

## CÁMARA! AHÍ NOS VEMOS

### Youth volunteers teach children to document community issues

#### THE CHALLENGE

Mexico is a land of contrasts. Over the past two decades, it has made economic progress and is among the wealthiest countries of Latin America. However, Mexico still ranks among those countries with the highest levels of inequality in the world. Human development indicators have improved in recent years but are still lower than Mexico's level of economic development would predict, particularly in school enrollment and educational achievement. More than half of Mexico's 103 million people are under the age of 24. Given the high levels of poverty and low-levels of education that keep many Mexican youth out of the higher paying sectors of the labor market, it is crucial for young people to develop the technical and life skills they need in order to succeed in the 21st century.

#### THE PROGRAM

The *Cámara! Ahí Nos Vemos* program uses video as a tool for disadvantaged youth to gain life and technical skills and help them contribute to their communities. Through the program, now in its second phase, low-income youth in Mexico City, Reynosa, and Puebla are taught important life skills, while simultaneously learning how to use video as a means to explore important issues in their community. Past videos have featured stories about victims of abuse and violence, corruption in Mexican corporations, and indigenous traditions.



#### THE PARTNER

*Fundación Rostros y Voces* is a national, nonprofit organization created in 1996 by leaders of Mexico's civil society organizations. Its mission is to support disadvantaged people's initiatives to improve their living conditions and exercise their human rights. Specifically, the Foundation works with indigenous people, women, migrants, youth, and children. *Fundación Rostros y Voces* seeks to foster social, public, and corporate responsibility to mobilize financial resources and human capacities in favor of social inclusion and to overcome conditions of poverty.



#### OUTCOMES AND RESULTS TO DATE

Specific life skills targeted through the program include: contribution, creativity, problem-solving/decision-making, teamwork, and self-confidence. The findings of an in-depth outcomes measurement study conducted by Brandeis University in 2006 suggest that the program has had significant impacts on participants' life and employability skills, as well as in other areas. The Brandeis data showed that participants experienced significant increases in 11 of the 12 life skills targeted. Another clear indicator of the program's success is that close to 95% of participants would recommend the program to their friends and classmates. With regards to youth employment, it is interesting to note that several graduated program participants have gone on to start their own video production companies, and others have obtained employment in the field of technology.

**PROGRAM:** *Cámara! Ahí Nos Vemos*  
**PARTNER:** *Fundación Rostros y Voces*  
**PERIOD:** 1 June 2002 – 30 June 2007  
**LOCATION:** Mexico City, Puebla, Reynosa  
**REACH:** 4,250 young people, ages 7 to 28  
**MODEL:** Youth social entrepreneurship and leadership, creative self-expression