

MCC's data-driven newsletter: the latest updates and a results brief from the Evaluation Catalogue.

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STATISTICALLY SPEAKING

MCC's Data-Driven Newsletter

January 2016



Welcome to the inaugural edition of Statistically Speaking, MCC's new data-driven newsletter! We created Statistically Speaking to take our commitment to learning one step further - providing development policymakers, practitioners, and evaluators with insights you can use from the data MCC collects, uses, and posts each day – with a particular focus on our independent evaluations. Looking for us to highlight something in future issues? Let us know what you think on Twitter at [@MCC_Data](#) or on our website at [MCC.gov](#).

– Beth Tritter, Vice President of the Department of Policy and Evaluation, Millennium Challenge Corporation

EVIDENCE INSIGHT

Policy takeaways from recent evaluations

Impact Evaluation: **IMAGINE** [Niger](#)

Policy Question: Can better facilities – like housing for female teachers, durable classrooms, and separate latrines – make schools more “girl-friendly” and improve educational outcomes for girls?

Key Results: MCC’s IMAGINE project aimed to improve educational outcomes, especially for girls, by building better quality schools with on-site housing for female teachers and separate bathrooms for girls and boys. An independent evaluation by Mathematica Policy Research measured village-level impacts using a randomized controlled trial and found statistically significant improvements in enrollment, attendance, and math test scores, and gains were generally larger for girls than for boys. These results suggest that targeted infrastructure improvements and complementary investments can make schools more “girl-friendly,” resulting in improved educational outcomes for girls. Building upon these positive results, the Niger Education and Community Strengthening (NECS) project expanded the activities begun under IMAGINE and added in complementary investments in early childhood reading. NECS will be subject to a separate evaluation, expected in 2017.

EVALUATIONS PIPELINE

What we have in the works

Evaluation Launched

- Cabo Verde Land
- Lesotho Health
- Senegal Irrigation
- Senegal Roads

Design Finalized

- Georgia Regional Development Fund
- Georgia Education
- Ghana Education
- Jordan Water

Ongoing

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Final Posted

- Armenia Agriculture
- El Salvador
ITCHA Education
- Mozambique Farmer Support
- Niger IMAGINE Education

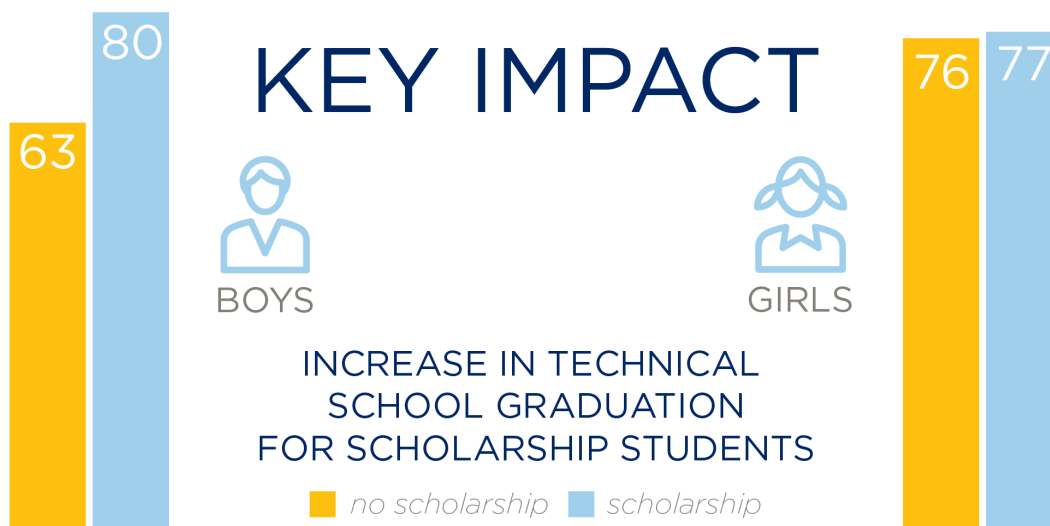
RESULTS BRIEF

What we're learning from our data

El Salvador [Evidence Workshop](#): Driving Better Policy through Evidence

Last summer, more than 180 policymakers, practitioners, and researchers attended MCC's first evidence workshop, *Closing the Gap: Strengthening the Ties between Evaluation and Policy*. Held in San Salvador, the workshop was an opportunity for MCC, the Government of El Salvador, and other partners to share evaluation results in education and investment climate projects and find ways to incorporate that knowledge into new programs and policies. Along with MCC, the World Bank, USAID, J-PAL, CEDLAS, IADB, and Jacobs, Cordova & Associates also presented evaluation results and analytical tools specific to education and El Salvador's investment climate.

The results offered interesting lessons and takeaways. Mathematica's impact evaluation of the Fomilenio I program providing scholarships to technical schools demonstrated that scholarships can provide strong incentives for students to complete secondary school, but that incentive has different impacts on the graduation rates boys and girls in El Salvador. Students who were offered scholarships were more likely to enroll in secondary school, graduate with a technical degree and to enroll in a post-secondary technical-vocational education institution. Yet while boys who were offered scholarships to improved schools were 27 percent more likely to graduate than boys who were not, girls who were offered the same scholarships showed no significant change in their graduation rate. Several stakeholders suggested that scholarships may serve as a stronger motivator for boys than girls because they reduce boys' strong incentives to emigrate or find low-skilled work to provide for their families.



The performance evaluation of the improvements to the Chalatenango Technical Institute (ITCHA), a post-secondary school in the Chalatenango Department in northwest El Salvador, showed that graduation alone does not necessarily lead to improvements in income. Across the different degree programs at ITCHA, employment rates were below targets one year after graduation, in part because only some of the skills needed by local employers matched what the program provided. A key takeaway from this evaluation was that to improve the likelihood that students will find jobs, practitioners should involve the private sector early in conversations about technical training to match the skills they need to the training programs being offered. To better serve these needs, the second compact plans to work closely with local businesses to create programs that target their identified skills gap

As part of the workshop, participants committed to use the lessons learned to improve education, gender, and legal and regulatory policy to make the business climate more competitive and help ensure that better educated students can find higher paying jobs in El Salvador.

El Salvador Evidence Workshop: Action Items

Responding to a request from the Government of El Salvador, MCC and FOMILENIO II—the implementing entity for El Salvador’s MCC Compact—are **planning an M&E certificate course for relevant ministries and implementing entities** to improve the M&E capacity within the government.

MCC and FOMILENIO II plan to **explore ways to conduct more targeted, rapid evaluations** during the life of the Compact to address the need for real-time feedback and timely evaluation results.

To better track improvements in the business climate, key stakeholders agreed to **use the World Bank Enterprise Survey, co-financed by MCC, as a way to monitor progress** made through the Regulatory Reform Activity under the El Salvador II Compact.

ECONOMIC RATES OF RETURN: THE 2015 REPORT ON CLOSEOUT ERRs

For the second year in a row, MCC has completed a systematic analysis of all of our original and closeout economic rates of return (ERRs). Don't miss this unique, portfolio-wide view of MCC's work, examined through the lens of one of the key data points we use for decision-making, accountability, and learning. The reports are available [here](#).



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