



Nabil Lopez Hawa

University of Michigan

Country: United States

Nationality: Dominican

24 years of age, from the Dominican Republic. I hold a BA in Economics from the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in the Dominican Republic, and am studying for my Master's Degree in Applied Economics at the University of Michigan. I focus on the analysis and evaluation of the current state, as well as the short-term, of the Dominican economy. During my free time, I like to play soccer and spend time with friends. I contribute to the

building of a better future for Latin America by participating in different charitable organizations, and also by preparing myself to be a profesional capable of putting forth ideas that can change the direction of my country.

Contrary to a generalized belief, Latin America is a very diverse region. Thus, it is crucial to keep this idea in mind when proposing solutions for the region's problems. This is why programs that ignored this, as the Washington Consensus, did not have the desired impact. Having this clear, one can venture on trying to identify the main challenges of our region, not obliterating the fact that the solutions, even for the same problem, may be different for each country.

In this attempt, the first topic that could be noted is the low educational level of most countries in Latin America. As Mandela said "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". If we want to make a change in our region prospects, we should empower the people with a better educational level. Consequently, any development project in the region should start addressing this vital problem.

In fact, due to a historical lack of interest in this crucial topic, complete generations of Latin America citizens have drown in extreme poverty, as a very small group simultaneously becomes richer and richer. Latin America has not only the world's highest levels of income inequality, yet provides very unequal opportunities to move up the social ladder. As a result, the second challenge that we face is the promotion of a more inclusive development, one that represents opportunities of a better life for the crushed low income class.

Nevertheless, political groups usually drive their actions pursuing personal interest apart from common welfare. Therefore, the third challenge we have to face is corruption. For instance, the resources available for any government, even the largest ones, are limited and particularly in the case of undeveloped countries; every peso devoured by corruption is a peso that will not go to the poorest one.

The deepness and complexity of the corruption system work as a toxic water where no one can swim in but the ones already immune to the poison. Hence, when I look in to the future, my biggest concern is that all the efforts of my generation will not have the full impact needed to change our society because they will be drowned by corrupted politicians. Nonetheless, there is still hope.

All in all, young people around the continent are mobilizing and taking action to reclaim a better country. For instance, students in Chile gathered around the idea of free quality education; young people in Venezuela organized themselves asking the government better security in the universities; thousands in the Dominican Republic took the streets requesting justice for corruption acts of the political class. Thus, we have the spirit and the intention to change our countries. All this, combined with a high quality education and preparation, will let us change the course of our countries so in the next decade Latin America will have the leaders we deserve and need.