and the decrease of trust in democracy, as well as the need to expand educational opportunities that genuinely enable students to have the capability to improve the quality of their own life and that of others.

After studying the key elements of democratic citizenship education, this program incorporates those that research suggests that achieve a greater and more effective development of citizenship competencies in students. For example, it is coherent with a learning by doing pedagogy based on the reflection of teachers' practice. Also, the work with teachers includes the development of competencies, where teachers, as facilitators, promote the participation of students in a practical experience. The components of the program are: 1) Training sessions, 2) implementation of a participatory methodology, and 3) ongoing assessment, teacher support and feedback.

The details of the Program will be discussed in this chapter, however as an introduction it is important to mention that the participatory methodology is a key component of this Program for the development of competencies in both teachers and students. The participatory methodology is applied in the classroom and requires the teachers to guide their students in identifying a meaningful problem for them and their community and designing a work plan in accordance with their own resources and context, which is implemented and later evaluated. While doing this, the teachers develop teaching competencies in democratic citizenship education. The resulting participatory projects, focused on improving the conditions of the students' community, allow them to develop a sense of agency while practicing other democratic citizenship competencies such as democratic deliberation and social participation. While participating with others to improve an aspect in their community, students develop a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), in other words, of feeling capable of finding solutions to the problems that affect them and others. This program also includes an understanding of a conceptual framework of democracy and civic participation that allows participants to have a continuous reflection on the process of implementing a participatory project and its relation to those concepts.

This chapter presents the program's contextual background and framework, theory of change, participatory methodology, evaluation mechanisms and results, as well as the distinctive aspects that characterize it compared to other teacher-training programs.

Contextual background

The program originated in response to different interrelated context circumstances:
- Inequality of educational opportunities in Latin America
- The need for non-traditional pedagogical approaches in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Latin America
- Education policies in Mexico and link to the teacher professional development program presented in this chapter.

Inequality of educational opportunities in Mexico
In Mexico, as in other parts of Latin America, poverty and inequality are determinant in people's quality of life. Inequality in the region is the highest in the world, with the richest 10% of the population amassing in the last decades an average 37% of total wealth, while the poorest 40% receive only a little over 13% of total wealth (CEPAL, 2010). Although efforts in reducing poverty have been applied in the last decades, Latin America continues to have great socioeconomic differences; only in 2014 the 10% richest of the population had amassed 71% of the wealth of the region (CEPAL, 2014). Particularly in Mexico, today 41% of population lives in poverty and 16% of them in extreme poverty (CEPAL, 2016).
This poverty and economic inequality translates into inequality in educational opportunities that creates a reinforcing mechanism where the lack of development of competencies affects social mobility (Reimers, 2001). Today 43% of the population between 15 and 64 is in a strong educational backwardness because they don't know how to read or write (7%), also because of lack of opportunities to finish primary or secondary school (29%) or because what they have "learned" after 12 years of education (6 out of 10 individuals) is not sufficient to master basic verbal and math skills. The individuals who are in the greatest backwardness are also the individuals who have had the most deficient educational opportunities, particularly affecting women that come from rural and indigenous communities (CEPAL, 2016; OECD, 2012, Gil Anton, 2014)[3].

Considering this context, education has a major role in changing this pattern with its potential to develop knowledge, attitudes, values and skills necessary for citizens to participate actively and effectively in their society particularly in the improvement of their quality of life and that of others.

The state of democracy and democratic citizenship education in Latin America
The democratic context in Latin America is exceptional: it is a historical moment given the number of democratically elected governments in the region. However, it is also a moment where democracy is still fragile (UNDP, 2004, 2008 and UNDP, OAS, 2010). A couple of studies carried out by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2004 and 2008) explain how close to half of the population in the region would be willing to have an authoritative government, even while losing their democratic rights such as liberties of expression and organization, as long as it was accompanied by higher economic development. In these studies Guillermo O'Donell and his colleagues explain how "democracy is a form of political organization that brings into play, in addition to political and contextual freedoms underlying the

regime, central aspects of civil, social and cultural citizenship. There is a close relationship between democracy and citizenship: democracy rests on the idea that the citizen chooses and contributes to the formation of collective decisions in the exercise of their autonomy. The fragility of political and civil rights and lack of rights and floors of social and cultural equality, question the possibility of that autonomy, at least for large, very broad sectors of the population. Democracy entails certain rights and invokes the existence of others without which the whole edifice of political equality is fragile (UNDP, 2008, pp.19)."

Considering the importance of citizens and their potential to contribute to build a more democratic society but also the lack of democratic knowledge and skills in the region, in 2001 the Inter-American Democratic Charter was signed by the 34 member states of the OAS, which highlights the importance of "promoting democratic values in order to establish a democratic culture and especially one 'that will pay close attention to the development of programs and activities for children and youth as a way to ensure the permanence of democratic values, including liberty and social justice'" (OAS, 2001). This message was re-emphasized at the meeting of Ministers of Education in Trinidad and Tobago organized by the OAS in 2005 considering the link between democracy and education for citizenship.

It is important to mention that several years after that meeting, the need for strong democratic citizenship education programs in Mexico is still significant. The findings of the ICCS 2009 Study, the largest international study on civic and citizenship education ever conducted, presented the distribution of civic knowledge scores across 38 countries and Mexico is ranked among the lowest average scores, only above five countries (Schulz, W., Ainley, J., Fraillon, J., Kerr, D., Losito, B., 2010).

Furthermore, Reimers and Cárdenas (in Sherrod, Torney-Purta, Flanagan, 2010) have studied the case of Mexico and youth civic engagement, concluding that even with the political changes in the country, in particular the changes in presidential parties in the last few years, citizens' perception of democracy has not improved. These authors conclude that without the development of education programs focused on these topics, democracy remains at risk.

In a recent book, editors (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, Flanagan, 2010) point out that thanks to the research from different experts in the last twenty years related to the development of citizenship competencies and the international comparison of teaching-learning models, civic engagement in youth and democratic citizenship education has consolidated itself as a field of study.

It is in this context that this program for teacher professional development is initiated, rooted in the idea that schools and teachers, with pedagogical knowledge, can enhance opportunities for children and youth, to develop democratic citizenship competencies that allow them to recognize themselves as citizens with rights who have the possibility of contributing to the construction of a more democratic society. This pedagogical approach of teaching based on competencies responds to the idea of strategies that go beyond the acquisition of factual knowledge, to the development of skills and civic dispositions (Osley, Starkey, 2004) that enable the person to effectively contribute in the construction of a more democratic and just society.

In the same manner, the program is born as a result of a collaborative effort of Vía Educación at the local, national and international level between researchers, professors, businesspeople and public officials, among others, to formalize opportunities where children's potential as agents of social change can be developed (Hart, 1997) as well as their right to participate in issues that affect them (Art. 12, UN, Convention on the Rights of the Child), through opportunities that promote citizenship awareness and participation.

Education policies in Mexico
Towards 2006 the Integral Reform of Basic Education (RIEB by its Spanish acronym) was passed in Mexico, which introduces the subject of Civics and Ethics at the lower-secondary grade level and in 2009 at the primary level in the national curriculum. In this context it was necessary to train teachers who would teach this subject. The regional Ministry of Public Education found Vía Educación's proposal valuable as it allowed the Ministry to expand opportunities for teacher professional development through civil society organizations.

The Reform at both the primary and lower-secondary level promoted the development of competencies in students, which implies that the teacher works with specific didactic strategies, particularly emphasizing project-based learning. This change in the form of teaching implied for the teacher a new way of planning and of guiding the students' work, as well as of an evaluation based on standards and the development of specific competencies.

One of the most complex elements of project-based learning is the design of a good project that actually develops competencies related to the subject's standards. This design requires the incorporation of didactic methodologies that the students can follow with the guidance of their teachers and that lead them to meet the pedagogical objectives as well as develop specific competencies. At the same time it requires mechanisms for monitoring and follow-up of learning that form part of student assessment and evaluation.

The design of the teacher professional development program described here has a pedagogical design congruent with the pedagogical principles of the Civics and Ethics subject that was introduced with the Integral Reform of Basic Education (2006 and 2009). As well with following Educational Reforms (2017) because of its well-grounded pedagogical design. The central characteristic of this program is that it strengthens teachers' work. Through a teaching and learning process focused on the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and civic dispositions, professors learn by doing and they learn to apply pedagogical strategies and a didactic methodology in their classroom, so that they can better reach the learning goals set by the national curriculum.

The work in public schools, particularly in vulnerable contexts, and the work with teachers has shown that teachers have a large workload and little time available (OCDE, 2013; Vía Educación, 2008). For example, many of them work double shifts and in addition to their subject classes must complete administrative paperwork. At the same time, the school schedule does not have space for additional programs.

This Program was carefully thought and designed to be applied by a teacher without generating additional work within the Civics and Ethics subject or related

subjects. It helps the teacher meet the subject's goals in terms of developing skills and civic dispositions, besides factual knowledge and the use of up to date learning strategies while expanding an emphasis on citizen democratic participation. At the same time, it was designed to be compatible in conditions with limited time and resources, given that this is the reality of many public school teachers.

Because of its well-grounded pedagogical design the program here described is an important support and a concrete tool so that teachers can meet the recent pedagogical objectives set by the latest Reform and the oncoming ones.

The following section describes in more detail the process of creation and development of the program in order to understand more about the context and the process in which it was developed and what has been achieved.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

The program for teacher professional development was designed in 2005 by Vía Educación, a non-profit organization based in Mexico. The creation of the program has three phases: 1) Design phase; 2) Initial implementation and evaluation, process and outcomes evaluation; and 3) Consolidation and expansion of implementation.

Design phase

The process of design considered the study of relevant literature regarding children's participation (Hart, 1997), organizing (Ganz, 2000), social development and learning opportunities (Reimers, 2001, Sen, 1996; Freire, 1996; Bythe, 1999), democracy, citizenship and education (Dewey, 1916; Cox, Jaramillo, Reimers, 2005; Cox, 2006, Lave y Wenger, in Sherrod, Torney-Purta and Flanagan, 2010). Along with the study of relevant literature, the design of the program considered a direct implementation of a participatory action-research process with a selected group of elementary school children from an underprivileged school. This process lasted two years, during which the researcher worked with the students in the development of projects to improve their school community, while in order to design a model.

The design was a continuous process based on observation and documentation, based on applying the literature findings and reflecting critically on its relevance, a process of listening to the children and to their teachers. From this experience a concrete methodology resulted that could be followed and scaled to a larger number of students and schools, including non-formal schooling environments and other age groups. It was defined as the participatory methodology, its purpose is to create a learning opportunity where students guided by a facilitator develop democratic citizenship competencies while implementing a project directed at improving their school community.

Since then, this participatory methodology has been continuously evaluated to ensure its effects on the development of democratic citizenship capabilities. Complementary materials were also designed and the methodology is accompanied by a series of operative principles that the facilitator must follow. For example, the

ideas of the participatory projects must derive from the interests of the children, and children must carry out the process, accompanied by the facilitator in shared decisions (Hart, 1997), with authentic participation. At the same time the participatory project developed must respect the norms of the school community and benefit the majority, and it must be inclusive and work under democratic principles.

Once the design of the participatory methodology was defined, the general structure of the teacher professional development program described in this chapter was established, as well as the monitoring system for the implementation that is explained later in this chapter. In summary, this teacher professional development program incorporates the participatory methodology and has the purpose of expanding opportunities for teaching-learning processes of democratic citizenship education to a larger number of schools and environments.

Initial implementation and process and outcome evaluation

Vía Educación established an alliance with regional Ministries of Education in different states of Mexico. In this first phase of the teacher professional development program, Vía Educación worked with around 120 teachers from public schools analysing how the implementation of the participatory methodology worked in different contexts: urban-marginalized, rural and in indigenous communities. The most important factor was the diversity of the contexts that resulted in the diversity of the projects carried out by the teachers and their students. The methodology turned out to be a valued tool by teachers and it strengthened their teaching practice, proving its flexibility and the possibility that it gave to participants to develop projects based on their own reality and context.

Expansion and Consolidation of implementation

In the next phase of the program development, the number of participants grew from a group of 120 public school teachers to 250, proving the program's potential for expansion. In this phase new facilitators came in and training materials were developed. The results documented of this implementation included the development of teacher skills related to democratic citizenship education (Vía Educación, 2012), but also this experience highlighted that it was necessary to strengthen the program with follow-up materials and additional guides for self-assessment in order to ensure the progress of the didactic process.

After that experience the program extended to five additional states (Nuevo León, Chiapas, Durango, Jalisco, Ciudad de México, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Guerrero and San Luis Potosí) in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, in both formal and non-formal schooling settings. In addition to the guides already designed, an electronic-platform for follow-up, feedback and reporting of results was designed for the participants. This implementation used an intensive initial training instead of a continuous training distributed throughout the school year and though some participants effectively implemented the methodology for participative projects almost without support from a facilitator, the evaluation highlighted that the optimal channel is to maintain continuous follow-up with the participants throughout the

implementation, at least for the first six months. The exchange of experiences between participants and the mentorship of the facilitators helped and motivated the teaching-learning process and expanded the results.

During the school year 2013-14 the program was tested in a different setting. It was implemented with teachers-in-training at a Teacher Normal School one of the most important teacher training schools in the northern Mexico, Montemorelos, Nuevo León, in order to evaluate the program's achievement in complementing the development of teacher pedagogical knowledge and skills in democratic citizenship education in this context. Over 120 students from the Normal School participated and carried out participative projects in public schools through their internships. The evaluation of this implementation has a quasi-experimental design; data is currently being processed and analysed, but initial results are promising regarding the possibility of another way to support teacher training in Mexico.

More recently, these last two years have included the program implementation with entire schools, which includes all teachers, principals, supervisors and parents in a transversal pedagogical support format. There is specific work with each actor in a way that the paradigm shift in terms of the participation of students is considered holistically in the school and integrates the different actors in a school community to maximize impact, because the contribution of each actor creates a new school culture.

Based on the organization's conformation as a Think tank and based on the program evaluations carried out to date (Vía Educación, 2008; Vía Educación, 2012; Reimers F., Ortega, M.E., Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E. 2014) Vía Educación has been able to structure a prototype that can now be shared as a public good beyond the implementation of this organization. Vía Educación's purpose is to extend the knowledge generated and use of the contents including the participative methodology, to a larger number of people through the collaboration with other actors, for example Teacher Colleges, or through different Centers for Teacher Training in the country, including the Normal schools or even other organizations focused on youth civic engagement beyond Mexico and Latin America.

At this time Vía Educación has been working with the National Ministry of Education in updating the curriculum in civics and introducing the participative methodology as support material for teachers in the Civics and Ethics subject of the national curriculum. At the same time, it is in preparation to contribute through the training of Pedagogical Technical Advisors[4] who in turn could train teachers in the area of civics education of the public education system.

In summary, the program has worked with teachers in a variety of contexts – urban, rural, and indigenous communities – in different states in Mexico, since its start in 2007. Over 700 teachers from public schools and other civil society organizations have been trained, reaching approximately 17,000 children and young people.

Before explaining the overall structure of the program and its specific procedure of implementation, the conceptual framework that underlies the program is presented.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The design of the program is based on a framework that considers several theoretical approaches. The theories support the program in two dimensions:

- The first dimension considers the fundamental reason of why we do it. This dimension considers the notion of social development and the meaning of teaching and learning from a humanizing and dignifying point of view (Sen, 2000, Freire, 1996, Hart, 1997).

- The second considers the process of how we do it. This dimension takes into account the use of pedagogical, teaching and learning practices that can enhance the experience of the participants and the concrete development of democratic citizenship capabilities by putting them on practice (Dewey, 1916, Delors, 1996; Bythe, 1999; Cox, Jaramillo, Reimers, 2005; Cox, 2006). This approach refers to not only teaching and learning factual knowledge, but also skills, attitudes and civic dispositions linked as well to the context and relations that result from it (Osley, A., Starkey, 2004).

Regarding the first dimension of why we do it, this program arises from the understanding of the reality of inequality of educational opportunities in Mexico (Reimers, 2001; CEPAL, 2010). Therefore, the program attempts to expand learning opportunities that develop capacities that truly result in better life opportunities for participants (Sen, 2000). The notion above is what underlies the creation of the program and it guides its fundamental humanizing principles and the way the participants are perceived in this program. Although many of the participants are in limited or vulnerable socio-economic conditions, both teachers and students are considered capable of improving their reality by their own means, whether these are their teaching practice or the conditions of their school or communities (Freire, 1996, Hart, 1997), and they deserve an opportunity to do so (United Nations, 1989).

With respect to the second dimension of how we do it, the design of the program considered the study of relevant literature regarding children's participation (Hart, 1997), social capital (Putnam, 2000), organizing (Ganz, 2000), learning opportunities and curriculum design (Blythe, 1999; Delors, 1996) and democracy, citizenship and education (Dewey, 1916; Cox, Jaramillo, Reimers, 2005; Cox, 2006, Lave y Wenger, in Sherrod, Torney-Purta and Flanagan, 2010). From these notions the program takes into account the knowledge generated regarding ways of teaching and learning that could be more effective and transcendental to achieve the development of pedagogical and democratic citizenship competencies.

Furthermore, the pedagogy used in this program considers a teaching and learning approach that goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge towards a more comprehensive learning process. This idea of a non-traditional pedagogical approach is documented in the findings of the IEA study (Amadeo, J. Torney-Purta, J., 2002) that evaluated citizenship and democratic practices in youth in 16 countries and later emphasized in further studies (Sherrod, L., Torney-Purta, J., Flanagan, C., 2010) concluding that school is a good environment for developing citizenship and democratic practices, but that different didactic strategies are needed to respond to the different levels of comprehension implied in citizenship development. That is, rote memorization and repetition of concepts is not enough: the critical and analytical thinking of different situations, as well as debate and negotiation, are necessary.

Ultimately these studies emphasize the importance of practical experiences that allow for this learning to strengthen and solidify.

Based on these studies, the design of this program incorporates several pedagogical strategies that can enhance the development and exercise of democratic citizenship competencies. These include Service Learning, Project-based Learning, Participatory Democratic Education and Situated Learning; however it has been understood that it is necessary to use them appropriately and in a concrete, defined way (McIntosh, H. and Youniss, J. and Higgins-D'Alessandro in Sherrod, L., Torney-Purta, J.,Flanagan, C., 2010), where teachers give students real responsibilities such as decision-making power and ownership and at the same time build critical analytic capacities. This is the case of this program, where pedagogical strategies are linked to an intentional process of development of democratic citizenship competencies, namely that the participatory projects are considered a way to develop and exercise those competencies. The program was also designed so that teachers could incorporate the tools easily into their teaching practice, while still being flexible enough to build upon with their own experience, creative ideas, knowledge and sense of their students' reality.

It is important to consider the reality of teachers and their actual possibility of using innovative teaching and learning practices. Generally teachers that participate in this program were trained in a traditional manner. Though some of them received additional training to teach Civic education, and although the Educational Reform suggests that teachers use different pedagogical approaches, most of the teachers reproduce a traditional way of teaching where the teacher is the principle vehicle of knowledge (Vía Educación, 2008, 2012).

In this manner, this teacher professional development program, "Learning to participate", works with teachers through the participatory methodology mentioned above, in order to establish a base from which teachers work to create a different learning environment that goes beyond traditional teaching and build closer relationships with and among students through the implementation of a project to improve their school community. The participatory methodology is sufficiently detailed to help guarantee the establishment of learning situations or experiences intentionally generated to develop democratic citizenship competencies while implementing the project. Some of these situations are for example, the need to establish rules, the need to understand themselves and their community, the importance of taking into account students' voices to determine the definition of the project, the use of democratic deliberation for decision making, developing a "common good" perspective, and considering the differences of others and ways to contribute with one's own personal resources to implement the project.

This program views education from a critical pedagogy perspective (Freire 1996) as a dynamic process where program participants, guided by a facilitator, have the possibility of expanding learning opportunities through reflection of their practice in a dialogic manner. In a similar way the participatory methodology considers the learning process as an opportunity for each participant to put their capabilities in practice and develop new ones in different forms (Delors, 1997; Blythe, 1999; Amadeo, J. Torney-Purta, J., 2002): the participant is challenged to think, to create, to solve real problems, to communicate effectively, to analyse different possibilities,

to make decisions about concrete situations, to collaborate with others, to bring their ideas to reality, to experiment and learn from mistakes, to recognize their personal viewpoints and value other's and to experience achievements that motivates them to continue learning.

In this case, citizenship is defined as the possibility that people have of participating in an organized manner, guided by ethical and democratic principles, in the construction of a better society. Citizenship is a concrete experience that the participant of this program lives consistently through the implementation of the participative project given that it implies bringing to practice an initiative to improve the quality of their surroundings by following the participatory methodology. In this way teachers and students can start to think in a proactive way about their own reality. This is, not from a passive position of only looking at difficulties, but in an active manner developing social capital and a sense of agency where they start to think, What can I do? What can we do together to improve things?

This program follows the model of Education for citizenship (Kerr, 2002) because in addition of using the didactic strategy of learning by doing, it is designed so that the experiences of the participants in their projects builds on the development of self-efficacy and could be transferred to other spaces in their lives. In this manner the focus of the work of teachers is precisely on the development of participative capacities in their students. Which means to specifically give them the experience of being able to contribute in the improvement of the quality of their own lives and that of their communities, by their own means and by the work with others.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

With the objective of giving a general overview of the program and its implementation the following section describes different elements that compose it such as the target audience, structure, theory of change, procedure and expected results as well as the curriculum, didactic strategy and assessment used. At the end of the section the challenges the program has met are presented as well as the particular nature of the program compared to other teacher training programs.

Target audience

As mentioned before, this program has been implemented in different contexts including urban, rural and indigenous communities among primary and lower-secondary public school teachers and university professors, particularly those who teach civics. It has also helped train facilitators from non-profit organizations in charge of extra-school activities with elementary and middle school children.

The participating teachers from public schools are usually invited through the Ministry of Education of each state of Mexico and in coordination with the Pedagogical Technical Advisors for the Civics and Ethics subject. This was particularly relevant in the state of Nuevo León, where by 2012 the program trained approximately 60% of the teachers of this subject in the metropolitan area of Monterrey. In other states the invitation has gone through collaboration with other

local non-governmental organizations linked with children and youth civic engagement and social development.

Program structure

The original design of the program includes a continuous training where professors meet for a five-hour monthly session throughout the school year. Since the expansion of the program to other states of the country, the program has also been delivered in an intensive modality where the training is at the beginning of the implementation. Along with those two formal modalities there have been experiences of a self-learning modality as well:
- Continuous modality: It consists of a series of monthly training sessions that add up to 50 hours throughout the school year in groups of 20-30 teachers. The exchange of experiences, monitoring and ongoing assessment is done during the monthly training sessions.
- Intensive modality: At the start of the school year training sessions are intensive for a total of 10 hours. There is a closing session of the project at the end of the year that consists of another 10 hours. In between, monitoring, feedback and follow-up is provided. For this modality an electronic platform has been used to monitor distant implementations and involves tools for follow-up such as guides of observation to ensure the effective implementation of the methodology. This modality has been used more recently to expand coverage to different states in Mexico.
- Self-learning modality: Teachers or facilitators use the Manual for Project implementation and the Self-assessment Guide to carry out participative projects on their own and can become members of a virtual network of facilitators.

Program Theory of change, procedure and expected results.

Purpose:
This program is intended to strengthen teacher practices to effectively develop democratic citizenship knowledge, skills and dispositions in elementary and middle school students in formal and non-formal settings. This program considers that teacher and student competencies are interrelated, and as teachers improve their teaching and learning skills, children will have better opportunities to develop their own competencies.

Procedure:
The Program is composed by three interrelated mechanisms of change focused to achieve the expected results (helpful to also see the Program's theory of change diagram below):
- Training sessions and Development of pedagogical competencies in teachers. These training sessions train teachers to achieve a paradigm shift in terms of innovative teaching-learning practices where they are the facilitators in the process of development of citizenship competencies in students. Simultaneously, teachers acquire pedagogical dominion of the teaching and learning of democratic citizenship

education. The didactic strategy of the sessions is based on learning by doing and dialogic learning linked to the reflection of one's practice.
- Understanding of principles and steps of participatory methodology. Central element of this program, it is a carefully designed process that the teacher follows for the development of a participative project developed by the students focused to contribute to improving their own lives and those of their communities. It consists of a set of principles and a series of specific steps. It is sufficiently flexible to adapt to a variety of socioeconomic contexts, time constraints, and ages of participants.

The participative methodology leads teachers step by step to guide their students in the design, implementation and evaluation of an initiative that contributes to improving the quality of their surroundings. The participatory project serves as an experiential civic engagement opportunity where social cohesion in the group is created, where there is a democratically establishment of rules for group work, and where participants map their community to determine through deliberation and consensus what situation or problem they would like to improve or resolve. After this, a plan of action is established; the group delegates responsibilities, executes the plan and evaluates the results by continuous reflection of their actions (Annex 1).
- Implementation of participative projects. Projects are the practical opportunity and the tool to develop democratic citizenship competencies in students such as democratic deliberation, sense of belonging, social participation, self-efficacy, and agency to contribute to improving their surroundings. The criteria for these projects is that 1) it should be significant to students and respond to a real need of the community, 2) be guided by and implemented by themselves with shared decisions with a facilitator, 3) consider the common good and 4) respect the norms and rules of their school community (Annex 2).

Foundation to achieve results.
The foundation to achieve the expected results considers a positive experience of civic participation where teachers help their students understand that their ideas are valued and their voices listened to; where they discover the challenges of working for the common good, but also an opportunity to discover how they are capable of learning and overcoming those challenges by a strong bond with teachers who encourage them to strengthen their social capital, their communication skills, trust and caring relationships.

Expected results.
The expected results of the program are to carry out a program based on learning by doing and the reflection on one's practice, where teachers can understand conceptual elements and methodological processes of Education for Democratic Citizenship, as well as the process of carrying out a participative project with their students.

It is also expected that participating teachers in this program will have exercised pedagogical competencies for an effective teaching of democratic citizenship, congruent with the competencies that they seek to develop in their students. This means a shift in paradigm from being the main knowledge transmitter to become facilitator of a learning experience: to work under democratic principles, listen to the voice of their students and use democratic deliberation in the teaching practice.
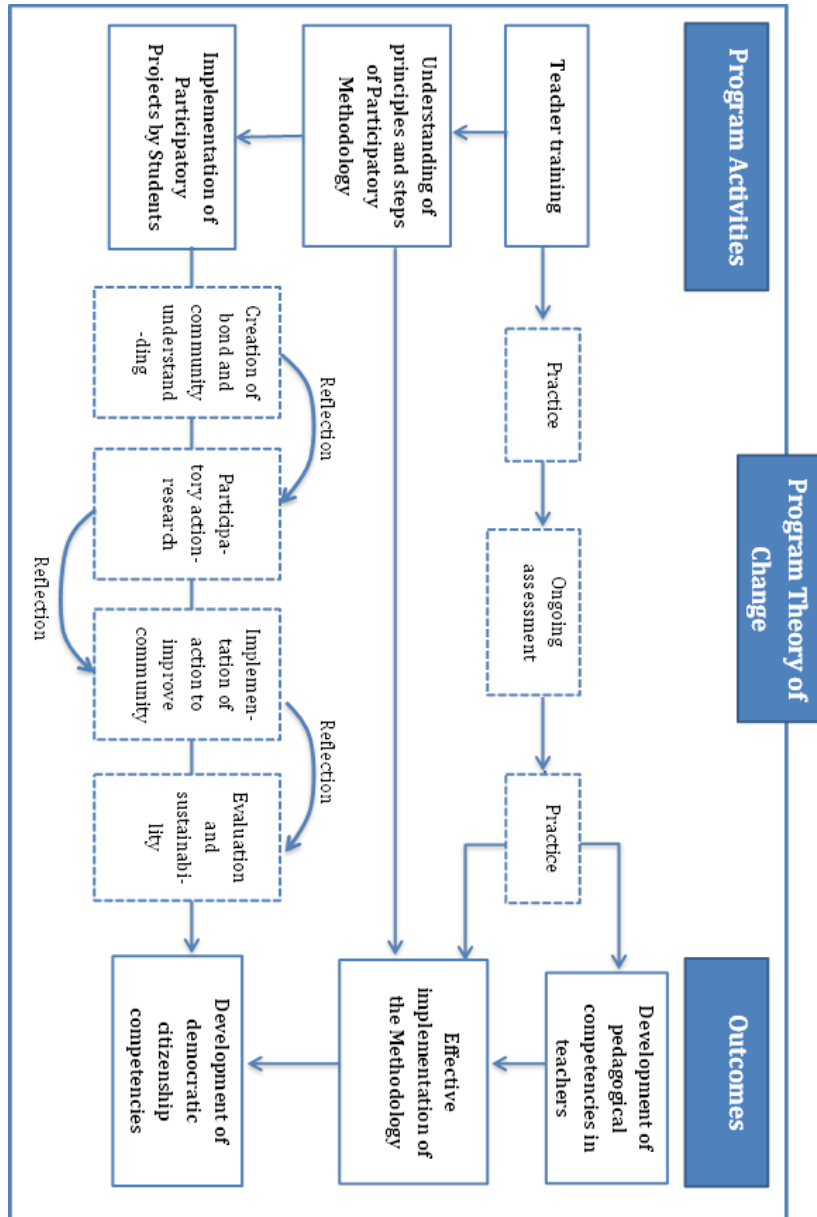
14

Which implies having the capability to analyze their reality, think critically about it, dialogue with others, search for the common good and discover ways to work collaboratively to act consequently.

It is expected that teachers develop pedagogical competencies that allow them to ensure an effective learning opportunity for their students. That implies the use of resources to broaden their students' achievement such as clear goals, specific mechanisms, and standards. In the same way, teachers will be capable of implementing a participative methodology for the development of projects with the authentic participation of students.

Regarding the students, it is also expected that this experience will help them understand how they can contribute to improving their own life conditions and those of their communities, where the process implies the dominion and the transfer to the practice of democratic citizenship competencies and the appropriation of a methodology that generates a sense of self-efficacy and agency to continue to do the same beyond the subject matter and the classroom.

The following diagram describing the Theory of Change shows the way each of the three key Program Activities (1.Teacher training, 2. Understanding of principles and steps of Participatory Methodology and 3. Implementation of Participatory Projects by Students) result in the expected outcomes (1. Development of pedagogical competencies in teachers, 2. Effective implementation of the Methodology, 3. Development of democratic citizenship competencies). The diagram also shows how the activity of Teacher training follows a process of reflection of practice and how the Participatory Projects by Students follow a series of steps of the methodology abbreviated here (Annex 1).

Figure 1.Theory of Change.

Program Activities

- Teacher training
- Understanding of principles and steps of Participatory Methodology
- Implementation of Participatory Projects by Students
  - Creation of bond and community understanding
  - Participatory action-research
  - Implementation of action to improve community
  - Evaluation and sustainability
  - Reflection

Program Theory of Change

- Practice
- Ongoing assessment
- Practice

Outcomes

- Development of pedagogical competencies in teachers
- Effective implementation of the Methodology
- Development of democratic citizenship competencies

Teacher pedagogical competencies
More specifically, the participant teachers are expected to develop throughout the program pedagogical competencies that enhance the teaching and learning of democratic citizenship education. Besides improving their knowledge on teaching

practice, the teachers demonstrate their acquisition of competencies by their practical work in their classroom which means understanding fundamental key elements of education for democratic citizenship and being able to put into practice the pedagogical principles for the elaboration of participative projects. This includes being able to create a democratic climate in the classroom, understanding the participatory methodology and being able to guide the implementation by the facilitation of spaces where the generators of ideas are the students themselves, this means, assuming a role as facilitators of the process and trusting students' capacity to develop their own initiatives; use dialogue to guide the establishment of rules by democratic deliberation, encourage the fact that the projects emerge from an analysis of their own reality, and by considering everyone's opinions in decision-making; use practices of reflection and analysis in each stage of the participatory project through a metacognitive process about why we will do what we will do; guide the group to ensure the understanding of concepts and the transfer of learning to daily life; be able to establish trust between them and students; and finally guarantee that the deliberation processes be democratic and include all the students considering the richness of different viewpoints.

Student democratic citizenship competencies
At the same time, it is expected that the work of teachers lead to the development of democratic citizenship competencies in students. For example, these include: to think proactively about their reality, carry out processes of democratic deliberation so that through dialogue they can analyse external information, analyse it critically and make decisions focused on action; assume responsibility in terms of their own reality and carry out actions that contribute to the common good; develop a sense of "agency" by discovering their potential for action an to improve the conditions of the school community along with a sense of self-efficacy of feeling capable to transfer this knowledge to other spaces of life.

Curriculum and didactic strategy.
The curriculum design of the training sessions was developed using the Teaching for Understanding framework and tools (Blythe, 1999) which are focused on expanding opportunities for teaching and learning through a conceptualization of planning elements that lead to understanding: generative topics, understanding goals, performances of understanding and ongoing assessment.

Accordingly, one of the main didactic strategies of the program consists in promoting a sense of critical self-assessment in teachers about their own teaching practices. This critical view is about constantly asking themselves if what they are teaching is really generating learning opportunities for the students. This critical assessment is fundamental in allowing the teachers to constantly go back to their goals, re-define their strategies, examine their teaching practices and adjust their mechanisms of evaluating student learning (Blythe, 1999).

In order to achieve this, the curriculum is composed of five modules. Each module has a conceptual and a practical component that are interrelated and distributed in two moments of the training session, plus another space for the exchange of experiences and for ongoing assessment:

17

-Joint work to understand key concepts in Education for Democratic Citizenship and pedagogical aspects to strengthen teaching practice.
-Collaborative work to understand practical methodological for the implementation process of a participative project.
-Exchange of experiences, collaborative feedback and reflection of one's practice through dialogue, considering a critical and personal analysis, focused on enriching the construction of group knowledge.

Table 1.Teacher Training Program Topics

MODULE 1 – Introduction and General Structure of Program
CONCEPTUAL COMPONENT
Relevance of Program and
Contextualization of current social and educational situation
Objectives and general structure of program
Teaching for understanding
Role of teacher as facilitator
PRACTICAL COMPONENT
Social cohesion
Establishment of rules
Democratic deliberation
MODULE 2 – Identification of Issue for Improvement
CONCEPTUAL COMPONENT
Education for Democratic Citizenship
Principles of the Participative methodology
Positive Learning environments
PRACTICAL COMPONENT
Understanding the Characteristics of the Problem
Community Mapping
Social Research
MODULE 3 – Action Plan
CONCEPTUAL COMPONENT
Essential didactic strategies
Levels of participation: Ladder of participation
Democracy in Latin America and dimensions of citizenship
PRACTICAL COMPONENT
Data Analysis and Definition of the Problem
Indicators and Work Plan Development
Distribution of responsibilities
MODULE 4 – Implementation

CONCEPTUAL COMPONENT
Metacognition applied to projects
Development models
PRACTICAL COMPONENT
Identification of Social Capital
Execution of Project
Collaboration and Communication with the Community
MODULE 5 – Evaluation and Closing
CONCEPTUAL COMPONENT
Self-efficacy in citizenship participation
Evaluation and ongoing assessment
Sustainability
PRACTICAL COMPONENT
Registration of Learning Experiences
Accomplishment of Goal and/or Reflecting on the Experience
Dissemination
Celebration

Evaluation of learning and ongoing assessment
The ongoing assessment is a key element of this Program. It serves two objectives. First it serves to understand the development of pedagogical competencies in teachers directed to the development of democratic citizenship competencies in students. Second, it provides well-timed feedback to expand educational opportunities.

We will know that the participants have met the objectives of the program or are progressing if during the process they start putting in practice the competencies outlined in the different modules/phases of the program. This will be observed through rubrics applied in the follow-up of participants, and in self-evaluations performed by the participants themselves and by the work of students. In this same way, the focus on reflection on one's practice allows for an observation of the degree to which goals have been met.

The evaluation of learning and the ongoing assessment of the learning process of the teachers uses the following main mechanisms:
- Teacher questionnaire. This is a questionnaire that measures the development of pedagogical skills in teachers. It is applied in the first session of the program and its objective is to measure the intended results. This is a quantitative questionnaire that also serves for the overall program evaluation.
- Student questionnaire. This instrument measures teachers through students' achievement and includes questions assessing dimensions of civic knowledge and attitudes, interpersonal communication skills, pedagogical efficacy of the school, participation of student in school, intentions of political and social engagement and political and social engagement in the community. The questionnaire includes selected items from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS, 2009) developed by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Also serves for the overall program evaluation.

- Monitoring documents for the implementation. Rubrics, formats, focus groups, field observations and other documentation material are used to determine the level of progress in the development of competencies at both the teacher and student level.
- Portfolio. It monitors throughout the school year the process of learning and the implementation of the program methodologies and tools by teachers in their classroom. This instrument collects qualitative information based on the description and reflection of each of the activities and a general reflection about teaching practices, student learning and the methodology for participative projects. It is used to give feedback on their participation.
- Follow-up formats. They contain evaluation criteria so that the facilitator can review the intended lesson plan with its actual implementation. One self-observation guide is provided as well as two follow-up formats, one for the self-assessment of the teacher and one for the self-assessment of the students. The formats include rubrics and checklists of processes, skills, behaviors and attitudes to determine the progress of the participative project.

Challenges the Program has met
The main challenge for some of the teachers is shifting their teaching paradigm from a more traditional approach to a learning by doing one in which they become facilitators of the learning process. However, we have seen many teachers undergo this transformation, often inspired by the motivated students resulting from their participation in the project elaboration.

Another challenge is finding time in the school schedule for the teachers to implement a participatory project. In Mexico, the non-education demands from the school system sometimes limit teachers' opportunities to implement more innovative pedagogical practices (OCDE, 2014). This challenge is present in any kind of effort to implement innovation in the classroom. In many cases there is a strong tendency to teach in a more traditional format. However, the majority of the teachers that have participated in this program, even those who are faced with this challenge, managed to overcome the time barriers and work with their students in a participatory project according to their own context and time constrains.

Particular nature of the program compared to other teacher training programs.
When following the analysis that experts in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship such as Cox (2006) suggest, the focus of this program stands out because it goes beyond a traditional civic education towards a citizenship education. This is due to its emphasis in the development of competencies that are linked to the reality of participants and because they are enriched radically by principles of teaching-learning where "the principal focus of the paradigm is the combination of study and participation, debate, decision and collective action practices (p. 70, Cox, 2006)". At the same time, the program seeks for citizenship education and democratic processes to go beyond the classroom to constructing a different relationship in the school (Annex 2).

In terms of teacher training, this program includes a design that from its very start is congruent with the perspective of Education for democratic citizenship that according to experts of the field (Kerr, 2002) which implies that the teacher in

addition to developing conceptual knowledge, puts into practice a methodology with students, allowing them to learn by doing. Research of the program (Reimers, F., Ortega, M.E, Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E., 2014) compared a rich pedagogical curriculum and this program and found that although rich pedagogy indeed improves teacher pedagogical practices, the opportunity of learning by doing that this program suggests increases teacher pedagogical practices plus civic knowledge, skills and civic participation of students in school which means a more comprehensive development of democratic citizenship competencies beyond factual knowledge solely.

Other distinct program characteristics are the mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring and feedback of the program. Teachers participating receive support throughout an entire school year to continue their learning journey based on reflecting on their practice. The teacher training programs offered through official government channels contribute in different dimensions, but many times do not foster a practical application of the learning of the course or do not provide follow-up throughout the year.

Education programs in different countries have subject matter that promotes knowledge in terms of citizenship under subjects like ethics, civics, morality, values, among others; however, in this program the participative methodology that is presented is a particular contribution based on pedagogical strategies focused on promoting genuine participation. In some cases the participation of children and youth runs the risk of being merely decorative or a simulation, as pointed out by Hart (1997). This program strives to generate genuine participation so that more than being just designated by and adult or consulted, children can carry out their own initiatives, so that through this process they can develop skills that are important in life, and as mentioned before, allow them to develop personal self-efficacy based on this experience where they were able to intervene in their reality, solve a problem and improve their surroundings. The trust in children's capacity to become an agent of change is a key and generative factor in this program which is relevant for motivation, perseverance and affective processes that allow the translation of knowledge and skills into efficient action (Bandura, 1997).

Finally, the design of the program is supported by research since its origin and through its implementation, which is relatively not found in teacher training programs of this kind, and which intents to have data to improve the program and ensure the expected results.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAM

Vía Educación is constituted as a nonprofit organization with a think-tank type configuration. Its purpose is the design, implementation and evaluation of pedagogical strategies that generate opportunities for social sustainable development, which means that the emphasis is in the creation of replicable, scalable models that can generate opportunities for social development in collaboration with other implementers. In this way, this program's sustainability is considered in two ways, to the extent to which local capabilities are installed and to the extent to which different actors, beyond Vía Educación can implement this model of teaching and

learning in different spaces. Moreover, the participatory methodology, central pedagogical element of the program, is a social contribution open to anyone wishing to develop participatory projects with children and young people focused on the development of democratic citizenship skills and social commitment.

The sustainability of the program considers certain elements to ensure the quality of knowledge transfer and expand the possibilities of impact: design, Installation of capabilities, evaluation and collaboration.

The sustainability through the design considers a training process sufficiently structured and supported by teaching-learning materials and assessment guides that can be easily used, not only by the teachers, but also by the facilitator conducting the teacher professional development program in other contexts. The design is focused to the construction and installation of local capabilities. This is considered a key element to achieve sustainability, as actors with the support of the materials could implement the methodology continuously on their own after the training and accomplish results. There is also a support system for the consolidation of capabilities developed through training, for follow-up, feedback and reporting of results that helps the optimal implementation of the model and expansion of impact.

Each implementation since 2007 has been accompanied by a program evaluation. This continuous effort has been useful to verify the maintenance of quality in every expansion of the program, considering changes in number of participants and contexts where it was implemented. Useful knowledge has resulted from this effort that allows an effective scaling up, strengthening the likelihood of expansion and sustainability.

Once the necessary adjustments were made this led to the generation of a program prototype that has expanded to other states thanks to collaborative work between different stakeholders, including the public education system, universities, research centers, foundations and other civil society organizations around the country.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ON PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluation system of the program

Evaluations to measure program effectiveness have been carried out throughout the program's history. These evaluations include two types, formative and summative evaluations.

- Formative assessments: Research has been conducted on program processes to better understand the experience of the teachers and students who undergo the program and the fidelity of program implementation, as part of formative evaluation strategies. These assessments have allowed improvements to the operation and design of the program, and also to understand the current level of systematization of program processes. For this evaluation different quantitative and qualitative instruments have been used, including field observations, focus groups, documentation, feedback surveys and portfolio analysis.

- Summative evaluation: Research has also been conducted on the effects of the program on the target groups, including program teachers and their students, as part of summative evaluation efforts focused on evaluating results and impact. Outcome

evaluations have found increases in both teacher pedagogical competencies and in student competencies related to civic engagement and democratic participation. For these evaluations mixed methods have been used, including questionnaires, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with program participants. The teacher and student questionnaire includes selected items from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS, 2009), among other instruments (TALIS, 2008, INEE, 2013).

Results

The findings from the formative evaluation efforts have been rich in determining what it is that teachers do to produce better results for students. In particular, a process evaluation that included classroom observation of 20 participating teachers at five moments of the school year enabled a proximity to the teaching practice and the verification of certain teacher competencies that finally result in the development of specific student competencies (Vía Educación, 2008). For example, teachers who implemented the participative methodology had students who were able to better understand the process of elaborating a participation project and were more likely to do so successfully. Qualitative analysis of these observations noted that these teachers effectively understood the pedagogical principles for the elaboration of participation projects, for example:
- Facilitating spaces where the generators of ideas are the students themselves.
- Having projects emerge after students' analysis of their own reality and taking into account everyone's opinion in decision-making processes.
- Passing through reflection and analysis processes in each phase always passing through a metacognitive process about why we do what we do.
- Assuming a role as facilitators of the process, trusting the capacities of students to develop their own initiatives.
- Guiding the group to ensure the understanding of concepts and the transfer of learning to daily life.
- Seeking that the deliberation processes be democratic and include all students considering the richness of differences by including all opinions.
    This same qualitative study (Vía Educación, 2008) showed that the program has been successful in different ways. A direct link was observed between improving teacher pedagogical skills and the change in a teacher's role from a more traditional approach to a facilitator capable of implementing a participative methodology, in addition to the increased motivation of students on civic engagement. Furthermore, students' motivation increases teachers' motivation to implement innovative pedagogical strategies directed to improve academic achievement and democratic citizenship competencies in their students. Teachers report an improvement in school climate, more acceptance of each other and less teasing and making fun of peers, resulting in academic achievement.
    The monitoring of the participatory projects developed by teachers and students indicate that this element of the program is key in generating a space for the development of democratic citizenship competencies. The complexity of the projects varies from school to school and it is related to the context, all of them are done with

their own means. They can be categorized in improvement of school climate (for example, improving relations among students and teachers, peaceful conflict resolution and anti-bullying efforts), implementing mechanisms to enhance academic achievement (peer tutorial systems and afterschool homework support groups) and improvement of infrastructure (for example, projects have included improving playing areas, improving school bathrooms, planting trees, recycling, and even building a library or bringing water to the school[5]).

The summative evaluations of results are composed of two dimensions: 1) the analysis of results in terms of pedagogical skills in teachers and 2) the analysis of results of competencies for active citizenship participation in students.

One recent evaluation of results that considered a before and after measurement of 142 teachers and 4,970 students finds that participating teachers increase the use of non-traditional teaching methods, their level of self-efficacy, their skills to create deliberative spaces within the classroom and their capacity to carry out activities more focused on topics of citizenship and democracy (Vía Educación, 2012). Additionally, the evaluations have found that students who participate in these projects improve their capacity for communication and trust in expressing their ideas effectively, as well as their skills for active participation (Vía Educación, 2012).

Another results evaluation of the program was published in 2014 (Reimers F., Ortega, M.E., Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E.). This study explains the impact of teacher training through innovative proposals for Civics and Ethics focusing on the development of citizenship competencies in lower-secondary school students. The evaluation had a quasi-experimental design and used a sample of 60 teachers and a total of 2,608 students, with comparative within-school groups.

This evaluation compared two pedagogical approaches, one treatment group focused on an enriched Lesson Planning (LP) design where teachers used a variety of instructional materials and didactic materials. This approach was intended to assess the impact of the existing curriculum and instructional materials with teacher professional development and support for lesson planning. The other pedagogical approach involved the use of the participatory methodology described in this chapter. This treatment group Participatory Learning (PL) was intended to assess the impact of a learning by doing alternative pedagogical approach.

This evaluation demonstrated that this program's participatory methodology succeeded in significantly improving teacher practice. The study shows results that are statistically significant for teacher general pedagogical practices, also for the development of teacher competencies for civic pedagogy, discussion of civics topics, and opportunity for student participation in school and decision-making. Regarding the students, the evaluation demonstrated statistically significant results in students in attitudes towards gender equality, civic knowledge and skills, participation of students in school, and vision for the future. This treatment also shows marginally significant impact on the development of interpersonal communication skills and on the intent for political and social action in the community.

The study also indicates that there is a negative impact on trust in institutions. "This might be result of the combination of greater knowledge of the role and responsibilities of governmental institutions with what their perception of the current

context when assessing their performance (Reimers F., Ortega, M.E., Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E., pp.48, 2014)."

    Although the Lesson planning (LP) treatment group also generated similar positive effects in pedagogy, there are specific dimensions targeted by the participatory methodology (PL) that showed statistically significant results in students regarding Civic knowledge and skills, participation of student in school, interpersonal communication skills and political and social action in the community that were not witnessed by the LP group. A summary of the effects of the LP and the PL (program) results versus a comparative group can be found below:

Figure 2. Direction and significance level of the effect of each treatment group[6]

	LP vs Control	PL vs Control
Teaching practices		
Civic pedagogical practices	+ + +	+ + +
General pedagogical practices		+ + +
Discussion of civic topics	+ + +	+ + +
Opportunity for student participation	+ + +	+ + +
Democratic practices in school		
Civic attitudes, knowledge and skills		
Targeted		
Attitudes towards gender equity	+ + +	+ + +
Tolerance to different people		
Trust in institutions	- -	- -
Tolerance to break norm		
Interpersonal communication skills		+
Civic knowledge and skills		+ + +
Pedagogical efficacy of school		
Participation of student in school	+	+ + +
Intentions of political and social action		
Political and social action in the community		+

Note: +++ positive and $p<0.01$, ++positive and $p<0.05$, +positive and $p<0.1$
---negative and y $p<0.01$, --negative and y $p<0.05$, -negative and y $p<0.1$

Overall, the implementation of the participatory methodology expands the teaching and learning opportunities for participant teachers and their students, although the different school demands and the willingness of teachers to change their teaching style, teachers that commit to a disposition to improve their teaching practice, do indeed succeed in the development of pedagogical competencies and their students demonstrate high motivation in participating to improve their school community considering a common good perspective and in the practice they become more civically engaged.

The evaluation processes of this program have been gradually strengthened trying to better capture the experience of the participants (Jaramillo, Murillo, 2013; Mejía, 2013). However, it is still limited in its possibility of capturing the commitment and work of so many teachers, their fulfillment as they reconnect with their own vocation, what it means to see the young participants take pride realizing that they were the ones who made a change in their school and a change relevant to them, the way some of them previously seemed disinterested in school and are now highly

motivated with their projects, going to school in overtime or on weekends, dialoguing with other peers, teachers and members of the school community to join efforts to achieve the proposed change and thinking about the common good. Children with so many creative ideas, expressing their dreams, and using their talents no matter how difficult their socioeconomic condition is. It is this what continues to motivate us in our own work and in sharing this experience with others.

Final note

The work developed, starting several years ago, has been an opportunity to fulfill our commitment so that children in our country have the educational opportunities that they deserve so they can be subjects of the transformation of their own lives and those of their communities – honest, just people who seek the common good (Francisco, 2016). We trust that what we have learned (and keep learning) are seeds that may be useful to others to expand and continue this mission. We thank professors and researchers from different countries in the field of Democratic Citizenship Education for their work that has deeply inspired us and with whom we share a common purpose. We also thank Vía Educación's staff[7] that has contributed with hard work, commitment and thinking, as well as friends from different non-profit organizations and foundations with whom we have had the privilege to work with. Finally, we thank and profoundly admire so many teachers with whom we have worked that demonstrate a true vocation and who have done remarkable things in spite of unfavorable conditions, inspired by the care and trust in the potential of all children. Furthermore, final thanks to the children, who inspire and fill us with hope.

Annex 1. Brief description of Participatory Methodology

Learning to participate by participating Participatory methodology		
Phase	*Step*	*Description*
Beginning	**Preparation with Facilitator**	Teachers explain the methodology and what it means to undertake a truly participatory project.
General Structure of the Program	**Presentation and Motivation**	Teachers present the program's objectives and discuss the procedure of designing and implementing a participatory project to the group.
	Social Cohesion	The teacher guides participants to get to know each other and to establish links through informal dialogue. Teacher discusses with the group the concepts of social cohesion, diversity and belonging, implements an integration activity, and reflects about what has been learned.
	Establishment of Rules	The teacher guides participants to set the rules of cooperation through democratic deliberation. Students discuss and establish proposed rules. Teacher discusses with the group the concepts of belonging, deliberation, democracy, dignity of human beings, equality, rule of law, and student rights. The class reflects about what has been learned.
	Description of the Program with the Students	The teacher and the students review the objectives and details of the participatory project. Students understand the path they will follow to complete the project. The teacher clarifies any questions. The class discusses the concepts of citizen participation, methodology of the project, and the "common good."
Identifying the Problem	**Understanding the Characteristics of the Problem**	Students understand the project's criteria. The project must: • Improve the quality of the environment. • Represent the needs and interests of the community.

28

	• Be carried out by the students, with shared decisions with adults (Hart, 1997). • Be carried out within the specified time frame. • Be within the rules or previously established social norms of the community.
Community Mapping	The teacher guides participants to investigate what they want to improve through community mapping and early problem identification (discussing problems they have observed, or aspects that can be improved, having informal dialogue with members of the community, designing a map of the school community, considering infrastructure or the relationship between members of the community). Teacher discusses with the group the concepts of social research, data collection instruments and the common good, in the new context.
Social Research	The teacher guides the students to establish and apply data collection tools in order to include the opinion of the whole community in the selection of the problem. After gathering information, the class reflects on the process and on their lessons learned during the data collection.
Data Analysis and	Through dialogue, the participants are guided by the teacher in order to establish mechanisms for data analysis. Students establish how to analyze the data collected. The analysis is carried out; they establish priorities and present their findings.
Definition of the Problem	The students deliberate to decide what to improve in their classroom or community, considering the criteria for the project established earlier.

		The group discusses the concepts of deliberation, democratic principles and understanding of equality.
Work Plan	**Work Plan Development, Identification of Social Capital, and Distribution of Functions**	The teacher dialogues with participants using the analyzed data to establish an action plan focused on improving the quality of their environment. Students participate to establish an action plan to follow up on the identified problem. Responsibilities are distributed through dialogue, establishing committees or work teams. The students analyze the group's social capital, timeline and necessary resources and establish indicators to carry out the action.
Implementation of the Action	**Execution of Project**	The teacher monitors progress throughout the process of implementing the action plan.
	Collaborate and Communicate with the Community	Participants carry out the responsibilities set out in the action plan. They involve the community, link their initiatives with the social capital identified, hold community meetings, and communicate about the project and its progress.
Evaluation	**Registering of Experiences**	Throughout the implementation of the project, participants register their experiences and reflect on them to consolidate the learning process of democratic citizenship competencies. The participants also reflect on progress and new strategies are designed if needed to accomplish their goal.
	Accomplishing the Goal and/or Reflecting on the Experience	Students achieve an observable change in the community that improves the quality of their environment.
	Reflection session of the Progress of the Project	The teacher guides students into reflection and assessment of their progress and the final outcome of their project.
	Diffusion	The teacher guides them the students in the preparation of the results. They carry

	out the dissemination of the results to the rest of the community.
Celebration	Students and teachers celebrate the whole experience. The students may organize an activity to celebrate their efforts with the community.
Next Steps	The participants, guided by the teacher, propose specific actions to follow up the changes they achieved or to design new strategies to achieve the desired results.

Annex 2. Comparison between a Traditional-Approach Project and a Participatory Project

Traditional Projects	*Participatory Project*
Teacher determines what the Project is about	The Project are children's initiatives with shared decisions with adults.
The Project is assigned	Deliberation takes place to achieve consensus The community is taken into account to select project's goal. The Project is based in real necessities of the School Community
Motivation is generally "extrinsic"	Motivation is generally "intrinsic"
Teacher determines work plan.	Children determine work plan
Teacher designates responsibilities	Children decide responsibilities for themselves
Most of decisions are unilateral/directive	Decisions are taken under democratic principles
Children are followers of instructions	Children are leaders and initiative managers
Little consideration of the rest of the community	Communities participates, and develops capabilities, since the beginning to the end
Children have low expectations	Children have high expectations and develop a sense of commitment

Not very flexible	Adaptable to times, spaces and capacities of participants.
Teacher has a directive style leadership	Teacher is a Facilitator that also learns and develops capacities.
Mistakes are considered something negative.	Mistakes are considered a learning opportunity
Little relation with the real / daily life of the student	Project originates from children's reality it is completely linked to their daily life.
It does not seek to develop a sense of community	Generates identity and sense of belonging to a community
Little potential to transcend beyond school	It has the potential to transcend to the rest of the community
It is not necessarily a hands-on experience	Main characteristic is "learning by doing"
Little relationship with sustainable development	It has a perspective of sustainability and common good.
Few opportunities for skills development	It is focused on the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes / values in a practical way
Little relationship with the development of self-efficacy	It develops a sense of "self-efficacy" in the participant, that is to say that the person perceives himself capable of participating and contributing to improve his own reality.

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amadeo, J. Torney-Purta, J. (2002). Civic knowledge and engagement: An IEA study of upper secondary students in sixteen countries. IEA, Amsterdam

Bandura, A (1997) Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control, Worth Publishers; 1st edition, CA

Blythe, T. (1999) Enseñanza Para La Comprensión, Guía para el docente, Paidós, Argentina.

Bujanda, M.E, (2005) Ciudadanía y deliberación democrática en la escuela primaria con apoyo de las tecnologías digitales. Una experiencia de investigación y desarrollo curricular. Ponencia presentada en el congreso "La educación y la formación de una ciudadanía democrática" Harvard Graduate School of Education y Fundación Arias para la Paz y el Progreso Humano Costa Rica.

CEPAL, Base de Estadísticas e Indicadores Sociales (BADEINSO). http://tinyurl.com/badeinso en La democracia de ciudadanía. Una agenda para la construcción de ciudadanía en América Latina, PNUD y OEA, Washington, 2010.

CEPAL (2014) Social Panorama of Latin America, United Nations, Santiago de Chile.

CEPAL (2016) CEPALSTAT | Databases and Statistical Publications, http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/Perfil_Nacional_Social.html?pais=MEX&idioma=english

Cox, C., Jaramillo, R., & Reimers, F. (2005). Educar para la ciudadanía y la democracia en las Américas: Una agenda para la acción. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. Departamento de Desarrollo Sostenible División de Estado, Gobernabilidad y Sociedad Civil Unidad de Educación.

Cox, C. (2006) Jóvenes y ciudadanía política en América Latina, Desafíos al Currículo, Revista Prelac,No.3,Diciembre 2006.

Cox, C. (2010) Informe de Referente Regional 2010. Oportunidades de aprendizaje

escolar de la ciudadanía en América Latina: currículos comparados. Sistema Regional de Evaluación y Desarrollo de Competencias Ciudadanas (SREDECC), Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. Bogotá: CERLALC

Delors, J.(1996) La Educación encierra un Tesoro, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the XXI Century, Ediciones UNESCO, Paris Francia.

Dewey, J.(1916) Democracy and Education, The Free Press, Later Printing edition, February 1, 1997, New York

Francisco, Papa (2016) Visita a México, Mensaje de bienvenida.

Freire, Paulo (1996)¿Extensión o comunicación? La concientización en el medio rural, XIX Edición, Siglo veintiuno editores, México

Fundación Escuela Nueva Volvamos a la Gente (2006) Hacia una Escuela Nueva para el siglo XXI, Módulo 2 Gobiernos Estudiantiles, Fundación Escuela Nueva Volvamos a la Gente, Bogotá, Colombia.

Fundación Omar Dengo (2005) CADE: Aprender a deliberar para una ciudadanía activa y democrática. Fundamentos teóricos y metodológicos y Guía didáctica para educadores, Fundación Omar Dengo, San José, Costa Rica.

Gardner, H. (1999) Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century, Basic books, New York.

Ganz, M (2000) Organizing notes, Mapping the social world, Harvard KSG, Cambridge, MA.

Gil Anton, M (2014) Las grietas de la educación en México, Programa de educación digital, El Colegio de México http://digital.colmex.mx/index.php/las-grietas-de-la-educacion-en-mexico

Hart, Roger (1997) Children´s participation, The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care, Earthscan and UNICEF, London and New York.

Jaramillo, R., Murillo, G. (2013) Educación y pensamiento critica para la construcción de ciudadanía: Una Apuesta al Fortalecimiento Democrático en las Américas, Programa Interamericano sobre Educación en Valores y Prácticas Democráticas. Serie Política en Breve sobre Educación y Democracia, Washington, D.C.

Kerr (2002) Original-César Bîrzéa, David Kerr, Rolf Mikkelsen, Isak Froumin, Bruno Losito, Milan Pol, Mitja Sardoc (2004) All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies, Council of Europe.

Kirlin, M. (2003). The Role of Civic Skills in Fostering Civic Engagement. CIRCLE - Working Paper 06 -: CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement), p.14.

Mejía, J.F. (2013) Evaluación de políticas y programas de educación para la ciudadanía democrática Programa Interamericano sobre Educación en Valores y Prácticas Democráticas. Serie Política en Breve, Washington, D.C.

OEA (2001) Carta Democrática Interamericana, Organización de los Estados Americanos, Washington, DC

OEA (2005) IV Reunión Interamericana de Ministros de Educación. Resolución aprobada por los Ministerios de Educación de las Américas, Programa Interamericano sore Educación en Valores y Prácticas Democráticas,Trinidad y Tobago

OECD (2012) PISA 2012 Results in Focus What 15-year-olds know and what they can do with what they know, http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-overview.pdf

Osley, A., Starkey, H. (2004). Study o the Advances in Civic Education in Education Systems: Good Practices in Industrialized Countries. Washington/Geneva: InterAmerican Development Bank - Education Network of the Regional Policy Dialog and the UNESCO International Bureau of Education.

Putnam, R. (2000). Bowling alone, The collapse and revival of american conmmunity. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Reimers, F. (2001) Unequal Schools, Unequal Chances: The Challenges to Equal Opportunity in the Americas, David Rockefeller Center Series on Latin American Studies, Cambridge, MA.

Reimers, F. (2008). Assessing Citizenship Skills in Latin America. The Development of a Regional Module as part of the International Civic and Citizenship Study. Paper presented at the AERA - Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, p.18.

Reimers, F., Ortega, ME., Cárdenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E.(2014) Empowering Teaching for Participatory Citizenship: Evaluating the Impact of Alternative Civic Education Pedagogies on Civic Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills of Eight-grade Students in Mexico, Journal of Social Science Education, Volume 13, Number 4, Winter 2014

Sen, A. (2000) Development as freedom, Anchor Books, New York

Sherrod, L., Torney-Purta, J.,Flanagan, C.(2010) Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth, Wiley, New Jersey.

Schulz, W., Ainley, J., Fraillon, J., Kerr, D., Losito, B.,(2010) ICCS 2009 International Report: Civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement among lower secondary school students in 38 countries, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), Amsterdam, The Netherlands

UNDP (2004) La democracia en América Latina, hacia una democracia de ciudadanas y ciudadanos, 2ª. Ed., Aguilar, Altea, Taurus, Alfaguara, Buenos Aires.

UNDP (2008) Democracia/Estado/Ciudadanía: Hacia un Estado de y para la Democracia en América Latina, http://web.undp.org/latinamerica/docs/Democracia_en_A%20_Latina.pdf

UNDP, OAS (2010) Nuestra democracia, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México

United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm

Vía Educación (2006) Sistema participativo de desarrollo sustentable, information in www.viaeducation.org

Vía Educación (2008) Qualitative Study of a Teacher Training Program for the Development of Democratic Citizenship Competencies in Students, Vía Educación, Mexico

Vía Educación (2012) Formative and Summative Evaluation of a Teacher Training Program for the Development of Democratic Citizenship Competencies in Students, Vía Educación, Mexico

TALIS (2014) TALIS 2013 Results: An International Perspective on Teaching and Learning, OECDE, Paris, Fr.

Weiss, Carol H. (1998) Evaluation, Second Edition, Prentice Hall, New Jersey

AFFILIATIONS

Mariali Cárdenas
Vía Educación
Co-Founder and Pedagogical Director

---

[1] Vía Educación, Co-Founder and Pedagogical Director. Río Sena 108-A Col. Del Valle, San Pedro Garza García, N.L. C.P. 66220, phone 52(81)17661195, marialicardenas@viaeducacion.org

[2] Vía Educación is a non-profit organization and think tank based in Mexico, with the mission of generating opportunities for sustainable social development through the design, implementation and evaluation of educational strategies. www.viaeducacion.org

[3] In 2012, Mexico ranked 53 out of 65 countries and economies in the PISA survey which assessed the competencies of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science.

[4] The Pedagogical Technical Advisor (ATP by its Spanish acronym) is an agent within the Public Education System that accompanies the implementation of the Educational Reform in schools.

[5] Water for the School. In a rural school in southeast Mexico, a teacher starts a conversation with her students regarding what they can do to improve the conditions of their school community. Students begin to dialogue about their school, their needs, and the relationships among those needs.

The teacher guides the students, who are encouraged that their voices are being heard. Then the teacher asks them what they believe the rest of the school community thinks, and the students decide to survey their peers to see what others think can be improved in their school. Students design their survey and ask their peers and school staff for their opinions. They return with their results and then deliberate how they should interpret the information.

The teacher asks what they learned from the experience, and students explain how they interacted with the people they talked to and how everybody was interest in improving the school community. Sparking discussion transforms the school; people talk about how to improve different things, many of which have been unresolved for a long time; for example, some walls need painting, desks need to be fixed, or children need accessible play areas.

Soon, one idea begins to stand out: water. There is no water in the restrooms, so they have been closed for several years. Supposedly, a pipe truck was meant to bring water once in a while, but the inconsistency of this service made the school staff decide to close the restrooms. Students cannot even wash their hands; there is only a big container to fill with water using a bucket. Students can use a small amount only when it is urgently needed.

The students begin to brainstorm ideas about how to solve this problem, and the teacher follows the participatory methodology of the project and directs them using the criteria to decide what to improve. Water will benefit everybody and is within the rules of the school. The final criterion is the students' capability to solve the problem with their own skills within a specific timeframe. The students are motivated by now. They insist that this is something that most of their peers mentioned in the survey, and they feel capable of finding a solution.

The teacher facilitates a new discussion process to examine alternatives methods of solving the problem by their own means. Soon, the students suggest bringing water to the classroom from a neighbor's well. Challenges are presented by the teacher and the students: what if the neighbor won't share his or her water? How can we transport the water?

This conversation provides the background for creating the Action Plan. Students determine what has to be done, by whom and at what time. Responsibilities and roles are assigned; they decide to have a president of the project, a treasurer and coordinators of specific tasks. By now, the students have organized the rest of the community, and all are motivated to participate. They have decided that they need a water pump, and they came up with several ways to earn the money required to buy it, such as selling tickets for the raffle of a soccer ball. They implement the project by first speaking with the school principal, then talking to the neighbor about the project and deciding the best way to transport the water to the school.

A few weeks later, the students have encouraged the entire school community to participate and have a motivated principal who supports them. The rest of the students of the school are also participating, and the neighbor has agreed to share the water from his well. A committee buys the pump using the money from the raffle and organizes the process to install it. The students dig a path from the well to the school, and the pump will soon provide water.

While working on the project, the students have applied different democratic citizenship competencies. For example: Understanding and analyzing the world around them; developing communication skills while considering democratic methods of assessing issues. This discussion allows students to find solutions and organize with others to implement them, motivating others in the community to participate. Students use data collection tools, learn to

think in terms of the common good, value the importance of individual opinions, and design specific actions to accomplish their goals.

By the end of sixteen weeks, there is a working pump, the restrooms have been opened, and clean water is being provided for everyone in the school. During the weekly school assembly, students who coordinated the project present its results and acknowledge those who helped. We observe how the students have changed; a girl who at the beginning of the school year was nervous about speaking in front of crowds is now presenting the finances of the project to the school and explaining how the resources were used. With a new sense of strength in their voices, the students who coordinated the project thank everyone for their participation in this project. This Project's video: http://viaeducacion.org/portfolio/el-agua/

[6] Table extracted from the mentioned study by (Reimers F., Ortega, M.E., Cardenas, M., Estrada, A., Garza, E., pp.50, 2014).

[7] In particular, Ana del Toro for the translation and input on evaluation and Armando Estrada for his support in the elaboration of this chapter and in helping to make this program possible.