MINEDULAB

Innovation Lab for Education Policy

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MORE EVIDENCE ➔ MORE IMPACT

Policies where cost-effectiveness is proven with rigorous evidence can have large social returns on investment.
How do randomized evaluations work?

1. The group we are looking at is divided randomly in two

2. One group receives the program or intervention

3. Outcomes for both groups are measured for impact
How can we institutionalize the creation and use of rigorous evidence within government institutions?
Outline

- What is MineduLAB?
- Examples
- Design and implementation
- Key factors for success
- Challenges
- Next steps
Innovation lab for education policy nested inside the Ministry of Education of Peru

- Allows Ministry to improve education and management outcomes with innovative policies
- Designs, rigorously evaluates, and implements low-cost improvements of existing policies or new interventions

MineduLAB
LABORATORIO DE INNOVACIÓN
COSTO EFECTIVA DE LA
POLÍTICA EDUCATIVA
Learning Cycle

1. Problem identification and diagnosis
2. Contextualization of existing evidence
3. Innovation and evaluation design
4. Experimental evaluation
5. Innovation implementation
6. Use of evidence generated to incorporate learnings
7. Scale-up of effective programs
8. Idea for a new program

- Idea for a new program
- Problem identification and diagnosis
- Contextualization of existing evidence
- Innovation and evaluation design
- Use of evidence generated to incorporate learnings
- Scale-up of effective programs
- Innovation implementation
- Experimental evaluation
Institutional positioning

Team embedded in the Secretary of Strategic Planning

- Provides M&E and budgeting services to implementation units
- Centralization of information: Access to Ministry’s administrative data
- Control over budget: Capacity to “persuade” units within the ministry
Team creates partnerships between academics and implementation units following learning cycle

- The team is composed of evaluation professionals trained on RCTs
- Intermediates/translations interaction between academics and implementation units
Cost-effective innovation

The lab uses administrative data for evaluation and low cost interventions

- Large quantity of administrative data
- Heavy focus on tweaks to existing policies and incorporation on behavioral economics
Policy and academic relevance

MineduLAB decision making process guarantees innovation’s policy and academic relevance

MineduLAB team creates demand by dissemination workshops and internal-external call for proposals.

Innovations are selected by the Secretariat team with advisory from the board of academics.

Working at the intersection of two sets of incentives:

- Novel evidence that has impact on scientific progress
- Timely evidence that has impact on political priorities
Minedulab completes the learning cycle

- Supports implementation units on decision making based on results
- Supports implementation unit on implementing innovation
- Disseminates learnings by publishing and presenting results (public goods)
Current MineduLAB Projects
Innovations with results

- Text Messages to improve school Management
  - School Principal
- “Grow your Mind”
  - Students
- Booklets with comparable information on results of similar schools
  - School Principal, Teachers and Parents
- Videos sharing the financial benefits of secondary and higher education
  - Parents and Students
- Text Messages to motivate teachers
  - Teachers
- Non-monetary incentives for teachers
  - Teachers

Innovations in evaluation phase

Innovations in design or implementation phase

- Feedback on schools’ key indicators
  - School Principal, Teachers and Parents
- Information to outstanding students
  - Parents and Students
- Access to technology for teaching purposes
  - Teachers and Parents
- Increase the visibility of teacher absenteeism
  - Teachers
Videos with information on economic and social returns to education, combined with higher education financing options

- 18% decrease in dropout rate for urban areas, and higher for rural
- Improvements in test scores for girls – 4% math, 3% reading
- Ministry of Education is scaling up the innovation
SMS for school principals to improve the implementation of a maintenance program (preliminary results)

1. 4.4 pp increase in the delivery of expenditures reports
2. For each 3 cents invested the expense report increased by $266
3. Program has been scaled up to more than 20,000 schools
How was the lab created?

1. Identifying “champions” within the Ministry and hiring technical staff
2. Embedding technical assistance (IPA/J-PAL)
3. Mapping and checking of existing administrative data
4. Designing and testing processes
5. Achieving quick wins
6. Launching the laboratory
Key factors for success

1. Evaluation “champions”
2. Prominent technical teams (attractive position)
3. Excellent institutional positioning
4. Large quantity of administrative data
5. Low cost focus
6. Quick and relevant results (impact)
Challenges

1. Focus on administrative data restricts the set of questions the Lab can answer (limited learning capacity)
2. Data management: merge of existing datasets and data publication
3. High turnover within Ministry threatens scale-ups and learnings
4. Unstable political landscape and weak institutions threaten continuity
Next steps

1. Providing support to Minedulab during political transition
2. Generating an innovation fund to support Minedulab
3. Replicating model in other sectors (AyniLab) – Latam fertile environment
Thank you