

### 3.6 1930's - 1940's

The urgent need to construct schools in all parts of the country initiated a considerable change in school typologies.

Functionalist architecture began to spread throughout Mexico during the 1930's because it was a way of economically generating a great quantity of hygienic, ventilated modular buildings in a very short period of time. Industrial materials were used such as brick, partition walls, reinforced concrete, metal structural frames that adjusted easily to incorporate regional materials and modern construction processes that facilitated mass production.

Schools at that time were built in this industrial manner and characterized a typology that is still seen today all over the country. During the 1940's this typology became a nationalist symbol that reflected the new social values of the country and linked local actions with those of the nation.

By the mid 1940's, the educational concern moved its focus from the rural areas towards the city. The population of Mexico City had increased dramatically (see section 2.4) and it was obvious that a new plan was needed to increase its number of schools. It also became obvious that the education system put in place before the city's massive population increase was still lacking. By 1940 there were 2 million more illiterate people than in 1930.

In 1941, under the government of Avila Camacho, Ocatvio Vejar Vazquez was appointed as the new head of SEP. During this time article 3 of the constitution was revised which again redefined Mexico's goals for sufficient public education. Educational programs were reformed as a result making them more uniform across the country. Building schools became the next concern.

In 1943, Don Jaime Torres Bodet became the head of SEP and over the next year started organizing the Planning Program for the Construction of Schools for Mexico. In 1944 the first proposal was accepted. Its main goal was to construct schools in every region of the country as indispensable bases geared at combating illiteracy.

Many studies about the country's then current educational situation had been done such as demographic studies, the areas that needed schools and how they were going to be distributed.

Some of the results of this study were as follows:

- i) More than 45% of the school-age population did not rely on schools
  - ii) 11% of Mexico's 20 million inhabitants were between the ages of 6 and 14 and were practically denied access to classrooms due to overcrowding.
- As a result illiteracy and ignorance was growing at a rate of 2 000,000 Mexicans per year.

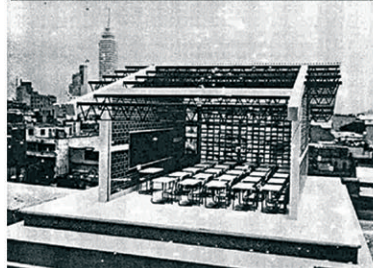
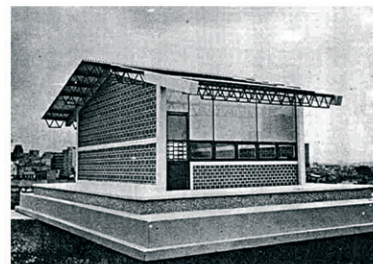
With these statistics, it was decided that Mexico was urgently in need of 45,000 new classrooms teachers. This would cost the government 675 million pesos (approx. 67 500 000 USD) and 156 million pesos (approx. 15 600 000 USD) given annually as staff wages.

To oversee the construction and planning of this massive project, the organization Comite Administrador del Programa Federal de Construccion de Escuelas (CAPFCE), was put into place April 10, 1944. As a way of decentralizing SEP, CAPFCE offices were placed in all regions of the country so they could oversee construction and planning.

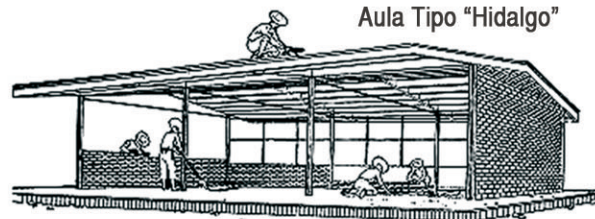
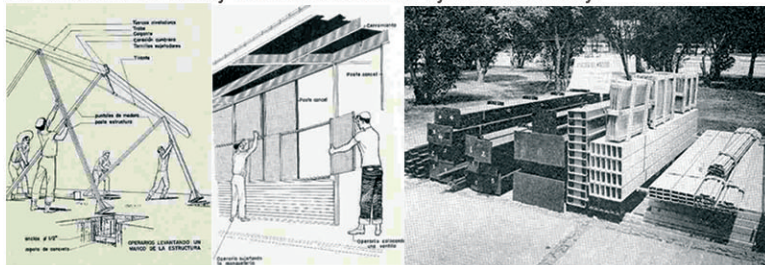
The architecture of these schools continued along the same lines of the prefabricated prototypes developed in the 1930's.

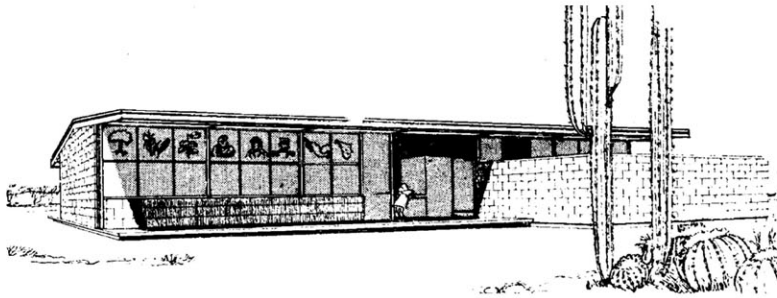
Towards the end of the 1940's, the Aula Hidalgo, designed by architect Rivadeneyra Falco, was seen as the ultimate integral solution and was used as the main school module throughout Mexico. The 'ideal classroom' was a 6 x 8 meter mixed structure with concrete supports, an exposed red brick wall and wall covered with sheets of ribbed framing that were made from very resistant translucent material and mounted on metal framing with vents installed inside. The door and windows were on both minor walls and a chalkboard on one of the major walls. The classroom set up was more or less fixed with the rows of desks facing the head teacher.

The entire structure of this prefabricated prototype weighed 4.3 tons and could be transported in a single truck. It was designed so that the facade material could be changed according to what materials were locally available and could be easily constructed on site by the community.

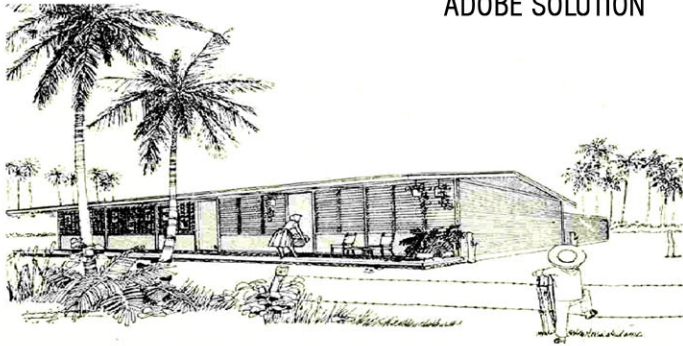


Aula Tipo "Hidalgo"

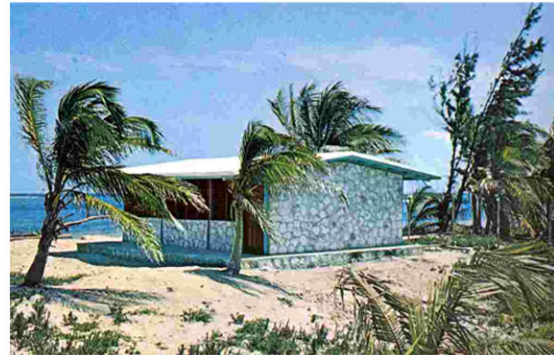




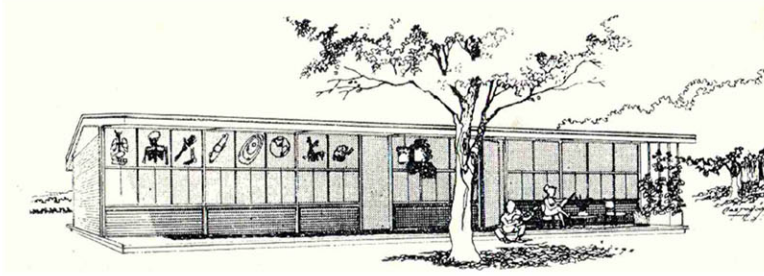
ADOBE SOLUTION



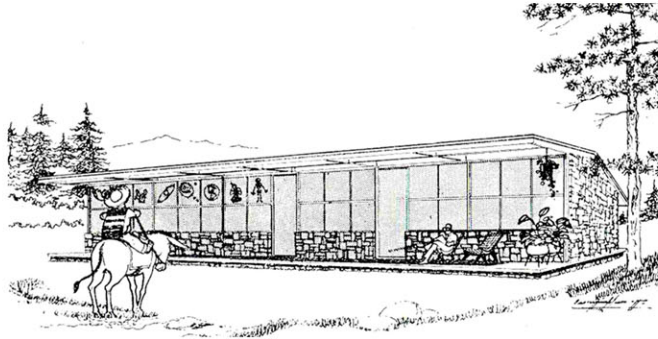
TROPICAL SOLUTION







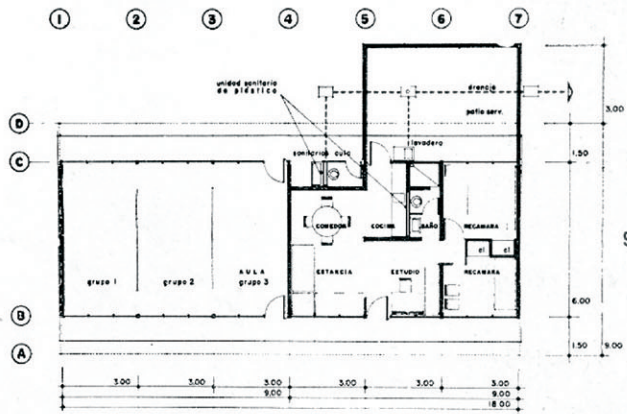
BRICK SOLUTION



STONE SOLUTION



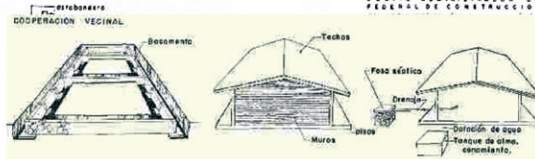




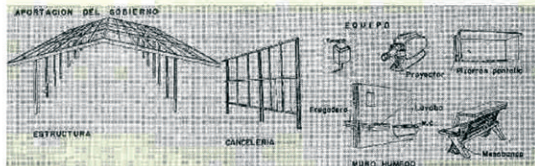
SOURCE: CAPFCE docu

escuela rural

COMITÉ ADMINISTRADOR DEL PROGRAMA FEDERAL DE CONSTRUCCIÓN DE ESCUELAS RURALES 21 agosto 1959



Plans of the Sistema ACR. by Arq. Pedro Ramirez Vazquez. Agosto de 1959



The Aula-Casa Rural (ACR) system, brought appropriate technical and sanitary conditions to communities at the most economical price. This was seen as the solution to the school infrastructure shortage as it could offer improvements while still respecting the same traditions, customs and habits.



SOURCE: CAPFCE docu

3.7 1950's - 2000

Over the next 20 years, Mexico made large efforts to provide schools for the entire country. Primary schools were the initial focus, however, during the 1950's, the government realized that they were lacking buildings for higher levels of education. Throughout the whole process the functionalist modernist, prefabricated approach was used for the design of the prevailing typologies.

Despite all of these efforts, towards the end of the 50's with SEP having been in place for nearly 30 years and having organized and overseen with CAPFCE the construction of about 550 new schools, the design and manufacturing of furniture for over 700 000 students with a monetary inversion of over 500 000 000 pesos, there was still an increase in illiteracy and a lack in supply for the needs of the population.

In 1958 with Lopez Mateos as president and new head of SEP Don Jaime Torres Bodet Article 3 was yet again revised to offer better quality public education and more schools. This gave way to 'The 11-Year Plan' announced by the president at the end of 1958. One of the great advancements of this plan was that the government took responsibility for providing all the textbooks for every child entering primary school in an attempt to make education more available to all sectors of the population.

During the next 11, years the prefabricated quick construction phenomenon was even more prevalent. The next model designed by Arq. Pedro Ramirez Vazquez Agosto was named the Aula-Casa del Maestro (ACR) (the classroom-house of the teacher) and was again based on the economic, quick assembly, prefabricated solution of the 1930's.