PERU

Innova Schools- Colegios Peruanos

1. Aims

Innova Schools (IS) has under its vision to offer quality education at a reasonable cost to the children in Peru. The targeted children are those that pertain to lower B, and C, SES. Our aim is to offer an alternative that is excellent, scalable and affordable, in order to narrow the gap regarding the problem of quality education in Peru. As a private educational system, we are resolved to overcome the learning gap, with initiatives and interventions that have innovation at the core.

IS is implementing a paradigm shift: from teacher centred schools, to schools that are student centred. In this paradigm shift, technology is regarded as an important tool in the learning process. Our learning process promotes that students use technology to learn efficiently, and that teachers facilitate this process accordingly.

To perform its vision, IS started as a full-fledged company in 2010 with a carefully designed business plan including the construction of a nationwide network of 70 schools that will serve over 70,000 students by 2020. Up to the moment, we have 18 schools, 16 in the peripheral areas of the capital city of Lima, and 2 in the provinces. IS is currently attending a population of approximately 620 teachers, and 9 100 students.

2. Leadership and Partners

At the educational system level, Jorge Yzusqui our CEO is a member of the National Council of Education [Consejo Nacional de Eduación-CNE]. There is also a close connection between our CEO and Martín Vegas who is the vice-minister of pedagogic management at the Ministry of Education in Peru.

In terms of institutions of higher education, we have an agreement of cooperation with PUCP [Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú] from which we beneficiate from all the educational technological innovations that the university develops. IS has developed some projects of professional development, especially one related to reinforcing capacities of teacher monitoring, with UPCH [Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia]. We also count with the support for professional development from UCIC [Universidad

Corporativa de Intercorp] which is the Corporate University of the Interbank Corporation1. We have an agreement with the Instituto Pedagógico de Monterrico which is a Normal or teacher college where primary and secondary teachers are formed. Under the agreement with the Normal de Monterrico, IS provides the faculty to the Institute. With these faculty, future English teachers are taught English and prepared to take standardized tests such as FCE ,CAE and TKT. The aim is to have evidence that these future teachers will perform well using English, and will have the necessary skills to teach English as a second language.IS expects to count on some of these English teachers when opening schools in the near future. IS is also contributing with the country, helping this Institute in the preparation of teachers of English as a second language.

In terms of business corporations, we have an agreement with Google by which Google deploys the apps (e-mail, word processor, spread sheets, presentations, and forms) for students and teachers. Google also funds some of our pilots to verify connectivity issues in our media labs. Another strategic partner is IDEO which is an innovation international consultant firm with which we have developed some of our innovative strategies in terms of use of space, pedagogy, construction model, use of technology and others.

Each of our schools also establishes relationships and work directly with local organizations from different sectors: NGOs, government, private sector, etc.

3. Strategies and activities

What is the main rationale?

The educational system in Peru has been able to overcome issues related to access to education. Elementary Education has 94% of national coverage, while Secondary Education has improved from 68% in 2001, to 77% in 2009[2]. However the problem of quality in Peru still pertains. This is evidenced in the results of national assessments. The *Evaluación Censal de Estudiantes* is a nation-wide assessment for students of second grade which is applied on yearly bases. In the *Evaluación Censal de Estudiantes, 2012*, only 30.9% of students reached the expected level in Reading Comprehension while only 12.8% did the same in Mathematics[3]. Moreover, the results in international assessments also make it clear that education quality in Peru is a present issue. Peruvian results in SERCE 2006[4] and PISA 2009[5] are in every subject or aspect of the evaluations, below average.

Besides the poor student performance, another important issue is the privatization of education in Peru. The economic growth in Peru has caused Peruvian families to migrate from public to private education in

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[1] The Interbank corporation is the corporation to which Colegios Peruanos belongs.

[2] Benavides,M.; Ponce, C. & Mena, M. (2011): Estado de la Niñez en el Perú. Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia y Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática. Lima

[3] MINEDU- UMC. Muestra de Control de Evaluación Censal de Estudiantes 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 y 2012

[4] Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America Latina and the Caribbean OREALC/UNESCO (2008): Student achievement in Latin America and the Caribbean.Results of the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE),Santiago de Chile.

[5] OECD (2010): PISA 2009 Results: Executive Summary, Figure 8

an attempt to search for a better quality education for their children. In Lima, just to mention an example of this migration, 43% of schools are private. Nevertheless, the alternatives of private education at low cost in Peru lack minimum standards of quality.

What are the specific design, features, and activities of the strategy?

The blended learning model is a powerful strategy that accounts for the uniqueness of the learning model at Innova. The innovation program, which will be described afterwards, is also a very interesting part of the model that represents and iconic moment in the life of students at IS.

Blended learning

A social constructivist learning model is highly effective because it allows students to seek knowledge and construct their own understanding. However it is expensive and requires special teaching talent-both barriers to scale. Blended learning combines direct hands on experiences in the classroom (social constructivist learning) with digital learning in which students use computer based tools to discover and work through core academic concepts. Blended learning at IS is made up of two modes: *Group learning* and *solo learning*.

<u>In group learning</u> students collaborate with each other, often in small groups that are led by a teacher to discover new concepts and develop high order understanding through projects and exercises. While group learning is a key to helping students develop academic knowledge, it supports the development of competences such as collaboration, teamwork and leadership. This usually happens in classes of around 30 students.

<u>Solo learning</u> is a new format of independent, student-led and self-paced learning often enabled by technology. Students construct their own goals, paths, and work flows, with teachers providing targeted support as needed. Solo learning is a major differentiator for IS, here the student learns to develop autonomy, focus, and responsibility for their own learning. Solo learning usually happens in a large format, with groups of around 60 students.

The innovation Program

The innovation Program (IP) is a school wide program. It invites Innova students to tackle issues in their community. The program exemplifies the Innova promise: encouraging students to become leaders with values, and connecting what they learn in the classroom to the real world.

The key to the IP is that it is about open-ended learning. There is no right answer to the challenges students are exploring. This helps our students learn that they can develop new solutions that make a difference in the lives of others.

Each semester, the IP launches with a high-level framing of a topic, set by Innova. Students might be asked to examine health in their communities or environmental problems. Each challenge is framed with a

question that begins with: "How might we..."Examples include: How might we improve health in our community? How might we help our community build confidence in our national heritage?

The IP follows a consistent process coming from the human centred design thinking framework whether students are in primary or secondary grades. Students move through each of the following stages to find an answer to the challenge posed to them: explore, design, experiment and share.

How is communication and feedback assured?

In order to make sure that the teachers, principals and main actors share the same framework and speak the same language IS has created strategies and tools for communication and feedback purposes.

The Teacher Resource Center (TRC) for Blended Learning: The TRC is the online home for the Innova learning program. It contains a comprehensive set of quality lessons for each subject across every grade. These lesson plans are authored by Innova, and are specific to the learning model. The lesson plans, and the aggregation of them in one central resource, allows Innova to distribute quality teaching resources to every teacher. It simplifies the process of lesson planning and creates common standards across the innova network. With the TRC, Innova wishes to create a community of practice where teachers can build on the initial materials and upload and share new resources.

Regional directors are in charge of 7-8 schools, this allows them to work closely with school principals to identify difficulties and to elaborate and execute improvement plans to assure the correct functioning and management of schools. Regional directors also identify and systematize good and innovative practices within schools in the system. The regional director is in some way a coach to the principal, who offers feedback and helps the principal stay focus on the task of managing the school and leading all students to a successful performance and achievement of the learning goals in the network.

Professional development: Training programs are designed for teachers and school leaders. These programs are aligned to the methodology of Innova schools, and are aimed at attending the needs of the teachers. Professional development is essential at IS where our teachers are for the most part novice teachers, through an intensive process of teacher training IS provides its teachers with a good understanding of the blended learning methodology at Innova.

Teacher monitoring Area: IS is aware that teachers also need support during service, for this reason the Teacher Monitoring system is put into place to observe teachers performance in classroom and give feedback based on observation instruments that are aligned to our educational model. The communication between teachers, mentors and school principals is essential to assure permanent and significant improvements in teacher performance.

The Department of quality assurance: This department applies standardized tests to students twice a year, to measure student performance and see if the innovations are having impact on the improvement of student learning and achievement. Also, this area designs the pilots that need to be done before large scale implementation of the pedagogic innovations. Along these lines, there are class observations and tests with control group design, that are being applied to students, to measure the impact of blended learning .

4. Context

Context, for the purposes of this system note, refers to many aspects surrounding the origins of Innova Schools in Peru: the economic and social context, privatization, and the educational context in Peru. Peru has the highest growth (6.9% in 2012) and lowest inflation (2.8% in 2012) in Latin America.[6] The emerging middle class has expanded over the past decade: NSE C grew from 15% of the population in 2003 to 20% in 2011.

Peru has a school population of approximately 7.2 million children, 22% of students in Peru attend private schools, in Lima 43% attend private schools as a consequence of the economic growth. There are 21,000 private schools in Peru[7] .

In recent years, the problem of quality has been addressed at different levels by the national educational system:(i) students and teacher assessments are being applied, (ii) a Public Teacher Career path has been developed, (iii) national standards on student performance are also being developed recently.

5. Resources

To provide an account of our resources we will refer to financial resourcing, facilities, equipment, technological resources and the way the Area of Educational Planning and Management is organized.

Financial resourcing
To perform its vision, IS started as a full-fledged company with a carefully designed plan. The total estimated investment is circa $300 million, with an equity capital contribution of $76 million. The balance of the investment will be funded by internally generated cash flows and financial leverage. The Inter-American Development Bank has granted Colegios Peruanos - Innova Schools a loan of $15 million to finance the expansion of our network.

Equipment and Technology
We have a significant investment in technology and connectivity. A regular school has 27 classrooms, 2 media laboratories, 1 science laboratory and open spaces for lunch and recreation. An average school has 100 computers, 20 multimedia projectors and internet connection of 3 mbps. Internet connectivity is difficult in Peru, especially in the areas where our schools operate.

Area of Educational Planning and Management
This area gives supports in all the possible aspects of the daily activities of a school that is why it articulates the academics, operation and logistics sections of Innova Schools.

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[6] Banco Central de Reserva (2013): Reporte de Inflación. Panorama actual y proyecciones macroeconómicas. Marzo 2013, Lima.

[7] Information retrieved from Unidad de Estadísticas Educativas - ESCALE. Ministerio de Educación, Lima, Peru.
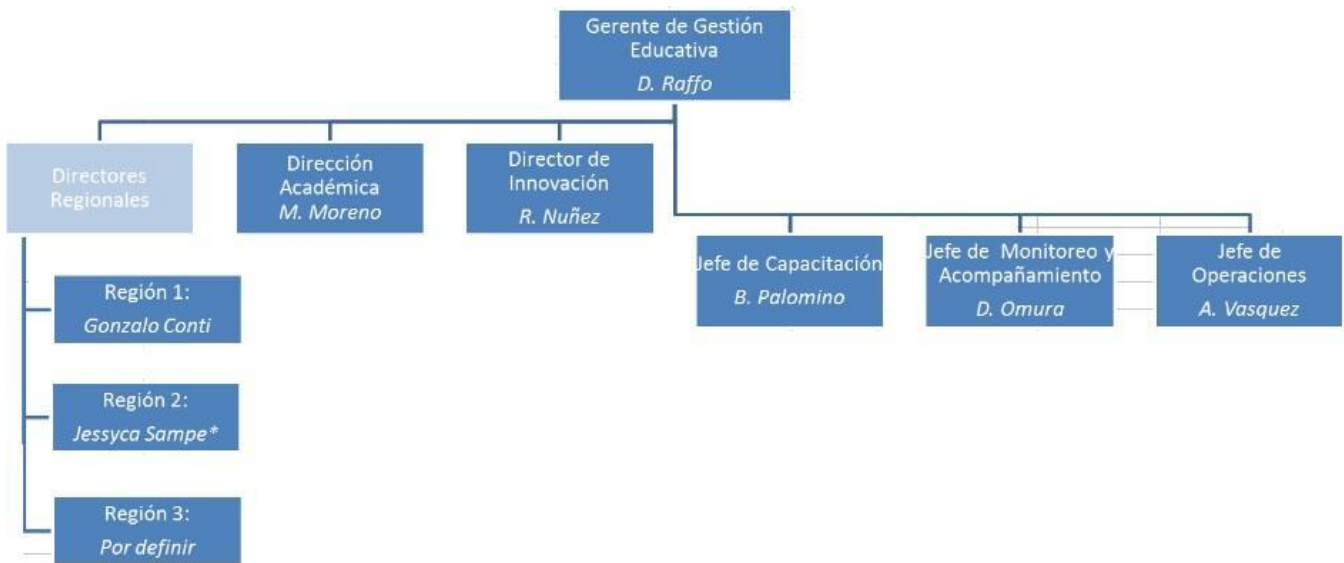
- *Teachers*: Young professionals with little or no experience as teachers in previous schools. They are trained in our teaching methodology and handle around 30 teaching hours per week.

- *Academic coordinators*: These are mostly our best kindergarten or elementary school teachers, with at least three years of teaching experience in our schools. This is part of a career line in which becoming a Principal is also a possibility.

- *Service Coordinators:* They are responsible of schools logistics, maintenance and administration. They have an administrative background and work directly with the principals.

- *Principals*: The head of the school, a professional in education that has had some school leadership experience. This persona has either been Head of a school department or Head of a school level.

- *Regional Directors*: This is a professional with experience in school management who is responsible of approximately 7 schools in many aspects: pedagogical as a priority, financial, marketing, and other issues related to school management.

- *The Academic Department* has Curriculum area specialists for the core subjects (mathematics, language arts, english as a second language, and science). These are experienced teachers that have also had experience in activities related to curriculum design and teacher training. The academic director makes decisions regarding the study plan, curriculum and pedagogy in general.

- *The Area of Innovation:* The innovation department designs, prototypes and pilots new breakthrough ideas at innova schools. Currently the area is working on initiatives in 4 key areas: academics, space, systems and infrastructure. With an eye to the future the area is exploring digital content and content generation platforms that will help incorporate adaptive learning to our learning model.

- *The area of professional development:* This area works in coordination with the academic department and UCIC, the corporate university of Intercorp, to design the training programs for teachers and school leaders. These programs are aligned to the educational model, and the training needs of the personnel. The area offers different learning pathways for teachers at different levels of teaching experience and performance at IS.

- *The Area of Teacher Monitoring* (*teacher monitoring teachers*): These are mostly IS teachers or teachers from other schools that have proved to be good at teaching, these teachers are trained to provide feedback to the teachers in service at IS. Becoming a teacher mentor in the core areas of the IS curriculum is also attractive and part of the career path offered at IS, to our in service teachers

- *Service and schools management coordinators*: These are professionals that come from management experiences in the private sector and help Principals deal with the administration of the schools. The aim here is to liberate Principals from the administrative tasks and have them more focussed on the pedagogical aspects in the schools.

6. Development over Time

2010

By 2010 three schools existed: Los Olivos, Villa el Salvador and Chorrillos.The learning methodology in schools was teacher centred. The teacher was at the centre of the teaching and learning process. In terms of curriculum design, IS was basically following the National Peruvian Curriculum (DCN, 2009).

2011

Two new schools were added to the network: San Miguel and Surco, we had five schools in total. The learning methodology shifted to a paradigm centred on students working collaboratively in groups. IS started to implement collaborative learning in class having socio-constructivism at the core of the pedagogical model. Teacher training was designed and executed in-house, it tagged on collaborative learning, curriculum design, authentic assessment and socio-constructivist pedagogy. In terms of teacher monitoring, class observation instruments were designed and validated that year. Class observations and feedback were carried out locally in schools, under the supervision of the school Principal, the academic coordinators and the school psychologists.

2012

By 2012 six new schools were opened other five schools were expanded. The new schools in 2012 were: Chaclacayo, San Juan de Lurigancho, Santa Clara, Carabayllo, San Martín de Porres, Callao. The use of technology through strategies as webquest, was introduced in the learning process. The curriculum core areas were prioritized in terms of teacher training and curriculum development: Mathematics, Language arts, Science and English as a second language.

A teacher monitoring system was designed, frequencies of class observations, and categories of teacher performance based on observations were established. Instruments of classroom observations were

validated and adjusted. The office of Quality Assurance started actions towards the implementation of quality assurance in the schools: (i) the first system evaluations were designed and implemented for each school term; (ii) the self-assessment and improvement plans were conducted and elaborated by the quality assurance school commission in each school.

2013

By 2013, eight new schools were opened and most of the previously existing schools were expanded. It has definitely been one of the most challenging years for the infrastructure department at IS. The 8 new schools are: Campoy, Puruchuco, Virreyes, Rímac, Sto. Toribio, Nuevo Chimbote, Chincha and San Miguel II. In 2013, we have started our expansion in the provinces outside of Lima, Chincha to the south, and Nuevo Chimbote in the department of Ancash in northern Peru.

In 2013 we started *a* new approach to learning: **Blended Learning**. The **Innovation Program,** a program using human centred design thinking to make students solve a challenge in their community, was also launched.

7. Evidence of effectiveness and efficiency

The data in this section refers firstly to student achievement. *Evaluación Censal de Estudiantes* is a nationwide assessment for students of second grade[8] which is applied on yearly bases in Peru.

Reading and Comprehensión 2nd grade

In terms of student performance, there is evidence of success at IS. The following data shows the results of Reading and comprehension in 2012. The national mean was 31% of achievement in all second graders in Peru; private schools in Lima achieved at a level of 52 per cent.

The schools in our network that participated in this assessment scored as follows: Los Olivos made 77 %, Chorrillos 80%, Surco 80%, and VES 76% all of them above the media of private schools (51%), and above the mean of the schools in the region (49%).

Mathematics 2nd grade

In second grade mathematics we also performed above the national mean (19%); however our results were not as good as the results obtained in Reading and comprehension. Los Olivos made 20 %, Chorrillos 28 %, Surco 37% and VES 26%. The mean in the region (Lima) was 13% and the mean for private schools in Peru was 17 %.

Secondly, we refer in this section of the note to the levels of satisfaction of the main actors involved. We have been collecting data since year one from a consultant marketing firm (Arellano consultores) that has

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[8] In Peru the national assessment happens in second grade reading and comprehension and mathematics. The Ministry of Education will be implementing national assessments in 4th, 6th , and 11th grade in the coming years; these are at a pilot phase and are not yet part of the national assessment of student performance

been inquiring through our main actors (teacher, parents and students), about their levels of general satisfaction. Last year parents general satisfaction was at the 72 per cent, the students satisfaction was 71 per cent, and the teachers general satisfaction was 80 per cent.

8. Success Factors

The following are what we consider to be some of the most influential factors in the success of the implementation of the IS network:

Curriculum Development

> IS underwent a strong revision of the Peruvian National Curriculum. Most schools in Peru strictly follow the national curriculum even though the Ministry of Education allows adapting and innovating two thirds of the curriculum. This revision ended in the formulation of a customized scope and sequence and educational standards to fit our educational model within the frame of the Peruvian National Curriculum and at the same time incorporating international benchmark. Considering also that curriculum alignment is an important factor to overcome student achievement issues, it was important to guarantee at IS in all grades and schools in the network, that the same content and process standards were being implemented.

Teacher Training

> Since most of our teachers are young professionals, IS is strongly committed to teacher training. Pre-service training includes induction sessions to tackle on our organizational culture and values; and an intensive summer training program where new teachers are trained in our academic model, curriculum, socio-constructivist pedagogy, and collaborative and blended learning. This builds on our new teachers the competencies needed to start the school year without major difficulties.

Teacher Monitoring and Support System

> This area provides pedagogical support to teachers from the core subject areas to improve their professional development and guarantee the implementation of our educational model, and assure quality learning in our students. This area helps new teachers to overcome teaching difficulties directly in the classroom and to spread good practices across our school network.

Regional directors

> Regional directors help to build a bottom to top strategy in the system, as opposed to what IS had before, where most of the decision making process was centralized in back office. In this way, the decisions that are made, result in a better fit for the concrete needs of the school. The regional director has also a role of coach with the principals (*Principals, coaching Principals*). This allows them to work closely with school principals, identify difficulties, elaborate and execute improvement plans to assure the correct functioning and management of schools. Regional directors also identify and systematize good practices in the school network, which also contributes to build a bottom to top strategy in the system.

The Teacher Resource Center (TRC)

> The TRC guarantees that the Innova Model is being implemented in every classroom across the network and that minimum requirements in the teaching process are met. It also builds a community of practitioners, where teachers share ideas, experiences and innovations and novice teachers can speed up their mastery of lesson planning.

Pilot Studies

> In Colegios Peruanos - Innova Schools we run pilot studies to test innovations. These pilot studies are usually conducted in two to three schools during several months and the Quality Assurance Area conducts systematic observations and feedback meetings. Pilot studies allow us to collect data in order to scale innovations and overcome possible issues during the implementation at large scale.

What risks are all these factors (strategies) reducing?

In the first place all the strategies are reducing the possibility of inefficiency dissemination, one of the biggest risks in a context of scale. Most of these strategies are built to guarantee that all the actors are on the same page and speak the same language, despite the geographical distance, and the difference in years of implementation, among schools. On the other hand, these strategies help us build autonomy in our schools in a dialogical way, in a way in which the answers that schools provide from their concrete needs, are also aligned to the system vision.

The second problem we intend to address with this strategy is the problem of curriculum misalignment. Curriculum and curriculum alignment are important to overcome the student performance gap. Innova schools needs to make sure that all grades, in all schools in the network, share the same content and process standards through teaching and learning.

In the third place, these strategies allow Innova schools to deal with the problem of low teacher performance which is a factor that has strong impact on student achievement. Teacher performance has many angles from where it can be analysed: content delivery and pedagogy implementation in classroom. Besides, considering the fact that at IS most of our teachers are novices and that IS opens an average of six schools per year, we have had to put into place several strategies to guarantee at a minimum level, a standardized teacher performance in each school in the network.

Finally, all these strategies are aimed at overcoming the student learning gap and to assure quality education in our school network in an effort to accomplish our vision: to offer quality education at a reasonable cost to the children in Peru

9. Tensions and impediments

Most of the impediments arise from a national context in which the educational sector is starting to grow and to situate quality at the centre of the discussion in the field. There are not many professionals in education in Peru that count with the qualifications and experience that is required to lead the educational initiatives at Innova schools. Moreover there are not many young men and women looking forward into

education as an attractive career to them. Since we open an average of 6 new schools per year, we are always facing difficulties in recruiting Principals, teachers, academic coordinators and other personnel. In order to overcome these recruitment problems we have started to develop some strategic agreements with Schools of Education in Peru.

There is also, due to the economic growth that Peru is experiencing, difficulties to acquire land at reasonable costs. The price of land is scaling up since there is huge demand for land to start different types of businesses in the areas in which we also want to open schools. This is a big problem when the aim is to open 42 more schools in 7 years according to IS business plan.

We have 16 schools operating in the peripheral areas of the city of Lima, a metropolis of more than 9.4 million inhabitants. To travel by public transportation from a school situated in the northern urban cone, to a school situated at the most southern urban cone, can take more than 3 hours. We also have 2 schools in the provinces, situated more than 200 km. away from Lima. The distances between our schools, and the time it takes to travel from one school to another, limits and shapes the way we organize meetings, train teachers, and handle the monitoring system and other logistic aspects.

Another factor that affects IS is the low level of internet broadband penetration in Peru, which is around 4%. This is 47% lower than the average for Latin America and 52% lower than the world average. There are several national barriers such as low computer penetration, difficult geography and lack of competition in the market, resulting in one of the slowest and most expensive broadband connections in the region. This affects the implementation of blended learning in our schools, especially in provinces where broadband access is even more difficult.

Finally another tension is scale and quality assurance within the schools in the network. Our motto is "excellent, affordable and scalable". This is especially challenging when low cost is also at the centre of what IS desires to implement.

As described at the beginning of this system note, IS has under its vision to offer quality education at a reasonable cost. The targeted children come from middle class families that can only afford a monthly tuition of 100 dollars. Therefore, IS needs to stay focussed when implementing innovations: if IS increments costs, loses its target; however, costs should stay reasonable enough, to help IS *effectively* deal with the huge problem of quality of education in Peru.

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