

# SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN EDUCATION IN CONTEXTS OF INSECURITY: REVISITING THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

## A CASE STUDY



### 1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In contexts with gang presence and insecurity, this study seeks to understand:



How schools and their teaching staff try to provide an adequate and safe environment for students.



How the involvement of the education community contributes to the school's functioning and the inclusion of students.



### 2. METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on six public schools in rural and urban settings with gang presence and insecurity in the surrounding area.

Each school is a case study, where in-depth interviews were conducted with teaching staff, the local education community and external stakeholders.



### 3. RESULTS

Three types of educational communities can be distinguished:



#### URBAN COMMUNITY

- Poor urban settings with few resources and fragile social cohesion.
- Sometimes students must work to help their families.
- Family participation in school is limited to attending meetings.
- Although families value secondary education, it is not a priority.



#### RURAL COMMUNITY

- The situation of poverty is more critical.
- Students often work together with their families.
- Family participation in school is limited.
- Secondary education is considered irrelevant.



#### MARKET COMMUNITY

- Students come from families who sell in the market.
- Students and their families travel long distances to the market and the school.
- The demands of commerce restrict family participation in the school.
- Students collaborate with their families in their commercial activities.
- A future in the market looks more attractive than education.



## CONCURRENCES IN THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITIES

### The changing security situation

- The ups and downs in the local security situation are out of the school's control.
- National security policies, police actions and decisions made by the gangs are more influential.
- Schools attempt to maintain cordial but distant relations with these actors, in order to avert problems.

### The school environment

- The social relations are affected by the active presence of gangs.
- The teachers and students fear those who exploit their proximity to the local gangs to exhibit defiant behaviors and threats.
- For students who work, school offers a moment of respite and diversion.



## 4. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS



In order to achieve an adequate environment, schools prioritize respect and dialogue with students.



Schools resort principally to infrastructure measures to achieve a safe learning environment. Often the school principal will assume an active role in transmitting a sense of security.



Schools do not have a model to guide their relationships with families and the neighboring community.



External organizations with education programs in local schools employ 'helicopter interventions': they fly in, conduct their intervention and disappear. They offer experiences and resources that are often novel and necessary, but unsustainable for the school itself.

