

BBVA Colombia and Unicef sign agreement to improve the quality of education

- **The purpose of the agreement is to sensitize local authorities and educational agents concerning the need to improve academic management processes.**
- **"The alliance will contribute to the development of public policies in education, as well as to the strengthening of education strategies", said Oscar Cabrera Izquierdo, president of BBVA Colombia.**



BBVA Colombia and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) signed an agreement whose main objective is to improve the quality of education in Colombia in educational institutions whose academic performance is low, as well as to sensitize local authorities and educational agents concerning the need to improve academic, administrative and community management processes.

Present at the signing of the agreement, which seeks to adapt the standards of basic competences and to create school environments apt for learning and harmonious coexistence, was the minister for National Education, Cecilia Maria Velez White, who was there to witness the initiative.

To accompany this alliance, BBVA Colombia will develop different actions, which will include transfers of resources, the linking up customers and the office network to raise support for the agreement, and the coordination of the projects that are undertaken as part of this alliance.

Unicef, meanwhile, gives its commitment to encourage the adherence of allies in the public and private sectors and of interested foundations, and to manage the resources that are assigned by BBVA in order to set in motion the initiatives that are seen to be necessary.

With this agreement, the Ministry for National Education undertakes to adopt the measures required to prioritise the participation of the areas chosen by the alliance's committee of experts within the projects developed by the Ministry's Quality Office.

This means the forging of an alliance that constitutes a model for linking together a national public entity, private commercial banking and international cooperation to improve the quality of education of the children and youth of this country.

Oscar Cabrera Izquierdo, president of BBVA Colombia, pointed out that investment in Corporate Social Responsibility for 2008 will be over 3,600 million pesos, which amounts to 1% of the Bank's profits in 2007. And he added: "The alliance we are announcing will contribute to the development of public policies in education, as well as to the strengthening of education strategies to support school enrolment, the transformation of the school and the improvement of the country's quality of education".

This agreement will run for a period of four years and will be organised in stages. The first area to benefit will be the province of Gutierrez in the department of Boyaca, where work will centre

on educational institutions from the municipalities of Chiscas, El Cocuy, El Espino, Guacamayas, Guican and Panqueba.

The agreement reached between BBVA Colombia and Unicef follows on from the signing of another agreement between BBVA Colombia and the Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), whereby the two bodies gave their approval to the carrying out of a study into the state of Early Childhood in Colombia and to the later development of projects aimed at bolstering public policies designed to improve attention and social cover for early childhood and child education in Colombia, within the project "Early Childhood in Latin America", subscribed to by the OEI and the BBVA Group, which will unfold over the course of four years and will receive a contribution from BBVA amounting to 576,000 euros (some 1,500 million pesos) to fund the development of the study in the region.