

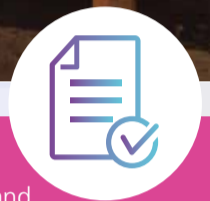
The digital gap in rural areas, an active social alert

The digital gap in rural areas does not make any relevant progress, as it only reduced by 3.7% from 2019 to 2020.

Although we live in what is currently known as the era of information and telecommunication, we are able to find inequality in different areas in Mexico, and the one that lately increased and produced more inequality was the digital gap.

Unfortunately, people who live in poverty face different difficulties to develop their regular activities due to the lack of access to internet services. That fact caused that their activities, either educational or commercial, were also affected and then, the threat of marginalization became part of their lives.

In accordance with the results of the National Survey on Availability and Use of Technologies of Information at Home 2020 (ENDUTIH), only 1 out of 2 people who live in rural areas have access to internet services. This does not reflect any progress at all, because the results obtained from ENDUTIH showed that only 47.7% of the population currently had access to that service, while in 2020 the official number was 50.4%. In conclusion, we can observe that the network coverage in those areas increased by only 2.7%.



SUMMARY

According to the results of the National Survey on Availability and Use of Information Technologies at Home 2020 (ENDUTIH), only 1 out of each 2 people in rural areas have access to internet services.

Only 1 out of 2 people have access to internet services in rural areas



From 2019 to 2020, internet coverage increased by only 3.7%



The path does not look as something simple, but at CMT we already made the first move

The answer is not easy to find, however, the objective is that people who are really convinced to perform efficiently their online activities are able to have network coverage, even if they do not have the resources to pay for the service. Therefore, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria developed the program called "CMT Supportive Contribution for Technology and Connectivity", whose purpose is to provide the service and the devices people need to surf the web in order to encourage

the promotion of welfare among the families who need that.

This support is provided through subsidies, which are being generally accepted in their first stage, so we have been able to witness some success cases in public universities in the country, and also, we were able to collaborate with different authorities in some municipalities and different union bodies in the country.

In the study called "Accessibility and use of the internet in Mexico during COVID-19", developed by Dr. Itzkuauhtli Benedicto Zamora Sánchez, we observed that despite the global increase from 2015 to 2019, the number of people with access to the internet in the country increased by 20%.

However, the digital gap in rural areas was not reduced so, the opportunities in rural areas were not able to get any benefits from the progress of technology, a fact that was determinant to benefit urban areas.



Mexican families and internet services

The problem was bigger because Mexican families could not afford internet services, particularly for these 3 reasons:



Lack of companies able to offer network coverage.



Lack of experience to use the full potential of that service.



Lack of commitment to develop online activities, as only 4 out of 10 people who took the survey were decided and willing to perform online activities.



The increase of internet users in Mexico is not enough to reduce the gap on inequalities to have access to that service in rural areas.

The increase of virtual activities as a result of the pandemic, the promotion of the campaign of social distancing when the situation started, and the increase of using smartphones as the most popular way to have access to the internet were not enough. Devices like

desk computers and laptops offer the best conditions to create learning contexts, but unfortunately not all the people were able to get them because of the big difference in their prices.