



Thornhill Capital Global Newsletter - March 2015

Social Development Issues in Latin America

According to the Cynthia Flores Mora of the World Bank, there are five key social issues in Latin America:

- Inequality
- Informal employment
- Women, rights and equality
- Innovation and education
- Chikungunya and obesity

The percentage of poor seem to have increased because half the jobs within the region are informal. With government's failure to generate formal employment there has been an increase in violence, particularly in Mexico.

Trying to stem this trend some governments have initiated conditional cash transfer programs where poor families receive cash in exchange for sending their children to school and bringing them in for medical checkups.

Women have taken a positive step in trying to reduce their family's poverty by engaging in work that was formerly considered in a man's domain including forming small businesses. However, Latin American stereotyping has made it difficult for women to expand their business efforts to a greater extent.

Although most Latin American's have access to educational facilities, they lack access to quality educational institutions. In a study conducted by the World Bank, *Great Teachers: How to Raise Student Learning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, it was determined that Latin American students lose one day of classes weekly due to teachers' inefficient use of time. In regards to innovation, some countries have taken advantage of their English language skills to exploit the growing industries of animation, software, and videogame development.

Non-communicable diseases have increased in the region putting a burden on healthcare systems. In Mexico, for example, six million people are obese, with many suffering from diabetes. Chikunguna is a disease throughout Latin America that is a growing health concern. Its newness means that most of the populace have yet to develop antibodies to fight it. In addition, cancer within Latin America seems to disproportionately affect the poor who have limited access to doctors and the funds for treatment.

As Latin America continues its economic growth and continues to address these issues the overall healthcare and income levels of its citizens should help mediate these problems.

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