



REACH

Increasing High School Enrollment in Rural México

Challenge



More than half of youth in indigenous communities in the Highlands of Chiapas drop out of school during the transition from middle school to high school.

Many of these students do not continue due to the cost of enrollment and school supplies, while others need to go to work to help support their families. Of those who do enter high school, making it to graduation is still a challenge because of the daily costs of transportation and meals. These economic barriers are a major contributor to high dropout rates.

Our solution



We visit students graduating from middle school to provide a voucher to cover the cost of high school entrance exams and a REACH scholarship to cover the upfront costs of continuing into high school. Once enrolled in the public school of their choice, Escalera provides scholarships throughout high school to help students cover the ongoing costs of staying in school.

The timing of our scholarship is crucial because it reaches students *before* the start of each semester when households must cover many of the costs of keeping their children in school. During each school year, students enrolled in high school received ~\$150 USD to support their studies.

Evaluation design

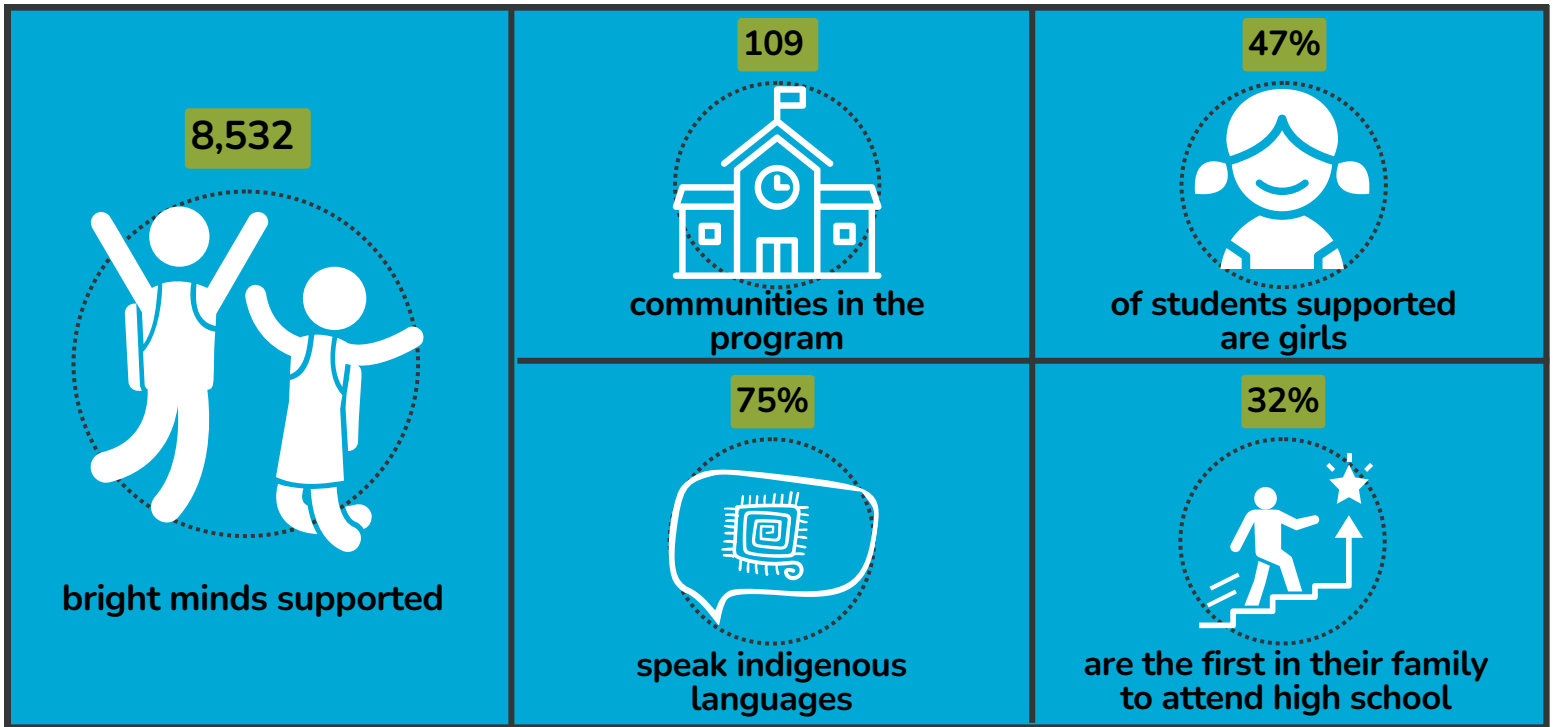


During the first five years of REACH, the program was run as a randomized control trial to confirm its effectiveness in increasing high school enrollment. We found that one of every six students who enrolled in high school would not have done so without the REACH scholarship.

Starting with REACH 6, we have continued to carefully track data on enrollment and continuation rates and gather qualitative data to identify opportunities to better support youth in completing their education.



2022-2023 School Year At-A-Glance



Key stakeholders



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