



## TRF's Regional Education and Gender Equity Program

In January 2013, The Resource Foundation (TRF) and the Caterpillar Foundation launched a \$3 million partnership to reach thousands of children in Latin America and the Caribbean over three years. Through a regional strategy targeting marginalized communities in 10 countries, the program seeks to improve academic achievement, gender equity and life skills among elementary school-age boys and girls from 95 schools.

This initiative provides disadvantaged children with improved educational curricula and teacher training, educational reinforcement and community support networks. By collaborating with knowledgeable local nonprofits from TRF's broad network, TRF and Caterpillar are ensuring the program's success and sustainability in Caterpillar's key Latin American locations—Brazil, Mexico and Panama—and in countries where the need for educational support, particularly for girls, is great: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Peru and Uruguay.

The program forms an integral part of TRF's work to help donors address the most pressing development issues facing Latin America, including education. The program takes a holistic approach to address some of the biggest educational challenges the region currently faces—quality of education, school retention and advancement.

The 2009 PISA Assessment, which is an international standardized test, revealed that 48 percent of Latin American students (and 62 percent of those classified as low-income), have difficulty performing rudimentary reading tasks and are judged to lack essential skills for participating effectively and productively in society. Only 18 percent of students similarly situated among rich countries showed these same levels of academic deficiency.



In keeping with TRF's belief that the most effective programs are interdisciplinary, this program will involve educators, parents and students, both in school environments and in their communities. TRF's local partners' direct knowledge of these communities and expertise in education, consolidated by TRF's support and evaluation, are helping thousands of children develop a love of learning and acquire core skills to move forward.

This program benefits children between the ages of 9 and 12 in 71 communities through a methodology combining four key components:

- 1) Educational Reinforcement in math and reading
- 2) Development of Life Skills around topics such as gender roles, personal responsibility, effective communication and others
- 3) Community-Based Libraries in each school, promoting reading and research in school activities
- 4) Creation of a Platform for Success and Sustainability by involving diverse stakeholders



By focusing primarily on students in grades 4 to 6, this program aims to ensure the children's advancement to secondary education, which has been shown to reduce income inequalities and is a key determinant of countries' economic growth. TRF is measuring the program's success by means of rigorous monitoring and impact evaluation, providing Caterpillar with interim reports tracking the evolution, performance and impact indicators. TRF expects to share program results with the public, in line with its mission to promote sustainable development in the region.