



A Comparative Analysis of School-based Management in Central America

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This paper provides a comparative analysis of school-based management reforms in four Central American countries (EDUCO in El Salvador, PRONADE in Guatemala, PROHECO in Honduras, and Centros Autonomos in Nicaragua). It starts by providing a characterization of the models and then reviews how they have expanded community participation and empowerment and school decisionmaking autonomy. It then continues by analyzing the impact of community and school empowerment on the teaching-learning process, including measures of teacher effort. The paper assesses the impact of the models on several educational outcomes, relating this impact with the teaching-learning environment and community empowerment. Finally, the paper attempts to explain the impact of the reforms by discussing how variations in reform design, country contexts and actors' assets can explain differences and similarities in result. The key conclusion of the paper is that school-based management models have led generally to greater community empowerment and teacher effort, resulting in: (a) a better use of the existing limited capacity of teachers and schools; (b) higher coverage in rural areas; (c) somewhat better student flows; and (d) learning outcomes at least as high as in traditional schools (while community-managed schools are generally established in the poorest and most isolated rural areas). A second set of key conclusions of the report is that the impact of community based schooling on student flows and learning outcomes could be greatly enhanced by a set of specific actions which largely aim at setting up the conditions for pedagogical improvement, improved management and empowerment at the local level, and sustainability of the models

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