THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

GUARANTEEING QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

A regional report, **Reviewing and Assesing the Progress** toward Education For All within the framework of the Regional Education Project (EFA/PRELAC)-2007

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UNESCO

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Regional Bureau of Education for
Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO Santiago

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The availability of information on the state of education in the region is vital for policy formulation, execution, and assessment, as well as for the development of more informed public discussion regarding education.

This report reviews and assesses the progress of countries from the basic right to education perspective, taking into account the internationally agreed-upon goals of Education For All as well as the strategies and principles which, in its Regional Education Project (PRELAC), the region has identified as central. From this perspective, it is both a response to an explicit request of the ministers of education in this regard, as well as an effort that directly touches on UNESCO´s role as an intellectual ally of its members in the search for fulfilling those key principles and rights that have determined the activities of the United Nations since its creation.

In order for information to be useful in education policy processes, it is necessary that it be produced and analyzed within a framework of meanings closely related to those policies needs. From this perspective, the production of information should be based on the identification of the substantive aspects that define public action in the field of education.

Thus, this report, rather than being a compendium of "data", is grounded on indicators of the state of education. It has been written with the understanding that education is a basic Human Right. For this reason, it has been organized taking into account dimensions that, on the one hand, defines this right, and on the other, represents public action in the field of education. Thus, it seeks to account for the relevance, pertinence, and equity of education, as well as the efficiency and efficacy of education systems operation.

This broad perspective also makes it possible to transcend the kinds of instrumental and/or reductionist views that have prevailed in the development of education information systems. It thus offers the bases for a substantial improvement and strengthening of the abilities of such systems to provide information that is not only reliable and timely but also meaningful and relevant, given the current challenges faced by education and the views of education that are the foundations of the policy strategies that PRELAC has identified as crucial.

Thus, this document consists of a contemporary view of the meaning of education. It is the result of a process that has taken place among the countries of the region through preparatory meetings of the Inter-governmental Committee of PRELAC, in which they have been able to discuss their own form and organization of this revision.

Moreover, this document is to be the first of a series to be produced every two years that will seek to contribute to national efforts, providing a regional perspective of the state of education.

On the other hand, this document was presented as a draft to the II Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of PRELAC, which took place in Buenos Aires on March 29-30, 2007. The intention of presenting it as a preliminary report was to provide an additional opportunity to receive feedback of countries regarding its contents prior to its publication.

It should be noted that the information upon which this document is based comes from various official sources, including: (i) documentary analysis based on national norms and documents; (ii) statistics that are mostly based on official reports of the Member States as delivered to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) as the agency that is responsible at the world level for this task, as well as information from household surveys carried out by national statistics agencies that are collected and processed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

It begins with a useful Reader's Guide that establishes some basic parameters regarding how the report has been constructed while providing details about the information utilized. The Executive Summary presents the most significant aspects and findings of the document.

This is followed by an introductory chapter presenting general considerations as well as the analytical framework that define the structure and range of the entire document. There then follow five chapters, each dedicated to a dimension of the analysis of the state of education here considered: relevance, pertinence, efficacy, efficiency, and equity. Finally, there are the Conclusions, as well as a section on methodology and two Appendices with researcher check-lists and data used.

A reading reveals significant progress in the region in the area of education while at the same time identifies another equally important set of challenges that seriously threaten the Right to education. In this sense, we have here a document that, in the difficult task of providing a comprehensive view of a complex phenomenon and diverse situations, seeks to maintain a balanced position that avoids both self-complacency as well as the temptation of negativism and pessimism.

Indeed, the state of education of the region is replete with great challenges and urgency due to the fact that what is at stake is the present and future of millions of people in our region. Recording what has been achieved and identifying what still needs to be done will provide information for the development of education policies.

We believe that this publication, as well as the series to follow will become a required reading that foster the development of efforts to which our people have a right, and that it is the obligation of those who hold the public trust to carry out.

We hope that the analyses and findings presented here will become part of national debate. If they do, we will have made a significant contribution to our tasks as an organization at the service of our Member States. If, in addition, the report points a way that the information system products do not merely stay in the reference libraries, we will have also contributed to education policies being increasingly informed by facts.

Santiago, Chile. May 2007.

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READER'S GUIDE

Information sources

This report has been developed using principally the following information:

- The international education data base of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The information corresponds to the school year ending in 2004, or the most recent year if the latter is unavailable. Details regarding information used may be found in the corresponding appendix.

- Information derived from household surveys collected and processed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), also treated according to the international education standards defined by UNESCO. This information corresponds to the 2004 calendar year, or the most recent year available.

- A documentary study specifically on education norms and national curricula developed by OREALC/UNESCO Santiago during 2006.

- Others used for specific purposes and identified as such in each case.

Definitions and methods

In order to assure international comparability, a key tool is the UNESCO *International Standard Classification of Education*, ISCED 97 (UNESCO, 1997). Definitions of education levels contemplated in this report correspond to this classification due to adaptations that each country has developed in order to report statistical information to the international database under the responsibility of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) – whether through that institution's questionnaires or those that are used jointly by UIS, Eurostat, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Regional averages of the indicators used in this report are calculated as simple means of the values of countries considered in each case. When *regional values* are used, these correspond to the weighted average according to the numbers of the corresponding populations. In both cases, only those countries from which information is available are considered.

Financial information is here always expressed in American dollars, corrected according to different national purchasing power. Thus, we have used PPP (purchasing power parity) dollars at constant values for the year 2000, according to figures published by the World Bank.

Documentary analysis

In order to account for issues linked to the relevance and pertinence of education programs, a documentary study has been developed that uses information from countries of the region. This information comes from:

- National constitutions and general education laws;
- Study plans, curricular frameworks, or basic curricular designs;
- Specific programs directed at particular groups (Intercultural bi-lingual education, special education, education of young people and adults, etc.) or on particular subjects in order to strengthen the curriculum (human rights, in-school social relations, sex education, citizenship training, prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, etc.);
- Policies and programs linked to recognizing individual, social, and cultural diversity.

Special attention has been given to curricular frameworks or study plans, given that the analysis of study programs would demand resources well beyond those available. Curricular frameworks include both general objectives and basic guidelines of various subjects, teach-

ing method orientations, considerations regarding assessment and other factors, as well as transverse objectives where these exist. However, not all countries present the same curricular structure. In some of them, plans and programs are organized around objectives and general contents and curricular frameworks are presented separate from the study programs of each subject. In these cases, we have continued with the procedures used for guidelines, study plans, and curricular frameworks. At the same time, certain kinds of curricula are organized around competencies or standards. In this case, plans and programs appear as an integrated whole, thus making it possible to analyze the set.

On the other hand, availability of and access to information on the web sites of ministries of education varies, thus leading to applying the analysis to diverse datasets. To this difficulty is added that of obtaining complete documentation on study plans. For Latin America, we have gained access to study plans for most countries with the exception of Aruba, Panama, and Cuba. For Paraguay we have analyzed only the study plan of the third year of primary education. In the Caribbean, we have only been able to consider the study plans of Belize and the Cayman Islands, while supplanting this lack by review of other documents such as the reports produced during assessment of progress in Education for All in 1999, the strategic plans of recent governments, national reports developed for the conferences organized by the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), or studies on curricular development. The foregoing explains the greater detail or precision of some countries and the lack of references for others.[1] At the same time, it is important to consider that in federal systems, with full financial and managerial autonomy of provinces or states, there are curricular policies and programs that have not been incorporated into this study.

Moreover, it should be recognized that some study plans have recently been approved. In these cases, one would expect that the normative frameworks reflect the most current advances in the area of education. However, it may be that their adoption and effective use are not yet a reality, while some curricula, although not as up-to-date in their education conceptualizations and structures, have been implemented for a longer period of time. Finally, although a prescribed curriculum is not identical to that which is experienced by students in the classroom, it is a key element for understanding that experience.

The aspects outlined here allow us to verify whether education legislation and curricular policies are properly aligned or not, and to identify which aspects are not fully developed in terms of pertinent services provided to the school population. Thus, the guidelines used for the analysis allows us to compare coherence between the rights one seeks to guarantee, the education principles by which they are supported, and the existing mechanisms, procedures, and regulations to make them effective. Through these guidelines one can improve and design new instruments for analyzing the pertinence of education systems in relation to school texts, national assessments, and school and pedagogical practices – questions that the present study does not approach and which would provide a more complete answer to the question of whether **how one educates** is or is not pertinent.

In regard to questions linked to pertinence of the curriculum, emphasis has been given to analyzing curricular frameworks or study plans, the principles or bases of the curriculum, curricular structure and organization, the general objectives and basic guidelines of various sectors, teaching and assessment guidelines, and other factors relative to curricular flexibility and adaptability.

Varying amounts of information have been obtained in regard to special education programs or those directed at particular groups (special education, programs to support education management, decentralization, teacher training, etc.) Aruba is the only case where it has not been possible to gain access to education legislation in regard to pertinence.

This documentary analysis has two major limitations. First, it does not allow us to

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1   For details on the documentation consulted for each country, see the corresponding appendix.

observe the functioning of education systems in terms of the practices of the actors involved. Second, its levels of analysis and comparability are restricted to political-normative and curricular declarations.

Thus, this assessment represents above all an initial look at the relevance and pertinence of education systems as they in fact function and operate, and which needs to be expanded through complementary analyses.

Statistical data

All tables and graphs show available information for each indicator used. Thus, not all countries appear in all graphs and tables. The appendices include information used and that which has been included in each case. The abbreviation "n.a." indicates that the information in question was not available for this report, either because it does not exist, or because the sources used did not include it.

Note that in some cases, available information may correspond to UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates or to those of the country. Details regarding this information are included in the data appendix. Moreover, OREALC/UNESCO Santiago, with the collaboration of UIS, has calculated indicators in addition to those published regularly by UIS using the same international database.

Information contained in this report may be different than that used and disseminated nationally. These differences occur for the following reasons:

- All references to levels of education are made according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 97) This classification does not necessarily coincide with national nomenclatures used in particular countries. For example, in this report, "primary education" means ISCED level 1, which is not necessarily identical to what countries call "primary education", "basic education", "elementary school", etc.
- Information sources used for calculating indicators do not necessarily coincide with other sources that may be used by countries or other organizations. An example is the value of the Gross Domestic Product, based on figures from the World Bank in United States dollars corrected for purchasing power parity and in constant values for the year 2000 (US PPP 2000) or demographic information based on population projections carried out by the United Nations Population Division.

Countries

This report includes the 41 UNESCO Member States or Observers in the Latin America and Caribbean region. These 41 countries and territories, the ISO identifiers used, and the sub-regional grouping used in this report are detailed below:[2]

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2 The sub-regional grouping used is based on cultural criteria (language) and on the territorial organization of UNESCO. Thus, we have considered as Latin America all Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries and Aruba. The Caribbean is considered to include English, French, and Dutch speaking countries except Aruba. The official names are given in the information appendix by country.

Table 1: List of countries included; identifiers and sub-regional groupings

Latin America		Caribbean	
AR	Argentina	AI	Anguilla
AW	Aruba	AG	Antigua and Barbuda
BO	Bolivia	AN	Netherlands Antilles
BR	Brazil	BS	Bahamas
CO	Colombia	BB	Barbados
CR	Costa Rica	BZ	Belize
CU	Cuba	BM	Bermuda
CL	Chile	DM	Dominica
EC	Ecuador	GD	Grenada
SV	El Salvador	GY	Guyana
GT	Guatemala	HT	Haiti
HN	Honduras	KY	Cayman Islands
MX	Mexico	TC	Turks and Caicos Islands
NI	Nicaragua	VG	British Virgin Islands
PN	Panama	JM	Jamaica
PY	Paraguay	MS	Montserrat
PE	Peru	KN	Saint Kitts and Nevis
DO	Dominican Republic	VC	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
UY	Uruguay	LC	St. Lucia
VN	Venezuela	SR	Suriname
		TT	Trinidad and Tobago

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. ***The State of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2007*** is an effort designed to describe the condition of education in the region using an approach where education is a fundamental human right and taking into account the goals of Education for All (EFA) and its regional expression as embodied in the principles and strategic approaches of the Regional Education Project (PRELAC).

2. According to the document ***Quality Education for All: A Human Rights Issue*** (UNESCO, 2007), a rights-based approach applied to education has implications regarding the understanding of what constitutes a quality education. From the point of view of its purposes, education must be ***relevant***; that is, it has to enable people to fully exercise their freedom and citizenship. Moreover, education can only achieve this goal if it is ***pertinent*** to the concrete conditions within which people act. Furthermore, the fact of its having a universal character, that is, being a right for all, and that it enables people in terms of their life skills, means that ***equity*** is a factor inherent to quality. Moreover, considering that it is a right, public action is of crucial importance. In this regard, a quality education must be ***effective*** in achieving the objectives proposed in the field of public action, while respecting the resources that citizens devote to the task by being ***efficient***.

    The principles and strategic focuses adopted by EFA/PRELAC (UNESCO, 2002) are, together with the above considerations, additional elements that require us to transcend merely instrumental views of education. This influences, therefore, the way that information relates to the formulation, implementation, assessment, and public discussion of education issues.

3. With this in mind, this report is organized according to the five dimensions of quality here indicated (relevance, pertinence, efficacy, efficiency, and equity),[1] reorganizing a set of existing facts and generating new information so that it may be consistent with the above formulations and providing information that is meaningful. Moreover, we expect this to be the first of a series that will be produced every two years.

4. The fact that current education information systems have not been constructed using these considerations has required an effort in two directions: (i) a re-reading of available information using a different framework of meaning, and (ii) specific production of information, in particular in regard to the dimensions of relevance and pertinence.

5. In spite of the above, there are many information gaps that need to be faced, both through specific research as well as through an effort to improve national education information systems in order that they become closer to current approaches to education – increasing their capacities to produce information that is not only reliable and timely, but also meaningful for decision-making and public discussion from a rights-based approach. Many of the current efforts of UNESCO within the framework of EFA/PRELAC are directed precisely at serving these areas.

Documentary analysis of the *relevance* dimension organized around the four pillars of education for the XX century (learning *to be, to do, to know*, and *to live together*) resulted in the following findings:

6. Of the four pillars of learning, *learning to know, learning to do*, and *learning to be*, have already been considered in the approaches to the quality of education in the last decades of the XX century (UNESCO, 2001b). The 1980s placed at the center of education projects the development of regulations and assessment of student learn-

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1   Note that this approach has been discussed in various technical meetings, and in the preparatory meetings of the Inter-governmental Committee of PRELAC (December, 2005 and May, 2006).

ing outcomes, especially in language and mathematics. During those years, trust was placed on education regulation and control within the perspective of improving the quality of education. Achieving better quality education demanded more and better definitions in regard to what and how much one needs to know, and more and better tests in order to precisely measure if this was achieved (UNESCO, 2003). Toward the end of the 1990s and at the beginning of the XXI century, *learning to live together* had acquired greater importance because in increasingly more complex, multi-cultural, and violent societies, social cohesion and harmony had become unavoidable imperatives in order to successfully face the challenges of development.

7. Within the current context, in the majority of countries of the region orientations have appeared, although with unequal emphasis, referring to the four pillars of learning in their normative frameworks and school curricula. Objectives built around *learning to know* and *learning to live together* are quite developed, at both the normative level and in the general lines of the curriculum as well as in some programs of study. On the other hand, the objectives of *learning to do* and *learning to be* do not appear as explicitly.

8. Similarly, in their treatment some weaknesses appear that require attention.

   a. The dimension of *learning to know* is seen very present in the development of abilities, skills, and attitudes in the areas of language and communication, as applied to mathematics, scientific and social knowledge, and the development of basic abilities to select, analyze, assess, and share information coming from diverse sources. In regard to the development of critical and integrating thought, these dimensions are more present in processes of analysis-synthesis and problem solving than those processes that require evaluative judgment on particular phenomena, and are even less present in processes that lead to decision-making. In other words, one notes a certain imbalance in regard to thought development processes, since it is not sufficient for students to manage information and be able to analyze and summarize it if they are not also taught to make well-founded judgements and interpretations for decision-making.

   b. This dimension shows itself to be very weak in developing the capacities of students to know how they know, or to learn through their own learning experiences, i.e., the exercise of meta-cognition and meta-learning. The latter are extremely important because they make it possible to extend learning to other areas of knowledge and foster the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances – most definitely a preparation for learning to learn throughout life.

   c. In study plans and programs, *learning to do* is present through the objective of preparing persons who are committed to preserving the environment and to sustainable development, as well as in using new technologies as tools for learning, productivity, communication, and research. Quite frequently, learning to work in teams appears as well, but there is little emphasis on the development of enterprise and leadership abilities that are essential in modern society. Fostering the innovative and creative capacities of people is limited primarily to the arts, although with fewer class hours compared to other learning areas. Creativity and innovation are mentioned at times in terms of the development of scientific research skills or in mathematics, but generally without this resulting in concrete applications through innovative creations or solutions of various kinds.

   d. The *learning to live together* dimension appears most strongly in aspects related to citizen training through the development of attitudes that foster cooperation and solidarity, the knowledge and exercise of human rights, learning directed at mutual understanding through respect for diversity and pluralism, and the ability

to resolve conflicts peacefully. Less emphasis is given to learning aimed at acting with fairness, transparency, and honesty — qualities of utmost importance given the lack of transparency and high rates of corruption in the region.

e. Finally, *learning to be* is perhaps the aspect that is the least emphasized, not as weak as in the general orientations of curricula as it is in the different areas of learning. The least developed learning objectives are those linked to the development of identity and autonomy, self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-control, and emotions management. Similarly, very general mention is made regarding the development of personal projection abilities. When these are mentioned, it is generally in association with vocational and employment training rather than with the development of life projects in the broader sense. In this dimension, the most visible indicators are the establishment of empathetic relations, the development of moral awareness, social responsibility, and reciprocity. In this regard, a general finding is the lack of school time and space devoted to personal development, guidance, peer interaction, and reflection and dialogue on subjects of interest to students.

9. Tension was noted regarding the option of using the four pillars of learning either as cross-cutting themes or as objectives or contents of specific learning areas. In various countries, orientations regarding *learning to live together*, to the development of thought, learning to endeavour, and *learning to be* were expressed only in the cross-cutting themes of the curriculum. While recognizing their importance for the organization of learning, if study program teaching guides do not explain how to work with these skills within the context of teaching and learning areas, one runs the risk of that which is cross-cutting become invisible and therefore these kinds of learning not being adequately developed. At the other extreme, one finds curricula that make use of this kind of learning only in some areas, restricting, for example, the development of creativity to the arts, problem-solving to mathematics, environmental awareness to the natural sciences, citizen training to the social sciences. Thus, by not applying this kind of learning in a cross-cutting manner, one limits the possibility of developing its different dimensions in others, while placing the responsibility for its promotion on only some teachers rather than on the school as a whole.

10. On the other hand, one notes a paradox that is the result of the greater emphasis given to learning linked to *learning to live together* – related to *socialization* – as compared to the objectives of *learning to be* - related to *individuation* – given that people are able to establish better relations with others and with their culture according to the extent to which they have developed their own personalities and personal life projects, while the construction of identity is developed through living with others who are different. A rights-based approach to education allows one to develop the full potential of students so they may be more integrated and better influence the world in which they develop.

11. Finally, in most countries analyzed, orientations referring to the four pillars of education are contained within the general objectives and principles of education more at the *prescriptive level* but do not always have a correlate in didactic orientations, contents, and learning activities of programs of study. This can make them very difficult to apply to regular school activities. After this analysis, a question remains regarding the extent to which these orientations are incorporated into teaching practices and in the institutionalized social dynamics of schools.

Analysis of the *pertinence* dimension, organized based on positions regarding respect for and recognition of the value of diversity, flexibility, and adaptability of education programs to the particular conditions of people and the operation of support systems resulted in the following findings:

12. Guaranteeing the right to education of all citizens is an explicit priority of the region. This is aimed primarily at assuring equal access to and permanence in the system through the provision of public, free educational services – usually understood as the absence of tuition fees – at least at compulsory levels. Only some countries mention that this should be quality education as well.

13. *Countries agree on the postulates of the right* of all students to not suffer discrimination, of equality of treatment of men and women, and of the right of persons with special education needs to receive a quality education with equal opportunities. Public education is secular in half of the countries. In the other half, religious training – mainly Catholic – is given in all schools while offering only in some countries freedom of choice to parents and teachers. The right of all students to receive an education that allows them to develop and strengthen their own identities is mentioned only rarely and is usually associated with national identity. Emphasis in this area tends to be placed on comprehensive development aimed at contributing to personality training: expression, skills, interest, and vocation.

14. Although national constitutions proclaim equality in the dignity and rights of persons and *the elimination of all discriminatory practices*, in a majority of countries these provisions are not backed by implementing legislation and sanctions for schools that do not comply. In other cases, although these are established, there is no prescription for the existence of monitoring mechanisms. In some cases, the regulations concentrate on protection in specific situations such as discrimination against students who are pregnant, belong to ethnic groups, those with HIV or AIDS, or regarding the civil status of parents. Very few countries have rules in regard to the existence of dispositions and regulations for the elimination of stereotypes and discrimination in school textbooks.

15. Assuring the right to not suffer discrimination is commonly linked to offering *equal opportunities for access to and permanence in* the education system and is embodied in compensatory policies for those who live under more vulnerable conditions. This is expressed in target programs (especially inter-cultural bilingual, special education, multi-grade, and adult education, etc.) These strategies tend to combine psychosocial and pedagogical activities. They often work with social, family, and community networks and include supporting funding for schools. The problem noted is the absence of links between different programs. It is difficult to determine the extent to which they share the same orientations, take advantage of accumulated experiences and produced resources, assess and systematize their progress and redirect their activities according to difficulties encountered and progress achieved. On the other hand, national programs aimed at improving the management of quality, especially among vulnerable groups, offer little information on procedures and mechanisms for responding to diversity and overcoming learning and participatory barriers typical of current school system culture and structure.

16. *Fostering and protecting the right of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendents, migrants, and other religions and linguistic minorities* to receive an education that values and incorporates their language and culture is particularly noted in countries with large indigenous and Afro-descendent populations. Not all of these, however, specify strategies and regulations to make this guarantee effective.

17. In spite of emphasis being placed on the need to adapt the curriculum according to the characteristics of each socio-cultural, ecological, and geographic context, while stressing the role of communities in the construction of proposals, these declarations are not always accompanied by explicit mechanisms and procedures in regard to how curriculum diversification and adaptation processes are to be carried out. Available documentation does not specify how education communities are to be incorporated into this process. In general, such participation is part of management decentralization strategies, the implementation mechanisms of which exhibit different levels of progress.

18. Although it is stated that teachers should adapt the curriculum, information is not provided regarding specific rules or mechanisms to be used in this task. Normally, guidelines regarding taking into account social, cultural, and individual factors and adapting them to teaching are general and prescriptive.

19. Usually, teaching in and about native languages takes place in schools located in areas of high concentrations of indigenous populations and in the first years of primary school. The challenge remains of extending this to multi-cultural schools in urban areas and to secondary education. Recognition by some countries in Latin America of their linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity has led to consolidation of the idea of strengthening inter-cultural dialogue in order to foster democratic participation and social cohesion. Thus, they have incorporated the cross-cutting theme of intercultural education into their national curricular designs, which is common for all students and is not limited to indigenous communities that do not speak the official language as it occurred in the past.

20. *There is general agreement in Latin America that education plans and programs should be pertinent*, with individual differences in levels of competence, paces of learning, styles for facing and resolving problems, and motivations considered in learning activities. There is, moreover, consensus on the importance of the active participation of learners in the construction of their own knowledge. Therefore, teachers should place value on the life experiences and previous knowledge of their students and foster interaction with them in searching for their increasing autonomy. Among the Caribbean countries, most intend to adopt measures necessary for serving those with special education needs. Few, however, mention adjusting the curriculum to different contexts and cultures, or explicitly consider gender differences.

21. There is a degree of agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of establishing conditions and mechanisms for autonomy and participation in the construction of individual school projects. However, although progress has occurred in designing strategies, mechanisms, and means for the development of such projects, strategies need to be developed for encouraging participation in their construction and for developing diversified curricular proposals accompanied by technical assistance and training for teachers and school authorities.

22. *There has been progress in constructing more flexible* curricula built around broad and common basic objectives. These curricula emphasize integration of contents by organizing them into learning areas and learning cycles. They can thus complement or consolidate different kinds of learning, minimize grade repetition, and respect the paces of student learning. However, while curricular frameworks declare that sub-national units should propose their own contents in order to allow students to learn about their regions and localities, few countries make time available for this purpose.

23. Most national curricula in Latin America highlight the importance of pertinent, inclusive, and inter-cultural education. *Teacher training* should respond to these principles.

However, only some countries use guidelines to specifically regulate teacher training institutions in order to guarantee fulfillment of quality criteria agreed upon and established nationally. In regard to teacher training, countries with greater levels of decentralization declare in their education legislation that sub-national units have the duty to coordinate teacher training activities in order that they pay proper attention to issues of diversity and human rights. The effectiveness of these declarations depends on the efficacy of decentralization processes, existing regulations, assessments of teacher performance, and the competence of those responsible for teacher training.

24. *Education of people with special education needs* is being re-directed, abandoning deficit-based models in favor of an approach based on the development of potential, and allowing equalization of opportunities, with schools being responsible for accepting and adapting to the learning needs of all. In this regard, the integration of persons with special needs into regular schools is a growing policy in Latin American countries. A number of them have education integration policies and regulations. Very few, however, have put these into practice or provide regular schools with the skills, technical assistance, guidance for curricular adaptation, and specific resources required. There is still little understanding of the interactive character of special education needs, and many continue to view learning difficulties as results of personal attributes of students. Few explicit references were found to the idea that all children, without exception, can learn and can develop basic necessary skills if they are offered quality educational opportunities.

25. We have identified very few *experiences of technical-pedagogical support and assistance* to schools that function permanently decentralized at the local level. Although many countries are developing programs for persons with special needs, very few provide information on resource centers for education integration, bibliographies, and personnel specialized in different disabilities in order to assist both families and teachers.

26. We note that support systems for schools are commonly conceived as multiple assistance services that include health, transportation, nutrition, school materials, enrollment retention aid, and in some cases psycho-pedagogical assistance to the most vulnerable schools. Another support provided is through student guidance and welfare units. Often, however, these actions are the only kind of support conceived, with no proposals to create inclusive schools with integrated orientations, strategies, and means to respond to the diverse education needs of their students.

27. It is commonly assumed that *parent committees and school councils* are meant to contribute to raising the quality of educational services and to ensure satisfaction of the learning needs of their children through social control. However, in various countries their roles are seen as collaborating or supporting in less important matters rather than deliberating on questions central to school orientation and performance. The documentation indicates that in few countries has the organization of school councils or education improvement committees been accompanied by actions, mechanisms, or means to permit them to act and to build a participatory culture in schools and local communities.

Analysis of the efficacy dimension has produced the following findings:

28. Monitoring of the policy objectives defined in the Framework of Action of Dakar[2] shows significant progress in their attainment. Available information shows progress in different aspects related to access and to literacy. However, there are still unresolved issues associated principally to completion of studies and to learning achievement.

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2   Note that the objective linked to equity is specifically treated in Chapter 5.

29. Coverage for the population 3 to 18 years of age shows disparities among countries. Some 35 million children do not enter any educational program. Although trends in access rates to primary education clearly point toward universalization, there are still cases in which one of every ten children of primary education official age group population are not so enrolled. Increase access to the levels prior to and following primary education has not been equally impressive for all countries, with some at a clear disadvantage in terms of achieving the objectives of Education for All. Some countries are able to guarantee access to pre-primary education for less than one-third of the official age group population and access to secondary education to less than half of the official age group population. Relative volumes of enrollments in tertiary education have disparate values between countries, thus differences are even more extreme, placing the Caribbean countries at a disadvantage.

30. Illiteracy rates have fallen, but at a pace that does not bode well for achieving the objective of Education for all by 2015. Nearly 35 million people 15 years of age and older describe themselves as illiterate. This, combined with the approximately 88 million from the same age group who have not completed primary schooling presents a challenge of considerable magnitude for education policies.

31. Primary education completion levels show that the region as a whole has progressed in achieving the goal of universalization. But this is not a subject that can be taken as resolved. There are still countries with current primary education completion patterns in which more than one in every five children do not complete primary schooling. Moreover, 4.5 million people between 15 and 19 years of age have not completed this level. The greatest challenges in regard to universal completion of primary education are found in a number of Central American countries.

32. In terms of completion of lower secondary education, and given current completion patterns, various countries are in a condition to ensure universal completion. But in others, this figure does not reach 70%. Taking all countries as a whole, the region has not been able to assure the completion of this level for more than 14 million people 20 to 24 years of age.

33. A small number of countries possess the conditions to ensure completion of upper secondary education for all of the population of the age to do so, while for many countries this is a distant possibility. Some have upper secondary school completion rates below 50%, with nearly 25 million people who have not completed this level. Note as well that in some Central American countries, completion levels for upper secondary education are low even among the higher income sectors, thus indicating additional problems for the country.

34. Participation in international studies that measure learning achievement using minimum criteria to ensure comparability and reliable results is a theme that should be encouraged. Previous studies with full participation of Latin American countries, as well as international studies in which some of them have taken part show great challenges ahead, given the poor results both in comparative and (principally) in absolute terms. These tests show that very high percentages of the population are not being assured minimal results in the learning areas assessed.

35. The need to have relevant information on curricular management in terms of teaching and learning processes in local contexts, teachers, students, and the interactions between them and with their peers is imperative for understanding aspects linked to the objectives and results mentioned. Efforts in this area could provide key information on vital subjects such as classroom and school climate, the relation among various education actors as a whole, and their interactions with their communities.

Analysis of the *efficiency* dimension has resulted in the following findings:

36. For years now there has been clear evidence of the important financial burden caused by grade repetition. For the school year ending in 2004, it is estimated that this burden reached 5.6 billion US dollars PPP in the case of primary education, and 5.5 billion US dollars PPP[3] for secondary education. Moreover, most of this waste is concentrated in Latin American countries, given that the practice of grade repetition is more extended there than in the Caribbean.

37. In addition to identifying the magnitude of resources, this report shows two concurrent phenomena: on the one hand, what grade repetition involves in terms of student trajectories, and on the other, the impact of delayed progress in school on completion of study.

38. Regarding the first aspect, education systems of the region have levels of approximately 70% of timely enrollment in first grade – that is, of children entering primary school at the officially stipulated age. However timely coverage for the final grade of primary education only reaches 45% of the corresponding population. Thus, education systems systematically delay or expel students. For every ten individuals who are able to enter primary education in a timely manner, only six retain that condition until the final grade of this level.

39. Moreover, levels of delay in progress are inversely related to levels of completion. The larger the discrepancy between the number of years expected for a person to be enrolled at a given level and the number of grades to be passed, the lower the completion levels. Similarly, the greater the capacity of education systems to delay or expel students, the lower the completion levels.

40. Grade repetition, the pedagogical value of which is seriously questioned, is not only a problem in that it represents a double expense for the State (the entire community) and families in a direct manner; it also has a negative impact on student trajectories, reducing the probability of completing schooling. Therefore, inefficiency is not only a problem in itself; it generates inefficacy as well.

41. There has been a sustained increase in the volumes of public resources allocated to education. However, this increase has been the result of growth of the economy and of tax revenue and not of increased priority granted to the sector. The latter, expressed in terms of the percentage of public spending dedicated to education – has remained stable. Specific research is required to understand the impact that these increases in volumes of resources have had on the efficacy, efficiency, equity, relevance, and pertinence of the educational services provided – the question remains as to whether we are simply "paying more for the same". This would seriously compromise the capacity to establish agreements in favor of giving more priority to public investment in education.

Analysis of the *equity* dimension has resulted in the following findings:

42. The analysis of equity involves a very broad set of aspects having to do with various dimensions of the quality of education. Thus, for example, those linked to pertinence, as well as flexibility, adaptation capacity, respect for differences – have direct impacts on equity. For this report, however, it has only been possible to consider some aspects for which available information provides clear evidence of regional trends.

43. We have analyzed variables linked to access and completion of studies and literacy disaggregated by gender, area of residence (urban or rural), ethnic pertinence, entry levels, and household income.

44. The variables analyzed show, in regard to gender, a heterogeneous situation in which

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3   At constant year 2000 values.

a small number of countries still show differences in detriment to females within a regional framework of parity or of a clear reversal of disparities. This means that it is increasingly common to find situations in which the male population appears to be at a disadvantage.

45. Similarly, we find systematic differences that show a disadvantage for rural populations and those belonging to native groups or Afrodescendents. These disparities tend to be of greater magnitude than those observed for gender.

46. Moreover, the element that discriminates most strongly has to do with household income levels and condition of poverty. In fact, we may say that the differences associated to household income, even in the case of completion of primary education, are very marked.

47. In addition, equity gaps, in general, are more marked the higher the education level considered.

48. Current challenges in regard to key aspects such as universal completion of primary education are not equally distributed among the population. Conclusion levels among disadvantaged groups tend to be systematically lower. Thus, inequities in education combine with other inequities, making up a complex set of social exclusion that denies a basic purpose of education linked to the creation of equal opportunities among persons. Available information shows clearly that education systems have not been able to reverse social inequalities; rather they reproduce them.

Final remarks:

49. The report illustrates a complex set of progress and challenges in regard to advancing toward the achievement of the EFA goals and guaranteeing the right to education.

50. Progress in the area of written curricula need to be accompanied by the development of mechanisms in order to assure that these are translated into practices in classrooms and schools, making effective that which at the declarative and prescriptive levels is quite clear. Curricular reform efforts, however, do have the benefit of significant frameworks of reference in order to move forward. The priority, therefore, is not in regard to adjustments that can always be made at this level, but rather in assuring that practices are consistent with explicit proposals.

51. In this regard, it is extremely important to ensure that the whole set of resources allocated to education are increasingly focused in this direction. Changes in education cannot be the exclusive result of initiatives that are important, but in the end marginal, compared to what most of the operation of the system implies for what happens in schools and classrooms.

52. Emphasis must be placed on the achievement of key national and international goals.

    a. The expansion of early childhood education is, in this area, a principal challenge due to its direct importance and its impact on student trajectories, on equity itself, and on achieving EFA goals.

    b. The universal completion of primary education is an absolute minimum. Countries approaching this level should pay particular attention to the specific needs of small groups of the population that are still excluded, since their rights are as important as those of any others, and their relative sizes should not make them invisible. In turn, countries that still face large challenges in this area should redouble their efforts, paying particular attention to the perverse effects of inefficiency. Together with the completion of primary education, countries should also direct their attention to access to and completion of other levels of education, especially those that are considered compulsory. Beyond the compulsory character of some education

levels, one must also consider the impact that completion of different education levels has on the living conditions of families, communities, and national societies as a whole.

c. Serving the education needs of young people and adults is also of great concern, and an area that requires greater effort. Current services are either very limited or are an alternate training channel for working children; this fact should not be ignored.

d. Reducing illiteracy involves the development of efforts in two areas. The first is attention to the adult population through programs that are effective and able to ensure the sustainable development of skills. The second has to do with moving toward universal completion of primary education in order to not continue to generate new groups of people in this condition.

e. Although comparable information on student achievement levels is limited, that which does exist shows a very worrisome situation. In spite of the progress shown in access to and completion of education, this has not been accompanied by the guarantee of the universal acquisition of minimal learning – an issue that seriously compromises achievement of efforts carried out.

f. The equity gaps identified in the report present a particularly critical challenge due to the fact that they seriously compromise the possibility of guaranteeing the right to education. The capacity of education systems to not reproduce social inequalities is a critical element of their performance that must be given much more attention.

53. Achieving quality education for all demands consolidating and sustaining progress gained as well as facing the pending challenges identified above in *each one of these areas*.

54. Follow-up of the progress of countries both at the regional and national levels also requires efforts to improve and strengthen education information systems. Although these systems have been consolidated in most countries, which are now able to regularly generate information on education, the conceptual frameworks that have inspired them present weaknesses that compromise their ability to generate relevant information. Thus, aspects that are of crucial importance require a re-reading of existing information and, in some areas they cannot be approached simply due to the absence of systematic information.

INTRODUCTION

(a) The state of education in Latin America and the Caribbean: development of an approach in light of EFA, PRELAC, and current challenges to education

This document brings together a broad set of issues in order to provide a comprehensive look at the state of education in Latin America and the Caribbean. The trends provoking change in education, usually associated to the process of education reform, have been increasingly influenced by the recognition of education as a fundamental human right and by a "expanded vision" of education best expressed 17 years ago in Jomtien by the world initiative of Education for All.

Although economic, social, and cultural rights (and among them the right to education) have been expressed in important documents in international public law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Rights of Children (1990), among others, constitutional recognition of these rights within different countries has not reached the point that they are contained in national legal institutional frameworks that guarantee them in a full sense.

In fact, in spite of such international instruments, the idea of recognizing education as an inalienable right is relatively recent. It has been expressed in publicly-stated concerns and policies and the creation of legal and institutional frameworks that truly guarantee that economic, social, and cultural rights are backed by the kinds of guarantees enjoyed by existing civil and political rights. Although there are clear legal frameworks that protect and assure, for example, the right of a person to not be subject to arbitrary detention (an appeal for legal protection such as *habeas corpus*), there are as of yet no equivalents linked to economic, social, or cultural rights. There is a growing trend to emphasize this need and to foster its existence.

This trend has resulted in this set of rights becoming the object of systematic reflection making it possible to define its basic attributes and assuring them through institutional and legal norms. In this sense, the efforts of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Education are of special note.[1]

For its part, the "expanded vision" of education was expressed in Jomtien as the need to be based on:

(...) the best of the present policies and practices but goes beyond existing resource levels, institutional structures, curricula, and conventional suppliers and incorporates whatever is needed to meet the basic learning needs of all. The structure and content of learning activities should be determined to equip all children, youth, and adults with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they need to survive, to improve their quality of life, to empower them to participate fully and responsibly in their communities and nations´ life, to initiate and to adapt to changing circumstances—and to continue learning according to their individual needs and interests.[2]

Therefore, emphasis should be placed on meeting *basic learning needs* understood as comprising "both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and *the basic learning content* (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning." (Op.Cit, p.11)

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1   See in particular Muñoz Villalobos (2004) and Tomasevski (2006) as well as UNESCO and UN Economic and Social Council (2003)

2   World Conference on Education for All (1990; 33)

These ideas were further developed in the report of the *International Commission on Education for the XXI Century* headed by Jacques Delors (UNESCO 1996) This work maintained and amplified notions of education as a life-long process within society. It proposed four basic pillars upon which education in contemporary society should be based: the development of learning to be; to live together; to do; and to know in a continuous manner.

For its part, the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April, 2000 - UNESCO 2000a), ratified the need to progress toward basic education objectives and offered a framework of action that provides a basic guide for the work carried out by UNESCO in education.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the wave of education reform has given increasing attention to these kinds of actions. In November 2002, the ministers of education themselves established the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) identifying four basic principles and five strategic focuses in order to guide public action in education (see UNESCO 2002a). These principles address the need for education policies:

- To go from an emphasis on inputs and structures to one on people as active agents for change so that through their own practice they may produce, modify, or reproduce the conditions within which they act. PRELAC thus argues for the need to go from instrumental approaches to perspectives centered on the active role of people in constructing social realities.
- To transcend the idea of education as mere transmission of content and understanding it rather as dealing with the comprehensive development of human beings.
- To increasingly affirm the requirement to meet the needs of diversity, leaving aside homogenous and homogenizing approaches to learning.
- To increasingly argue that education is the responsibility of society as a whole – an *educating society* that transcends the focus placed on schools alone as venues for education.

For their part, the strategic focuses underline the need to organize public action around the following issues:

- The contents and practices of education, in order to construct meaning regarding ourselves, others, and the world in which we live.
- Teachers and the strengthening of their active participation in education change, in order that they may respond to the learning needs of their students.
- The culture of schools, so they may become communities of learning and participation.
- The management and flexibility of education systems, in order to offer effective life-long learning opportunities.
- Social responsibility for education, in order to generate commitment to its development and its results.

These principles and strategic focuses are in harmony with contemporary ideas about social action and education, and are therefore basic referents for assessing the progress of education. In particular, given the character of UNESCO as an inter-governmental organization and the way that public action is structured in contemporary societies, these principles and focuses are vital for approaching the state of education in our countries.

In order to understand the situation, we must possess information, which should be organized in a way that ensures produced evidence responds effectively to the current challenges and understandings of educational task.

These considerations led OREALC/UNESCO Santiago to deeply reflect on the consequences that contemporary approaches to education have on the production and organization of information. The results of this effort were presented and discussed during the preparatory meetings of the PRELAC Intergovernmental Committee held in December, 2005 and May, 2006. These discussions made possible to adjust the analytical model that is at the foundation of this report.

(b)   Analytical framework

Based on the general considerations detailed above, the analysis of the state of education in the region seeks to determine the extent to which we have moved toward the goal of achieving quality education for all; that is, to what extent the right to such education is being assured as described in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. (United Nations, 1948).

In turn, these basic principles have been developed through subsequent efforts to define their reach and to construct instruments that make the right to education a legitimate legal demand of all citizens.[3]

It is not surprising that a the meaning of quality education, as viewed from the perspective of EFA/PRELAC, not only considers goals (which could be easily done from an instrumental viewpoint based on efficacy in regard to achievement of such goals), but also the axiological perspectives from which it presents corresponding correlates in the meanings attributed to the practice of education.

In turn, this view is closely linked with elements that are central to the task of education itself. Thus, constructing meaning and developing skills are directly related to the particular conditions of people (pertinence) and to the challenges to development they must face (relevance). They are also, and not coincidentally, closely related to the way people operationalize some objectives of education policy (efficacy), and reflect operational principles proper to contemporary society (which include efficiency in the use of public resources). There is also a link to the contemporary notion of the universe of civil, political, and social rights that have an effect in the lives of citizens (equity).

This approach leads to an understanding of **quality education** as one that guarantees the right to education, successfully treating aspects related to:

- The *relevance* of learning. This analytic dimension refers to the need for educational experiences to guarantee the development of the kinds of learning that truly prepare people for modern life. In order to understand the state of education in the region, attention must be paid to the extent to which educational experiences make possible the development of learning related to personal identity (learning to be); to the capacity for mutual understanding, valuing, and practicing harmonious and democratic social relations (learning to live together); the preparation of people for life-long learning (learning to know); as well as the ability of people to act in the various areas of their lives (learning to do).

- The *pertinence* of educational experiences. This analytic dimension refers to the flexibility of educational experiences so that they can adjust to the particular conditions of individuals, can value diversity, and can provide venues for participation.

- *Educational equity*. The universal nature of a fundamental human right demands that we inquire to what extent the right is effective for all. Otherwise, its universal nature would be denied. Moreover, the establishment of the right to education promotes the

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3   Details of these thoughts may be found in the second chapter of UNESCO (2007)

creation of more just societies and contributes as well to guaranteeing other funda-
mental human rights.

At the same time, education being defined as a right makes it subject to public action.
In this sense, government action is particularly important. This leads to the need to inquire
about the extent to which public action through education policies and systems make it
possible to:

- Achieve major education policy objectives as expressed in specific goals; that is, the
extent to which public actions can achieve **efficacy**. This area has to do with achieving
concrete goals such a expansion of comprehensive early childhood care and education;
access to and universal conclusion of primary education; and assuring student learning
achievement.

- Develop activities related to the need to make good use of the resources that the
community designates to public tasks; that is, the extent to which public services are
efficient.

This report offers a view of the state of education based on a human rights approach,
and is organized by presenting a review of that situation organized according to the five dimen-
sions described above. In so doing, it seeks to assure that the organization of information on
education is consistent with comprehensive, rather than reductionist, perspectives on educa-
tion in order to convey meaningful messages that do in fact offer relevant elements to public
debates on education and that nourish decision-making processes. At the same time, the report
goes beyond a merely instrumental approach -based on using a production function metaphor
to describe the education dynamic-, to the organization of information that has distinguished
education information systems in recent decades and which today is clearly insufficient, due
to the fact that it limits the informative capacity of information systems, given the current
education concepts and challenges.

It is no accident that this approach is very similar to other conceptual efforts carried out
in recent years[4] and that also seeks to supersede the over-simplification contained in a concept
of education quality linked merely to learning achievement as measured in standardized tests.
Such a view not only simplifies analysis. It also tends to underestimate key aspects for assuring
the right to education. An emphasis on "quality" understood merely as academic achievement
leads to undervalue aspects such as, for example, coverage – without which there is no way to
universally assure the right to education. Disassociating "quality" from "quantity" may lead one
to think not only that the latter can exist without the former (high coverage and little learning),
but also that the former can exist without the latter, which is nonsense – education cannot be
thought to possess quality if it is not for everyone, since the right is universal.

This report also represents an effort to re-design the territory within which education
information systems can best confront their current challenges while developing their capacity
to provide information that is not only timely and consistent, but relevant and meaningful as
well, and increasing their capacity to meet the needs of education policies.

Although this report has been constructed on the basis of the analytic framework
briefly described herein, the information that is currently available does not correspond to
its demands. This has resulted not only in reorganizing current and constructing additional
information. We have also identified important information needs not being met and that
have to be addressed.

Thus, this report is also a *first effort* to follow-up the progress of education in the
region and provide a description of the state of education, identifying information gaps that
need to be faced in order to construct a depiction that informs in a better way the processes

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4   For a global review, see Chapter 1 of the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team (2004); for information concerning
      efforts developed in the region, see among others, INEE (2004); Muñoz Izquierdo (2004); Schmelkes (1996); and
      Toranzos (1996)

of formulation, implementation, and assessment of education policies as well as to contribute to public debate on the theme.

In regard to the **relevance** of services provided by education systems, it is absolutely necessary to treat actions resulting from observations and analysis of national curricula, legal regulations, educational practices, and assessment models in regard to the four pillars of education for the XXI century: learning to know, to do, to be, and to live together.

In order to develop the analysis, we have operationalized these pillars and developed a set of methodological guidelines, using them to analyze national curricula and current regulations. However, this is only a first step in the area of documentary analysis of what is prescribed that is a condition of practice, but different from it. For this reason, there is a key need to foster and to develop studies from this perspective that concentrate on education practices and assessment systems. We have also analyzed the structures of education systems and the number of compulsory years of study and the levels to which these correspond.

In order to have information regarding the **pertinence** of services offered by education systems, the analysis of curricula, legal provisions, classroom and school practices, and of assessment systems provide information that makes possible the evaluation of this dimension.

In this field, it was only possible to treat actions for developing an assessment guide to make it possible to observe how current regulations include the need to ensure flexibility and the ability to adapt education services to the individual's specific needs and populations' as well. The analysis provides information for determining the extent to which pedagogical processes, curricula, and school organization entail content adaptation; that is, whether objectives are achieved with reference to content defined at the local level, and to what extent a view prevails of either single, uniform "plans and programs", or what is the degree of attention to diversity.

It is important to note the need to foster carrying out studies that allow one to approach, in addition to the regulatory body, other observation levels related to school and classroom practices as well as to the existing assessment models.

In regard to the **efficacy** dimension, measurement of variables related to the attainment of proposed objectives has been the object of various analyses in the region – principally those linked to the access to primary and lower secondary education, the completion of studies, as well as the measurement of student academic achievement through standardized testing.

Analysis of this dimension here presented focuses on the EFA goals (except for the themes of equity that are considered in a dimension apart) and considers the following aspects: (i) levels of access to education, (ii) levels of completion for primary education and for lower and upper secondary education, (iii) academic achievement levels of the student population, and (iv) illiteracy levels of the adult population.

To these effects, we have used a broad set of information organized from a perspective adjusted to the analytic model adopted. This is different from more conventional ways of using this information. We have also developed new indicators that better respond to current education policy needs.

In addition, it is necessary to include aspects linked to current teaching and learning processes according to the contexts in which they are carried out, teacher and student attributes, together with the interactions among actors and among peers. For the purposes of this study, these aspects have been grouped under the category "curricular management". An area of particular importance in this field has to do with teachers and their active involvement in curricular change. Clearly, there is a need to take a comprehensive view of the phenomena associated with teachers in order to determine what they do (their practice), since this is a key element for achieving national education objectives. Thus, there is need for an analysis regarding the variables associated with teachers and their contributions to fostering student learning. The legal framework, teacher working conditions, career paths, career entry, career

perceptions, assessment, and career exit, absenteeism, professional qualifications and dedication, are all aspects that the literature cites as factors that influence student learning. Because of the enormous lack of information in this field, this report incorporates very few indicators while recognizing the limitations that this causes in the analysis – which raises once again the urgent need to generate relevant information in this field. It would also be very valuable to have solid evidence on school and classroom climate and on the numerous variables that influence classroom and school practices and their relations with the background made up by the interaction among different actors in education.

The **efficiency** dimension has been the focus of a number of analyses throughout time. We thus have some consistent information, although there is a lack of information on issues that the usual analyses have not taken into consideration. This document uses information on levels of grade repetition and the associated wastage of resources, and introduces new elements such as: (i) comparison between the number of years that it is expected for persons to be enrolled in a particular level and the number of grades that they do pass (ii) the preservation or deterioration of timely coverage between the initial and final grades of primary education. In this sense, it should be made clear that the indicators presented in this report allow for a new look at existing information in order to respond directly to key questions of education policy, while at the same time review old premises that are the source of biases in traditional models of analysis for these topics.

On the other hand, a direct measure of the availability of financial resources for the education of each student is the absolute level of spending per student. The availability of these resources is not a direct indicator of efficiency. It is, however, linked to that since it belongs to the area of the allocation and use of material resources. At the same time, this corresponds to the need to organize system descriptions, making sure to look into education investment as a whole and highlighting the urgent need to spend more and better. Other aspects would be desirable to have been included but, unfortunately, comparable information is not yet available at the regional level. Examples include: (i) education management (ii) the opening of schools to community participation, and (iii) the existence of legal provisions that allow schools to be able to manage financial, human, and material resources autonomously, as well as the existence of levels of flexibility that make possible the diversification of educational services.

Providing universal guarantees for equal opportunities in regard to the right to education involves observing the concrete practice of some of these that have greater descriptive power, given EFA goals. Thus, the desire to assure levels of access, completion of studies, and achievement results for the entire population, independent of pre-existing social conditions, has resulted in selecting some indicators of access, completion, and proposed results that make possible the development of measures that describe how such characteristics are distributed in terms of equity. The aspects of **equity** considered in the report are those linked to income, poverty, area of residence, gender, and membership in racial or ethnic linguistic groups. Efforts should be made as well to include information not currently available, such as that regarding populations with special needs, the geographic distribution of educational services, and the existence of physical infrastructure and equipment. The possibility of including indicators that treat existing differences among groups defined according to equity criteria throughout the school experience would contribute to bring light to the impact of education in these gaps. Thus, attention should be given to the need to include information regarding the development of alternative education or affirmative action programs.

1. ARE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES *RELEVANT*, GIVEN THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORLD?

In examining the relevance of education, we answer questions regarding its ends *(what for?)* and content *(what?)*. The response regarding relevant content must be coherent with the meanings and ends that society as a whole assigns to education, and the meanings and values considered desirable by different sectors of a society at a given time. Similarly, in terms of a political and social project, education has a series of purposes that vary in time and from one context to another, and that influence the assessment of its relevance.

Besides the consideration about its function as a tool for economic or social development as a common good and human right, education has an intrinsic purpose of contributing to the full development of people and to human dignity. Both in human rights international law and in national norms, this is the principal purpose assigned to education. Therefore, education is relevant if it fosters the learning of skills necessary to fully participate in different spheres of human life, face demands and challenges of society, find proper employment, and develop a life project in relation with others. That is, if it makes possible *socialization* and *individuation* (UNESCO, 2007).

From a rights-based approach, education possesses quality if students have the opportunity to know and live these rights - which means learning not only knowledge and abilities, but above all to develop values, attitudes, and behaviors. Although necessary, it is not sufficient that students develop their cognitive capabilities and learn basic skills in order to obtain a proper and gratifying job. It is also necessary that they develop social skills in order to be able to live harmoniously in a plural world, that they achieve a balanced affective development and a moral conscience that allow them to act with autonomy and responsibility.

From the perspective of UNESCO, education for the XXI century should develop competencies related to the so-called *four pillars of learning* identified in the Report on the International Commission on Education for the XXI Century (UNESCO, 1996):

I.   *Learn to know*, in order to acquire a broad cultural repertory and the specific knowledge that stimulates the curiosity in order to continue learning and developing in the knowledge society;

II. *Learn to do*, developing competencies that train people to deal with unexpected situations, work in teams, and develop themselves in different social and working contexts, as well as develop enterprising capacities;

III. *Learn to live together*, fostering the understanding of and valuing others through perception of the forms of inter-dependence and respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding, and peace;

IV. *Learn to be*, in order to know and value oneself, construct one's own identity, and act with a growing capacity for autonomy, judgment, and personal responsibility in different life situations.

This section treats the theme of the relevance of education, considering these *four pillars of learning* through the identification of some areas of learning that are seen as central for its implementation and which allow us to observe the extent to which national legal frameworks and curricular policies foster these kinds of learning for the XXI century.

To this end, we have analyzed the purposes of education contained in the norms and instruments of policies from the perspective of these four pillars of learning and verified whether these are expressed in a balanced manner in curricula. Thus, the documentary analysis has allowed us to note the coherence between general objectives of the different levels of education (primary, and lower secondary) according to the four pillars, and their embodiment in the objectives put forth in various curricular subjects or areas. It was not possible to carry out

analyses of educational material, school culture, assessment criteria, or pedagogical practices - although it would be highly recommendable to do so in the near future, in order to analyze the distance between education discourse and practices.

Therefore, we have carried out an analysis of aspects linked to the obligatory nature of schooling that each country establishes, since this is an additional illustration of how each of them operationalizes the above considerations in terms of the structure of the education system. That is, we have examined the time periods adjusted to different moments of individual development with educational experiences considered to be the desirable minimum that are obligatory for all in light of the meanings established above.

We detail below the major results of our analysis carried out as a function of the four pillars of education for the XXI century, followed by a section on obligatory schooling.

(a)   Learning to know

Learning to know assumes acquiring a general culture sufficiently broad with more profound knowledge in a limited number of subjects. This assumes, moreover learning to learn in order to be able to take advantages offered by education throughout life. In order to analyze this dimension, the following indicators were used:

- Education fosters the development of competencies that make it possible to appropriate and lend meaning to the contents of universal culture.
- Education fosters the development of critical and systemic thinking.
- Education develops the capacity to learn to learn throughout life, fostering processes of meta-cognition.

Recently, curricular frameworks have moved from focuses centered on the transmission of knowledge to those that foster in students the construction of knowledge, the processing and analysis of information, and the development of critical thinking. Good learning takes place in interactive processes and contexts - not in unidirectional transmission processes in which students are able to exchange their hypotheses, ideas, and meanings with what appears in books and other materials, including the internet, and with what their teachers and peers state. From the analysis, it is possible to observe that most curricular principles express the idea of mobilizing and applying knowledge - or rather the development of conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal content for performing satisfactorily in the world.

Of the indicators considered in this dimension, the aspects treated in greater depth refer to the development of competencies for the information processing and analysis, and comprehension of the languages of new technologies - fundamental skills for taking ownership of and giving meaning to the values of universal culture. Less evidence was found, however, in regard to the development of learning that links the processes of analysis of information to decision-making processes and, even to a lesser extent, to reflections on what is learned; that is, metacognition - key elements for the transfer of learning and the development of skills in order to continue learning throughout life.

(a.1)   Education fosters the development of competencies that allow people to lend meaning to the contents of universal culture

One of the purposes of education is the development of socialization processes - which means that new generations take ownership of the contents of culture and acquire the competencies necessary in order to actively participate in society. Culture is the experience accumulated by different social groups that have generated collective solutions for facing their difficulties, and that encompass aspects such as conceptual and interpretive frameworks of reality, beliefs, ways of life, languages, and others (Coll 1987). The school curriculum represents a collection of those contents of culture that, at a given time, are considered important for fostering the development of persons and for achieving the purposes sought by education.

Curricular frameworks and programs of study structure the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes through different areas of learning.

In the area of language, most countries present an approach centered on communication more than formal aspects of language, the study of which does not disappear, but rather is placed at the service of the development of communication skills. The question remains, however, of whether this approach is suitable or not, given the weight of tradition in regard to the formal aspects of language (spelling and grammar) and the recent nature of the curricular reforms that have incorporated this new approach. Moreover, the classic separation between, on the one hand, content, and on the other, skills or abilities, as well as the large quantity of specific content, allows to foresee the possible tension felt by teachers between developing all of the contents, or only communication skills.

An important advance seen in the development of this area is the priority current in multi-lingual countries of learning a mother language, together with the teaching of a second language.

In mathematics, priority is given to approaches based on problem-solving, development of logical thought, processes of abstraction, and application of mathematical concepts for daily use, thus involving and advance in comparison to curricular concepts centered on the transmission of knowledge.

In sciences, some countries integrate the social and natural sciences in a single area of knowledge referred to knowledge of the natural and social environment, especially in the first three or four years of primary school. In others, the areas of social and natural sciences are separate. The former uses the contributions of various disciplines for understanding social processes and phenomena, and the latter focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the natural world through initial introduction to the scientific method, the study of the effects of scientific and technological development. In these areas, especially in lower secondary education, one sees the incorporation of some emerging and current themes such as the environment, cultural pluralism, democracy, and human rights.

> LANGUAGE AS A CROSS-CUTTING THEME CAN BE SEEN IN THE NEW CURRICULAR DESIGN OF HONDURAS (2004) THAT BROADENS THE AREA OF LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE NOT ONLY SPANISH, BUT ALSO INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES, FOREIGN LANGUAGES, AND ART, IN ORDER THAT STUDENTS CAN EXPRESS THEMSELVES AND UNDERSTAND ORAL, WRITTEN, AURAL, GRAPHIC, OR GESTURES COMPETENTLY IN DIVERSE COMMUNICATION SITUATIONS AND WITH DIFFERENT INTERLOCUTORS.

The areas of art, physical education, and technology are present in curricula with less emphasis and class time than the above-cited areas - which may contradict proposals linked to the comprehensive development of students.

(a.2) Education fosters the development of critical and systematic thought and the ability to learn to learn throughout life, fostering processes of meta-cognition

The development of thought is organized into different progressive processes that include:

- *Information processing*, that involves locating, selecting, judging, and synthesizing information.
- *Analysis and assessment*, that involves the ability to integrate data, relate, structure problems, demonstrate and summarize evidence, make value judgments, compare and interpret, and discuss and engage in dialogue.
- *Decision-making*, that involves recognizing and identifying problems, creating alternatives in the face of different situations, and developing plans of action.
- *Meta-cognition*, that consists in the development of the ability for self-reflection regarding how students know and learn, use planning skills, and utilize appropriate learning techniques for acquiring and applying new knowledge.

Of these four processes, the first two are those that show more development in the curricular frameworks of countries, linking the acquisition of knowledge with the exercise of skills for processing and analyzing information. However, study plans organized around com-

petency development show greater systematization and articulation with the development of skills associated with critical and reflective thinking.

In some curricula, the development of thought is presented as a cross-cutting theme, but its application to study programs in different areas of learning is not presented in detail. .

In other countries, the development of thinking is incorporated into expected learning in some sectors of knowledge, but in a dispersed and unsystematic manner. In mathematics, it is centered on problem-solving, on processes of abstraction, and on the use of inference for the development of reasoning, through which one can predict, anticipate, and extract the consequences of logical interrelations and structures. In language it is incorporated through the manipulation and analysis of information, analytic and interpretive reading, and the elaboration of ideas through writing. In the sciences, it is incorporated through the capacity to observe, analyze, synthesize, induce, deduce, generalize, and through the capacity to classify, establish cause and effect relations, hierarchize knowledge, and in general to develop "scientific research" procedures.[1] In regard to the abilities to analyze information, assess or emit value judgments, although in general it is not stated explicitly, it is shown, for example, training in formulating hypotheses and to compare them with those developed by their peers. In history, the analysis of different social situations is encouraged through critical understanding of certain social phenomena and the diversified use of sources that support them. In general, a good number of study plans refer to applying critical and reflective capacities to everyday situations.

An aspect that is mentioned, albeit weakly, is the relation between the development of critical thought and decision-making. In general, the learning process fostered by the school in regard to de- velopment of the analysis and assessment of information is expressed clearly, but it is not clear how one fosters and monitors the autonomous activities of students who use the new understandings. On the few occasions when the learning of decision-making is mentioned, this is associated with social situations (regarding conflict resolution), of an ethical nature (regarding moral dilemmas), or aesthetic questions (regarding artistic production).

Finally, the development of processes of reflection through ways that students them- selves learn is also weakly and unequally expressed. In many developing countries, the ability of learning to learn is announced as a guiding principle, saying that teachers should direct the learning process using active methodologies that foster dialogue that promote thinking, that teach their students to learn to study, that facilitate the expression of personal criteria, so they may experience the satisfaction of knowledge. However, this does not have a direct correlate in teaching orientations in order to facilitate its implementation. For some countries, we have found no explicit referents to developing the ability of learning to learn and of encouraging meta-cognitive processes.

Similarly, we have found little evidence in regard to the planning and organization of knowledge on the part of students themselves. When in some subjects there is an allusion to this theme, it is only in passing. A difficulty linked with this aspect is that in the curricula no time is reserved for personal or directed study, or for planning one's own learning. This makes more difficult the development of meta-cognitive processes; for these require time in order to review facts, rectify, identify difficulties, and plan the steps in order to continue to learn.

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1   Usually uncritically understood from a simplified positivist posture.

The development of this kind of learning should be included in all sectors, and should be the responsibility of the school as a whole. In this sense, it is important to provide specific times and opportunities to facilitate its development.

(b) Learning to do

Education moves between the poles of knowing and transforming. One knows by transforming, and transforms by knowing. Education should not be assessed only in terms of the appropriation of concepts; but rather in terms of the capacity to provoke improved practice and to transform one's surroundings (Leis, 2006).

Learning to do is not only about obtaining qualified personnel, but rather about acquiring competencies that train people to confront diverse situations and to work in teams. *Learning to* do has meaning to the extent that it generates knowledge that can be socially useful. Therefore, it involves a capacity to identify and to resolve problems, but always with solutions in accordance with the values and beliefs of the community's culture. *Learning to do* also means learning to organize institutions in order to take advantage of the environment resources and place them at the service of the community so they may be used in a sustainable manner (Olivé, 2006).

For the analysis of this dimension, we have considered the following indicators:
- Education develops the innovative and creative capacity of people.
- Education develops capacities of enterprise, leadership, and teamwork. .
- Education is aimed at preparing people who are committed to the environment and to sustainable development.
- Education fosters the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as tools for learning, producing, communicating, and investigating.

Of these indicators, the most information appears in the incorporation into curricula of emerging themes such as the environment and the use of ICTs. But there are slight indications of other more substantive themes such as the development of creativity, innovation, enterprise, and leadership. However, in a quickly changing world such as ours, that demands learning and living with uncertainty, creativity, enterprise, and leadership are fundamental tools that formal education should help to develop. Therefore, the weak expression of these aspects in most curricula should be something to be reviewed in national education policies.

(b.1) Education develops the innovative and creative capacity of people

In a dynamic world, innovation and creation are key capacities in order for people to manage their environments with versatility and success, providing solutions to new challenges, or re-structuring the terms with which they relate with others.

In spite of this social requirement, only in the normative frameworks of some countries do we find references to the development of the capacity for innovation as an end or general objective of the education system. But this does not translate into a relevant characteristic of the study plans and exit profiles of students. Only some curricula include development of the capacity for innovation and creativity in their cross-cutting objectives, but even there, only at the level of general orientations that do not always find a correlate in the study programs of the various sectors of knowledge.

Innovation, understood as the capacity to develop diverse alternatives for solving problems that appear is, in almost all cases, limited to the exercise of mathematics. Only in some cases it is stimulated from other areas linked with intervention and transformation of the environment. This, however, is seldom

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HAS ESTABLISHED A CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY AND TALENT, WHICH BEST SHOWS THE EMPHASIS PLACED ON FOSTERING THE CAPACITIES OF INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY. THE GUIDELINES OF THIS AREA STATE THAT ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY WILL SERVE AS A BASIS FOR PRODUCING A SOCIETY THAT ASPIRES TO DEVELOP ITSELF THROUGH INITIATIVE, CREATIVE CAPACITY, AND THE ACCEPTANCE AND PROMOTION OF INNOVATION AND CHANGE.

translated into practical knowledge applied concretely to production. In general terms, the step from theoretical to practical knowledge has not been taken through the development of activities that have an impact on daily surroundings more than remaining in the kinds of simulations typical of schools.

Likewise, in most countries, references to the development of creativity are present only in the area of the arts. But the fact that these areas have relatively few class hours devoted to them is an indication of the relative importance that these skills have in the training processes of students; all the more so when they are only associated with extracurricular activities.

(b.2) Education develops capacities of enterprise, leadership, and teamwork

Within *learning to do*, enterprise has become a very important skill to be encouraged. It leads to the development of a pro-active attitude. Doing, with knowledge and awareness, helps people set goals, make proposals, develop projects, and make decisions. "In general, the idea of developing enterprise skills within schools has the purpose of training students in the ability to solve problems with initiative and creativity, and to play an active role in the construction of their own life projects so that they can act as true authors of change in the social, political, cultural, and economic processes in which they will live, contributing to the sustainable development of their communities" (Ferreyra, 2005, 2).

However, in spite of the importance of incorporating into teaching the development of enterprise and leadership skills, these are only weakly expressed. In some countries, they are presented in a very general way in cross-cutting themes, and their mention is neither explicit nor intentional in areas of study. Only in some cases have we found specific programs for developing these skills in students.

In spite of the fact that in most countries working in teams is mentioned among the purposes of education, only in some cases it is developed in a systematic manner as a cross-cutting objective, and applied in various areas of study as a didactic orientation.

(b.3) Education is aimed at preparing people who are committed to the environment and to sustainable development

Human beings depend on the ecosystems of which they are a part. The human species cannot survive on a devastated planet. Efforts directed at disseminating knowledge about the interdependence and fragility of the systems that sustain life on the planet are at the core of education for sustainable development. These programs must foster the importance of treating subjects related to natural resources as part of the general agenda of development. In particular, the links with social and economic factors allow students to adopt new behaviors to protect our planet's natural resources that are essential for human development and survival.

In regard to the requirement to educate for sustainable development, in normative frameworks, education laws, and the

ends and general objectives of education systems, the majority of countries include references to educating people to be committed to the environment.

In most countries, this indicator is treated in depth in the area of the natural sciences. However, in some cases it is included as a cross-cutting objective taught in many subject areas.

In turn, the relation between citizen training and environmental development is present in various countries (Argentina, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Jamaica, and Chile), which incorporate this subject in the social sciences, fostering the development of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes so that students participate individually and collectively in the analysis, prevention, and reduction of environmental problems.

EL SALVADOR AND VENEZUELA, FOR EXAMPLE, ESTABLISH IN THEIR NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONS THAT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IS OBLIGATORY, SPECIFYING IN THE CASE OF VENEZUELA THAT THIS SHOULD BE OFFERED AT ALL LEVELS AND MODALITIES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS WELL AS IN NON-FORMAL CITIZEN EDUCATION. SIMILARLY, IN GRENADA, THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATES CARE FOR AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS IMPORTANT THEMES. FOR ITS PART, IN COLOMBIA ENVIRONMENTAL SUBJECTS WERE AN IMPORTANT PART OF ITS TEN-YEAR EDUCATION PLAN 1995-2005.

THE ENVIRONMENT AS A CROSS-CUTTING THEME IN THE CURRICULUM

- THE CROSS-CUTTING THEME ON THE ENVIRONMENT IN BOLIVIA TEACHES THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND AWARENESS OF THE PROGRESSIVE DETERIORATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT CAUSED BY THE ACTIVITIES OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THEIR OWN SURROUNDINGS.

- IN VENEZUELA, THE CROSS-CUTTING THEME ON THE ENVIRONMENT IS MEANT TO STRENGTHEN ENVIRONMENTAL, ETHICAL AND AESTHETIC VALUES AND THE ORGANIZED PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN THE SOLUTION OF SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. THIS IS SIMILARLY EXPRESSED IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULA OF GUATEMALA, CHILE, AND MEXICO .

- IN COSTA RICA, THIS IS TREATED IN THE CROSS-CUTTING SUBJECT ENTITLED "ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT" WHICH IS AIMED AT FOSTERING THE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, RECUPERATION, AND PROTECTION PROJECTS.

- IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF THE CROSS-CUTTING THEME ENTITLED "THE SOCIAL AND NATURAL CONTEXT" IS TO ESTABLISH NEW AND BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT IN ORDER TO PREVENT ITS DETERIORATION AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE COUNTRY'S ECOSYSTEM, PREVENTING DEFORESTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION.

- THE RELATION BETWEEN CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT IS PRESENT IN MEXICO, WHERE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, VALUES, AND ATTITUDES ARE PRESENTED USING CROSS-CUTTING THEMES SO THAT STUDENTS PARTICIPATE INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY IN THE ANALYSIS, PREVENTION, AND REDUCTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS AND FOSTER THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- IN CUBA, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, WHICH INCLUDES THEMES ON ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, IS GIVEN A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY FOCUS BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM IN ACTIVITIES THAT INVOLVE THE PARTICIPATION OF FAMILIES, LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES.

(b.4)   Education fosters the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as tools for learning, productivity, communicating, and investigating

The digital gap is seen as source for other gaps. Those who are not connected are excluded from the benefits of the information society. Recognizing this challenge, most countries have incorporated within the central orientations of their curricula the fostering of the use of ICTs. .

In most Latin American countries, there are educational web sites that offer to school officials, teachers, students, and parents access to a complete bank of educational resources.

Moreover, various countries foster the development of specific programs in order to:

- Provide computer technology to schools (computers, printers, internet access).
- Train students and teachers in computer use as a technological resource that makes possible the selection, receipt, storage, and assessment of information, as well as its production, dissemination, and critical use.
- Supply technological tools that improve the levels of academic quality and develop in students the technical skills demanded by the current labor market in order to raise the competitive levels of countries.

However, it is not specified in these cases how computer training programs are integrated into the development of student learning processes in the various curricular areas. It is not clear if such equipment is for sporadic use, or intended to be incorporated and regularly used in the classroom. At times, as in the case of Nicaragua, these are presented as extra-class activities and one does not detect the intended application in major curricular areas. At the same time, other countries foster the use of ICTs in specific areas of learning: sciences (Brazil), computer education workshops (Uruguay and Cuba), natural sciences and technology (Honduras and Mexico), and mathematics (Colombia). In the Dutch Antilles, all programs of study include the use of ICTs in learning processes.

(c)   Learning to live together

Learning to live together involves developing a high capacity for understanding other people and perceiving the possible multiple forms of interdependence, such as carrying out common projects and preparing to treat conflicts in an appropriate manner, respecting the values of pluralism, mutual understanding, and peace (UNESCO, 1996). In order to analyze this dimension, the following indicators have been considered:

- Education fosters learning aimed at mutual understanding through respect for diversity, pluralism, and the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Education is aimed at learning to value and act with fairness, based on transparency and honesty.
- Education has as an objective the knowledge and exercise of human rights.
- Education fosters the exercise of democracy, stimulating the learning of civic attitudes, cooperation, solidarity, and responsible participation.

Of these indicators, the most developed are fostering learning aimed at mutual understanding, knowledge and exercise of human rights, and the exercise of democracy. Invariably, the aspect least expressed is that of fostering honesty and transparency; one to which more attention should be given, considering the problems of corruption which generate poverty and profound social disharmony.

(c.1)   Education fosters learning aimed at mutual understanding through respect for diversity, pluralism, and the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully.

The ideal model that should guide us is for the world to move toward greater mutual understanding, and increase of the sense of responsibility and solidarity based on the acceptance of our spiritual and cultural differences. By allowing everyone to have access to knowledge, education has a very concrete role to play in carrying out this universal task: to help to understand the world and to understand others, and thus to better understand oneself (UNESCO, 1996, 47).

The need to build consensus and generate mutual understanding in increasingly complex societies such as ours requires that education foster learning that allows us to understand, respect, and value diversity, to face conflicts in a non-violent manner, and to live harmoniously.

This is a dimension in which progress has been made by incorporating into the common curriculum objectives related to the learning of intercultural dialogue skills - especially in countries that constitutionally recognize themselves as pluri-cultural and bilingual. In these cases, inter-cultural bilingual teaching is especially relevant, and is aimed at the knowledge of and the appreciation for their own cultures and mother languages, in the cases of indigenous populations, and the dissemination of knowledge of and respect for different native peoples at the national level; that is, inter-cultural understanding for all.

The understanding of the diversity of human culture and the development of harmonious relations are aspects commonly mentioned in national constitutions and in education laws, highlighting the need to foster in schools the culture of tolerance, respect, recognition of differences, justice, freedom, and social and gender equality.

In most countries, this orientation is reflected in education policies, curricular frameworks, and profiles of the school graduates, emphasizing the importance of stimulating learning aimed at the acceptance of diversity, consensus building, tolerance, respect, non-discrimination, the elimination of prejudice and stereotypes, and fostering democratic relations. Various countries include cross-cutting objectives linked to valuing cultural pluralism and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against gender, sexual orientation, religion, or others. However, very few curricula have been able to integrate cross-cutting content with different sectors of learning and to make concrete proposals for working with cultural pluralism in different academic subjects. Thus, one runs the risk of such cross-cutting objectives becoming invisible and of teachers not adequately assuming responsibility for fostering and developing them.

> IN BRAZIL, IN THE DESCRIPTION OF THIS CROSS-CUTTING AREA, IDEAS APPEAR OF HOW TO INTEGRATE THE THEME OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY INTO DIFFERENT SUBJECT AREAS: IN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY THROUGH TREATING IMMIGRATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY'S HISTORY; IN PORTUGUESE BY WORKING WITH THE LINGUISTIC VARIETY OF THE COUNTRY AND ANALYZING LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR DISSEMINATING VALUES AS WELL A RACIAL, ETHNIC, OR CLASS PREJUDICES; ART EDUCATION WORKS WITH APPRECIATION FOR CREATIVE DIVERSITY AND FOLKLORE; IN MATHEMATICS THROUGH STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PERCENTAGE OF INHABITANTS BY THEIR ETHNIC ORIGINS.

REGARDING GENDER DISCRIMINATION

- IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, THE CROSS-CUTTING AREA ENTITLED THE SOCIAL AND NATURAL CONTEXT EMPHASIZES THAT STUDENTS SHOULD EXHIBIT RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDES REGARDING THE DYNAMICS OF DEMOGRAPHY, FREE OF STEREOTYPES AGAINST WOMEN'S DIGNITY AND FOSTERING EQUAL RESPECT FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

- THE CURRICULUM OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO EMPHASIZES EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN. FOR THIS REASON, STEREOTYPES THAT FOSTER GENDER DISCRIMINATION HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM STUDY PLANS AND TEXTBOOKS.

- IN PANAMA, THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY HAS DEVELOPED CURRICULAR GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE CROSS-CUTTING AREA ENTITLED EDUCATION AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION.

- IN CUBA, GENDER EQUITY IS A CROSS-CUTTING THEME BASED ON THE NEED TO GUARANTEE EQUALITY TO ALL CITIZENS, TRAINING STUDENTS IN THE ELIMINATION OF PREJUDICES, TABOOS, AND STEREOTYPES RELATED TO WOMEN.

The relation between education and multi-culturalism is not a simple one. An education able to accept different world views involves questioning by both teachers and students. Learning to accept differences thus becomes citizen education in the radical sense of the term: learning to put oneself in other people's shoes.

Curricular frameworks, together with fostering understanding and respect for diversity, present learning objectives aimed at mutual understanding through harmonious and democratic

social relations within schools and in society. A recurrent theme in this regard is learning how to engage in dialogue as an effective means of communication for reaching agreements. Many countries work with this skill as a cross-cutting theme, with emphasis in the areas of language and communications and social sciences through motivating students to listen, establish bases for their opinions, and value other points of view. In this understanding, emphasis is placed on dialogue and argument a basic communication resources for solving problems and fostering consensus - indispensable elements for living together in democratic societies. In addition, some countries have specific programs on living together, mediation, and peaceful conflict resolution.

Colombia: Basic citizenship skills. Training for citizenship. What we need to know and know how to do

For the 8th and 9th grades: Building peaceful relations that contribute to harmonious daily living in my community and municipality.

- I understand the importance of maintaining good relations with my family, friends, and partner in spite of differences, disagreements, or conflicts.
- I understand that conflicts occur in relations, including with partners, and that they can be treated constructively if we listen to each other and understand the other person's point of view.
- I identify and control emotions such as resentment and hate, in order to be able to pardon and reconcile with those with whom I have had conflicts.
- I use constructive mechanisms to diminish my anger and to face my conflicts (ideas: stop to think; calm down by doing exercise or speaking with someone).
- I foresee short and long-term consequences of my actions and avoid those that might cause suffering to me or other people, near or far.
- I know and use creative strategies for resolving conflicts (for example, brainstorming).
- I critically analyze conflicts between groups in my neighborhood, municipality, or country.
- I critically analyze arguments that legitimize violence.
- I identify dilemmas in life in which different rights or values enter into conflict, and analyze possible options for solutions, considering the positive and negative aspects of each (for example, I have a dilemma between the law and loyalty: my friend confesses something to me and I don't know whether to tell or not).
- I argue and debate over daily life dilemmas in which different rights or different values are in conflict; I recognize the best arguments even when they do not coincide with mine.
- I construct, celebrate, maintain, and repair agreements between groups.

(c.2) Education is aimed at learning to value and act with fairness, based on transparency and honesty

An important element of learning to live together is that of the building of trust- essential for believing in others and acting fairly. Today more than ever, people live in uncertainty

and are keenly aware of their vulnerability. Building trust has a social dimension: transparency as a value that generates closer relations between government and society and between people. It also has a personal dimension: honesty. All social systems and organizations, including schools, require the development of trust as a condition for functioning. School systems are called upon to implement trust-building mechanisms among their members, both at the level of their

structures as well in their organizational culture. However, this indicator is feebly expressed in countries of the region, and is mentioned in only a very general way in the guiding principles of curricula, with very unsystematic references in cross-cutting themes, without being incorporated into areas of learning or subject-matter.

References to learning to act fairly appear to have most of the emphasis - understood both in the personal dimension, as well as a rule to follow in school and family relations, and in the social dimension in terms of the ethical-political imperative of overcoming social inequalities. This is expressed in normative frameworks and goals, general objectives, and in the school graduates' profiles.

(c.3) Education has as an objective the knowledge and exercise of human rights.

The knowledge and practice of human rights is a fundamental tool for assuring *respect of all rights, by all and for all*. We must make sure that those curricula, teaching methods, educational environments, and textbooks be consistent with the learning of human rights and respect education systems as a whole. Future citizens are unlikely to respect human rights if they do not have the possibility of knowing them, on the one hand, and experience the respect for their rights, on the other. In many countries, human rights education is part of cross-cutting themes. This means that they should be embedded in the educational process (Blanco, Op. Cit.).

The introduction of training in human rights in education has been strengthened in recent years with the participation of civil society around the defense of their rights and the implementation of national policies in this field. Normative frameworks and general orientations of education policies of all countries state among their purposes inculcating respect for human rights and individual freedoms, together with the observance of corresponding duties. At the same time, they make reference to the value of education in fostering universal peace, based on the recognition of respect for the rights of nations.

For their part, curricular frameworks and study plans include learning aimed at the knowledge and exercise of human rights in general, and those of children and young people in particular. In some cases, cross-cutting objectives referring to democratic education, participation, and values and citizenship, work on learning regarding knowledge of and exercise of human rights and the consequences of their violation, while fostering their defense and developed in various learning sectors.

However, in most countries, human rights are only part of specific subjects such as citizenship training or in social sciences. Consequently, one must ask if the fostering of human rights is part of the analysis regarding how to improve the social relations of teachers, students, and the community, or if they are only one more subject matter in the area of social science. Moreover, placing the knowledge and exercise of human rights in a particular academic area can restrict the possibility of developing different dimensions of this subject in other areas of knowledge, and places the responsibility of their fostering

and development more than ever on some teachers who teach these disciplines, rather than on schools as a whole.

Some countries have recently incorporated human rights training as part of national campaigns for their promotion.

(c.4) **Education fosters the exercise of democracy, stimulating the learning of civic attitudes, cooperation, solidarity, and responsible participation.**

Education alone cannot solve the problems caused by the breaking (wherever it occurs) of social links. One can expect, however, that it will contribute to developing the will to live together, which is a basic factor of social cohesion and national identity. Democracy appears to progress according to forms and stages adapted to the situation of each country. But its vitality is constantly threatened. It is in school that education for conscious and active citizenship should begin (UNESCO, 1996, 66).

The education policies and curricular frameworks of most countries foster the exercise of democracy and the development of civic attitudes. This is expressed in the purposes of national education, in basic objectives, and in the profiles of the school graduates. Cross-cutting themes foster the development of democracy, solidarity, and participation. In turn, study programs in citizenship training and in social sciences address issues treat themes such as the organization of communities and their inhabitants within a democratic system; the organization of norms that regulate a democratic regime; national heritage and identity; political participation; the powers of the State, the electoral system, and others.

Education for conscious and active citizenship, as fostered by the Delors Report, requires a broader view than discussing whether this should be a subject in the curriculum (civic education) or a cross-cutting theme included in many academic subjects. Today, it is proposed that both areas be integrated, in which the development of knowledge as well as abilities are fundamental for training in this dimension (Reimers y Villegas, 2006). This training should be developed with many more elements than the explicit content of the curriculum. It should be reflected in classroom and school climate; in school management and organization, fostering participation and practicing non-discrimination, dialogue, and equal treatment. Education policies are explicit in stating that training for democracy means living it and putting it into practice through democratization of relations within the education community; the establishment of student organizations; and the promotion of respectful relations, cooperative efforts, and activities that link schools with local communities.

Regarding training in citizen participation and solidarity

- In Brazil, solidarity is fostered basically through the area of Ethics, developing activities in the daily life of the school, in special situations such as catastrophes, and in resolving problems present in the community. Acting jointly with other civil society organizations and the Ministry of Education, the name "Solidarity School" is awarded to those institutions that systematically develop voluntary education projects to serve their local communities.

- In Argentina, the National Solidarity Program fosters, through the training of teachers and students, the development of learning-service projects in which student place their learning at the service of a community need. Since 2001 these solidarity practices have been publicly recognized and disseminated by means of the "Solidarity School Presidential Prize".

(d)   Learning to be

The Delors Report emphasizes the importance of this pillar of learning in order that people can develop their own personalities and be able to live with increasing levels of personal autonomy, judgment, and responsibility. To this end, education should not disregard any attributes of persons - memory, reasoning, aesthetic senses, physical capacities, and communication skills (UNESCO, 1966).

For the analysis of this dimension, we have considered the following indicators:
- Education fosters the development of identity and autonomy.
- Education develops capacities for personal projection.
- Education promotes the ability to establish empathetic relations.
- Education seeks to develop moral judgment and ethical behaviors based on respect for the dignity of others.

This dimension is expressed as the weakest in the analyzed documents. The kinds of learning expressed the least are those related to the development of identity and autonomy, including self-recognition, self-esteem, self-control, and emotion management. The development of abilities for personal projection are mentioned in a very general way, usually associated with vocational and labor orientations rather than with the development of personal life. The indicators most visibly expressed refer to the establishment of empathetic relations and the construction of a moral conscience.

(d.1)   Education fosters the development of identity and autonomy.

Achieving the recognition of the individual in society requires assuring the right to his or her own identity. The challenge remains for schools to help that this right is made effective, for it involves respecting people as they are without using homogeneous responses to students who by nature are heterogeneous, and to help them to construct their own autonomous life projects.

The development of personal and social identity, together with self-knowledge and self-esteem are the kinds of learning that is undeveloped in our region. We often find references to the development of the identity of students in general terms in curricular frameworks, in the profiles of the school graduates, and in cross-cutting themes. However, the application in areas of study is unclear. Nor do we supply didactic orientations in order to achieve it. In the few cases in which these objectives are incorporated into subject matter, they are scattered.

A key element in the construction of identity is the appropriate management of emotions that arises out of self-knowledge. According to Maturana and Dávila (2006) it is not control or self-control of emotions that children and adolescents should acquire in their transition to adult life; rather it is an awareness of their feelings, reflection on their actions, and responsible actions in the tasks carried out in their lives as members of a community of

collaboration and mutual respect. This is linked with the development of autonomy, by providing them with the means that enable to act from within themselves, seeing and understanding what they desire so they may learn to be spontaneously ethical and socially responsible.

However, the knowledge and development of emotions is rarely present in curricular designs. We have found practically no explicit references to the theme. Some countries include general orientations in cross-cutting objectives, but without correlates in practice.

Even fewer instances are found linking emotions and autonomy. In general, references to the development of autonomy focus on solving problems, investigating, developing projects, self-assessment, and doing homework without the help of the teacher. In a few countries, this is linked to decision-making.

Finally, self-knowledge and self-value is closely, linked to self-care. This is expressed in study programs of science and physical education, in cross-cutting themes, and in specific support programs that address issues related to health, sex education, and HIV/AIDS prevention, helping students to know and care for their own bodies and to adopt healthy habits.

(d.2) Education develops capacities for personal projection.

"In its most profound sense, to educate does not mean teaching, and much less training people to think, act, or feel in a particular way. To educate means opening horizons that make possible the affirmation of the subject and his or her responsible participation of the daily invention of life in society" (Rodríguez, 2005, 40) In this perspective of opening horizons, it is a function of education to develop in students the ability for personal projection.

The documents that we have reviewed allow us to affirm that education systems do not emphasize in a precise and systematic manner the development of this capacity of personal projection. In this regard, they identify two central elements: the development of decision-making capacity based on reflection, and on processes of discernment, and building personal life projects.

In certain countries, general objectives of education, profiles of the school graduates and curricular framework orientations make reference to the intention of developing in the students moral judgment, and moving progressively from moral heteronomy toward increasing degrees of autonomy, so that finally they may make free and conscious decisions.

In general, the construction of life projects is linked more directly to vocational and occupational orientation in lower secondary school. In Uruguay, Cuba, and Argentina there are programs or guidelines on vocational and occupational guidance that mention possible venues for reflection about life projects of students in order to offer aid making a proper choice and to diminish grade repetition and school drop-out, facilitating future entry into the labor market. Nicaragua and Venezuela have established employment guidance as a cross-cutting theme that aids students in the analysis of various employment possibilities that the community and national context offers. Treatment of this indicator is observed with clarity in different areas proposed to be developed in the curriculum, such as decision-making

that is aware, free, informed, and responsible, and in the collection of information about employment areas of interest, having a clear view of their aspirations.

(d.3) Education promotes the ability to establish empathetic relations.

The skills related to living together are not skills in the popular sense; rather, they are dimensions of social conscience that the child should learn to develop both in the home and at school. Listening, for example, consists of hearing and paying attention; something that requires a significant degree of self-confidence. In order for one to hear expressions of the emotions of another, one must be able to listen without fear of disappearing. Such collaboration is only possible based on respect and care for one's own world and that of others. (Maturana and Dávila, op. Cit.)

In most countries, this indicator is present in normative frameworks and in general orientations of education policy. But only in certain curricular frameworks it is made concrete through some areas of study.

A key component in the construction of empathetic relations is effective communication. In this regard, there are different focuses in the area of language. In some cases, they place emphasis on the more instrumental use of language, as in the case of primary education in Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay aimed at efficient mastery of Spanish as an instrument of communication through reading, writing, and oral expression. In other countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Honduras, Venezuela, Peru, and Colombia, there is a more communicative approach to language that is part of a process of encounter, exchange, and understanding in order to learn, engage in dialogue, discern, and reach consensus; to reflect on preconceived prejudices and judgments; and to develop as free individuals with solidarity, continuing to discover the possibilities that open through the expression of opinions and feelings.

Many countries provide instruction based on dialogue for conflict resolution and the establishment of agreements and rules for better relations. Moreover, within the cross-cutting objectives referring to ethics, citizenship training, and human rights, the development of empathetic relations is strengthened.

In the social science programs of various countries, learning is developed in regard to respecting and valuing cultural diversity, citizen participation, and social responsibility.

A key to good social relations is the ability of putting oneself in other's shoes, and to understand and support others. In some countries, cross-cutting objectives help students be sensitive to the pain of others and to the problems of the community. They collaborate in tasks at home and in their surroundings, showing a spirit of cooperation in carrying out group tasks and participate in social campaigns.

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* "Prosocial" behaviors are those that, without seeking external or material reward, favors other persons or groups, or social goals and increase the probability of generating positive, quality, and solidarity-based reciprocity in consequent inter-personal or social relations while safeguarding the identity, creativity, and initiative of the persons or groups involved (Roche-Olivar, 1998).

CHILE, COSTA RICA, AND MEXICO DEVELOP THIS THEME IN THEIR GUIDANCE PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TO RECOGNIZING THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO REFLECTIONS ON THE LIVES OF ADOLESCENTS IN THEIR OWN CONTEXTS. CONSEQUENTLY, THE CIVICS AND ETHICS PROGRAM IN MEXICO AND THAT OF VALUES IN COSTA RICA ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO THINK, DECIDE, AND ACT FOR THE FUTURE. THESE PROGRAMS TREAT CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND THE MUTUAL COMMITMENTS OF LIFE IN SOCIETY. THE SAME IS THE CASE IN COLOMBIA, WHERE AMONG THE ORIENTATIONS OF THE AREA OF ETHICS AND HUMAN VALUES IT IS NOTED THAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE TRAINED TO CONSTRUCT PROJECTS FOR PERSONAL REALIZATION, BEGINNING WITH PROJECTS WITHIN SCHOOL, AND ADVANCING TOWARD EMPLOYMENT AND PROFESSIONAL PROJECTS, AND IN MORE GENERAL TERMS, TOWARD PROJECTS FOR ADULT LIFE.

IN COLOMBIA, THE LANGUAGE AND MATHEMATICS STANDARDS INCLUDE AN AREA CALLED HOW GOOD IT IS TO EXPRESS WELL WHAT WE THINK AND WANT IS INTENDED FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN HOW TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES AUTONOMOUSLY AND EFFECTIVELY, BEING ABLE TO RELATE WELL WITH OTHERS.

IN BRAZIL, WITHIN THE CROSS-CUTTING THEME OF ETHICS THERE IS AN ENTIRE BLOCK OF CONTENT THAT REFERS TO DIALOGUE: ITS VALUE AS AN INSTRUMENT TO CLARIFY CONFLICTS; FOR COORDINATING ACTIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS; FOR FORMULATING QUESTIONS THAT HELP IN UNDERSTANDING OTHERS. LEARNING TO LISTEN IS EMPHASIZED IN ORDER UNDERSTAND THE PRECISE MEANING OF WHAT OTHERS WANT TO SAY; CLEAR AND PRICES FORMULATION OF ARGUMENTS; THE WILLINGNESS TO OPEN ONESELF TO OTHER IDEAS, OPINIONS, AND ARGUMENTS AND REVISE ONE'S OWN POINT OF VIEW WHEN NECESSARY.

IN NICARAGUA, THE CURRICULUM SUGGESTS THAT STUDENTS, UPON ENDING THEIR STUDIES, DO SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE RELATED TO PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT. IN ARGENTINA, THE NATIONAL SOLIDARITY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOSTERS THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS AT ALL LEVELS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, FROM PRE-SCHOOL TO THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL, BASED ON DEVELOPING "PRO-SOCIAL" ATTITUDES* IN STUDENTS.

(d.4)   Education seeks to develop moral judgment and ethical behaviors based on respect for the dignity of others.

Training in values should be based on the functioning of schools themselves; that is, it should impregnate and transform the meaning and activities of schools. There is a need to create school communities that are morally committed, and in which participation, mutual respect, tolerance, and solidarity for the weak be what guide decision-making and initiatives of schools. Student admission criteria, behavioral rules for the community, relations between students and teachers, and the participation of everyone in developing rules of social relations and their application are some relevant ways of making concrete the will to create a democratic and participatory community able to offer a functioning model adjusted to the values that one wishes students to assume (Marchesi, 2006).

In the general guidelines of education policies and curricular frameworks of most countries we find references to the value that should be given to moral judgment and to the development of ethical conduct on the part of students. But this is more evident on paper, without a practical correlate in programs of study.

Some countries include cross-cutting learning objectives linked to discernment regarding personal actions and on fostering relations of mutual respect, dialogue, justice, and solidarity.

WHAT DO TEACHERS THINK ABOUT THE BASIC PURPOSES OF EDUCATION?

ASPECTS OF CURRENT NORMS OUTLINED IN THIS CHAPTER ENTER INTO FORCE TO THE EXTENT THAT EDUCATORS MAKE THEM THEIR OWN; THAT IS, WHEN THEY ASSUME IN THEIR CONVICTIONS AND PRACTICES VIEWS OF EDUCA-TION THAT COINCIDE WITH THESE DECLARED PRINCIPLES.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO SYSTEMATIC INFORMATION AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL REGARDING HOW TEACHERS CONCEIVE EDUCATION, UNESCO, THROUGH THE BUENOS AIRES BRANCH OF ITS INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCA-TIONAL PLANNING (IIPE) WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ITS RESEARCH PROGRAM ABOUT "THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHERS", HAS GENERATED INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT IN SOME COUNTRIES OF THE REGION.

THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE COMES FROM REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES OF TEACHERS IN ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, PERU, AND URUGUAY. IT SHOWS THAT MOST TEACHERS TEND TO IDENTIFY THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY AND A CRITICAL SPIRIT AS AMONG THE PRIORITIES THAT EDUCATION SHOULD PURSUE, FOLLOWED BY PREPARATION FOR LIFE IN SOCIETY. IN THE CASE OF PERU, THE SECOND MOST-CHOSEN OPTION REFERS TO THE TRANSMISSION OF MORAL VALUES. ON THE OTHER HAND, ABOUT ONE-FOURTH OF TEACHERS SURVEYED ELECTED AS AN OPTION THE TRANSMISSION OF UP-TO-DATE AND RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE – A VIEW GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH A MORE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF EDUCATION[2].

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2   For more, see Tenti (2005)

TABLE 2: OBJECTIVES THAT EDUCATION SHOULD PURSUE. PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS BY SELECTED OBJECTIVES. 2004*.

Purposes	Argentina	Brazil	Peru	Uruguay
Develop creativity and a critical spirit	61,3	60,5	57,6	69,6
Prepare for life in society (**)	44,6	72,2	35,3	42,7
Transmit up-to-date and relevant knowledge	27,8	16,7	25,1	24,9
Create habits of behavior	6,4	3,9	5,6	6,4
Transmit moral values	25,6	10,8	47,1	31,1
Select those best qualified	0,9	2,6	2,9	1,1
Provide minimum necessary knowledge	2,8	8,9	1,4	3,5
Prepare for employment	13,5	8,3	14,0	7,3
Integration of the most relegated social groups	15,5	13,0	10,9	12,9
Don't know; no response	1,5	0,5	0,2	0,5

(*) The questionnaire asks respondents to indicate the most important, according to their point of view.
(**) In Brazil this statement was formulated as "preparing aware citizens".

(e)   Compulsory education

The aspirations declared in study guidelines and programs are also related to one of the central elements of public policy; since it is expected that every citizen can have an educational experience, what do countries understand as compulsory education?

The obligatory nature of education is related to a central idea of the universality of the educational experience. In this sense, that which is defined as obligatory demonstrates a kind of "floor" or minimum educational experience that is legally sanctioned as desirable or absolutely necessary for all.

Within this framework, a first reflection arises regarding identifying who is the subject when we speak of the compulsory nature of particular educational experiences. Current national legislation declares that it is the obligation of the State to provide the service, as well as an obligation of parents to assure that their children attend the appropriate programs.

Every country in the region has defined its own obligatory scheme that includes different stages or levels of education. In some cases, the focus is on the obligatory nature of attendance, relating this to the ages during which it is obligatory to attend school as well as the obligation of the State to provide educational services for each of the levels. Thus, in cases in which the obligatory nature of a particular level of education is declared without specifying the ages of compulsory schooling, one may assume that conclusion of obligatory levels must be universal, referring to all the population and not only children. Thus, it would have to be guaranteed to all through different program forms and modalities. Likewise, when an age-group for compulsory education is specified, it would be appropriate to ask what are the obligations to those older than the maximum age specified and have not concluded the obligatory levels. Are they provided with alternative channels adjusted to their own characteristics? What happens to a child who, due to problems of the inefficacy or inefficiency of the system, reaches the age limit for compulsory education before finishing the education levels considered to be the object of "universalization"? Does the obligation of the State to provide the service end?

Considering the regulatory frameworks and their definitions referring to the obligatory nature of education, it is seen that all Latin America and Caribbean countries have established as obligatory at least the primary level, thus manifesting their will to universally assure this level. Note, however, that as we will see below (p. 88 ff.), this will has not yet been translated into universal assurance of the conclusion of primary schooling for the population.

On the other hand, there is growing agreement that universal completion of primary education is an insufficient minimum, and that consequently, it is necessary to extend it to other levels of education. Thus, all but seven countries (Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) include lower secondary as the object of universal coverage. In many cases, these two levels of education (primary and lower secondary) are considered to be unified, being called "basic education".

Graph 1.1: **Years of compulsory education, by official ages and levels, by country. 2004.**

☐ Pre-primary education   ☐ Primary education   ■ Lower secondary   ■ Upper secondary

Ages

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

AG
AI
AN
AR
AW
BB
BM
BO
BR
BS
BZ
CL
CO
CR
CU
DM
DO
EC
GD
GT
GY
HN
HT
JM
KN
KY
LC
MS
MX
NI
PE
PN
PY
SR
SV
TC
TT
UY
VC
VG
VN
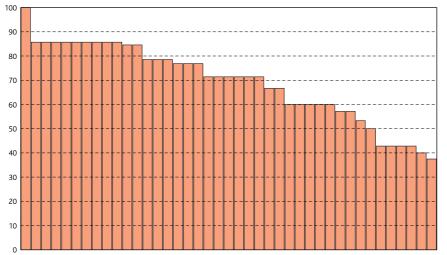
However, even requiring primary and lower secondary as obligatory are now increasingly seen as insufficient as a universal educational experience because, on the one hand, of the crucial nature of pre-primary education as a period of development; and on the other, upper secondary is becoming to be seen as the minimum for everyone. There is evidence that minimum levels of education required to increase productivity and the capacity to generate income and thus reduce the probability of poverty are moving in this direction.

In four countries (Argentina, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador) one year of pre-primary education is considered obligatory[3], while in Turks and Caicos two years of pre-primary education are required.

In contrast, there are 12 countries (Anguila, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Turks and Caicos)[4] in which upper secondary is obligatory, and in 9 countries (Bermuda, Costa Rica, Guyana, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Uruguay, and Venezuela) part of upper secondary is obligatory.

It is thus clear that countries have granted priority to the extension of obligatory education beyond the primary level without an equivalent effort in regard to the pre-primary level.

These diverse standards of compulsory years of schooling show much heterogeneity. If we consider the percentage of years of compulsory education related to the total duration of these levels, there is a variation going from 37.5% in Haiti, to 100% in Turks and Caicos.

Graph 1.2: **Percentage of obligatory years of the total duration in years of pre-primary, primary, and secondary school, by country. 2004.**

Source:
Calculated by the authors with the information from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

Most countries have defined as obligatory a number of years equivalent to at least 50% of the total duration expected of the pre-primary, to upper secondary levels.[5] Exceptions are Panama, Honduras, Jamaica, Suriname, Nicaragua, and Haiti. On the other hand, in 11

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3   Note that, besides the norm of being obligatory, there are other countries that have proposed universal attendance of at least one year of pre-primary education (Peru: Constitution establishes pre-primary as mandatory, but the international data reporting does not declares as such).

4   Chile may be added to this group, since in 2005 it established all of upper secondary as obligatory, although this is not yet reflected in international data reporting.

5   As a range of reference for the joint duration of these four levels of education. Note that at least one grade of each level is considered to be obligatory by at least one country in each case.

countries of the Caribbean (Turks and Caicos Islands, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, San Kitts and Nevis, Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, Bermuda, and Barbados) and Aruba, the number of years defined as obligatory surpasses 80% of the duration of the total education offered.

It would expected that this extension be accompanied by investment patterns which at least reach those aimed at primary education (an object of universalization for many years) in order to assure quality education for all.

In terms of the coverage of the population that should be obliged to attend school according to their age, as the following graph shows, some countries have increased the total number of years of compulsory education, having in some cases satisfied the demand expressed in high percentages of the total population attending school (Anguilla, Barbados, Aruba), while others still need to make greater efforts in order to achieve what they have established as obligatory (Turks and Caicos Islands, Colombia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). The countries with smaller percentages of their total duration defined as obligatory (less than 50%) have more than 90% of their in-school population in some level of the education system.
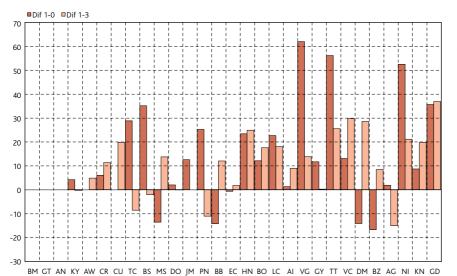
Graph 1.3: **Percentage of obligatory years of the total duration in years of education levels. Pre-primary, primary, and secondary and total coverage for the official ages declared as obligatory, by country. 2004.**

If we note the number of certified teachers[6] for pre-primary and upper secondary compared to primary education, we may conclude that in slightly more than half of the countries for which information is available, the percentage of teachers who comply with the norms established to work at the pre-primary and upper secondary levels are lower than for primary. On average, these percentages are 12 (pre-primary) and 10 (upper secondary) percentage points below the percentage for primary.

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6   A teacher is considered "certified" if he/she satisfies the minimun requirements established nationaly for practicing the teacher profession at the corresponding level of education.

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

The graph shows heterogeneity in the region. Thus, in pre-primary we see the most extreme differences in Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Nicaragua, and Trinidad and Tobago, surpassing in all cases 30 percentage; while for secondary, only Grenada reaches that threshold.

However, this information only partially indicates the kinds of teachers that students have in order to assure their right to education. It is limited the information that needs to be complemented with the level of certification that countries require for each level of education, or be organized according to the number of students who have teachers with the required information.

On the other hand, an important theme to consider in regard to the relation between education levels and compulsory ages is the link with the minimum entry age into the labor market. Although labor legislation of the countries may differ on this point, all of them have ratified Convention 138 of the ILO (1973) which establishes as 15 years the minimum for employability, with early ages permitted only in exceptional and justified cases. From this perspective, some countries of the region have left a gap for those children who have not continued their studies, cannot enter the labor market. Thus, Bolivia, Chile, and the Dominican Republic define the end of compulsory education one year below that stipulated in the Convention, while Nicaragua does so two years, and Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago three years below 15.

(f)   Final remarks

In summary, a documentary analysis of the relevance dimension shows four central aspects that define the situation encountered:

- In most countries of the region there are orientations referring to the four pillars of education, although not with equal emphasis. The objectives of *learning to know* and *learning to live together* are more developed on both the normative level and in general lines of the curriculum, and in some programs of study. On the other hand, the objectives of *learning to do* and *learning to be* do not appear as systematically and or with the same emphasis in areas of learning or subject matter.

- Curriculum reforms have provided substantial advances in terms of understanding the interactive character of the learning process, as well as in regard to the central role of students – expecting them to reorganize their perceptions and ideas, interpret and determine their own ways of proceeding, using learning content and situations especially designed for them. The curricular structure, in terms of fundamental objectives, the development of concepts, skills, abilities, and attitudes, or in terms of competencies, is the framework *for the active participation of students* in their learning processes. However, such participation – in most curricula – is not considered in terms of developing the ability to reflect on their own learning processes. In order for this to take place, there is a need for specific objectives, times, and curricular opportunities in each area of subject matter dedicated to individual and collective reflection on their own learning processes – identifying the next steps, strategies used, errors committed – and opportunities for students to communicate their findings, socialize their results, and link them to other fields of knowledge. This coincides with the slight relevance granted to objectives directed at enterprise, leadership, and teamwork skills, to the development of identity and autonomy, and to the development of creative and innovative capacities. All of these require involved and committed action of students in their own learning.
- We must make progress in developing curricula with greater internal coherence in terms of the priority of fundamental objectives being demonstrating concretely in the objectives of each class subject or area of learning – especially in regard to the development of ethical behaviors and attitudes, both in *learning to be* and in *living together*. This is linked with preparing students in the construction of a personal and social ethic based and valuing oneself and others. There is a risk of the development of thought not being balanced if the analysis and understanding of phenomena are not accompanied by the ability to judge and interpret them in the light of the ethical development of persons. Thus the enormous importance of the constant link being made between the development of an ethical conscience and knowledge of the world – a fundamental consideration for decision-making and in taking responsibility for ones' own actions and their consequences.
- Many countries have made significant progress in regard to the integration of cross-cutting objectives and common objectives of the curriculum through providing didactic orientations and specific cross-cutting objectives in each subject matter or area. However, progress needs to be made as well in areas related to inter-disciplinary integration. There is an agreement in affirming, as stated in chapter 2 (p. 51 ff.), the need to promote understanding that allow students relate facts, integrate, refer to contexts of information in different areas, and establish judgments from various perspectives. This demands not only disciplinary integration – even when the curriculum is organized into learning areas – but also a clear and consistent pedagogical framework that permits teachers to effectively apply the goal of integrating learning, including specific guidelines in this regard.

2.   ARE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES OFFERED *PERTINENT* TO THE PARTICULAR CONDITIONS OF STUDENTS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES?

From a rights perspective, education is student-focused. It must be comprehensive and be directed at all students, regardless of their culture, language, social condition, gender, and capacities. *Education is pertinent to the extent that it responds to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students- assuring comparable results, full participation, and construction of the learner's own identity*.

The concepts of relevance and pertinence are indissolubly united. The relevance of what people learn depends on the extent to which teaching and learning processes enrich and are adapted to their particular needs and to their territorial, institutional, and classroom contexts with the support and participation of the actors involved, while taking into account their competencies and skills.

Education that is pertinent respects and values diversity and flexibility. It adapts the provision of education services to the particular conditions of persons and groups in their life contexts and provides support systems that guarantee that schools have the necessary resources for assuring the learning and participation of all students.

For education systems, responding to diversity involves the establishment of basic rights and principles that assure life-long quality learning, and the participation of all. In order to make these concrete, they must offer conditions, opportunities, and regulations that assure access to, progress and permanence in, and culmination of studies.

Therefore, and considering the type of base information used, we have developed an analysis which begins by identifying critical areas or aspects for establishing pertinence. These are:

- The extent to which regulations and policies **establish** basic rights and principles in order to meet the needs of diversity and foster the learning, participation, and identity construction of all;
- The extent to which regulations and policies **provide** flexible curricular structures and adaptability mechanisms to respond to individual, social, cultural, and gender diversity;
- The extent to which regulations and policies **prescribe** putting into practice support systems and resources in order to assure the learning and participation of all.

We present below the major findings of our documentary review, carried out according to the above criteria.

(a)   The fundamental right of all persons, whatever their individual, social, or cultural condition, to receive a lifelong quality education.

Full exercise of the right to education requires that it be of quality, assuring the development and learning of all people throughout their lives. To this end, it is necessary to guarantee certain fundamental principles:

- The right of all students to receive a quality education that allows them to develop and to strengthen their own identities.
- The right of all indigenous groups, people of African descent, migrants, and other cultural minorities to receive an education that incorporates their language and culture.
- The right to be treated with dignity, to not be the subject of discrimination, and to participate in activities that the school develops, without exclusion.

- The right of both genders to receive an education that assures their full development and eliminates all forms of discrimination against women.
- The right to receive an education that fosters freedom of conscience and belief, and that eliminates any kind of religious discrimination.
- The right of vulnerable groups to receive a quality education and with equal opportunities.

The education policies of the region grant priority to guaranteeing the right to education of all citizens, assuring equality of access to and permanence in the system through the provision of public and free education – the latter usually understood as the absence of tuition payments – at obligatory levels. Only in some countries is it mentioned that this should be quality education.

Education is treated in legislation as an essential function of the state and as a right of all people. Brazilian law makes explicit the right to demand education. In Panama, it is the right of people to educate themselves. In the case of Guyana, the responsibility of parents to educate their children is regulated and sanctioned in the case of non-compliance. Various countries add the duty of families and communities to contribute to the development and improvement of education.

(a.1)   The right of all students to receive a quality education that allows them to develop and to strengthen their own identities.

As noted in another document (UNESCO 2007), responding to diversity involves assuring the right of people to their own identities, respecting persons as they are, with their biological, social, cultural, and personality characteristics – the very things that make possible the identification of the individual in society.

This right is less often mentioned in law, or is present in association with the sense of national identity, although all countries seek to offer comprehensive education that contributes to the personality of the learner. There is mention of physical, intellectual, creative, and critical capacities – or in other terms, stipulation of the need for adequate expression of and opportunities for the development of educational skills and vocations, as well as aptitudes and interests, and the importance of valuing the individual expressions of all learners, and their actions as citizens.

(a.2)   The right of indigenous groups, people of African descent, migrants, and other cultural minorities to receive an education that incorporates their language and culture

Respect for the cultural identity and language of indigenous communities and/or minorities is present in much of the norms examined, where it is stated that one of the objectives of education policy is to offer bilingual intercultural education that contributes to preserve and strengthen indigenous cultures, recuperate their histories, maintain their languages, and value various world views and ethnic identities. These declarations are, of course, more frequent in countries with large indigenous populations in which these documents constantly mention the multi-ethnic character of the country and seek to foster a society that respects cultural differences as a pillar of identity.

Two aspects particularly stand out: (i) the aspiration for an education that guarantees peoples access to information, technical and scientific knowledge of the national society and of other indigenous societies; (ii) an education that fosters inter-cultural dialogue with the national community and with various cultures that co-exist in the country; that is, an education that allows all people to participate actively in a multi-cultural world.

Inter-cultural education is normally contained within the framework of the human and collective rights of indigenous peoples and those of African descent. These rights include equal access to a quality education. This involves guaranteeing and increasing levels of access to dif-

ferent education modalities, favoring intercultural bi-lingual education at all levels, as well as employment training. Moreover, this involves a system of student grants at all levels, especially in higher education which in practice is found in few cases (in Mexico and in Chile).

(a.3)   The right to be treated with dignity, to not be the subject of discrimination, and to participate in activities that the school develops, without exclusion.

Assuring the right of all to a quality education absolutely requires guaranteeing non-discrimination. No person should suffer limitations in participating in different school activities due to their social and cultural origin or their gender, political thought, or religious beliefs.

Normative standards and policy guidelines highlight the right to non-discrimination in most countries, although they are infrequently adopted explicitly for strengthening student participation and the elimination of restrictions to full integration, without discrimination.

The existence of special laws or regulations to protect children and adolescents offers an additional element in guaranteeing the right to not suffer discrimination, to not be exploited or maltreated, including sanctions against discrimination or omission in safeguarding these rights. Such regulations are present in Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

Access to education is a first step which needs to be assured in terms of its obligatory and free nature. Regulations and sanctions are needed for preventing schools from discriminating in their admission procedures, and protective measures to prevent expulsion or canceling of enrollment of particular students due to their origins, appearance, beliefs, or any condition of vulnerability that schools see as "undesirable". Evidence in this regard is very slight in the region.

In some countries – Honduras, El Salvador, and Venezuela – in spite of their constitutions declaring that all types of discrimination (not only in education) is punishable, and defining crimes and sanctions for infractors of this precept, we could not find information about how this legal mandate is guaranteed within schools.

Similarly, there are norms aimed at treating specific situations such as discrimination against pregnant students (Bolivia, Chile, and Uruguay), or children of single or divorced parents (Bolivia), or in Mexico, in the case of students with HIV or AIDS, and in Guatemala to protect those affected by ethnic discrimination. Various Caribbean countries have laws regarding freedom of religious belief.

Adoption of measures in favor of persons or groups which may be the targets of discrimination, marginalization, or mistreatment is more robust in countries such as Bolivia, El Salvador, Venezuela, Peru, and Colombia, where education legislation establishes institutions to guarantee the defense of these rights such as in Colombia (Defensorías Educativas or Acciones de Tutela) that, among other functions, defends the rights of students and takes to court situations of abuse or violation of rights.

In addition, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands regulate the protection against aggression originating from students or that may place in risk the lives of other students. In these cases, the Ministry of Education regulates school discipline, including suspensions or expulsions in cases in which students use violence, carry weapons, use drugs, or consume alcoholic beverages. In these cases, there are special mechanisms for notifying ministerial authorities who are to investigate the events that cause suspension, and with the minister personally the decision regarding re-integration, expulsion, or transfer of the student to another school that can provide the necessary support.

> SOME LEGISLATION NOT CONTAINING DIRECT PRESCRIPTIONS REGARDING NON-DISCRIMINATION REFERS TO EFFECTIVE EDUCATION WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL (URUGUAY, CAYMAN ISLANDS) OR OF EQUAL ACCESS, REGARDLESS OF RELIGIOUS OR IDEOLOGICAL BELIEF (NETHERLANDS ANTILLES) OR OF EQUAL TREATMENT BY GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO), PROHIBITING DENIAL OF ADMISSION TO ANY PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR REASONS OF AGE, EXPERIENCE, OR SOCIAL-ECONOMIC CONDITION.

> IN OECS (ORGANIZATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES) COUNTRIES – ANGUILLA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, VIRGIN ISLANDS, DOMINICA, GRENADA, MONTSERRAT, SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS, SAINT LUCIA, AND SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) DISCRIMINATION IS PROHIBITED IN THE ADMISSION PROCESSES OF ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR ANY REASON, WITH A MONETARY SANCTION APPLIED TO PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS THAT DO NOT COMPLY.

The existence of measures and regulations to assure that school texts incorporate criteria of diversity and the elimination of stereotypes and discrimination, both in school text design as well as in its content and pedagogical approach, aids in progressing toward full exercise of the right to education. In this regard, in more than one-half of the countries surveyed no evidence was found in regard to measures and regulations to assure that school texts incorporate criteria of diversity, avoidance of stereotypes, and non-discrimination. Only in Chile, Brazil, Honduras, Uruguay, and Panama are there indications in the contracting for purchase of school texts in regard to the content not excluding or denigrating groups due to their social or racial origins (Uruguay), for reasons of gender, color, or ethnicity (Brazil),or discrimination against women (Panama and Honduras).

Discrimination among teachers
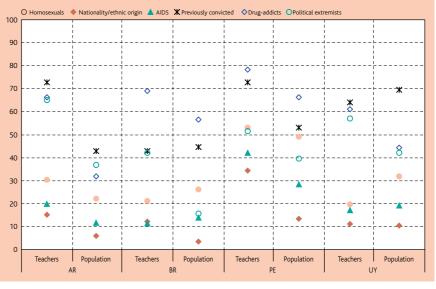
The norm against discrimination establishes a basic framework for fostering education that guarantees respect for all. However, as with other factors, this initial framework must be put into practice so that the actors themselves in their daily practice assume and take ownership of experiences of non-discrimination. In this sense, it is extremely important that actors in the educational process share a system of democratic, tolerant, and non-discriminatory beliefs in order to assure quality education for all.

The survey on world values 1999-2004 (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) presents some key information on the degree of tolerance and democracy of some of the countries of the region. Moreover, a study of the Buenos Aires – based International Institute of Educational Planning (UNESCO–IIPE) on *The professionalization of teachers* (Tenti 2005, p.190 and ff.) offers comparable information on discrimination among teachers in four countries of the region.

In societies moving toward greater levels of tolerance and mutual respect, it is to be expected not only that education instills these objectives on the normative level, but also that the actors themselves do so in practice, in order that the presence of discriminatory elements or beliefs be the exception or isolated, or in any case less than observed in society in general.

Unfortunately, available evidence shows the contrary. Discrimination indicators recorded among teachers and the general population systematically shows greater instances of discrimination among the former, as well as high levels of the discrimination criteria considered. The following graph offers proof of this assertion.

Percentage of teachers who answered to the question: Would you like ...as a neighbor? By selected criteria.

(a.4) **The right of both genders to receive an education that assures their full development and eliminates all forms of discrimination against women.**

Equal and dignified treatment of men and women so that both have the same opportunities to develop their potential, share public and private functions and responsibilities, tends to be a constitutionally-sanctioned subject, included within the general principles of equity.

In various cases, we find indirect references to gender equality in education, accompanied by affirmative action education policies in order to eliminate disparity of treatment to the detriment of women. However, in most Latin American countries gender equity is treated within the cross-cutting areas of the curriculum. At times, particular reference is made to fostering gender parity for certain groups: indigenous women (Bolivia, Mexico, and Panama); within specific programs (El Salvador), or only at certain levels such as lower and upper secondary education (Uruguay) or among young people and adults (Argentina).

Legislation in Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Panama, and Ecuador focuses on gender. Panama prohibits discrimination against women and strengthens their participation outside and within the classroom. Panama is a particularly outstanding case. It has established special sections for women within public agencies, the development of teaching material that incorporates the gender perspective, use of recreation and sports time periods without gender discrimination, determines that education content be imparted equally to males and females, and fosters the leadership of females through such areas as civic education.

It should be noted that, despite the increasing number of situations in education in which males appear at a disadvantage, existing documentation does not tend to approach this theme explicitly.

THE STATE OF ECUADOR IS CONSTITUTIONALLY COMMITTED TO FORMULATING AND EXECUTING POLICIES TO GUARANTEE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN THROUGH A SPECIALIZED AGENCY THAT IS TO INCORPORATE THE GENDER APPROACH IN PLANS AND PROGRAMS, AND TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ITS OBLIGATORY APPLICATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

(a.5) **The right to receive an education that fosters freedom of conscience and belief, and that eliminates all kinds of religious discrimination.**

The right to freedom of conscience and religious practice was declared a fundamental right in the *Convention on the struggle against discrimination in the sphere of teaching* of 1960. In this regard, at least one-half of the countries have determined that public education is lay education. In various countries of the Caribbean, this right receives particular mention in the law, specifying that facilities should be offered to students in order to participate in the religious cults of their parents, but participation in a religious cult cannot be a requirement for admission to or integration in the various activities of schools. On occasion, religious instruction is part of the curriculum of public schools. But parents may decide if the accept or not this offering (Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Bolivia and Panama). As a result of agreements established between countries and the Vatican State, preferential treatment is established for Catholic beliefs that are included in the law or within common curricula. This is the case in Peru and Costa Rica, where these practices are discriminatory against other beliefs.

(a.6) Rights, guarantees, and attention to education services for socially and/or educationally underprivileged groups

Given that the conditions under which children enter school are diverse, the education system needs to understand them – especially in the case of those who suffer discrimination for different reasons, and offering equality of opportunities for educational access, resources, processes, and results, and thus allowing every person to attain comparable learning, according to individual possibilities.

In regard to attention to vulnerable groups, most countries have laws that establish policies for equity in education, linking non-discrimination directly to offering equal rights and opportunities for access, permanence in school, and academic achievement. This involves guaranteeing access as well as the minimum conditions for quality learning, as well as the implementation of policies and programs for the protection and compensation for children and adolescents who are the most vulnerable.

In general, the responsibility of the State is emphasized as a guarantor of access and creator of conditions to guarantee true equity.

> CONDITIONS FOR EQUALITY, IN VARIOUS CASES, GO BEYOND ASSURING ACCESS. THEY REFER TO EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION, RECOGNITION, INTEGRATION, AND ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND ADULTS (ECUADOR, CHILE, ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, AND PARAGUAY). IN THE CASES OF PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY, THE COMMITMENT OF THE STATE IS EXPRESSED IN REMOVING OBSTACLES AND IMPEDING FACTORS THAT MAINTAIN OR FOSTER INEQUALITIES AND USING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES FOR PROTECTION AGAINST INEQUALITIES.

Most organizational structures include sectors the purpose of which is to secure proper attention to the specific needs of different underprivileged groups through compensatory programs or special programs at different levels and modalities (special education, intercultural bilingual education, education of young people and adults, community education, etc.). There are few recorded instances of mechanisms for cooperation between these programs, thus resulting in duplication of efforts, contradictions, and waste of resources, as well as the problems resulting forms their possible divergence. Cases have been found of programs directed at vulnerable populations which do not appear to be linked to a specific policy, but rather emerge from the initiative of a particular government administration and apparently end with the assumption of another.

In regard to the right of persons with special needs to a quality education, norms make reference to the need to provide an experience that makes possible their integration and full development of their capacities. The term "special education needs" has been widely adopted in the norms and policies of all countries. In most cases, this is defined in relation to students who present greater difficulties than the others, or significant learning difficulties, and who require certain additional or particular help during their time in school. In all cases, the groups that present special education needs are specified: those with physical disabilities with learning difficulties, and with learning difficulties without having physical disabilities. In the OECS, eight Latin American countries, and Belize, Barbados, and the Caiman Islands[1] take into account gifted students as well.

Regulations normally state that the system must guarantee equal opportunities, or equity, to persons with disabilities. They also treat other issues, such as the right to carry out individual study projects, work, and insertion into society, development of their own identity (Bolivia), right to participation, non-discrimination, the guarantee of full access, integration, and progress (Chile), and personal growth (Paraguay).

In the Caribbean, the responsibility of the State is mentioned in the provision of services that guarantee the rights of persons with special education needs, indicating that regulations and provision of methods are required. In the OECS countries and others such as the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla, responsibility is given to the minister – who must

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1 Organization of Eastern Caribbean States - Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

provide special education programs within corresponding phases of compulsory education (5 to 15 years of age).

The education of persons with special education needs is experiencing a re-orientation in terms of current conceptions, and is moving from the model based on deficits to one guided by the development of potential and provision of opportunities, with the school being responsible for accepting and adapting to diversity. Even so, there is a lack of general understanding of the interactive character of special education needs, which continue to be considered as being based only on the personal conditions of the student (Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico). At times, the idea is expressed that all children, without exception, can learn and develop the necessary basic skills if they are offered quality educational opportunities (Argentina, Honduras).

It is recognized that the concept of special education needs includes students who, without having disabilities, require help and special resources in order to meet their needs in school. But we also find expressed a series of difficulties in the application and understanding of this concept.

(b) Normative and curricular frameworks for responding to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students

Consideration of diversity as a key factor in education is based on the fundamental right of all people to receive an education that does not discriminate and that is appropriate to each person's particular needs and life context.

(b.1) Basic educational principles for responding to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students

The basic educational principles for responding to the diversity of students are coherent with the framework of inclusive education – a view based on diversity and not on homogeneity. Its purpose is to confront exclusion and social segmentation, opening the way toward pluralistic schools that receive all children of the community, independently of their social and cultural origins and personal conditions. This presupposes significant changes in the organization of education in terms of its culture, institutional policies, and pedagogical practices in order to serve the learning differences of students and to eliminate the various types of discrimination. This is to say that teaching must adapt to students, and not students to teaching (UNESCO 2007).

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO DIVERSITY

- THERE IS A NEED TO ESTABLISH SPECIFIC KINDS OF LEARNING AS A FUNCTION OF THE DIFFERENT CONTEXTS, CULTURES, GENDERS, AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS, WITH COMMON LEARNING BEING ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.
- RECOGNIZE THAT ALL CHILDREN, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, CAN LEARN AND DEVELOP BASIC NECESSARY SKILLS IF THEY ARE OFFERED QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.
- RESPECT THE INDIVIDUAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS, CONSIDERING THEM A FACTOR THAT ENRICHES TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES.
- RECOGNIZE THAT PEOPLE HAVE MULTIPLE POTENTIALS, AND THE NEED FOR SCHOOLS TO HELP TO DEVELOP THEM.
- STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE THE NECESSARY SUPPORT IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THEIR MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT AND AUTONOMY, REGARDLESS OF THEIR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ORIGINS AND INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS.
- STUDENTS ARE AT THE CENTER OF TEACHING. TEACHING METHODS SHOULD BE BASED ON THEIR CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES.

Both legislation and curricular frameworks establish education principles for serving the needs of diversity. Thus, it is the stated need for developing curricular designs that recognize local cultural identities and that foster access to knowledge meant for the system as a whole (Venezuela, Bolivia, Mexico, Brazil, Paraguay, Honduras, and Argentina). In other countries there is mention of basing the curricular processes on students, their contexts, previous knowledge, interests, motivations, learning paces, and particular needs (Chile, Honduras, Venezuela, Uruguay, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica).

IN ITS STRATEGIC PLAN, GUYANA EXPRESSES THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS IN WHICH NO CHILD IS EXCLUDED, AND THAT ARE MODELS OF TOLERANCE, REJECTING ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION. TO THIS END, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE SPECIAL TRAINING IN THESE SUBJECTS TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

Only in the normative and curricular frameworks of Mexico, Brazil, and Chile are individual differences considered to be a source of enrichment. At the same time, a large number of Latin American countries value diversity through recognition of the multi cultural, ethnic, and linguistic nature of the country as essential to national identity. For their part, curricula note the need to value the identities of different groups and to be pertinent to different life contexts, fostering recognition of the value of one's own cultural identity.

Definition of a common set of objective and contents that are accessible to all, or of common or special education schemes (*special education, intercultural bilingual education, community education, rural education*) necessary in order to respond to specific needs, is a widely-expressed principle.

The different abilities of students are infrequently mentioned in curricular orientations. *One concludes that diversity is in many cases understood in a restrictive manner, since it is mainly seen in regard to cultural factors*. Rarely is the idea made explicit of using different capacities as a point of departure in pedagogical practices. Nor do we often see expressed the recognition that all children are able to develop the necessary basic competencies if offered quality educational opportunities (Argentina, Honduras and Uruguay). This coincides with the scarce mention of the multiple talents of persons and the need to stimulate the harmonious development of all potential, taking into account individual differences (Bolivia and Nicaragua). However, many countries emphasize the need for individual attention (Mexico and Uruguay), especially for students with special education needs. Similarly, in Honduras, Costa Rica, Peru, and El Salvador interest is expressed in using multiple and differentiated strategies for working in the classroom. However, individual attention is generally seen as a strategy limited to students who exhibit difficulties.

THE CURRICULUM OF NICARAGUA SUGGESTS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES, AND REQUIRES TEACHERS TO ENRICH THEIR PRACTICE WITH VARIOUS PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES. IT STATES THAT THE ROLE OF STUDENTS HAS GONE FROM BEING PASSIVE RECEIVERS TO ACTIVE SUBJECTS WHO PARTICIPATE, OBSERVE, INVESTIGATE, CONSTRUCT, AND RECONSTRUCT KNOWLEDGE. IN THIS SENSE, THE CURRICULUM FOSTERS AN ACTIVE PEDAGOGY, RECOGNIZING STUDENTS AS FULL PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROCESS OF KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION.

We have found limited evidence regarding guidelines for teacher training within the framework of the kind of inclusive education that meets the needs of diversity. There is a coincidence, however, in curricula in the sense that these should be developed in order to carry out adapted and diverse education proposals that respond to the characteristics of students and that link classroom learning to everyday life, and are able to serve students in terms of their common and individual needs.

Similarly, we have found little evidence on normative frameworks for teacher training that can guide teacher training institutions in regard to the new demands resulting from curricular reform.

There are also a limited number of references to prepare teachers in using strategies to foster the participation of students, and to train teachers in eliminating all types of discriminatory educational practices. Constant mention is made of the need to improve pedagogical practices, implementing more dynamic methodologies that assure student participation in teaching and learning processes.

In general, the documents surveyed do not provide evidences on the support needed to facilitate student learning and autonomy. But there is a coincidence among countries in terms of the need and obligation of the State to create institutions and services able to assure the right to education as well as comprehensive services for student guidance, assistance, and protection. This is particularly clear in Brazil, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Venezuela.

The support that schools should provide to those with special education needs is viewed in different ways between countries. In some, the focus is placed on strengthening the ability of schools to serve all students (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela), while in others, the focus is on supporting those with disabilities so they may be integrated (Mexico, Peru, Chile, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador).

Incorporating families and local communities as an effective and fundamental support is increasingly mentioned in laws and educational programs. The General Law of El Salvador is perhaps one of the clearest in this regard. It states that internal management of schools shall be developed with the organized participation of the education community – teachers, students, and families – who are to be organized in school councils, make joint decisions, and be responsible for the activities carried out. The Caribbean countries coincide in agreeing on the importance of integrating families and communities into schools, especially through school committees, associations of parents and teachers, management councils, or participation commissions, made up of various representatives from both the school and local community.

AN EXAMPLE OF CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER TRAINING IS THE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED IN CHILE. THESE STATE THAT TEACHERS SHOULD POSSESS KNOWLEDGE REGARDING WAYS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN THEIR PERSONAL, SOCIAL, AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. THEY SHOULD ALSO UNDERSTAND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES.

IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, THE CURRICULUM STATES THAT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS BEGIN WITH THEIR OWN KNOWLEDGE THROUGH METHODOLOGIES THAT OFFER MEANINGFUL AND AUTONOMOUS LEARNING. TO THIS PURPOSE, THE TEACHER PROFILE INCLUDES: (I) BEING A FACILITATOR IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE THROUGH MEANINGFUL, RELEVANT, AND PERTINENT LEARNING PROCESSES; (II) APPLYING METHODOLOGIES BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF GLOBALIZATION, AND THAT SERVE THE LEARNING NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF EACH STUDENT; (III) PRESENTING SITUATIONS THAT GENERATE QUESTIONING AND THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS; (IV) TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PRIOR EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS, AND FACILITATING ITS INSERTION IN THE BODY OF ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE.

(b.2) The balance between what is common and what is diverse

Curricular content must be recognized as valuable by students as well as by families and communities in order to assure their understanding and linkage to universal knowledge. Moreover, effective equality of opportunities, as well as unity, inclusion, and participation in the national society posit establishment of a common curriculum that provides the basic tools for life in the modern world.

The achievement of these principles requires a series of conditions: that the common curriculum be flexible in order to respond to the individual, social, and culture needs of students; that assessment and grade promotion strategies and mechanisms be flexible, respecting individual pace, processes, and characteristics; that conditions and mechanisms exist for fostering the participation and coexistence of all students; that different alternatives and modalities are offered for the full access, integration, and mobility of students within the perspective of life-long education; that regulations and mechanisms are offered so that schools can adapt the curriculum and teaching, including content relevant to their own contexts; and that means are

established for adapting the curriculum and teaching to individual learning differences, giving particular attention to special education needs.

- **A common curriculum, flexible enough to be adapted and enriched, according to the diverse needs of students and their life contexts**

The bases of curricular frameworks are for the most part established upon the principles of flexibility, openness, integration, and pertinence. They seek to provide an education appropriate to the particular characteristics of the groups toward which they are directed, integrating into curriculum development their interests, motivations, and expectations. These principles are supported by a common core of broad basic objectives that are based, in general, on the development of common objectives and specifically expected learning in terms of basic contents and the development of abilities, skills, and attitudes (OECS), or based on competencies (Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Honduras, and Guatemala).

Most curricula in Latin America establish work by areas in order to achieve greater integration of knowledge. This refers principally to the areas of the sciences (social science, the natural sciences, geography, and the environment). In regard to inter-disciplinary linkages, it is not frequent to find concrete suggestions for establishing links between the contents of diverse areas. At the same time, the organization by cycles – of two or three years – in order to complement or consolidate different kinds of learning, minimizing repetition and respecting learning paces, is a common characteristic of curricula.

Although curricular frameworks often suggest that sub-national units propose their own content in order to include regional or local knowledge, in general class time is not available for this purpose.

IN REGARD TO CURRICULAR FLEXIBILITY, THE FULL-TIME SCHOOLS PROPOSAL OF URUGUAY (PRIMARY EDUCATION) DEFINES A COMMON TEACHING TIME (35 HOURS PER WEEK) IN WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE DEVELOPED LINKED TO STUDY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT COMPLETE THE CURRICULUM, PLUS A COMPLEMENTARY PEDAGOGICAL TIME (THREE HOURS A WEEK) FOR PERSONALIZED HELP FOR SMALL GROUPS OF STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES. BOTH SHOULD BE DEFINED BY THE TEACHER IN TERMS OF THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS, THE SCHOOL PROJECT, AND THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL. FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION, TWO HOURS PER WEEK ARE AVAILABLE FOR WORKSHOPS ADDRESSED TO THE INTERESTS, NEEDS, AND EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS.

Exceptions to this occur in Venezuela, Chile, Nicaragua, Panama, Ecuador, and Peru. Venezuela reserves 25 percent of content in order to consider the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural pluralism of regions. In Peru, one-third of curriculum time is reserved for local content and it is stated that all content should be adapted to local contexts. In some cases, the space available in the curriculum is quite reduced, as in Mexico, where this possibility is available only for two hours per week in the first year of lower secondary education. In other cases, such as Argentina, no time is made available, but local jurisdictions are allowed to create extra-curricular content (outside the days and hours of regular school activity) for the development of activities linked to art, sports, recreation, nature, social aid projects, among other activities of interest to students.

Generally, the greatest degree of flexibility is offered in upper secondary education, where students may structure their own schedules according to their interests and preferences for their academic training.

- **Regulations and mechanisms for adapting the curriculum and teaching to the diversity of students**

Diversity is present in all schools and classrooms. Nevertheless, instruction continues to be offered as if all students were equal. This explains many of the learning and participation difficulties that often affect populations that have a cultural capital different from that which predominates in schools. For this reason, methods for adapting the curriculum and teaching are indispensable in order to facilitate the development of the potential that each person possesses, and to take into account different capacities. Adaptability in teaching can be fostered through processes that lead to greater autonomy for schools, localities, districts, provinces,

and regions in order to diversify and enrich the curriculum and to construct education projects pertinent to their realities.

Most Caribbean countries argue for adopting measures to meet special education needs. However, few of them (Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Cayman Islands, and Anguilla) mention the need to adapt the curriculum to diverse contexts and cultures, or consider gender differences.

There is consensus in Latin America regarding the importance of conditions and mechanisms for autonomy and participation in the construction of **institutional education school project**. These refer to the need of schools to offer their own curricular proposals in accordance with local realities and within the framework of common objectives and guidelines defined by national norms. This process should include the participation of pedagogical teams and the education community. In some countries, this is done through representative levels or groups that are school councils (with slight variations in the name) in Panama, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Mexico, and El Salvador) seeking the commitment of their actors to the proposals discussed and with placing projects in context.

However, although progress has been made in the design of strategies, mechanisms, and means for developing local school projects, the available documentation notes the absence of strategies for generating effective participation in their construction and for the development of diversified curricular proposals accompanied by technical assistance and school teacher and principal training. The Peruvian regulations state that diversification be carried out through a diagnosis organized by the school principal and the education community who are to develop school, curricula, and classroom projects. However, we do not have information on rules that teachers should follow in order to diversify; nor regarding the extent to which they receive technical assistance, training, or accompaniment.

Degrees of autonomy, decentralization, and management are quite variable between countries. Normally, models and procedures for transfer of responsibilities are under construction. For their part, competencies and powers granted to public agencies and their interface with locally participating entities comprise a "black box" in various systems that have an operational structure that is very complex or of limited coordination. In Mexico, Social Participation Municipal Councils operate with municipal authorities, parents and representatives of their association, outstanding teachers and school principals, representatives of the teachers union, as well as representatives from social organizations. Their powers vary from the improvement, construction, and enlargement of public schools to the formulation of local content to be included in study plans and programs. The areas of competence of these groups are very broad, and their technical-administrative capacities are probably very dissimilar. We know of no technical-operative instruments or training plans that would allow them to operate efficiently or in a coordinated manner.

Only four Caribbean countries have populations equal to or above 500,000 inhabitants. Eight of them have less than 100,000 people. Thus, it is not common to count with regional or local governments, and primary schools tend to depend directly upon the Ministry of Education or teams under its authority. In the case of secondary education, there is the Board of Management, which grants greater autonomy to schools.

THE DOMINICAN EDUCATION STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2002 – 2012 *INCLUDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING SCHOOL PROJECTS, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NETWORKS OF SCHOOLS THAT SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK OF THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE FIELD OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND TEACHING, FOSTERING THE DESIGN AND EXECUTION OF SCHOOL PROJECTS AND STRATEGIC PLANS THAT ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF ACTORS AND SECTORS IN EDUCATION SYSTEM.*

BAHAMAS HAS STRONGLY ADVANCED A DECENTRALIZED EDUCATION SYSTEM, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF FAMILIES AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES, WITH MANAGEMENT TEAMS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNITY AND A DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT WHO HAS MORE OF A PLANNING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT THAN A CONTROL FUNCTION.

CHILE, HOWEVER, HAS A GOOD TEACHING FRAMEWORK (2003). THIS INSTRUMENT PROVIDES CLEAR AND PRECISE CRITERIA FOR PLANNING AND CREATING A PROPER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR ALL STUDENTS. THIS FRAMEWORK HAS BEEN USED AS A TEACHING REFERENCE AND FOR PROFESSIONAL EXERCISE IN THE TEACHER ASSESSMENT SYSTEM.

Although teachers are mandated to carry out curricular adaptations, and they are seen as the major actors charged with planning motivating and culturally meaningful activities, we do not have more information regarding the specific norms or mechanisms by which they are guided. Usually, teaching orientations are very general, and methodological aspects of curricular areas are not specified in the plans and programs reviewed.

The flexibility of the school calendar according to the geographical and climatic regions or economic cycles is also a manifestation of autonomy and adaptation of the system to diversity. The calendar in most countries is defined at the national level, although some countries grant autonomy in this sense to districts (Bolivia), departments (Honduras), or States (Brazil). In Paraguay, the school calendar is set centrally by the Ministry of Education, with some changes and adaptations formulated by departmental authorities.

- **Regulations, mechanisms, and resources for schools to adapt their curricula and teaching to the life contexts and culture of indigenous peoples, those of African descent, and others**

Given the characteristics of the region, there has been interest in specifically inquiring about the treatment of these topics in regard to indigenous peoples and those of African descent.

In order to foster the quality of education, coexistence, advantage should be taken of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the region as an educational opportunity. The development of intercultural bilingual education makes it possible to improve learning through valuing and learning about people's own culture and native language, as well as having access to universal culture through mastery of the codes of modern life. Moreover, "intercultural" means that the relations between people who are part of various ethnic groups and cultures be based on respect and from the perspective of equality (Schmelkes, 2004).

Especially in countries with indigenous or African descent numerous population, the need is expressed to make adaptations to the characteristics of their particular social, cultural, ecological, and geographic context, with the participation of the communities in developing these proposals (Bolivia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, and Peru). Note is made of the responsibility of the State to foster the development of intercultural bilingual education (IBE), encouraging the creation of local levels of participation of indigenous communities in the planning and management of teaching and learning processes. However, available information does not include descriptions of mechanisms and procedures that provide detail on how such

curricular diversification would be carried out and how the community would be incorporated into this process.

In some Latin American countries (Uruguay, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador) there are no references in the documents examined to indigenous minorities or those of African descent; nor in Caribbean countries with a majority population of African descent. In two cases (Trinidad and Tobago and Bahamas) there is a recognition of the multiracial nature of the society and conditions are sought to respond to different contexts and cultures. For their part, Cayman Islands and Anguilla, state concern for a growingly multi-cultural society and the evidence that schools are not reflecting this diversity, indicating that lesson planning should respond to the needs of all students.

- **Regulations for developing a common curriculum with an inter-cultural approach**

Exceptional cases such as Bolivia, Guatemala, Brazil, Mexico, Honduras, Venezuela, and Peru consider the importance of social and cultural heterogeneity of the country and defend the adoption of an intercultural bilingual focus in the national curriculum. In particular, in the curricular designs of Bolivia, Brazil, and Mexico, inter-cultural education has become a cross-cutting subject, common for all students in primary and secondary education, and not, as tends to be the case, as a subject only included for indigenous communities that speak other languages other than the official one.

In regard to teaching and conservation of languages on rare occasions are references made to maintaining and developing bilingual education. Generally reference is made to the right to be education in one's own language, and to continue use of native languages within their communities. In various countries, native languages continue to be seen as only transition languages for learning the official or dominant language, with the native language only being used in the initial phases of education. Mexico and Peru have approved linguistic rights laws, and recognize a number of native languages as official – being on the same level as the one dominant throughout the country, declaring the intention to preserve and strengthen the development of indigenous languages in all areas of social life.

In general, teaching of and in native languages is offered in special schools in areas with high concentrations of native people, and in countries like Mexico, the need is expressed to increase intercultural bilingual education to multi-cultural schools in urban areas. In Bolivia and Honduras, the interculturally-focused national curriculum offers two modalities in the area of language – one bilingual modality for those whose first language is indigenous and wish to learn and continue developing Spanish as a second language, and another single language option for Spanish speakers.

It is stipulated that it is the responsibility of the State to foster opportunities for the participation of indigenous communities in the planning and management of local education projects and of schools themselves. In cases such as Bolivia, it is considered that the Native People Education Councils should participate in the formulation of education policies and monitor their execution – particularly in areas touching on inter-cultural and bilingual issues. The need is usually expressed to work with indigenous communities. However, available documents are not always explicit in regard to the means, procedures, and mechanisms to make this possible. Although various countries do not specifically mention the participation of indigenous communities, the participation of the education community in general is part of decentralized education management strategies.

For its part, the influence of the indigenous movement and the demand for inter-culturality in education as a right have contributed to the participation of indigenous people and organizations or those of African descent in presenting, negotiating, and developing inter-cultural education proposals, taking advantage of official sponsorship of bilingual inter-cultural education.

Due to the fact that indigenous education is an important theme in Latin America, various regulations establish the obligation for teachers to speak and write the native language of their students, as well as to be trained in the use of bilingual methodologies (Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, and Guatemala). Intercultural bilingual

In Peru, the National Intercultural Bilingual and Rural Education Advisory Council (DINEIBR) seeks to foster the participation of civil society and the direct users of intercultural bilingual education. This council is composed of 15 members. Nine of them are representatives of indigenous peoples (Aguaruna, Shipibo, Asháninka, Aimara, and Quechua) and the other six are non-indigenous specialists in the area of intercultural bilingual education in the fields of anthropology, education, and linguistics.

Ethno-education in Colombia is conceived through linking the daily lives of the community and is part of a community development effort. "Life Plans" are comprehensive community development plans developed through participation and considering traditions, customs, and world-views. "One's own education" is defined by members of the community according to tradition and personal dynamics of cultural transformation. It is founded on family and community socialization.

education units or programs are the major entities responsible for carrying out teacher training (Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Venezuela, and Colombia).

In regard to initial teacher training specializing in intercultural bilingual education, there are fewer references available in the documents consulted.

Available school texts are adapted to different languages and cultures in various Latin American countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Guatemala, Peru, and Chile). Generally, these are for the initial grades of schooling, in some areas of study, and in the major native languages. In particular cases such as Mexico, there is in addition a National Reading Program that seeks to respond to the different interests of students through providing school library collections and bilingual classes. In addition to the development of educational material in electronic format in native languages in these countries, there are also materials for teachers such as guides for the development of interculturality in the classroom, follow-up and monitoring instruments for teacher training, guidelines for teaching the native language or second language, etc.

- **The common curricula and adaptation of teaching for people with special education needs**

Just as in the case of indigenous populations and those of African descent, it is important to consider attention directed at special education needs, since they affect a group usually not visible in discussions about education.

A significant number of countries have policies and rules in this regard; but few of them have provided regular schools with the competencies, technical assistance, and guidance in order to adapt the common curriculum and specific resources for their execution (Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica, and with less emphasis, Dominican Republic and Bolivia).

In general, in these countries special education is offered in two modalities: in common schools and special schools. However, as specified in Bolivia, it will only be provided to regular schools that that "have the conditions" to receive students properly. Evidently, this shows a system in transition.

The general trend is to send to regular schools individuals with less serious special needs, especially students with mental or intellectual disabilities. For students with severe disabilities, the State offers education in special schools.

Both for special schools as well as for students with special education needs in regular schools, it is stated that education systems should consider specific curricula, methods, techniques, educational and organizational resources in order to meet their needs. This is the case for those who present some kind of disability, and in fewer cases, students who possess exceptional talents or aptitudes. Although education laws recognize these rights, we have found little information regarding mechanisms to make individual curricular adaptations viable.

The didactic orientations of most-recent study plans provide general recommendations on individual care of students who have special education needs, according to what is established in education integration programs. In the case of lower secondary education, Mexico specifies that tutors should share their work with the other teachers of the group in order to define, together, strategies that contribute to increasing the capacities of students, overcome limitations or difficulties, and define cases that require individual attention.

The documentation offers little information on the reorganization of the teaching practices of schools, indications for adopting complementary teaching measures such as individualized monitoring carried out by teachers in the classroom or in study groups, extra lessons, or other measures that each school can create, including requests for outside teachers.

We have found in only three cases (Costa Rica, Peru, and Dominican Republic) a promotion norm that allows students with special needs to continue to accompany their reference groups, even in countries that have made progress in fostering integrated education policies.

Teacher training for serving students with special education needs is included within the integrated education programs in countries that have begun activities in this regard. It is unclear, however, how such training is to be carried out.

For example, the National Curricular Design (DCN) of Peru contemplates the inclusion of people with special education needs within the regular pre-primary to upper secondary education program, and offers basic guidelines on diversification and adaptation of the curriculum in order to serve those with special needs associated with disabilities or talents. On the other hand, we have found no information on training within schools or for teachers for the inclusion process, including the diversification of curricula. Moreover, the functions of those responsible for monitoring the regulations are yet to be defined.

- **Flexible assessment and grade promotion criteria and mechanisms for serving diversity**

Flexibility in assessment allows us to consider with a broader perspective the diverse processes of growth, incorporating context variables and differences in competencies and learning pace in order to adjust or complete training processes according to the characteristics and needs of students. Flexible assessment systems are related to the achievement of broad objectives upon which the curriculum is based, more than upon performance in specific content. Such systems weaken the link between grade promotion and assessment, organizing such promotion into cycles. At the same time, diversity mechanisms and assessment instruments make it possible to concentrate on individual processes and progress while responding to different diagnostic, process, meta-cognitive, and completion objectives.

Aspects linked to assessment are little-developed in the documentation examined. However, there are general indications in the didactic orientations of the curricular frameworks. In some countries, available information comes from specific programs, such as the Full-Time Schools program of Uruguay.

In most countries where promotion has been organized in cycles of two or three grades (Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Paraguay, Venezuela, and Ecuador), the intention is to weaken the link between assessment and promotion. In other cases, although the curriculum is still organized by cycles, promotion is defined on the basis of the objectives achieved in each study year (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay).

The documentation of Honduras, Venezuela, and Mexico (lower secondary) present information on the development of a comprehensive view that incorporates both objectives established for each grade and phase, with exit profiles. Promotion is associated with these cycles and not to each grade, seeking to incorporate in this way a holistic view that integrates cross-discipline content and intellectual, motor, and affective skills involved in student training.

Assessment frameworks provide indications on different proposals in this area: diagnostic or initial, for supporting the teaching process (training), and considering objectives achieved (summative), which is clarified in most of curricular guidelines.

As expressed in most curricula, assessment seeks to focus on processes more than on results. To this end, it uses various modalities. However, little precise information is available on orientations for making these proposals effective. In other cases, curricula designs mention the importance of assessing capacities and attitudes using indicators and criteria, without specifying how to do so.

Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, on the other hand, specify means and mechanisms for obtaining a variety of information in regard to the teaching/learning process in order to make it possible to assess

THE CURRICULUM OF NICARAGUA PROPOSES MAKING ASSESSMENT CLASSIFICATIONS FLEXIBLE IN ORDER TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WHO INTERRUPT THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR STUDIES DUE TO JUSTIFIABLE PROBLEMS, AND THUS PROVIDING THEM WITH ALTERNATIVE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES; ALL TO FACILITATE THEIR PREPARATION AND RE-ENTRY.

THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES STATE BASIC OBJECTIVES FOR ALL STUDENTS, SPECIFIED CENTRALLY IN TERMS OF BROAD OBJECTIVES ORGANIZED INTO THREE TEACHING CYCLES. ASSESSMENT GIVES PRIORITY TO QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENTS IN ORDER TO DOCUMENT CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT IT THROUGH ATTENTION TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS. REPETITION IS NOT MENTIONED; BUT RATHER PROCESSES OF "AUTHENTIC" ASSESSMENT WHICH TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE PAST ACHIEVEMENTS OF CHILDREN AND THEIR POTENTIAL, WITHOUT COMPARING INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WITH GROUP NORMS.

different capacities and content in question, as well as how to contrast with data obtained in different ways and in different contexts. The documentation also refers to assessment criteria that should be used for different types of indicators, making their interpretation flexible based on individual student characteristics and specific objectives and content.

The function that assessment can play as an instrument for reflection and meta-cognition regarding learning processes themselves – through self-assessment and co-assessment procedures – is presented in didactic orientations, thus limiting its use in educational processes, its application to other fields of knowledge, and the responsibility of students for their learning processes. El Salvador provides additional information in this regard, stating that self-assessment and hetero-assessment help students to assume responsibility for their own learning and to control their progress. It also allows them to assess their own personal and social qualities.

- **Regulations and mechanisms for fostering the participation and living together**

The participation and living together require that schools offers venues for participation adapted to their diverse interests and needs while including mechanisms for avoiding discrimination and segregation, allowing them to participate in decisions that affect them while developing commitments to their own training processes.

Education laws tend to include among the purposes of education the full development of personalities of learners as well as their participation. However, these laws do not always make explicit the kind of participation to which they refer. The participation of students in the construction of the education project of schools is an element not seen in the available documentation, especially for primary education. There exist specific norms on student organization and participation which propose that students can form student governments, organize themselves into associations, clubs, and others. However, the documentation available does not always detail school mechanisms or instruments for generating such participation.

In Paraguay, the law recognizes and fosters the creation of student organizations in primary and lower and upper secondary education. These must be organized through statutes approved by school authorities. Student representatives and authorities are to foster the exercise of rights and fulfillment of duties of learners as members of the education community. However, the norm does not establish the degree of participation of student organizations in school decision-making processes, nor their participation in different levels of learning. The enumeration of rights is conditioned on their exercise according to what is proper for each age. Thus, a key issue is the interpretation of adults of what is proper or possible for each age group.

In Bahamas, the issues of living together and ethics training have been developed through various strategies: the creation of student councils in all lower and upper secondary schools; their incorporation into the social studies and family life program; and in the design of programs for fostering sensitivity for and appreciation of cultural differences. Moreover, channels for participation have been opened for student contributions to curricular reform. Strategies have been incorporated for preventing drug abuse and to foster the peaceful resolution of conflicts, as well as programs for the improvement of conduct.

Many actions carried out in secondary education are aimed at strengthening the active participation of the education community, and especially of students. These changes are reinforced within the framework of human rights, rights of children, and in the growing social conviction on the importance for respecting the rights of students to receive an education without discrimination. In 2005, Uruguay revoked the old secondary education student norm which contradicted the legal framework of human rights. A new student statute was written in order to develop the fundamental principles that assure young people the full exercise of citizenship and insertion into society with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities.

It is of note that, in some cases, definition of this priority does not emphasize student participation in the development of the norms of discipline and harmonious relations. This is the case of El Salvador, where a policy on *School Climate to Foster Learning* has been established. Although this measure is based on the fact that it is important

that disciplinary norms are known, shared, and above all adopted by all members of the school community, students do not appear to have been participants in their construction.

Participation venues open to students are also contemplated in the regulations of a significant number of countries that are carrying out specific programs. Thus, the Juvenile Activities Centers (CAJ) in Argentina seek democratic participation of adolescents and young people, fostering opportunities for interaction between them, and putting into practice activities for their personal development as part of a community. Through these centers, students more actively participate in the design of events and attract the community through the organization of artistic workshops. In cases where this norm is developed through specific citizenship training programs, the teacher training opportunities reach a very limited number of schools and teachers, and continuity of such activities depends on the priority granted them by each government administration.

(b.3)   Alternatives and modalities for full access, integration, mobility, and lifelong learning of all people

Consideration of the diversity of education needs and particular conditions of people requires that education systems establish: (i) links between levels of education, (ii) the possibility of following different paths of access to and integration in the education system, according to the life conditions of individuals; (iii) training programs and modalities differentiated according to interests, needs, and talent; and (iv) competency certification systems that are flexible and permit life-long continuous learning and development.

Both on the level of legal frameworks as well as orientations, education systems commonly offer different alternatives and modalities for full access, participation, and permanent learning of all people.

- **Coordination of transitions between different levels of the education system**

One way of carrying out such transitions has been the coordination and sequencing of levels. In order to guarantee equity and continuity of studies of inhabitants of the rural area of Uruguay, the Policy Coordination Division for Rural Areas coordinates activities for improving education, seeking solutions adjusted to the context and interconnected between primary, secondary, and higher education. However, in spite of coordination carried out, the existence of autonomous entities in the administration of each level of education could make transitions difficult.

In various countries (Guatemala, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica), although expressing the will to facilitate transitions and coordination between levels, mechanisms or strategies to do so do not appear explicitly in the norm. In other cases, the coordination and transition between levels has been an explicit proposal and accompanied by clear procedures. Venezuela contemplates guidelines in order to facilitate transitions in the education process from nursery school through upper secondary through preferential attention to those courses seen as critical and in order to avoid breaks in schooling at critical ages.

Multi-sector coordination has been another strategy employed, although not well-disseminated in the region, to serve underprivileged students and to facilitate the permanence and continuance in education. The way this operates is through levels of educational support that link the education system with the systems of health, transportation, social assistance, and justice (the latter in cases of complaints of violence against children) among others. Some Caribbean countries have Boards of Management in some schools, composed of school

IN BRAZIL, WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION, LITERACY, AND DIVERSITY (SECAD) – THERE IS A DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION CHARGED WITH FACILITATING THE COORDINATION OF INCLUSION ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED BY VARIOUS ACTORS BY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES BETWEEN MINISTRIES, OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND CIVIL SOCIETY.

representatives and community members, and professionals from various areas who provide a multi-sector view to school management.

- **Alternative programs for access to different levels of education**

The offer of alternatives for access and re-entry to the education system occurs in countries in different ways. The most common is the modality of conclusion of studies through special courses during hours compatible with employment or through the offer of distance or semi face-to-face education. Other possibilities include, such as the case in Brazil, access to an education cycle through an assessment that defines the student's degree of development and experience, independently of previous schooling.

Various countries have programs for re-entry into the formal education system, such as the *National Education Inclusion Program* in Argentina that is concerned with inclusion in school of individuals between 11 and 18 years of age who are outside the system, creating strategies that allow students with different social and school trajectories to be integrated into the system in the shortest time possible.

- **The offer of education modalities in order to assure full exercise of the right to education at any stage of life**

The concept of education modality is used differently in different countries. Generally, it is understood as those options that seek to respond to specific requirements of training and to serve different groups either permanently or temporarily. The education modalities offered are special education, continuing education for young people and adults, technical-professional, rural, intercultural bilingual, as well as the less-common modalities for persons in hospital or incarcerated. On the other side are all of the non-formal varieties such as community education, family education, and literacy training which in many cases can issue certificates granting recognition of studies and capacities acquired. At times, technical-professional education, aimed at employment in a particular goods and/or service sector incorporates a dual training modality with the acquisition of professional competencies with emphasis on employment with the active participation of work centers, through agreements with private companies according to the type of teaching imparted (e.g., Honduras, Chile, Brazil, and Mexico).

The various education modalities and possibilities that they continue to offer in various countries facilitate entry, exit, and mobility within the educational system by serving different life conditions and according to the demand and needs of the population. In various Caribbean countries (Bahamas, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, Anguilla and the OECS countries) technical-vocational modalities are offered for professional training and continuing education. This occurs in Jamaica, where such offerings are described as full-time, part-time, and free-time.

In regular education, employment training options generally begin during upper secondary school, diversified into alternatives such as technical-vocational, and scientific-humanistic. An example is the Dominican Republic where, in upper secondary, the first cycle is common for all students, and the second cycle consists of three modalities: general, technical-professional, and arts and which granting students who complete the course a graduate certificate in the corresponding modality.

- **Education for employment and labor certification**

The provision of various employment training stages and options has been strengthened by the progressive installation of flexible work skills accreditation systems.

Most Latin American countries offer flexible study accreditation mechanisms, generally through open examinations, validation of studies in professional or employment training, community education, and various modalities for concluding studies such as distance, open, and continuing education. However, only for some countries have we documented the existence of the provision and regulation of work skills certification systems (Mexico, Colombia, and Chile; in the Caribbean only in Trinidad and Tobago). Costa Rica and El Salvador are contemplating the design of a learning accreditation and certification system.

> IN MEXICO, THE SYSTEM OFFERS VARIOUS TRAINING AND SPECIALIZATION OPTIONS, ACCOMPANIED BY A SYSTEM OF COMPETENCY CERTIFICATION. WITHIN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION THERE ARE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES THAT CONNECT THE SCHOOL TO THE LABOR MARKET: THE NATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM; THE OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM; AND THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION — CONALEP. MOST OF THE SCHOOLS ARE ACCREDITED WITH THE LABOR SKILLS STANDARDIZATION AND CERTIFICATION COUNCIL — CONOCER — AS LABOR SKILLS ASSESSMENT CENTERS.

(c) Support systems for improving the learning and participation of all students

From an inclusive approach, education difficulties are not attributable to students (to their skills, social origins, the cultural capital of their families), but rather to schools and education systems. The progress of students does not depend on personal characteristics only, but rather on the kinds of opportunities and support provided or not provided. The same student can experience learning and participation difficulties at one school, and not have them at another (UNESCO 2007). In this sense, what is required is (i) to develop the skills of teachers and their collaboration in networks of schools in order to foster the participation and learning of all students, (ii) seek to incorporate families and local communities as effective support, and (iii) create specialized support services and resource centers to meet individual learning needs.

(c.1) Teachers trained to foster the participation and learning of all students

In general, the documents reviewed emphasize the importance of a pertinent, inclusive, and intercultural education in Latin America. This must be translated into teacher training that responds to these goals. However, only some countries provide guidance, norms, and regulations regarding the conditions that should exist in teacher training centers (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, and Chile). Moreover, even when university or teacher training center accreditation processes do exist (Paraguay, Mexico, and Ecuador) in order to guarantee fulfillment of quality criteria agreed upon and established by the country, in general documentation is not available on the accreditation guidelines used.

In cases such as Venezuela, Honduras, Bolivia, and Dominican Republic, although we have not found evidence of national teacher training guidelines, the curricular frameworks of training centers contain orientations regarding teacher profiles and the skills that they should develop in regard to serving the needs of diversity.

In the Caribbean, Bahamas and Anguilla stand out due to the attention paid to the development of teaching skills for serving individual student needs and their training for the development of contextualized learning with a gender focus. Moreover, the new curricular framework of the Cayman Islands establishes obligatory content that meet the needs of all students, considering different expected results and differentiated methods according to requirements, expressing the need for intensive teacher training,

> IN BRAZIL, NATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM GUIDELINES STATE THAT PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSALS SHOULD INCORPORATE RESEARCH ON THE PROBLEMS THAT OCCUR IN THE DAILY LIVES OF SCHOOLS, AND CREATE SOLUTIONS THROUGH REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE; DEVELOP PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES THAT PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZE INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS AND STUDY OF SOCIETY.

In countries with greater decentralization, the norms prescribe that sub-national levels are responsible for the coordination of teacher training activities so they may develop attention to diversity and respect for citizen and human rights.

In general, the training of practicing teachers for serving diversity is provided within the context of professional development programs. Examples are the *EDUCAME*, *COMPRENDO*, and *Todos Iguales* programs in El Salvador. These propose teacher training and technical assistance activities from an inclusive focus. In addition, within ministries of education, units in charge of specific programs (for indigenous populations, special education, education of young people and adults, etc.) generate teacher training activities in schools that are part of their operations. As mentioned above, the links between these programs, their sustainability in view of the skills that they seek to develop, as well as assessment regarding the effectiveness of the strategies and activities carried out are unknown.

THE JOINT PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES CAN INVOLVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL AS WELL AS PARTICIPATION OF THE SCHOOL IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. IN PARAGUAY, PARTICIPATION OF THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY IS CARRIED OUT ON TWO LEVELS. IN ONE, A SOCIAL-COMMUNITY PROJECT THAT IS PEDAGOGICAL IN NATURE, YOUNG PEOPLE USE THE COMMUNITY FOR CITIZEN TRAINING AT WORK, IN BUSINESS, AND IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS. IN THE OTHER PROGRAM CALLED SCHOOL COOPERATION ASSOCIATIONS, PARENTS ARE INVOLVED IN THE DECISIONS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, CONTRIBUTING TO THE FLEXIBILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATION PROJECT.

BAHAMAS HAS DEVELOPED, THROUGH ITS 2004 STRATEGIC PLAN STUDENT-CENTERED POLICIES IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND COOPERATION BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS. TO THIS END, IT INVITES PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS, STRENGTHENING BY VARIOUS MEANS TRAINING THAT PLACES INTO CONTEXT THE LEARNING OF VALUES, ATTITUDES, AND ABILITIES THAT STUDENTS NEED TO DEVELOP.

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY, JAMAICA HAS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. GUYANA HAS CREATED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ACTION COMMITTEES, PROVIDING FOR JOINT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY AND PARENTS IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT. THE OECS COUNTRIES AND ANGUILLA PROMOTE PARENT AND TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS TO REINFORCE CLOSE COLLABORATION AMONG THEM.

(c.2) Incorporation of families and local communities as an effective and fundamental support in the construction and improvement of educational processes

It is commonly assumed that parents and school councils seek to contribute to raising the quality of education services and to seek the satisfaction of the learning needs of children through social control. However, in various countries, they are given collaborative and support roles, but they do not make decisions on the orientation and performance of schools.

Available documents indicate that in very few countries has the creation of school councils been accompanied by a program of action, mechanisms, or means to put them in place and to create a culture of participation in the school and local community.

Another level of participation of the education community in the school are assemblies of teachers, parents, and students. These are normally of a consultative nature. In any case, the powers transferred to schools provide the possibility of controlling only a very limited fraction of the operational budget, since these are dedicated mostly to salaries of teachers and other personnel which are in large measure beyond local control.

The incorporation of members of the community in school activities can be found in specific programs as a complementary strategy, but this is not something that occurs regularly in different levels of the education system. In Argentina, Juvenile Activities Centers (CAJ) of the School for Young People program invite members of the community to collaborate in artistic activities in order to enhance community identity.

The Caribbean countries have placed special emphasis on family and local community involvement in educational processes and school activities through parent-teacher associations, School Committees, rules for attending to parent demands, and Boards of Management in primary and secondary schools.

(c.3)   Systems of support, resources, and infrastructure for serving diversity

Support systems to respond to diversity require the establishment of levels of technical support for teachers, of specialized support services, and resource centers in order to respond to the education needs of students. These should offer comprehensive and multi-sector services linked to networks outside the school with companies, NGOs, community organizations, universities, or other neighboring institutions.

Support systems tend to be conceived as multiple assistance (for health, transportation, nutrition, school materials, pro-retention grants, and in some cases psycho-pedagogical support) for the most vulnerable schools. Another kind of support is offered within schools themselves through student counseling and welfare units. At times, ministries establish agreements with museums, libraries, other cultural, scientific, artistic, sports, and recreation institutions in order to foster the access of students to these benefits (Paraguay and Honduras). Often, these kinds of activities are the only kinds of support services available, with no plans to create inclusive schools with comprehensive orientations, strategies, and means to respond to the needs of diversity.

Venezuela has a policy of *student protection and development* that is closer to comprehensive intervention and that uses a set of socio-educational plans, programs, and projects. It focuses on reducing risk factors and strengthening the protection of children and young people through external support or services (contribution of equipment, subsidies, grants, health and sex education projects, support of community centers, etc). Nevertheless, such intervention does not seek the transformation of school culture and the strengthening of the skills and capacities of actors (school authorities, teachers, families, and communities).

Another strategy often used by ministries of education for providing support and to respond to the diversity of students, especially the underprivileged, is the use of education compensation programs. They tend to provide psycho-social and pedagogical support, working in social networks with families and communities and accompanying their activities with the contribution of resources in order to support schools. The documentation does not detail the existing articulation between these programs or indicate to what extent they share the same orientations, take advantage of accumulated experience and resources produced, assess and systematize progress, and re-orient their actions based on difficulties encountered and results achieved. On the other hand, national strategies aimed at improving the quality of management, in contrast to targeted programs, tend to omit procedures and mechanisms to respond to diversity and to overcome learning and participation barriers of schools themselves and the current cultures and structures of school systems.

The documentation we have examined identified few experiences of support and technical-pedagogical units that operate in a decentralized and regular fashion. Bolivia has a *Structure of Pedagogical Technical Services and Resources* which is a specific instance of specialized and permanent technical support in the districts, sub-districts, groups of schools and individual schools under its jurisdiction. This resource has pedagogical assistance teams charged with teacher training in groups of schools that are responsible for on-going teacher performance follow-up and assistance.

THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS NETWORK program in El Salvador is a management strategy that emphasizes cooperation among schools in the same geographic area. Its purpose is to improve efficiency in the delivery of educational services in order that children and young people in the poorest areas complete their lower secondary education using a uniform pedagogical model and with a coordinated administrative system.

Mexico has developed a Controlled Experiences Program for integration in education. This involves activities within schools such as: the design and operation of curricular adaptations, the psycho-pedagogical assessment of children, continuous assessment of the integration process, permanent cooperation with parents, and the establishment of a collaborative relationship between regular school teachers and special education personnel.

For their part, the Multiple Care Centers have the responsibility for the schooling of students with single or multiple disabilities who for different reasons have not been integrated into the regular school system. This is done through: (i) temporary incorporation into these centers of persons with disabilities who require specific strategies, (ii) guidance for teachers regarding specific methodologies for working with children with disabilities, and (iii) special classes to support students with disabilities who attend regular school.

AMONG ITS STRATEGIES, GUYANA SUGGESTS THE PROVISION OF MECHANISMS FOR AVOIDING ANY TYPE OF DISCRIMINATION, FOSTERING THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE AMONG GROUPS, AND STIMULATING AS WELL THAT PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS TREAT THESE SUBJECTS, PROPOSING TO ESTABLISH AN ANNUAL CONTEST TO IDENTIFY AND RECOGNIZE THOSE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES THAT PROVIDE THE BEST EDUCATIONAL ATTENTION TO DIVERSITY.

The organization of support networks among schools and among teachers for the exchange of experiences and best practices is also a frequent initiative, often applied to education in rural communities. A prime example, and the earliest, is the "Escuela Nueva" program in Colombia, which has disseminated its strategies and achievements in various countries.

Documents from Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Costa Rica show significant advances in integrated strategies for the education of children and young people with special needs. With the exception of these countries, the installation of specialized support services to serve schools and communities has been weak or little-visible. Although various countries are developing support programs for students with special education needs, little information is available regarding resource centers and their bibliographic and didactic resources and specialized personnel for aiding families and teachers. It has been possible, however, to conclude that in most cases, regulations state that schools should eliminate architectural barriers for students with special education needs.

In Brazil, the idea is reinforced that sustainability of the inclusive process is fostered by, among other factors, teamwork within schools, cooperative work in the classroom, and the creation of support networks with families, other agents, and community resources. Regulations on special education specify the existence of specialized support teams in regular schools, as well as the availability of other complementary support for learning, mobility, and communication.

In the Caribbean, available information shows that regulations in Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Cayman Islands, and Guyana expressly address the issue of diversity in schools. However, we have not encountered evidence of the organization of special support services nor of tools offered to meet special education needs in regular schools.

(d)   Final remarks

We must move forward in the development of education inclusion policies aimed at transforming schools so that students, regardless of their condition, may participate and learn. To this purpose, external support to families and to students with special education needs are insufficient. It is vital to guide, train, and support schools from a comprehensive perspective so that they may re-orient their activities and cultures, organizing and developing policies and practices that serve the needs of diversity.

Most certainly, legal and curricular norms are largely aimed at valuing and responding to the needs of the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students. But it is necessary to strengthen the design of strategies and regulations in order to make these education rights and principles effective. This is a crucial and complex step in societies that are increasingly plural and democratic, and that require the design of diversified and common policies that make it possible to provide quality education to all.

In this regard, in terms of the **articulation** of policies and programs to respond to diversity we need:

- To assure the coherence between principles, policies, programs, and the means to make them effective.
- Strengthen the articulation and coordination between the different operational levels of education systems (from central authorities to individual schools).
- Develop mechanisms and regulations to make effective fundamental principles and rights, specially those concerned with being treated with dignity and non-discrimination.

- Strengthen articulation between policy design and mechanisms for its appropriation by the various actors in the system.
- Assure the articulation between units and programs for serving different groups, in order to avoid duplication of effort.

In regard to the **regulation** of policies and programs to respond to diversity, we need to consider that, although it is necessary to increase education decentralization, the quality of policies and programs will depend on the existence of norms, mechanisms, and levels of supervision and assessment of the services provided and their proper management, both within schools and at the different managerial and participatory levels in the development of educational services.

In regard to **training, technical assistance, and monitoring**, it is good to consider that the development of inclusive schools – with emphasis on aspects of interculturality, given regional realities – requires vigorous policies for training the principal actors, and especially teachers. These policies must take place both within regular schools, including families and communities, as well as in specialized services of external support and pedagogical technical units. For their part, agencies of the State, responsible for conducting policies within their territories, should be trained and receive as well technical support and accompaniment in the exercise of their functions.

3. ARE EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF THE REGION *EFFICACIOUS* IN TERMS OF ATTAINING FUNDAMENTAL GOALS?

Verification of the achievement of goals proposed in the education sector is a key issue that is directly linked to understanding the extent to which the population's right to education is guaranteed. In fact, aspects such as coverage, the completion of studies, and student academic achievement are key manifestations of making concrete the exercise of this right. Given the fact that national education policies differ, we have considered as a key element of reference for this section, the education goals instituted within the framework of the Education for All (EFA) initiative as stated in the Global Action Framework of Dakar and that of the Americas (Santo Domingo), and as contained in the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC).

The following pages will treat the state of education in the region in relation to the goals of access, completion, achievement, and elements of education management.[1]

(a) Levels of access to education opportunities

For many years, education policies in the region, as well as the actions of numerous non-government actors interested in education have emphasized the need to ensure significant levels of access of the population to structured educational programs. As a starting point, these policies assume that access to education, in some way, means that people will move through the system and complete certain expected levels while assuring the learning that these levels are intended to offer. However, history has shown that ensuring access is a necessary but not sufficient condition for guaranteeing the right to education, since access in and of itself does not guarantee that people will construct the expected relevant learning; nor that educational experiences are always sensitive to individual conditions. Not being sensitive to them can result in serious problems of continuity and completion of studies as well as in limiting the learning achieved. On the other hand, these problems and limitations tend to be distributed unequally, where the more vulnerable social sectors or those who are more marginalized and excluded are the ones who are mostly affected. Thus, education programs tend to reproduce pre-existing social inequalities and to subvert their own basic purposes in regard to equality.

However, the fact that increase in access does not necessarily result in other achievements in education should not lead us to underestimate the importance of this objective. On the contrary, the fact that access is a necessary condition for guaranteeing the right to education underlines its importance. The limitations observed serve to point out the need for education policies not to limit themselves to this area. In fact, the experience of recent education reform efforts shows that attention is being given to other factors, the presence of which also contributes to assuring the right to education.

In dealing with levels of access to education programs, this section presents evidence in regard to: *global levels of access to education programs, access to education programs by level, enrollment size in tertiary education, education of young people and adults, and a reflection on effective free schooling*.

(a.1) Global levels of access to education programs
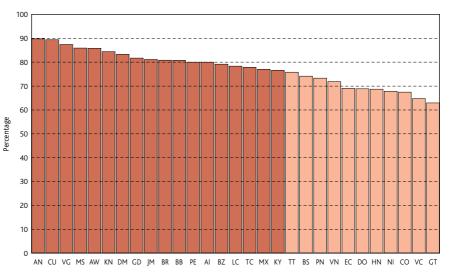
One of the basic pre-conditions for making the right to education effective is access to educational services as part of a trajectory that leads to achieving the goals of EFA. The possibility of having information on global levels of access to the education system provides insight as to what proportions of the population currently have access to some education

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1 Note that treatment of these goals corresponds to those established in Dakar, with the exception of that linked to gender parity which will be treated in the separate chapter on equity.

program, and as a complement, provides data on the population not served or "out of school". To this purpose, we have information corresponding to the so-called "age-specific enrollment rates"[2] for the population 3 to 18 years of age. The following graph shows the percentages of the 3 to 18 year-old population in education programs up to the upper secondary level.

As can be seen, in only five countries (Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Netherlands Antilles, and Montserrat) at least 85% of that population have access to some kind of education program of any level, and in seven countries (Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) this figure is less than 70%. The observed value for the region is 76.2%, being 74.1% in the Caribbean, and 76.3% in Latin America. This means that more than 35.5 million individuals between 3 and 18 years of age are not served by any education program. Of these, 34.0 million are in Latin America, and slightly more than 1.3 million are in the Caribbean.[3]

Graph 3.1: **Age-specific enrollment rates for the population 3 to 18 years of age, by country. 2004.**

As noted throughout this study, here as well there is much disparity among countries. Those appearing on the right side of the graph are those which explain the number of persons not served by the education system in a greater proportion of their population; that is, they are those that show a total coverage for their 3 to 18 years of age populations that is lower than the regional average.

Moreover, for each country it is possible to observe different patterns, depending upon the age sub-groups that make up the population 3 to 18 years of age.[4] For example, in all countries except Colombia, at least in one of the ages considered achieve coverage above 95%. However, the number of age groups for which universal, or nearly universal coverage

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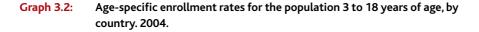
2   Although the name traditionally given to this indicator may be unclear, its purpose is in fact just as simple and direct as described, and in this sense measures the coverage provided to a given population (whether by single ages or age ranges); that is, it shows the percentage of the population who is schooled.
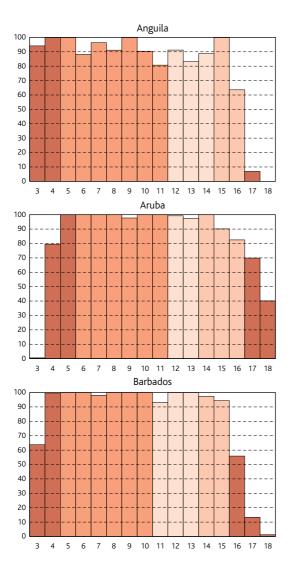
3   Note that this calculation includes information not published by UIS for Haiti, country wich show 960 000 persons, 3 to 18 years of age who are unschooled. Haiti accounts for 72.7% for the Caribbean. This information has not been published due to the fact it contains elements that make it non comparable with that provided by the other countries. Nevertheless, and with the sole purpose of being able to have global reference information, we have included this data, given the relative weight that this country has in its sub-region. This country has a share of persons not served by the education system in the region larger than it share of the regional population.
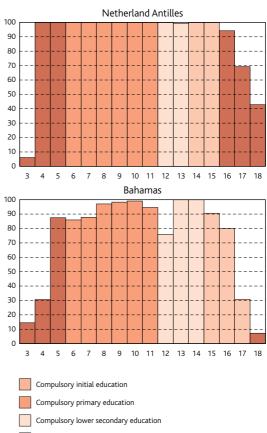
4   Note that in the less-populated countries, potential mismatches between enrollment and population data may result in erratic behavior of the indicator, without this necessarily implying highs and lows in coverage.

applies is variable. In addition to Colombia, in Anguilla, Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Turks and Caicos, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Venezuela, the number of age groups for which there is coverage equal or above 95% is less than six, which is the duration of primary education.

On the other hand, in only seven countries (Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Cuba, and Montserrat) does coverage surpass 95% in at least nine age groups.

Graph 3.2: **Age-specific enrollment rates for the population 3 to 18 years of age, by country. 2004.**
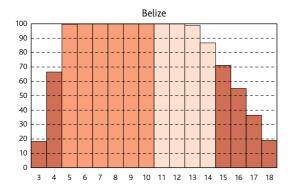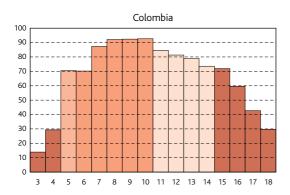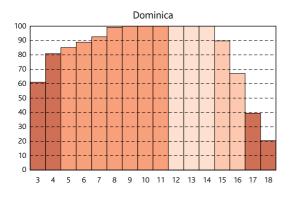
Legend:
- Compulsory initial education
- Compulsory primary education
- Compulsory lower secondary education
- Compulsory secondary education
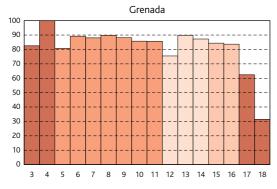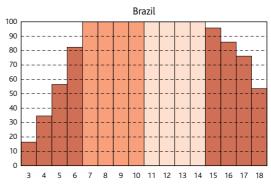
Belize

Brazil

Colombia

Cuba

Dominica

Ecuador

Grenada

Guatemala

Honduras

Cayman Islands

British Virgin Islands

Jamaica

Mexico

Montserrat

Nicaragua

Panama

Peru

Dominican Republic

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Vicent and the Grenadines

Saint Lucia

Trinidad and Tobago

Turks and Caicos

Venezuela
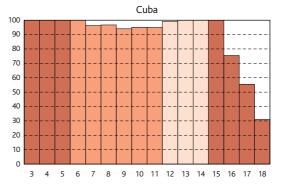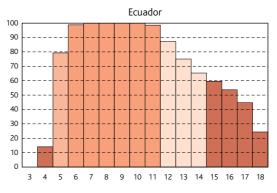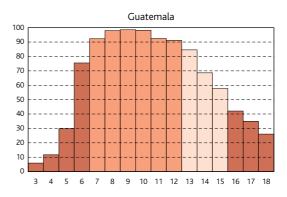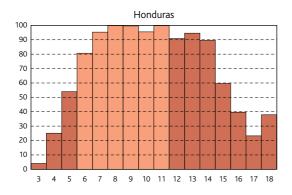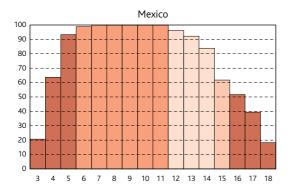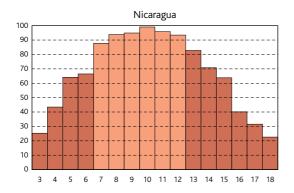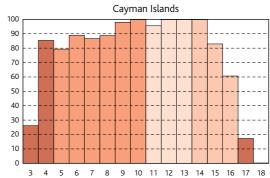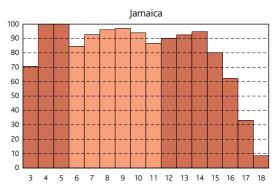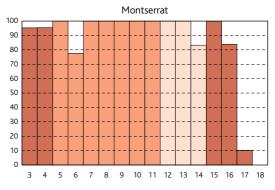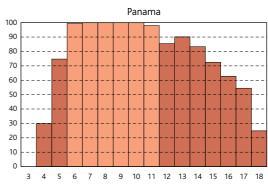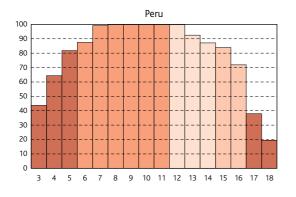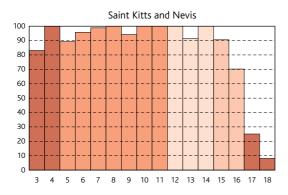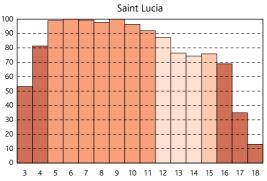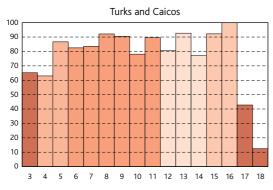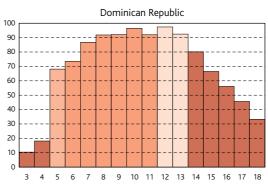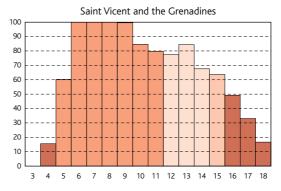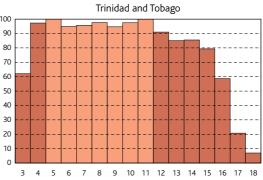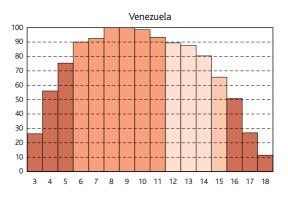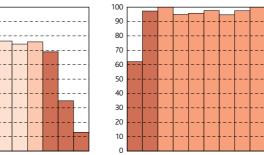
(a.2)   Access to education programs according to their level

Information regarding the proportion of the population in a given age range considered appropriate to be at a given level of education and which is in fact so enrolled is provided by the so-called "net enrollment rates".[5] In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, current global levels of access to education programs result in patterns differentiated by education levels.

Actually, as the following graphs indicate, access to pre-primary education shows significant differences among countries, as does secondary education. In the case of primary education, there is greater homogeneity among countries due to more universal access.

Although the goal of comprehensive early childhood care and education services cannot be reduced to providing programs at this level within educational institutions, an approximation to such services can be obtained through the enrollment rates in early childhood education programs. We thus observe that in 12 countries (Venezuela, El Salvador, Cayman Islands, Bolivia, Bermuda, Nicaragua, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and Bahamas) access to pre-primary education is provided for less than half of the population of the age to attend an education program at this level. In two countries, (Cuba and Netherlands Antilles) such coverage is universal, while in five others (Guyana, Jamaica, Anguilla, Suriname, and Aruba) it is above 90%.

Graph 3.3:   Net enrollment rate in pre-primary education, by country. School year ending in 2004

On the other hand, policies aimed at expanding pre-primary education have tended to be structured in order to seek progressive expansion, beginning with ages nearer to the age of entry into primary education. Thus, one notes that in most countries, the above-described net enrollment rates are the result of quite differentiated levels of access for each of the ages considered. In this sense, most countries record the maximum enrollments for the last year of this level; this being ages 4, 5, or 6, depending upon the primary school entry age for each
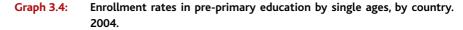
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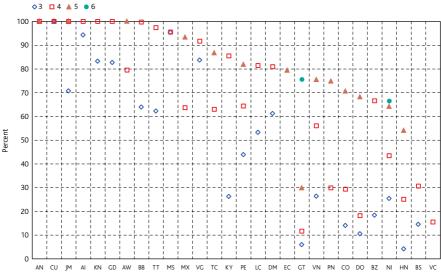
5   It is clear that the names of indicators used regularly in education statistics have been inherited from the time when these were conceived; that is, from times when the key issues of education policy were different from current ones. Thus, for example, enrollment rates (both gross and net) were created principally in order to report on population size (gross rates in particular provide such information) and not to treat proportions of the population that satisfy a given condition (for example, being in or not being in the education system). Among the efforts that need to be made in order for education information to be truly useful for policy-making is that of defining its meaning and, eventually, to seek more appropriate names that facilitate understanding.
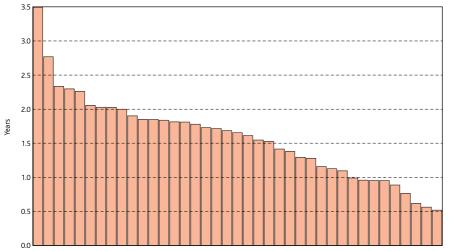
particular country. All countries, with the exception of Dominican Republic, Belize, Nicaragua, Honduras, Bahamas, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, surpass 70% of coverage for the age immediate before the official age of entry into primary school, with the figure being 90% for Netherlands Antilles, Cuba, Jamaica, Anguilla, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Aruba, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Montserrat, Mexico, and British Virgin Islands. We note as well the heterogeneous situation in terms of the rates for the other ages at this educational level, presenting in some cases very asymmetric scenarios. Thus, there are countries such as Netherlands Antilles, Cuba, Anguilla, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Montserrat, and British Virgin Islands in which the rates surpass 80% for all ages of this level, while in Cayman Islands, Guatemala, Venezuela, Panama, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Belize, Nicaragua, and Honduras, the differences in coverage rates between the ages for this level vary between 40% and 70%.

Graph 3.4: **Enrollment rates in pre-primary education by single ages, by country. 2004.**

These access levels for pre-primary education result in differences in the number of pre-primary education years that a child may have. As can be seen, the large majority of countries (except for Cayman Islands, Ecuador, Bahamas, Belize, and Bermuda) guarantee that, on average, a child can expect to have at least one year of pre-primary education and nine countries (Cuba, Jamaica, Anguilla, Guyana, Netherlands Antilles, Turks and Caicos, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Brazil, and Aruba) achieve an average of at least two years. The regional average is 1.7 years, which contrasts favorably with the world value of 1.0, and that of the developing world in particular (0.9). The figure thus begins to approximate that recorded by the developed world (2.2), which means that the region shows the greatest progress in this field among the different developing regions.[6]

6   See *EFA Global Monitoring Report Team* (2006)
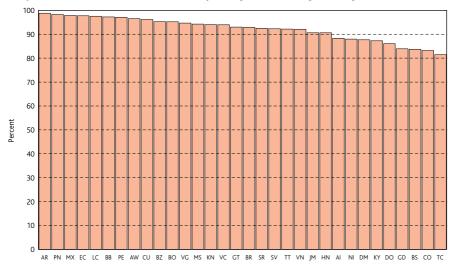
Graph 3.5: School-life expectancy (pre-primary only) by country. 2004.

For its part, access to primary education shows an auspicious picture in that the majority of countries have begun to approach universal coverage. Thus, 11 countries show access rates above 95% (Argentina, Panama, Mexico, Ecuador, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Peru, Aruba, Cuba, Belize y Bolivia); another 12 have rates above 90% (British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis , Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Guatemala, Brazil, Suriname, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Jamaica, and Honduras). However, nine countries (Anguilla, Nicaragua, Dominica, Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Bahamas, Colombia y Turks and Caicos) have access rates of less than 90%, thus making patent the need for even greater efforts in order to incorporate the population still without access to this level.
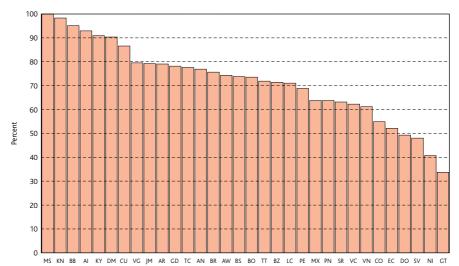
Graph 3.6: Net enrollment rates in primary education by country. 2004.

One should consider, however, that it is necessary to recall that the differences observed between these rates and the value that indicates universal coverage, (100%) cannot be seen as indicative of the population outside the education system. In fact, a fraction of these persons are studying in different education programs, whether at a previous level (pre-primary),

a subsequent level (secondary), or in non-formal or adult programs not considered in the calculation of these rates which seek to identify enrollment of a segment of the population corresponding to their age. For this reason, it is particularly important to refer to information on coverage previously presented (age-specific enrollment rates, p. 75 ff.) in order to identify the population not served by the education system.[7]

Graph 3.7: **Net enrollment rates in secondary education (lower and upper combined) by country. 2004.**

Access to secondary education programs is required for monitoring the goal referring to serving the learning needs of young people and adults. This also shows a disparate situation, in that only six countries of the Caribbean (Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Barbados, Anguilla, Cayman Islands, and Dominica) achieve access levels above 90% of the population which, given their age, should be studying at these levels (lower and upper secondary). To these countries, one should add eight others (Cuba, British Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Argentina, Grenada, Turks and Caicos, Netherlands Antilles, and Brazil) that have been able to guarantee access to secondary education for at least 75% of the population of age to enter these programs.[8]

(a.3) Enrollment dimensions in tertiary education

In the case of higher education (university or non-university tertiary, including up to doctoral programs), one may observe enrollment dimensions expressed per 100,000 inhabitants.

Addressing access to tertiary education poses two kinds of problems that lead to the need to use measures different from those employed for other levels. On the one hand, there is no "official" age for being involved in tertiary studies, since they are open to substantial contingents of the population only on the condition that they have gone through secondary education and independently of the age group to which they belong. Thus, a measure of absolute

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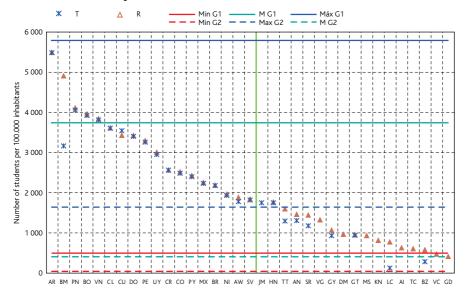
7   The so-called "net enrollment rate" seeks to describe schooling in particular types of programs corresponding to a population of a particular age range; for example, typically one expects that the 6 to 11 year-old population (this range varies among countries) is attending primary school, thus combining two criteria: a population group and enrollment in a particular level of education. For its part, the concern for people outside the school system ("out of school"; "not served") concentrates exclusively on the population concerned (of a particular age or group of ages such as 3 to 18 used in this report) and not on a given educational level; it being evident that if the population is not served by the education system, one cannot speak of a specific educational level.

8   Note that 75% is the goal set by the Education Action Plan of the Summit of the Americas (available at *www.summit-americas.org/chileplan.htm*)

numbers of enrollment is required which can be referred to any reference population or to the total population in order to understand the relative weight of the training of persons at these levels. On the other hand, there is significant international mobility at the tertiary level. Thus, if one considers the enrollment of persons in a single country, one may not be considering the training of those who are permanent residents of a particular country in those which receive large contingents of foreign students or that have large numbers of their citizens studying abroad. The latter situation is not particularly significant for countries with large populations in which international mobility does not involve large numbers of people. But it is important in countries with smaller populations and/or which engage in efforts of regional training. This is the case for most of the Caribbean countries.

With this in view, the following graph shows enrollment in tertiary education programs expressed per 100,000 inhabitants, and is presented both territorially (T) and in terms of the permanent residence of persons (R). As can be seen, the difference of approach (territory, permanent residence) shows practically identical results in the cases of countries with larger populations, but shows significant differences in countries with smaller populations or that receive large numbers of international students. In fact, in seven Caribbean countries (Bermuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Netherlands Antilles, Suriname, Guyana, Saint Lucia, and Belize) the differences between these values surpasses 10%, while even reaching 84% in one case (Saint Lucia); while in eight countries the approach based on permanent residence covers all of the enrollment at this level, since these countries do not have institutions offering tertiary education programs and which send their permanent residents to study at one of the campuses of the University of the West Indies or to other international destinations. Moreover, one should note the case of Cuba, which is the only country in the region which is a net receiver of international enrollments.[9]

Graph 3.8: **Number of students in tertiary education per 100,000 inhabitants by country. 2004.**

Source:
Developed by the authors using information of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.

9   That is, the number of international students in Cuba is more than the number of Cuban permanent residents studying abroad.

These enrollment figures may be compared with those observed in other countries of the world, providing a comparative view of the regional situation using some benchmarks derived from other experiences. Thus, we have included in the graph three lines of reference indicating the minimum (481), average (3,726), and maximum (5,776) values for this indicator in countries of North America and Western Europe (G1).[10]

Only five countries of the region (Argentina, Bermuda, Panama, Bolivia, and Venezuela) have permanent residents enrolled in tertiary education programs in proportions that surpass the North American and European average, while Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada do not reach the minimum value of this group of countries.

Similarly, in sub-Saharan Africa (G2), these values vary between 35 and 1,634, with an average of 399.[11] Thus, we can say that no country in the region shows values lower than the average for that region, and that 14 Caribbean countries (Trinidad and Tobago, Netherlands Antilles, Suriname, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Dominica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Anguilla, Turks and Caicos, Belize, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada) and one Latin American country (Guatemala) show values lower than the maximum for that region.

Note should be made of the clear differential grouping of the sub-regions. The highest values of the indicator are systematically recorded in Latin American counties and the lowest in Caribbean ones. In fact, the left side of the graph (to the left of the green line) is composed almost exclusively by Latin American countries, except for Bermuda. The right side is composed by Caribbean countries except for Honduras and Guatemala. Thus, this separation corresponds almost exactly to countries with values for the indicator above and below the minimum value for North America and Western Europe.

We can see, then, that the variation among countries of the region is very significant, with the relative value recorded in the country with the highest enrollment in tertiary education (Argentina) being 13.4 times greater than the relative number seen in the country with the lowest relative enrollment (Grenada).

(a.4)   Youth and adult education

Education programs aimed at young people and adults are an important commitment, not only due to the fact that they provide opportunities for continuous learning, but most especially because they are able to assure that those who for particular reasons could not take or complete their studies during the planned ages can thus guarantee their right to achieve, at the least, minimum learning and thus responding to the demands established by the EFA goal in regard to learning opportunities for young people and adults.

Due to the fact that international comparable data collection does not yet systematically consider these kinds of programs, this report has utilized data from household surveys from a group of countries in the region. It is to be hoped that in the near future we will have information covering this crucial area of education programs. For the time being, it has only been possible to calculate the proportion of people 20 to 39 years of age who, not having completed upper secondary education, claim to be attending some kind of educational program.[12]

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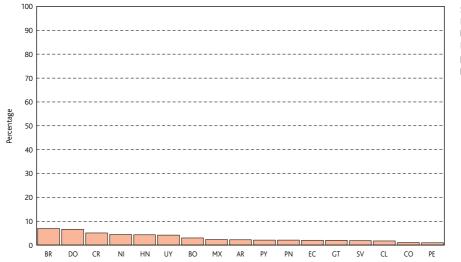
10   Note that these values correspond to published data that present the indicator computed according to the territorial approach. However, in all the countries that include this grouping, the difference in approaches produces values with differences of less than two percent, except in Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Luxemburg, where differences vary between 2.5% and 4.8%.

11   In these countries, calculation of enrollment according to both approaches produces values that in no case differ by more than three percent.

12   Household surveys and population censuses tend to ask people regarding their "attendance" in an educational program. However, the way that such attendance is defined is not necessarily precise. Nor is it equivalent in all cases. Therefore, the resulting information is of referential value, and is particularly useful in case of the absence of other information generated in a more systematic manner.

Available information shows very limited margins of attendance of educational programs (excluding tertiary education) on the part of young people and adults. In effect, the percentage of people between 20 and 39 years of age who, not havinging completed upper secondary education, say they attend some kind of educational program does not reach 10% in any of the countries with information available.[13]

Graph 3.9:   **Percentage of persons 20 to 39 years of age without complete upper secondary education who declare that they attend an educational program. 2004.**

This information should be read with particular concern in that it means that youth and adults education programs do not reach a significant segment of the target population.

It should be noted, however, that there are programs directed at this population that have not received formal recognition and therefore are not present in official statistics, or are not considered to be "educational programs" by those who respond to household surveys.

Note as well that there is evidence, recorded in various countries,[14] that the majority of the enrollment in these programs corresponds to the population under 20 years of age. That is, these programs seem to mostly serve the non-adult population that, for some reason, is not in regular school. The reasons for this may vary from regulatory constraints that hinder those over 15 years of age to attend regular school, or economic motives linked to the incompatibility between regular school hours and the employment demands of this population. It is necessary to take care in order to avoid that programs for young people and adults not be, in fact, programs to serve minors who are in vulnerable or marginalized situations; that is, *night schools for the poor*.

(a.5)   Effective free education

The gratuity of education programs has been conceived as a measure aimed to avoiding the existence of barriers of access which could limit the exercise of the right to education.

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13   Note that, in dealing with information from sampled surveys and with a much reduced absolute number of persons who satisfy the three conditions here considered (being between 20 and 39 years of age, not having completed upper secondary education, and attending an educational program) the values here shown are referential in nature, and should not be taken as precise estimates of the general situation, due to the fact that the confidence intervals for estimating the population values are large.

14   This has been confirmed by UNESCO in recent years in reviewing the state of information systems and the forms for reporting international data in, at least, Peru, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Costa Rica.

However, experience has shown that the concept of free education is in itself insufficient for that purpose due to the fact that it can co-exist with financing models of public education programs that in the final analysis have negative impacts on equity and which, therefore, do limit the right to education.

In fact, long-established practice has lead the allocation of public spending for education to be administered on the basis of equal criteria. Given limitations of resources, such spending has tended to be at the operational minimum. Actually, the fact that public spending on education goes primarily to paying salaries (75.7% of public investment assigned to schools as a regional average)[15] and that these tend to be defined centrally and in an equal fashion, shows that the opportunity for differentiated investment in order to suitably meet different needs of the population are very limited. This, in turn, results in an understanding of "free education" as identical to not paying tuition, while not considering other costs that are assumed by families.

Moreover, the fact that public provision of education tends to be very limited and with spending almost exclusively dedicated to paying salaries means that other current costs or even investment being dependent of the support that families can provide. Thus, public schools themselves end up being dependent upon the economic support of families. This support is proportional to their incomes having a considerably regressive impact.[16]

It is even possible to find situations in which the allocation of public resources tends to favor those who are more favored financially, since these individuals have access to resources (electricity and connectivity, for example) absent in poorer contexts. Thus, the allocation of public resources can be regressive, even before counting on the support of families.

Similarly, it is possible to have situations in which schools are ranked according to enrollment (even having an impact on teacher salaries and making such schools more "attractive") and producing an additional criterion that favors urban conglomerates to the detriment of small schools that serve a geographically dispersed population.

In face of this situation, many countries have implemented "compensatory programs", or others have sought to make special allocations of resources to underprivileged populations. However, these programs tend to represent limited fractions of public investment, and part of their impact is limited by the fact that most investment does not obey the same logic of progressiveness in public investment.

It is in this sense that the concept of free schooling needs to be expanded in order to consider that the financing of education should be proportionate to needs (educational and others that have an impact on the right to education) of people, overcoming the schemes of equal financing in favor of equitable ones.

(b)   Completion of studies

As we have noted, access is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for full exercise of the right to education. Similarly, the completion of studies is another basic condition, the fulfillment of which must be verified, specifically in order to monitor the goal of universal completion, both within the framework of EFA as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

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15   Authors´ estimate, based on information taken from the UIS database for the school years ending between 1999 and 2004.
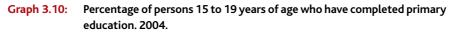
16   The *progressive* or *regressive* nature of public policies (of revenue or spending) is defined by considering the relation between the latter and the conditions of the population toward which expenditures are directed. Giving more to those who have more results in regressive effects, since it increases differences. On the other hand, giving more to those who have less is progressive, since it tends to close pre-existing gaps (the equivalent is correct in regard to the generation of tax revenue). Such reflections should take into account both current assets of people as well as the magnitude of their needs. According to the first criterion, an equal allocation would give proportionately more resources to those who have less. According to the second criterion, an equal allocation reproduces existing gaps, since the needs are, in absolute terms, greater for underprivileged sectors.
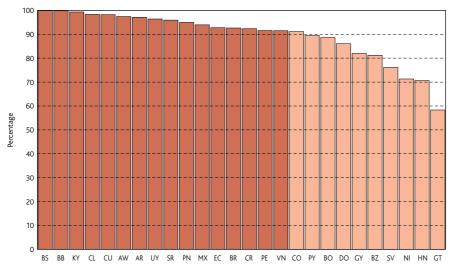
Available information shows how many people have already completed the different levels of education. It also allows us to estimate current completion levels. In fact, socio-demographic information allows us to determine what proportions of the population corresponding to different age groups have in fact completed studies at each level. Moreover, current enrollment patterns allow us to estimate the proportion of persons who complete a particular level at a given time.[17]

(b.1)   Primary education

The graph below shows the percentage of persons 15 to 19 years of age who have completed primary education. We have used this age group because it refers to those of recent graduation ages, leaving a margin in order to consider the possible effects resulting from late entrance and grade repetition.

In a significant number of countries, the goal of universal completion of primary education is very close to be achieved. Actually, in 10 countries (Bahamas, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Chile, Cuba, Aruba, Argentina, Uruguay, Suriname, and Panama), the proportion of people 15 to 19 years of age who have completed primary education is already above 95%. To this group may be added another seven countries (Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Venezuela, and Colombia) that have already surpassed the threshold of 90%. Of particular note are a group of four countries (El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala) that are further from achieving the goal, given that they have not yet been able to assure completion of this level for more than 20% of their populations of recent graduation ages.

Graph 3.10:   **Percentage of persons 15 to 19 years of age who have completed primary education. 2004.**

This situation is the result of a historical process in which, the proportion of those completing primary education has grown consistently, as can be seen in the changes among different age groups.[18]

In spite of the auspicious situation in which 91,3% of those 15 to 19 years of age have completed primary education in the region as a whole, this also means that more than 4.5 million young people of these ages have not done so. This is a clear violation of their right to education. Of these individuals, 42.9% are young Brazilians or Mexicans. This, however, is

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17   See details of the procedure in the methodological notes as well as in Guadalupe and Taccari (2004).
18   In this regard, see UNESCO (2004) and ECLAC coord. (2005)
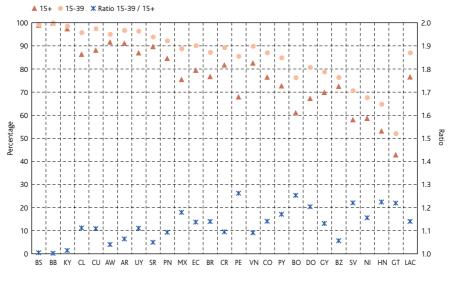
explained by the fact that these countries account for more than 54% of the regional population of these ages. That is, the participation of these countries in the total of young people without a complete primary education is the result of their demographic weight, since proportionately they have completion levels that surpass the regional value. In fact, it is the nine countries highlighted on the right side of the graph that contribute to this total to a greater extent than does their population, with such contribution being twice as great in the cases of Guyana, Belize and El Salvador; three times as much for Nicaragua and Honduras, and four times in the case of Guatemala.

If, in addition to the population group of recent graduation age, the total 15-years and over population is considered, you find that 23.6% of these (at least 87.6 million people) have not completed primary schooling. This represents a key challenge for education policies in terms of designing education programs for young people and adults that ameliorate this violation of the right to education produced over many decades.

Graph 3.11: **Percentage of persons 15 years of age and older and from 15 to 39 years of age with complete primary schooling, by country. 2004.**

Moreover, one should consider the impact for the development of countries of having a population without the basic skills that primary education should assure. In effect, taking only the 15 to 39 year-old population – that which will represent most of the economically active population of each country for the next 25 to 50 years – one sees that 13.0% of this group (29.1 million people) have not completed primary education.

Available information shows that the greatest challenge caused by the accumulated education deficit represented by this population is concentrated in Brazil and Mexico. This is due to their large populations, and, in the case of Mexico, to having a proportion of people 15 years of age and over without complete primary schooling larger than the regional value. This is also the case of Peru, Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. Note as well that in the case of the 15 to 39 year-old population, these same countries (except for Mexico, which here improves its regional position) show values less favorable than the regional average.

As seen in the graph, countries have experienced progress of various kinds shown in the comparison between age groups. Thus, Peru shows that the percentage of people with complete primary schooling in its younger population (15 to 39 years of age) is 1.26 times the

proportion observed for the group 15 years of age and over, being the country that shows the most marked progress, in spite of the fact, as noted earlier, it still has not attained a position above the regional average, given the magnitude of the accumulated deficit among the adult population in general. It is important to note that those countries with high percentages of people with complete primary schooling among their older population have, logically, a lower margin for improvement in the percentages here considered.

The following graph shows the absolute numbers of adults without complete primary schooling, as well as the relation between these absolute numbers expressed as a percentage of the regional total, and the relative participation of each country in the regional population – thus showing if its "contribution" to the regional total of adults without complete primary schooling corresponds to or differs from the relative weight of its population.

Graph 3.12:   **Distribution of persons 15 years of age and older and 15 to 39 years of age without complete primary schooling, by country. 2004.**

For each country, variation in the ratio between "contributions" to population and to the number of persons without primary schooling shows the rate of progress relative to the progress of the region as a whole. Thus, Bahamas, Suriname, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala show slower progress than the region as a whole (illustrated by the red line in the following graph). This is particularly disturbing in the countries that only are able to assure completion of primary schooling to a smaller percentage of their 15 to 39 year-old (less than 90%); that is, in all of those countries mentioned with the exception of the first two (Bahamas and Suriname).

This situation is disturbing, since evidence shows that the *countries with the largest accumulated deficits are, at the same time, those that have shown more modest progress in their recent past*. Moreover, they are also the countries with the greatest current deficits. This results in an *increasing gap between countries*.
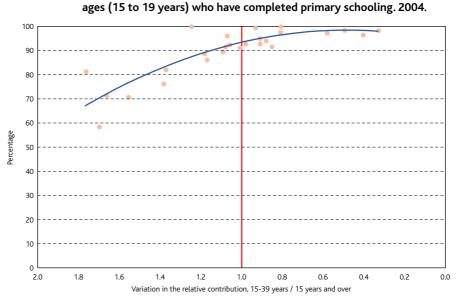
Source:
For Caribbean countries and Aruba: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). For Cuba: information from the Population Census of 2002. For countries of Latin America: household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All of the information has been organized according to ISCED 97. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.
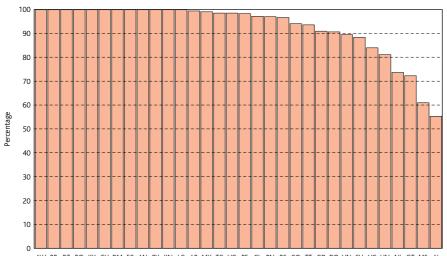
Graph 3.13: **Variations in relative contributions to the number of adults without primary schooling and the percentage of persons of recent graduation ages (15 to 19 years) who have completed primary schooling. 2004.**

The above contributes to underlining the urgency of assuring universal primary completion for the younger population and avoiding continued "generation" of adult populations that have not achieved such schooling – especially in countries in which the accumulated deficit is larger, and where current completion levels are smaller.

On the other hand, these proportions of adults who have or have not completed primary schooling are the results of education paths taken in the past (more recent ones for those 15 to 19 years of age), and for this reason do not characterize the current performance of education systems. It is possible, however, to calculate, based on enrollment information in the final grade by ages, what is the percentage of people who are at present completing primary education corresponding to current enrollment patterns.

This percentage of persons currently completing primary education is presented in the following graph:

Graph 3.14:   Current completion rate for primary education, by country. 2004.

Current enrollment patterns show that universal completion of primary education is being achieved in at least Argentina, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Netherlands Antilles, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Mexico. In these countries, the proportion of completion surpasses 99%. In the same fashion, in Chile, Turks and Caicos, British Virgin Islands, Peru, Panama, and Bahamas there is an auspicious situation, with current completion above 95%, and another four countries with proportions above 90% (Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, and Dominican Republic) while four countries show proportions of less than 80% (Nicaragua, Guatemala, Montserrat, and Anguilla).[19]

This information shows the continuation of the historically recorded trend toward growing levels of completion increasingly reaching universality.

(b.2)   Lower secondary education

The following graph presents the percentage of persons 20 to 24 years of age who have completed lower secondary education. We have taken this age group as it comprises recent graduation ages for this level, adding an additional margin to account for late entrance and grade repetition.

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19   The low value shown for some countries merits a remark. This situation may be the result of lack of adjustment between enrollment and population data (especially in countries with small populations), or of high percentages of grade repetition that affect the calculation.

Graph 3.15: **Percentage of persons of 20 to 24 years of age who have completed lower secondary education. 2004.**
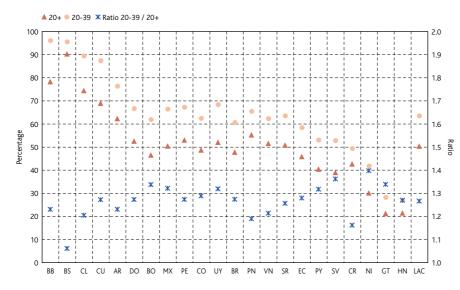
As one might expect, completion levels here are lower than for primary education, given that the latter is a prerequisite for entering secondary education, and that there is a greater variety of situations. In fact, only three countries (Barbados, Bahamas, and Chile) have completion levels of 90% for people 20 to 24 years of age. After these countries, completion of lower secondary education is greatest in Cuba (85%) and in Argentina (80%). For their part, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil, and Panama have completion levels of above 70% but less than 80%. Finally, in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras less than half of persons between 20 and 24 years of age have completed this level of education, with the figure being less than one-third in the latter two countries.

It should be noted that completion of the lower secondary level is seen as an object of universalization (since the level is compulsory) in the regulations of all countries here considered, with the exception of Panama, Suriname, Guatemala, and Honduras (marked in the graph).

Thus, taking the region as a whole, slightly more than 70% (71.1) of the population 20 to 24 years of age has completed this level. This means that education systems have not been able to assure completion of this level for more than 14.2 million people in this age range. Some 54.2% of this population are citizens of Brazil and Mexico. These latter values should, however be contrasted with the demographic weight of these two countries. Thus, Mexico accounts for a number of persons 20 to 24 years of age who have not completed lower secondary educa-tion that is a lower proportion than its contribution to the population of the region. That is, Mexico achieves completion levels above the regional value. The same is not the case for Brazil. The eleven countries highlighted on the right side of the graph are those that contribute to the number of persons 20 to 24 years of age without complete lower secondary education in a greater proportion than their contribution to the population of the region. This greater proportion is double in the cases of Guatemala and Honduras.

If, in addition to the population group of recent graduation ages, one considers the entire population of 20 years or more, the conclusion is that half of this (49.8%), or more than 158 million people, have not completed lower secondary education. This is a key challenge for education policies in terms of designing education programs for young people and adults that can ameliorate this violation of the right to education produced over many decades.

Graph 3.16: **Percentage of persons 20 years of age and older and 20 to 39 years without complete lower secondary education, by country. 2004.**

▲ 20+ ● 20-39 ✖ Ratio 20-39 / 20+

Source:
For Caribbean countries and Aruba: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). For Cuba: information from the Population Census of 2002. For countries of Latin America: household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All of the information has been organized according to ISCED 97. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.

Moreover, one should consider the impact on the development of countries as a result of having a population which lacks the essential skills that should be ensured by what countries refer to as "basic education". In effect, when considering only the population between 20 and 39 years of age – that which represents most of the economically active population of the country for the next 25 to 50 years-, one sees that 36,5% of this group (62,7 million people) have not completed lower secondary education.
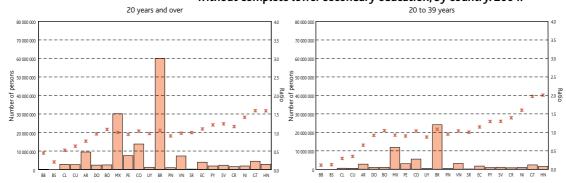
Available information shows that the greatest challenge resulting from the accumulated education deficit within this population is for Brazil and Mexico. In the latter country, this is so due only to its large population, since it has lower secondary completion rates similar to the regional average. In Brazil, this is due both to its size as well as to the fact that it has a number of people 20 years of age or more without complete lower secondary education in a proportion greater than the regional value. This is also the case for Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras. Note as well that in the case of the population 20 to 39 years of age, these same countries, as well as Dominican Republic and Panama, record values less favorable than the regional one.

Thus, as the graph shows, countries have made progress of varying degrees as observed when comparing the two age groups. Thus, in Nicaragua, the proportion of people with complete lower secondary education in its younger population (20 to 39 years) is 1.4 times that of the group of age 20 or more, being the country with the most marked progress. It is important to note that those countries with high percentages of people with complete lower secondary education among their older population logically have less room for improvement in the proportions here considered.

The following graph shows the absolute numbers of adults without a complete lower secondary education, as well as the relation between this absolute number and the population of each country. Thus, it indicates if the "contribution" of each country to the regional total of persons without lower secondary education corresponds or differs from their corresponding participation in the total population of the region.
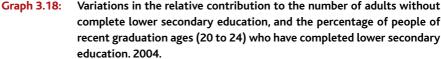
Graph 3.17: **Distribution of persons 20 years of age and older and 20 to 39 years without complete lower secondary education, by country. 2004.**

20 years and over

20 to 39 years

For each country, the variation in the ratio between "contributions" to the total population and to the total number of people who have not completed lower secondary education indicates the pace of progress relative to the region as a whole. Thus, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Colombia, Brazil, Panama, Venezuela, Suriname, Ecuador, Paraguay, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras show slower progress than the region as a whole (illustrated by the red line in the following graph). This is particularly disturbing in countries that have not yet been able to achieve a significant figure (at least 70%) of completion of lower secondary for their 20 to 39 year-old populations; that is, for all of the countries listed above. This is a particularly serious challenge in those cases in which less than one-half of this population has completed lower secondary education (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras).
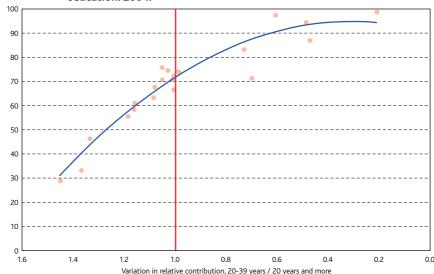
This reinforces the finding identified in regard to completion of primary schooling, in the sense that the countries with the greatest deficits are, at the same time, those that have shown more modest progress in the recent past. Since they are also the countries with the greatest current deficits, this thus strengthens the trend toward widening the gap between countries.

Graph 3.18: **Variations in the relative contribution to the number of adults without complete lower secondary education, and the percentage of people of recent graduation ages (20 to 24) who have completed lower secondary education. 2004.**
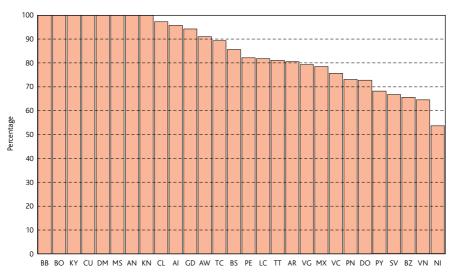
This contributes to highlighting the urgency of assuring universal completion of lower secondary education among the younger population and of avoiding that countries continue to "produce" adult populations that have not achieved this level of schooling.

Just as with primary education, these proportions of adults who have or have not completed lower secondary education are the results of educational experiences that took place in the past. For this reason, it is necessary to calculate the percentage of people who at the present time are completing lower secondary education, according to *current enrollment patterns*.

The proportion of people who are currently completing lower secondary education is presented in the following graph:

Graph 3.19: **Current completion rate for lower secondary education, by country. 2004.**

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Based on information provided according to ISCED 97 by national focal points in countries that report data using joint UNESCO-OCDE-Eurostat questionnaires. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.

Current enrollment patterns show that a significant number of countries will assure nearly universal completion of lower secondary education, since they record current completion rates that are above 95%. This is the case for Barbados, Bolivia, Cayman Islands, Chile, Cuba, Dominica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Anguilla. Moreover, in Grenada and Aruba, this percentage surpasses 90%. At the other extreme of the distribution are seven countries in which this indicator does not reach 75% (Panama, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, El Salvador, Belize, Venezuela, and Nicaragua).

(b.3) **Upper secondary education**
The following graph shows the percentage of persons 20 to 24 years of age who have completed upper secondary education. We have used this age group because it contains more recent graduation ages, leaving a margin in order to consider the possible effects resulting from late entrance and grade repetition.

Graph 3.20: **Percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed upper secondary education. 2004.**

First of all, it is necessary to note that only five countries with information on this subject see upper secondary education as a service to be universalized (Barbados, Cayman Islands, Bahamas, Aruba, and Peru)[20]. These countries are marked on the graph.

Moreover, note that only one country (Barbados) achieves completion levels of upper secondary education for its recently graduated population that are above 95%. Two other countries that are also in the Caribbean (Cayman Islands and Bahamas), surpass the threshold of 85%. On the other hand, the large majority of countries have completion levels of below 50% (Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname).

Independently of the compulsory or non-compulsory nature of this level of education, it is important to think about what it means for a country in which, for example, less than 25% of its population 20 to 24 years of age have been able to reach and complete this level. Such is the case for three countries (Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname). Moreover, completing upper secondary education is a prerequisite for entering higher education. Therefore, potential inequities in the completion of secondary schooling (which will be treated below in the corresponding chapter), result in inequities in conditions that allow people to have access to higher education.

Moreover, the impacts of higher levels of schooling in the lives of persons, their families, and communities are widely documented,[21] and completion of secondary education is considered necessary in order to significantly increase the likelihood of a person not to live in poverty (ECLAC 1997).
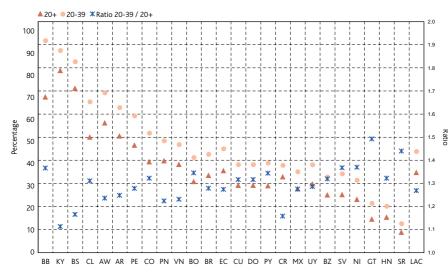
Thus, taking the region as a whole, we see that slightly less than 50% (49.7) of the 20 to 24 year-old population has completed this level of education. This means that education systems have not assured completion of this level for more than 24.7 million people in this age range. Once again, Brazil and Mexico are the countries that account for most of this population (55.9%). But in this case, their participation in this figure is greater than their demographic contribution. The 14 countries highlighted on the right side of the graph are those that have completion levels below the regional value. Consequently, their contribution to the regional population that has not completed upper secondary education is above their demographic participation.

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20   A group to which Chile should be added beginning in the school year ending in 2005.
21   A broad review of research in this sense may be found in Muñoz Izquierdo (2004).

If in addition to the population group of recent graduation ages one considers the entire population 20 year of age and older, we see that 65.5% of this group, or more than 208 million people 20 years of age and older, have not completed upper secondary education. This represents a key challenge for education policies in terms of designing education programs for young people and adults that ameliorate this violation of the right to education produced during various decades.

Graph 3.21: **Percentage of persons 20 years of age and older and 20 to 29 years who have not completed upper secondary education, by country. 2004.**

▲ 20+   ● 20-39   ✖ Ratio 20-39 / 20+
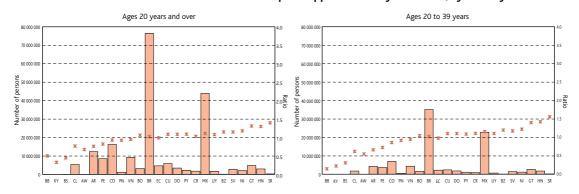
As in the cases previously mentioned, one should consider that the 20 to 39 year-old population represents the majority of those who will be economically active in the region in the coming decades. Here we see that 56.2% of this group (at least 96.8 million people) have not completed upper secondary education.

Available information shows that the greatest challenge resulting from the accumulated education deficit for the 20 years of age and older population is found in Brazil and Mexico. This is so due both to their large populations and to the fact that they present rates that are below the regional value. This is also the case for Bolivia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname. Note as well that in the case of the population 20 to 39 years of age, these same countries show values that are below the regional value.

Moreover, as the graph shows, countries have demonstrated varied progress. This can be seen when we compare the two age groups. Thus, Guatemala shows that the proportion of persons among the young population that have completed upper secondary education is 1.49 times that of the group 20 years of age and older, thus being the country showing the most marked progress in this regard. It is important to recognize that those countries with higher proportions of people with a complete upper secondary education among the older population have, logically, smaller room for variations in the percentages here considered due to the fact that the margin is greater in those countries where the rates are lowest.

The following graph shows the absolute numbers of adults without a complete upper secondary education, as well as the relation between this figure and the population figures of each country. Thus, we see whether the "contribution" of each country to the regional total of adults without a complete upper secondary education corresponds or is different from its population participation.
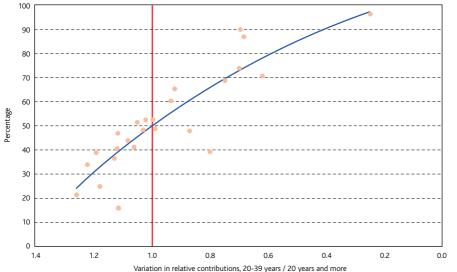
Ages 20 years and over

Ages 20 to 39 years

For each country, the variation in the ratio between population "contributions" and the number of persons without complete upper secondary education shows a pace of relative progress in regard to regional progress as a whole (illustrated by the red line in the following graph). Thus, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Mexico, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname show slower progress than the region as a whole. This situation calls particular attention to the countries that have not yet been able to assure completion of upper secondary education to at least one-half of their 20 to 39 year-old populations (Panama, Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname). This results in a particular challenge in those cases (Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Suriname) in which less than one-third of the cited population has been able to complete upper secondary education.

This finding is consistent with what has been stated regarding the other two levels of education previously described, in that *countries with the greatest deficits are the ones which have demonstrated the most modest progress in their recent past*. They are also the countries with the greatest current deficits and contribute to a growing gap between countries.

Variations in the relative contribution to the number of adults without complete upper secondary education, and percent of persons of recent graduation ages (20 to 24 years) who have completed upper secondary education. 2004.


Source:
For Caribbean countries and Aruba: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). For Cuba: information from the Population Census of 2002. For countries of Latin America: household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All of the information has been organized according to ISCED 97.

As we have stated regarding the other two educational levels described above, these proportions of adults who have or have not completed upper secondary education are the results of educational experiences that took place in the past. For this reason, it is necessary to calculate current completion levels based on current enrollment patterns.

Graph 3.24: **Current completion rate for upper secondary education, by country. 2004.**

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Based on information provided according to ISCED 97 by national focal points in countries that report data using joint UNESCO-OCDE-Eurostat questionnaires. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.

Current enrollment patterns show that in two Caribbean countries, (Barbados and Montserrat) completion of upper secondary schooling is practically universal. To these countries we may add Anguilla and Turks and Caicos, with current completion levels surpassing 90%. Grenada, Cuba, Dominica, and Peru, for their part, have levels of above 75%. At the

other extreme of the distribution are seven countries which show completion levels of below 50% (Paraguay, Venezuela, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Nicaragua, Mexico, Aruba, and Dominican Republic).

(c)   Issues linked to learning achievement

As we have noted (p. 75), it used to be assumed that access to educational programs would imply progress through them, completion of studies, and the achievement of desired learning. Experience has shown, however, that educational processes are complex and that this assumption is not necessarily so.
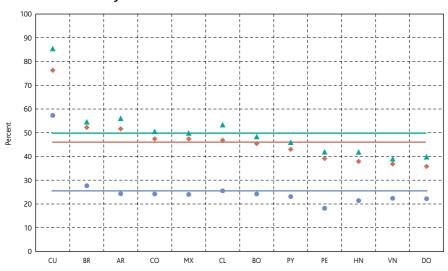
On the one hand, significant levels of access recorded in the region are accompanied by lower levels of completion. On the other, evidence indicates that often, learning achieved is not equivalent to what has been expected, and in some cases may be so disparate as to severely compromise the right to education.

The first point, that access has not resulted in sustained progress toward completion of studies, is often described under the rubric of "student failure", meaning by this term that there is a group of students who do not make adequate progress within the system and who are thus required to repeat grades or abandon studies without completing them. This view tends to place the burden of the problem on students; for it is they who "fail". However, from a perspective more in accordance with the need to recognize diversity of circumstances as a pre-requisite for the educational experience, and in recognition of education as an inalienable right, the fact is that what one has in these cases are failures of an education system able neither to assure progress through and completion of studies, nor that these studies are accompanied by the achievement of expected outcomes. "*Student failure*" is a *failure of schools as a whole in their task of effectively guaranteeing the right to education*.

Having dealt with themes corresponding to the completion of studies; that is, that people have access to and then do not abandon school until completing a particular level of education, and given that the issues linked to the behind-grade study and repetition generated by schools themselves, we will (p. 75 and ff.) address the evidence on learning achievement.

With the exception of the First International Comparative Study carried out by UNESCO in 1997 (UNESCO 1998; 2000b and 2001), there is no internationally comparable evidence on the academic achievement of students that involves a large set of countries in the region. It is hoped that the second study currently being developed by UNESCO will provide internationally comparable information in 2008 on academic achievement for practically all Latin American countries. It will also be desirable to ensure that the interest expressed by representatives of the Caribbean countries will lead to an extension of this study to that sub-region.

Data from the first UNESCO study, as well as from other international and national studies show that there are serious limitations in learning achievement considered to be acceptable. In fact, although the outcomes of the first UNESCO study are widely known and can be consulted in detail in the corresponding publications (UNESCO 1998, 2000b y 2001), for the purposes of illustration, we will address the results corresponding to three skill domains of mathematics: simple problem-solving, recognition of objects and elements, and complex problem-solving.

Graph 3.25: **Percentage of correct responses in three mathematics skills domains, by country. 1997.**

Source:
Database of the UNESCO First Regional Comparative Study. The lines represent the regional average of correct responses for each domain.
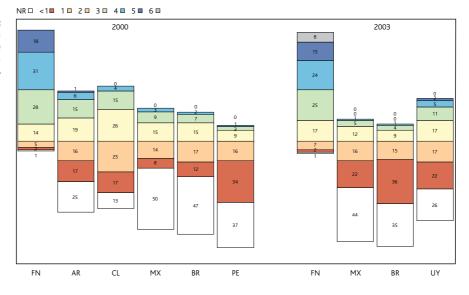
It is clear that the regional average, in all domains correspond to the number of correct answers lower than 50%, and that these regional averages are systematically surpassed in the three domains only by Cuba with percentages above 50%. It is also evident that the behavior of the other countries does not show great variations among them, only reaching 16% in regard to simple problem-solving, 17% in the recognition of objects, and less than 10% in regard to complex problem-solving. Differences are clear in regard to country performance in each of the three domains, in that the percentages of correct responses are systematically greater in regard to simple problem-solving and less so in regard to complex problem-solving.

Moreover, the participation of some countries of the region in the OECD *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) reveals serious limitations in the performance of 15 year-old students who are enrolled in secondary education – those who have been able to complete primary schooling and continue with their studies. The evidence generated by PISA suggests that completing primary education only guarantees the acquisition of basic reading, writing and numeracy skills by a very small segment of the population. In effect, the first two rounds of PISA allow us to verify not only the significant segment of the population that was not represented by the study, since it concentrated exclusively on the 15 year-old population enrolled in secondary education,[22] but also significant difficulties in the achievement of basic skills considered to be fundamental for the performance of individuals in today's world.

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22   See the methodological notes for detailed information on PISA objectives and the meaning of the levels of achievement used.

Graph 3.26: Percentage of students by level of proficiency on the reading (2000) / mathematics (2003) scale. Selected countries.

NR ☐ <1 ◼ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ◼ 6 ☐

2000

	FN	AR	CL	MX	BR	PE
	18					
	31					
		1	0			
		6	4			
	28	15	15	0	0	
				3	2	0
	14	19	26	9	7	1
	5			15	15	3
	2	16	25	14	17	9
	1					16
		17	25	8	12	
			17			34
	25		13	50	47	
						37

2003

	FN	MX	BR	UY
	8			
	15			
	24			
				0
				2
	25	0	0	5
		0	0	11
		1	1	
	17	5	4	17
	7	12	9	
	2	16	15	17
	1			
		22	36	22
		44	35	26
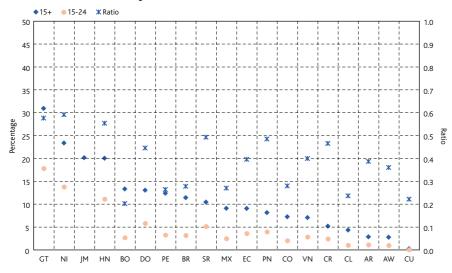
In effect, PISA reveals not only, nor mainly, that countries of the region demonstrate lower student learning performance, compared to other countries (in the graph the case of Finland –FN which serves as an illustration in this regard), but much more important, that in this performance, independent of the relative positions of other country rankings, our region is deficient in absolute terms, with students demonstrating serious difficulties in carrying out the most elemental operations of reading and numeracy.

If to this evidence we add the fact that the *First International Comparative Study* of UNESCO in 1997 showed that, with the exception of Cuba, there were no significant differences in achievement levels among the participating countries, and one assumes that these results can be associated with those of PISA, it is possible to suggest as a hypothesis that the performance levels of the other countries of the region would not have been very different than those recorded by test participants. This, most certainly, is corroborated by the general feeling of unease regarding academic achievement that education systems provide for students, based primarily on evidence of national achievement assessments or other kinds of evidence.

The completion of studies with expected learning outcomes is also expressed through the skills manifested by the population throughout life. As available evidence indicates (Statistics Canada; OECD 2005 p.59 and ff.), schooling levels achieved by the population result in reading and writing skills, although in a variable manner, that are a reflection of different levels of effectiveness of educational experiences. To date, there is no systematic and comparable evidence in the region on reading and writing skills, since such information has only been produced by isolated studies with scant participation of countries of the region. It is within this framework that LAMP - the *Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Project* carried out by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) - takes on added importance.

LAMP seeks to produce systematic and internationally comparable information on literacy skill levels of the adult population, placing particular emphasis on identifying the different kinds of difficulties that explain low performance in order that intervention programs will have key information for their design and implementation. Moreover, LAMP seeks to develop national capacities in order that countries can independently generate this kind of information based on conceptual frameworks more in accordance with current concepts of education, and which see literacy skills as a continuum of abilities that are not properly represented through

the use of a dichotomous variable, as has been the case traditionally in measuring "the ability to read and to write" – a concept that poses additional difficulties as well based on the fact of depending upon self-declarations or on information on levels of schooling of the population used as a proxy measure.

To date, however, we only have information on such traditional literacy rates. These rates show the proportion of persons who say that they are unable to read or to write. In spite of the aforementioned limitations, these rates provide us with a general indication of those who identify their situation as one of maximum exclusion from education, and which at least provides a "floor" for understanding the magnitude of the problem.

Graph 3.27: **Percentage of illiterates among the population 15 years of age and over and 15-24 years. 2004.**

The figures show that in general, progress noted in the sections above have resulted as well in a significant reduction in the percentages of people who claim not to be able to read and write. Thus, with the exceptions of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras, the countries with available information show rates for their younger populations that are less than half of those observed for the population in general.

This, however, does not diminish the fact that these numbers indicate that 34,8 million people 15 years of age and older define themselves as illiterates. Of these, 3.2 million are between 15 and 24 years of age.[23] If this information is linked to the 87.9 million people 15 years of age and older without a complete primary education, the magnitude of the challenge is unassailable.

On the other hand, the current rates are the result of a significant pattern of change observed in recent decades, as the following graph shows.
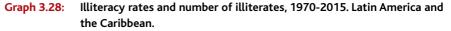
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23 Note that the most recent assessment of UIS (in September, 2006) upon which this information is based, only includes a limited number of countries and information from various years. Thus, for example, it does not include information on Haiti, nor does it consider more recent efforts such as those carried out in Venezuela, due to the date of information used as a source. See the data appendix for details.

Graph 3.28: **Illiteracy rates and number of illiterates, 1970-2015. Latin America and the Caribbean.**

It is worth noticing the differences in paces that which both the rates and the population that claims not to know how to read and write fall, with the latter being much smaller than the former. This different behavior of the rates and absolute numbers is related to various phenomena. First, there is the significant growth in population observed in the same period, which shows that the total population of the region in 2005 was 2.4 times greater than in 1970. It is expected that in 2015 the population will be 2.8 times that former value. The fact that this population growth has not been accompanied by an equivalent growth in the absolute numbers of people who claim to not know how to read, and that this number has decreased, although in the observed proportions, is the result of clear progress recorded in terms of access to and completion of primary education in particular.
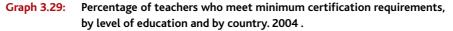
However, the fact that this progress has still not reached universal primary completion means that each year, a number of young people is incorporated into the population that claims to not know how to read and write, and thus partially compensating for the reductions that deaths produce in the number of adults in such condition. Although the numbers of the young population who do not enter school or abandon their studies without attaining the most basic reading and writing skills are increasingly smaller, this is a phenomenon that still exists. It indicates that education systems are still unable to universally guarantee at least basic levels of reading and writing, and that they continue to "produce" individuals who do not possess these abilities.
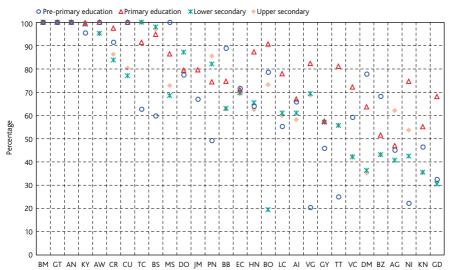
(d) Aspects of curricular management directly linked to achieving the goals

In addition to aforementioned aspects which refer to the efficacy of educational programs to achieve goals aimed at fulfilling aspirations of the right to education, we should also include in our reflections elements linked to how the concrete activities of actors involved directly in teaching and learning contribute or not to the attaining key objectives. To this end, it is necessary to consider the context within which these individuals (teachers and students) act, as well as the interactions between them and between peers.

The availability of comparable information on these subjects is particularly limited. In fact, international information on teachers – beyond that of their numbers[24] - is limited to data on formal certification and investment in teaching posts by numbers of students.[25]

Specific studies have touched upon other substantive aspects. However, we have yet to move toward an analytic framework that would allow us to identify information needs on management in general as well as on teacher issues in particular, and organized around a focus on the right to education.[26]

Graph 3.29: **Percentage of teachers who meet minimum certification requirements, by level of education and by country. 2004 .**

○ Pre-primary education △ Primary education ✕ Lower secondary ◆ Upper secondary

Available information reveals a highly varied situation. Thus, in pre-primary education, eight countries (Bermuda, Guatemala, Netherlands Antilles, Cayman Islands, Aruba, Costa Rica, Cuba, and Montserrat) declare that more than 90% of their teachers meet official certification requirements. On the other hand, in eight other countries (Panama, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua y Barbuda, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Grenada) less than 50% of teachers meet certification requirements for this level.

This situation varies in the case of primary education, where the 90% threshold is surpassed by ten countries (the same ones listed above, less Montserrat and including as well Turks and Caicos, Bahamas, and Bolivia), and only one country (Antigua and Barbuda) has less than 50% of teachers with the certifications required for this level.

Similarly, in secondary education (lower and upper) seven countries surpass the 90% threshold (Bermuda, Guatemala, Netherlands Antilles, Cayman Islands, Aruba, Turks and Caicos, and Bahamas) and five (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Belize, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Grenada) have less than half of their teachers with the required certifications at both levels (upper and lower secondary), while in three other countries (Bolivia, Antigua and Barbuda, and Nicaragua) this is the case only for lower secondary.

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24   Not always defined with precision, since it combines various motivations and aspects to be explored. For example, concerns about investment tend to emphasize the number of teachers as full-time equivalents; or the number of existing contracts or teaching posts. Pedagogical concerns emphasize the number of students per teacher. The greatest problem appears when an indicator is used that was constructed for a different purpose.

25   Unfortunately, it is common for this investment indicator (calculated using full-time equivalents) to be used to describe the pedagogical phenomenon "group size".

26   See Guadalupe, C. (2005) and Mascardi, L. (2005)

TEACHER WORKLOAD AND THEIR VIEWS ON ASSESSMENT OF THEIR PERFORMANCE AND ON SCHOOL AUTONOMY

IN TERMS OF FULL-TIME TEACHING AND THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN WHICH TEACHERS WORK, THE INDICATORS THAT APPROACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF TEACHERS AND THEIR PROFESSION COME FROM A RECENT STUDY CARRIED OUT BY THE UNESCO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING, BUENOS AIRES, ON THE *PROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHERS* (SEE TENTI, 2005). REGARDING ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, PERU, AND URUGUAY, WE MAY SAY THAT AROUND 15% OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS UNDERTAKE OTHER PAID ACTIVITIES (BESIDES TEACHING). THIS VARIES BETWEEN 12.5% (ARGENTINA) TO 17.3% (URUGUAY). IN REGARD TO INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS WORKING AT MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL, THE SITUATION IS MORE HETEROGENE-OUS, AND VARIES BETWEEN 44.7% OF TEACHERS WHO WORK IN ONE SCHOOL ONLY IN THE CASE OF URUGUAY, TO 87.4% IN PERU (OP.CIT. P.92 AND P.86)

TABLE 3:

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS BY NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN WHICH THEY WORK

	Argentina	Brazil	Peru	Uruguay
Only one school	68.6	57.2	87.4	44.7
2 schools	21.1	31.5	10.5	35.2
3 schools	5.8	6.2	1.4	13.7
4 or more	2.8	2.9	0.7	6.5
No answer	1.7	2.3	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

THIS SITUATION VARIES ACCORDING TO LEVELS OF EDUCATION, WITH SECONDARY TEACHERS BEING THOSE WITH A LOWER DEGREE OF DEDICATION TO ONE SCHOOL, AS WOULD BE EXPECTED. HOWEVER, THE DIFFERENCE HERE BETWEEN COUNTRIES IS STRIKING, AND IS DUE TO THE VARIETY OF WAYS THAT COUNTRIES ORGANIZE THEIR EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES. THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE IS BETWEEN PERU AND URUGUAY. WHILE IN THE FORMER, 81.6% OF SECONDARY EDUCATION TEACHERS WORK IN ONLY ONE SCHOOL, IN URUGUAY ONLY 27.2% DO SO (OP.CIT.).

THE SAME IIPE/UNESCO STUDY SHOWS THAT SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 75% OF TEACHERS OF THESE COUNTRIES DEFINE THEMSELVES AS STUDENT LEARNING *FACILITATORS* – A HIGHER PERCENTAGE THAN THOSE THAT DEFINE THEMSELVES AS *TRANSMITTERS OF CULTURE AND OF KNOWLEDGE*, WITH THIS PATTERN BEING QUITE HOMOGENEOUS FOR THE TWO LEVELS OF EDUCATION ANALYZED, WITH A SLIGHT TENDENCY FOR AN INCREASE IN THE PERCENT-AGE OF "TRANSMITTERS" IN THE CASE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND FOR MALE TEACHERS (OP.CIT. P.123 AND P.124).

IN REGARD TO TEACHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT, MOST TEACHERS THINK THAT THE ADMINISTRATORS OF SCHOOLS IN WHICH THEY WORK SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS (ARGENTINA 75.5%, BRA-ZIL 69.0%, AND URUGUAY 76.8%), WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PERU, WHERE CHOICE OF THIS OPTION FALLS TO 47.7% AND WHERE TECHNICAL STAFF AND SPECIALISTS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ARE THE MOST FREQUENT OPTION. NOTE SHOULD BE MADE AS WELL OF THE MARKED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRAZIL AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY IN TERMS OF THE PARTICIPATION IN TEACHER ASSESSMENTS OF PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, ON THE ONE HAND, AND OF STUDENTS, ON THE OTHER. IN FACT, IN BRAZIL AROUND 50% OF TEACHERS VALUE THE PARTICIPATION OF THESE ACTORS IN TEACHER ASSESSMENTS, WHILE IN OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH A PREFERENCE DOES NOT SURPASS 35% IN THE CASE OF PARENTS, AND IS LESS THAN 25% IN THE CASE OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION (OP.CIT. P.97).

RELATED TO THIS THEME, THE POSSIBILITY OF STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE BEING TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PURPOSES OF ASSESSING TEACHER PERFORMANCE IS A SUBJECT THAT DIVIDES THE OPINIONS OF TEACHERS. WHILE IN ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL, 42.9 % AND 41.8% OF TEACHERS, RESPECTIVELY, ARE IN FAVOR AND 46.8% AND 53.5% AGAINST, IN PERU 68.5% AGREE WITH SUCH INCLUSION, AND 29.2% DISAGREE. INDEPENDENTLY OF
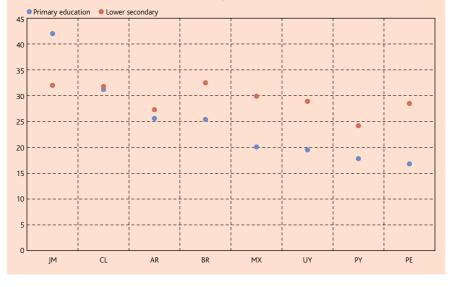
THE MAGNITUDE OF EACH COUNTRY, PERCENTAGES IN FAVOR INCREASE WHEN THE RESPONDENTS ARE TEACHERS WHO WORK IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS (BASED ON INFORMATION PROCESSED ESPECIALLY BY IIPE/UNESCO FOR THIS REPORT).

IN REGARD TO SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND INCREASING THE FLEXIBILITY OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS, THE SURVEY SHOWS THAT MORE THAN 60% OF TEACHERS IN BRAZIL, PERU, AND URUGUAY BELIEVE THAT GREATER SCHOOL AUTONOMY WOULD STRENGTHEN THEIR ABILITIES TO INCREASE THE EQUALITY OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, WHILE IN ARGENTINA THIS PERCENTAGE REACHES 47.0%, WITH 28.6% OF TEACHERS WHO AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT GRANTING MORE AUTONOMY TO SCHOOLS IS A POLICY THAT "REMOVES RESPONSIBILITY" FROM THE STATE IN PROVIDING EDUCATION SERVICES (BRAZIL 16.9%; PERU 17.1%, AND URUGUAY 15.9% - OP.CIT. P.144).

CLASS SIZE

IN FEW CASES (THOSE COUNTRIES THAT REPORT INFORMATION THROUGH UNESCO-OECD-EUROSTAT QUESTIONNAIRES) DO WE HAVE COMPARABLE INFORMATION ON THE SIZE OF LEARNING GROUPS WITH WHICH TEACHERS WORK, BUT ONLY FOR PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AND WITHOUT HAVING DISAGGREGATION THAT WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO CONTROL FOR THE EFFECT OF MULTI-GRADE SITUATIONS. AS IS TO BE EXPECTED, CLASS SIZES ARE SMALLER IN PRIMARY EDUCATION (EXCEPT IN JAMAICA), WHILE IN CHILE THEY ARE PRACTICALLY IDENTICAL, CORRESPONDING WITH THE FACT THAT ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL STRUCTURE, THESE TWO LEVELS ARE INDISTINGUISHABLE.

BEING ABLE TO HAVE INFORMATION ON THIS INDICATOR, CONTROLLING FOR THE IMPACT OF MULTI-GRADE SITUATIONS, AND MEASURES THAT DESCRIBE VARIABILITY WITHIN COUNTRIES AND FOR THE REGION AS A WHOLE WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ANALYSIS OF THIS KEY VARIABLE IN PEDAGOGICAL PROCESSES.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER SECTION OR GROUP, BY COUNTRY. 2004.

● Primary education ● Lower secondary

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

(e)   Final remarks

Variables analized in this chapter show that progress towards the achievement of EFA goals[27] is limited and that additional efforts are required even in relation to basic areas, such as ensuring universal primary completion, and that this accomplishment goes together with ensuring that everyone achieves essential basic learning outcomes.

Even in those countries almost achieving universal primary completion, it is necessary to pay attention to the situation of still excluded groups of population since even if these could represent minor percentages of the total population, they are persons entitled to some rights like everybody else. Action required for reaching these population groups usually has specific attributes and even requires inter-sectoral coordination.

In relation to other goals, progress can also be verified, but it tends to be even more modest. For instance, the number of persons who claim not to be able to read and write is an area where an urgent and firm action is required together with actions oriented towards preventing that another individual acquires such condition.

In the same fashion, access to early childhood care and education programs, depicted here only in relation to accessing pre-primary education programs, shows significant levels of progress that make the region appear in a promising global situation. Nevertheless, it also shows large disparities among countries and among age groups. Universal attainment of at least one year of pre-primary education is a goal near to be accomplished by a significant number of countries, but there are some countries far from this condition. At the same time, as reported by the last EFA Global Monitoring Report (EFA Global Monitoring Report team, 2006), these educational services tend to be concentrated in more privileged populations, thus expanding their scope is a vital challenge in order to move forward also in the arena of equity-related goals.

Access to and completion of secondary education also show a very heterogeneous situation. A significant number of countries guarantee access to at least 75% of their official-age population; nevertheless this is not a condition easy to attain by many countries where access and completion levels are strikingly low. Few countries ensure upper secondary completion to more than half of their population and there is even a limited number of countries where less than one in three persons complete that level.

The impact that having millions of people without complete primary and secondary education (lower and upper) has on general development opportunities for countries and on the likelihood of those persons to achieve decent living conditions cannot be neglected. Directly related to this, the extremely limited access of youth and adults without complete primary or secondary education to educational programs designed for them is noticeable.

It should be called attention to the marked differences in access to tertiary education between Latin American and Caribbean countries in relation to both enrollment size, and patterns of international mobility.

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27   It should be noted that the goal pertaining to equity is specifically addressed in chapter five.

4. ARE THE EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF THE REGION *EFFICIENT* IN TERMS OF THE ALLOCATION AND USE OF RESOURCES THAT SOCIETY ASSIGNS TO EDUCATION?

Education system efficiency is an everpresent issue in the educational debate. But, it cannot be seen as an economic-led obsession; rather, it is closely linked to key aspects of public action in the field of education:

- To the need to make good use of the resources that society allocates to public activities. This is an imperative that has to do with the condition of people as citizens, and consequently with their basic rights as polity's participants.
- To the negative effect that inefficiency has on the task of education itself, both in terms of diverting part of the limited resources upon which one depends and which could well be used to better guarantee the right to education, as well as in terms of the education experiences since falling behind in grade reduces the likelihood of continuation and completion of studies.

The region possesses innumerable studies on internal efficiency. These are generally based on a set of information and indicators available from countries that have routinely collected information in this regard given the current analytic models leading information systems activities.[1]
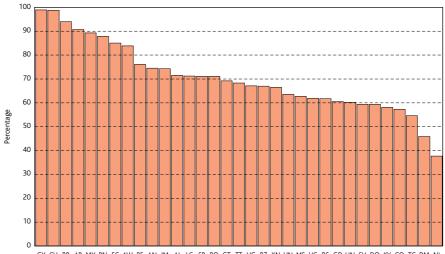
Here, in order to inquire about levels of efficiency in education systems, we shall review information relative to some indicators that, although being produced utilizing available information that is internationally comparable, are not part of the standard sets included in traditional analyses of internal efficiency. These include:

- The condition of timely enrollment of students and how this varies from the moment of entry into primary education, throughout their school careers. The main interest is to find out to what extent individuals enter primary school at the moment that corresponds to their development (that is, at the officially stipulated age, given the curricular structure) and starting here, if education programs are able to move the individual through the system in a timely manner or, to the contrary, if they provoke delays or expel students.
- We will compare the number of years expected for a person to be enrolled with the number of grades the person is expected to pass.
- The impact of being behind in grade on the likelihood of completing studies.
- The volume of financial resources that are wasted each year due to problems of internal inefficiency in education programs.

(a) Timely access and coverage

Being behind in grade is a recurrent phenomenon in the region. It is caused by problems of late entrace and is worsened due to grade repetition. In this sense, it is of crucial importance to know, first of all, the late entry conditions of individuals at the beginning of their school careers as an indicator of what education programs "receive" from society.

Late entry tends to be associated with problems of accessibility to services, particularly in rural areas with scattered populations. Actually, the possibility of traveling long distances in order to attend school is directly related to the age of children. In this sense, late entry is linked to the insufficiency of education services and indicates conditions of marginalization of populations.

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1 Models of the context-input-process-product type (CIPP)

The following graph shows the proportion of persons who enter the first grade of primary education at the age legally stipulated. As can be seen, there is a significant gap between the established age and what actually happens in many countries. It should be noted, however, that although this gap tends to indicate problems of late entry, it may also be the result of "early" entrance that can involve equivalent or even more serious pedagogical difficulties than those caused by late entry.

Graph 4.1:   **Net intake rate into the first grade of primary school, by country. 2004.**

Only four countries (Argentina, Barbados, Cuba and Guyana) achieve that at least the 90% of the population in the theoretical age to enter the first grade of primary school actually do so at that time. In 18 countries (Bahamas, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, and Venezuela) this proportion is below 70%, being even less than 50% in two cases (Dominica and Nicaragua).

Although the above information may be affected by certain problems of record keeping or of data inconsistencies, it does allow us to establish a point of reference upon which education programs function, and, in this sense, it is possible to assess the degree to which this "received" situation is maintained or deteriorated by operation of the system.

In fact, a perfectly efficient education system, from the point of view of school trajectories, is one in which 100% of persons of the age to enter in fact do so when they should, and go through the different grades without being hindered by the effect of repetition or expulsion. Thereby, the proportion of individuals enrolled in the grade that is in accordance with their age – that is, timely coverage – is a summary measure of this efficiency in the trajectories. The evolution of such timely coverage shows the extent to which the education system is able to maintain what it has "received".[2]
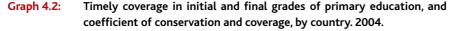
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2   Guadalupe, Rodríguez and Silva in Guadalupe ed. (2002) and Guadalupe (2002)
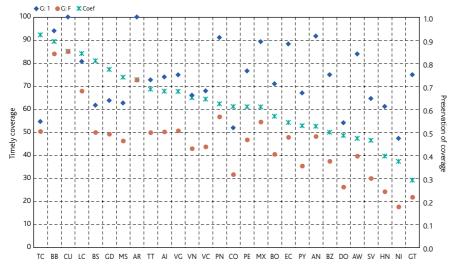
The following graph shows the percentage of the population of the corresponding official ages that is enrolled in the initial or final grade of primary education, as well as the coefficient that links both values, showing the extent to which the education system conserves its point of departure.[3]

As can be seen, only one country (Turks and Caicos) shows that throughout primary education it retains nine-tenths of the timely coverage with which the population begins in the first grade. That is, for every ten children who enter the first grade at the stipulated age, nine are in the final grade under the same condition. The large majority of countries conserve less than seven-tenths of this coverage, and in six countries (Dominican Republic, Aruba, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala) the system manages to delay or expel more than one-half of the persons who had entered the first grade in a timely manner.

In two countries (Barbados and Cuba) more than 80% of the population in the theoretical age to be in the final grade of primary education are in fact in that grade. Timely enrollment in the final grade, which would be the norm in an efficient system, is only a reality for less than one-third of the population in six Latin American countries (Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala).

Graph 4.2: **Timely coverage in initial and final grades of primary education, and coefficient of conservation and coverage, by country. 2004.**

Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.

Moreover, although timely coverage in the first grade of primary education has an average value for the set of countries observed that surpasses 73% (72.6), some 47% (45.5) are delayed or leave before the final grade. This means that education systems only preserve, on average, 63.1% of their point of departure.

We conclude that *education systems in the region delay or expel* **during primary school** *alone four of every ten children* that make timely entry into the first grade.[4]

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3   Ideally, this information should be constructed using time-series data in order to have timely coverage for the first year for year t, and timely coverage for the final grade in the year t+d-1, where d is the official duration of the level. However, available information has not allowed us to thus proceed. Therefore, we have considered only information of a single year, assuming for the moment a certain degree of permanence in time of these values. For greater detail, see the methodological notes.

4   Note that lack of information on Brazil tends to skew these regional values. In this case, therefore, we have preferred to speak of the value for the countries observed. Brazil's high repetition rates, plus the size of the population could significantly affect the regional figure.

At the same time, one may note as a way of reference in some countries,[5] the extent to which timely coverage in the final grade of primary education has changed in recent years. The following table shows the available information in this regard. As can be noted, the trend is positive, at least in these countries, although with very slow growth. What is of particular concern is that timely coverage in the final grade of primary education tends to be low (in all countries except Argentina and Cuba, the last value observed is less than 60%).

Table 4: **Timely coverage in the final grade of primary education. School years 1999 to 2004.**
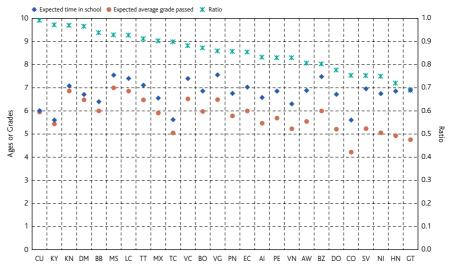
Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Argentina	73.2	74.2	73.8	75.7	74.5	72.8
Colombia	32.7	n.d.	34.3	34.4	n.d.	31.7
Cuba	77.2	81.2	83.1	88.6	86.7	85.1
Ecuador	42.3	43.6	45.4	47.0	47.9	n.d.
Guatemala	16.3	18.6	19.8	20.5	n.d.	21.8
Panama	51.7	54.7	55.9	57.3	n.d.	56.7
Paraguay	26.9	30.2	32.2	34.6	25.5	35.4
Peru	42.6	44.3	40.1	43.2	n.d.	46.7
Venezuela	34.1	35.5	n.d.	41.4	41.7	42.9

(b)   The impact of inefficiency on education trajectories

One manifestation of the problems of efficiency of education systems is the relation between the number of years that a person is expected to remain in school and the number of grades he or she is expected to pass. The following graph shows the values and relation between both phenomena for the case of primary education.

Graph 4.3: **School life expectancy and expected average grades passed in primary education. 2004.**
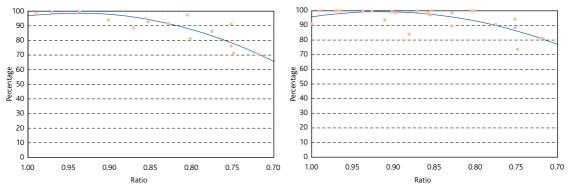
It is clear that there is a significant number of countries with marked lack of adjustment between expected time in school and the number of grades passed. If we link this

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5   The referential character of this information is due to both the number of countries as well as the limited nature of the information available and its possible inconsistencies.

information with that shown on completion levels of primary education (p. 88 and ff.), it will be noted that as discrepancies increase, completion levels of studies decrease. This is shown in the following graph.

Graph 4.4: **Ratio of the expected grade passed / school life expectancy (primary education only) and percentage of the population 15 to 19 years of age that has completed primary education, and current completion of primary education. 2004.**
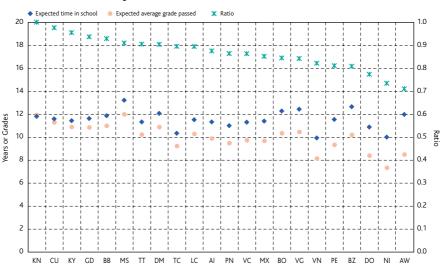
This relation, evident in primary education, becomes cloudy at the level of secondary education due to the fact that delays in progress through grades increase the likelihood of dropping out of school, which is more marked the older the age. This means that those who reach secondary education do so after having passed through the "filter" of primary education. Thus, the fact that the probability of continuing to study is reduced with delays in progress produces a pattern according to which those who reach the higher grades are those with more "successful" school careers (with fewer delays), and thus producing a Darwinian pattern of "survival of the fittest", carrying a profound discriminatory component.

This can be seen, on the one hand, in the structure of enrollment by ages and grades; and on the other hand, in the lesser adjustment between the aforementioned relation which, in any case, is present. Actually, while observing education trajectories up to the end of upper secondary education we also note an important discrepancy between the number of years that a person is expected to be enrolled and the number of grades the person is expected to pass, as shown in the following graph.
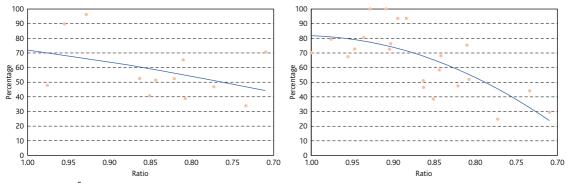
Graph 4.5: School life expectancy and expected average grade passed. Primary and secondary education. 2004.

Graph 4.6: Ratio of expected grade approved/school life expectancy (from primary until upper secondary education), and percentage of the population 20 to 24 years of age that has completed upper secondary education and probability of completing upper secondary education. 2004.
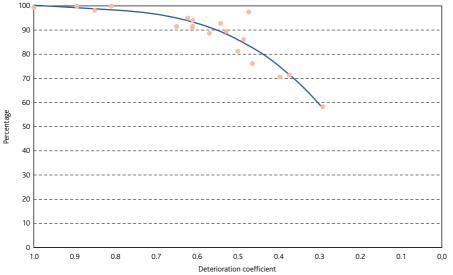
(c) Impact of inefficiency on the completion of studies

The inefficiency of education systems has an impact on the possibilities of people in regard to successful continuation of their studies. In effect, delays in school progress due to grade repetition also leads to families being obliged to face additional expenses, as well as increasing the opportunity costs of studying which, in the last analysis, translates into decisions on the continuity of studies.

Evidence available in the region clearly shows how the inefficiency of education systems, expressed by their capacity to delay or expel students, is associated with lower levels of completion of studies. This can be seen in the following graph.

Graph 4.7: Deterioration coefficient of timely coverage in primary education, and completion levels of study between individuals of recent school graduation age (15 to 19 years). 2004.

For the countries of the region, in those in which timely coverage in the final grade goes below 0.8 times the observed value in the first grade, completion levels drop, and this decrease is increasingly pronounced as the deterioration increases. Thus, patterns of internal inefficiency of education systems should be seen as phenomena that affect the exercise of the right to education in various senses, including completion of studies.

(d)   Resource wastage
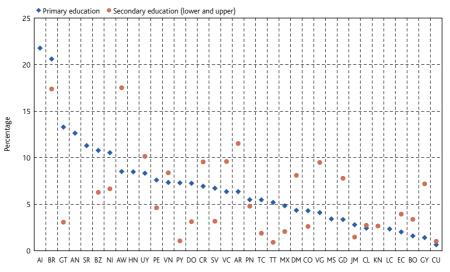
As we have seen, the internal inefficiency of education systems not only causes difficulties for students; it also results in a significant wastage of public resources. In effect, in financial terms, grade repetition means making an investment already made due to the fact that the system could not guarantee the progress of a group of students in a given school year. It is important to consider that grade repetition as a policy has been seen as a way of granting a "second chance" to students who fail. This argument presents a number of weaknesses.[6] As we have noted, it is not students who fail; rather it is education systems that are not able to duly guarantee the right of education to students. From this point of view, we may well ask if repetition means that the system treats those who repeat grades, correcting the errors or omissions that led to repetition. In fact, it is rare that repetition involves correction by the system; on the contrary – it subjects students (along with the negative affective elements, pressures from the environment, and increased opportunity costs for studying) to an educational experience similar to the preceding one which, not being sensitive to the factors that explain the repetition, is unlikely to achieve a better result.

On the other hand, and given the results of learning assessments such as PISA, it would be well to ask whether grade repetition is associated with learning objectives. For if this is the case, students assessed on a test such as PISA, due to the fact of being enrolled in secondary education, should not exhibit such poor results, for having "passed" primary education, they should be able to demonstrate more competence in reading, writing, and numeracy.

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6   For a detailed discussion of the problem, see Crahay (2006).

Repetition is associated with the assessment practices carried out by teachers. What is it, then, that teachers are assessing? With what criteria? We may well ask whether grade repetition is in fact more associated with other factors different from the achievement of learning objectives expressed in the curriculum. For example, is there not, rather, a pedagogical culture that establishes "quotas" of repeaters that reflect the proper exercise of teaching? Are there not discriminatory practices and/or self-fulfilling prophesies that punish even more those who are in most need? Are there not practices that punish all and everything that deviates from a supposed homogenizing "norm"? These kinds of considerations have led to the growing view of grade repetition as a vain pedagogical mechanism that, by creating or aggravating problems of progress through school, gives rise to additional problems without solving any. In fact, in various countries in Latin America, where repetition is greater, since in the Caribbean there is a grade promotion tradition associated with the ages of students, have begun to apply "automatic grade promotion" policies which in some cases have been accompanied with pedagogical support. It is revealing that the introduction of automatic promotion policies in specific grades (particularly in the first grade of primary school, which historically has witnessed the highest repetition rates which for their part express very ably the lack of adjustment between how education practice is structured and the needs of children who are beginning their school experience) have not led to an increase of failure in subsequent grades. This also reinforces the criticisms of grade repetition as a pedagogical practice.

Thus, the costs of grade repetition not only seem to have no justification whatsoever; but have undesirable impacts as well. This is even more dramatic when we note their magnitude in financial terms, and the amounts that could well be spent to improve education programs in order for them to be better able to guarantee the right to education.

Graph 4.8:   **Percentage of enrolled students who are grade repeaters. Primary and secondary education. 2004.**

These enrollment percentages mean that two countries (Anguilla and Brazil) spend each year more than one-fifth of the resources allocated to primary education in order to cover this inefficiency. Another five countries (Guatemala, Netherland Antilles, Suriname, Belize, and Nicaragua) spend more than 10%. Thirteen countries (Mexico, Dominica, Colombia, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Grenada, Jamaica, Chile, Saint Lucia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, and Cuba) have enrolled as grade repeaters less than 5% of their primary school students.

In the case of secondary education the situation is a bit better, with the number of

countries with less than 5% of their enrollees as repeaters being greater. In effect, there are 16 countries in this situation (Guatemala, Peru, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama, Turks and Caicos, Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Colombia, Jamaica, Chile, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Cuba). Note that in this group there are countries with lower primary completion levels – being additional evidence in regard to the Darwinian behavior of school trajectories mentioned above. Only two countries (Brazil and Aruba) have repeater percentages higher than 15% in secondary education.

These rates involve equivalent proportions of investment that cannot be applied to improving educational programs. These resources reach the sum of 5.6 billion US dollars (PPP) (at constant values for the year 2000) in the case of primary education, and 5.5 billion US dollars PPP (at constant values for the year 2000) in the case of secondary education. Note that Brazil, due to its population and to high grade repetition rates, explains most of both figures (62.9% and 73.9% of the regional value, respectively.)[7]
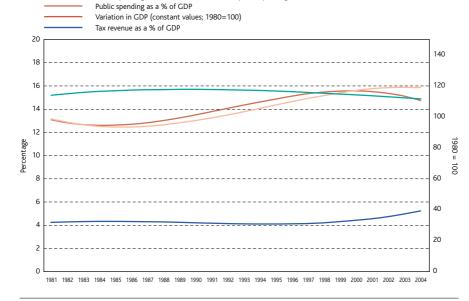
This wastage of resources is not only inadmissible in itself, due to not respecting the efforts made by society to finance public action; it should also be seen in the light of the opportunity costs of these resources. In effect, the resources here wasted could fund many important activities aimed at guaranteeing the right to education, such as overcoming repetition and providing support mechanisms aimed at guaranteeing learning of all students.

Thus, the problems of financing education not only suffer restrictions due to lack of resources, but also because of wastage in their application. Thus, the joint call by ECLAC and UNESCO to "invest better in order to invest more" has become an imperative (ECLAC, UNESCO; 2005).

Note that public investment in education has increased regularly during the past decade. Currently, public effort in education represents, on average for the region, 5.0% of the Gross Domestic Product, when in the 1980s the average was 4.3%, and in the 1990s 4.1%. This greater relative effort takes place within a context of economic recovery during which the total resources allocated to education have increased in absolute terms.

Graph 4.9: **Indicators of effort, priority, and economic context. 1981-2004.**

Public spending on education as a % of total public spending
Public spending as a % of GDP
Variation in GDP (constant values; 1980=100)
Tax revenue as a % of GDP
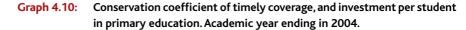
Source:
UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and on-line database of the International Monetary Fund.

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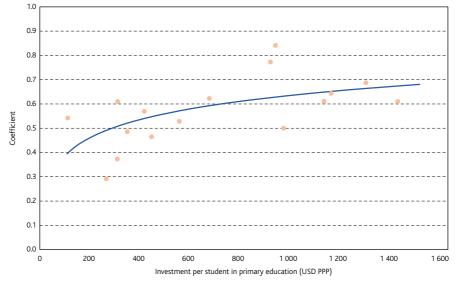
7   Estimates of the authors based on information from the UIS database for the school years between 1999 and 2004.

This increase, however, is the joint result of economic development and increases in tax revenue, since the relative priority assigned to education in government budgets has tended to stagnate. Thus, while tax revenue in the 1980s was an average 12.6% of GDP, during the 1990s reached 14.1%, and 14.8% in 2004. At the same time, the relative participation of education in public spending went from 16.0% in the 1980s to 15.3% in the 1990s, and 14.4% in 2004.

On the other hand, a greater effort a well as greater priority granted to education could, depending on the behavior of enrollment figures, translate into higher rates of investment per student. This, for its part, could mean better services provided to them. In addition, as can be seen in the following graph, it is possible that greater levels of investment per student are related to greater efficiency in student trajectories. That is, the countries with the highest levels of investment per student tend to be also those that guarantee greater efficiency in education trajectories.

Graph 4.10: **Conservation coefficient of timely coverage, and investment per student in primary education. Academic year ending in 2004.**

Finally, the task remains to assess what has been the effect that this increase in allocated public resources has had on the real progress of countries. That is, has this greater allocation better assured the right to education? Has it made it possible to raise levels of access to and completion of studies? Has it made possible raising the level of student learning? Has it made possible greater relevance of education content and better adjustment of services to the needs of people? Has it been accompanied by measures that optimize their impact, improving education trajectories? Has it contributed to achieving greater equity? The concern for efficiency – for respecting the resources that society allocates to education – involves clarifying whether spending "more" means spending "better", in light of its impacts on key issues that define the right to education.

5. ARE EDUCATION SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTING TO *EQUITY* THROUGH THE CREATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?

The previous chapters show a complex education situation in the region. This situation comprises both significant progress achieved and equally significant limitations and challenges. However, these chapters have treated each of the countries of the region as a unit, effectively showing the typical situations of each country, but not showing the disparities that exist within them.

In fact, the analysis of existing disparities, if focused on elements that one would wish to be similar for different population groups, provides substantive evidence on the subject of equity. The equal treatment of persons requires identifying in what areas we can expect equality of behavior.[1] For example, assuring equivalent learning most certainly requires an unequal allocation of resources that proportionally meets the diversity of situations and needs of those demanding the right to education.

Thus, approaching the theme of equity involves verifying if the above-mentioned national progress or challenges benefit or affect people in an equivalent way; or rather, if they are distributed throughout the population in a manner that reproduces and/or makes social inequalities more acute based on realities that go beyond the strictly educational. These potential differences in the ways that the above-mentioned achievements and challenges have an impact on different sectors of the population must be explained as well, in regard to how education policies treat diversity. For example, equal financing schemes that are blind to the diversity of conditions and needs tend to reproduce social inequalities. Similarly, the presence of gender stereotypes or elements of cultural discrimination in education materials or practices can result in evident differences in aspects such as rates of the completion of studies or in learning achievement.

This chapter will focus on identifying disparities between pre-defined population groups[2] that point toward discriminatory elements in that they touch upon exercise of the right to education. Thus, and given the availability of information, we will describe disparities between different social groups (men and females, urban and rural populations, populations with different levels of income and condition of extreme poverty, populations according to ethnic or linguistic group) in regard to access to education programs, the conpletion of studies (and literacy as a phenomenon linked to completion), and being behind grade in school.

(a) Gender equity

Information on gender parity in rates of school access, completion, and delay show that the region has tended to close these kinds of gaps during recent decades. In fact, we begin to see a clear trend toward a reversal in disparities in that, increasingly, the male population shows less favorable rates.
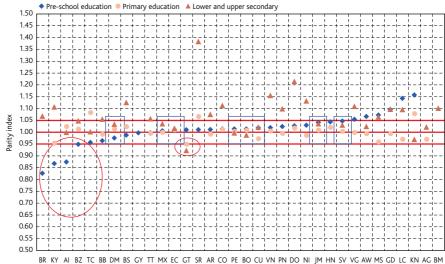
In effect, access rates show that in very few cases (the six indicated by the red ovals on the graph) are their disparities against the female population, while in a significant number of cases, existing disparities place the male population at a disadvantage (the cases that fall

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1   In this regard, see Sen (1992)

2   For this purpose we have used as tool parity indices. These compare the value of a given indicator for two population groups. When the index obtained has a value of one, this means that the indicator presents the same value for the two groups compared. If, on the other hand, the value is less than one, it means that the indicator for the group considered in the numerator (usually the group presumed to be at a disadvantage) is lower, showing a disadvantage for this group. Similarly, a value of more than one indicates the inverse of the disparity; that is, that the group whose value is considered in the numerator is in an advantageous situation. Finally, we have considered that values of an index between 0.95 and 1.05, or 1 ± 0,05, represent situations that may be considered as in parity.

on the upper part of the graph mainly corresponding to secondary education). In the other cases, we see smaller differences that can be seen as situations of parity, especially in eight countries (Dominica, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Cuba, Jamaica, and El Salvador) the indices of which are marked in blue rectangles, since in these we see a general situation of parity in the levels of education considered.

Graph 5.1: **Parity index between females and males in net enrollment rates of pre-school, primary, and secondary education. 2004.**
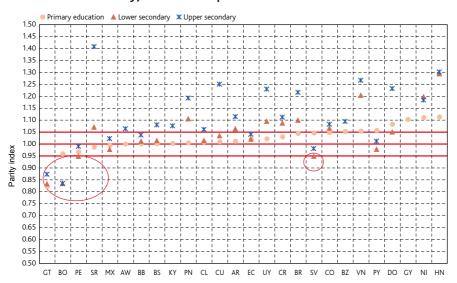
In the case of completion levels for populations of recent egressing age, we see that disparities against the female population are rare and are seen in four countries (Guatemala –at the three levels-, Bolivia –both secondary levels, and Peru and El Salvador –lower secondary only).

However, differences in regard to the male population are more marked than in terms of access, and only three countries (Barbados, Ecuador and Mexico) show parity in completion of the three education levels considered.
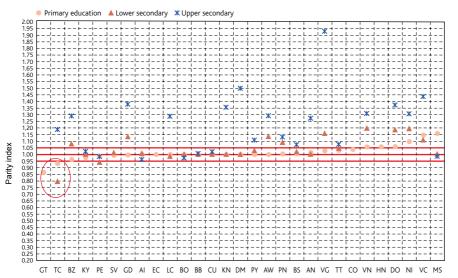
Current patterns of completion of studies show a similar behavior. In only two cases (Guatemala and Turks and Caicos) their disparities leave the female population at a disadvantage, and only in the case of primary education in the former, and primary and lower secondary in the latter. Similarly, only five countries (Cayman Islands, Anguila, Bolivia, Barbados, and Cuba) show parity in the three education levels considered, while disparities against the male population can be seen principally, but not exclusively, in the case of upper secondary education.

On the other hand, literacy rates show disparities against females in the adult population as a whole in Guatemala, Bolivia, and Peru (countries with a significant indigenous population) although only in Guatemala do these gaps apply to the younger population (15 to 24 years). All of the other countries show parity between males and females in both age groups, except in Nicaragua and Jamaica.[3] In the former, parity in the population as a whole begins to show a disadvantage in detriment to males; in the latter, the only data available shows significant disparities against the male population.

Graph 5.4: **Parity index between females and males in percentages of individuals 15 years of age and over and 15 to 24 years who claim to know how to read and write.**
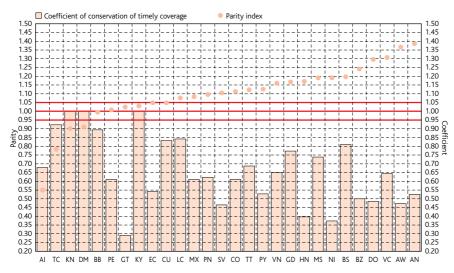
Finally, the coefficient of conservation of timely coverage in primary education, as an indicator of behind-grade schooling, shows four countries (Anguila, Turks and Caicos, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Dominica) where girls appear to be at a disadvantage, six countries (Barbados, Peru, Guatemala, Cayman Islands, Ecuador, and Cuba) where there is parity, and 18 countries in which there is disparity against the male population. Note, however, that the observed parities or disparities correspond to very different levels of conservation of timely coverage. Thus, for example, Cayman Islands and Guatemala present parity between genders. But while in the former this corresponds to high conservation of timely coverage, in the latter case this corresponds to boys and girls being delayed or expelled from the system in large proportions, but equivalently.

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3   Note that the data for Jamaica comes from an assessment of reading and writing skills and, therefore, is not strictly comparable to the other countries.

Parity index between females and males in the conservation of timely coverage between the initial and final grades of primary education. 2004.

☐ Coefficient of conservation of timely coverage ● Parity index

If we link this information with that observed in terms of the completion of primary education, we note that in the case of Guatemala, there are marked differences in such completion to the disadvantage of the female population. The co-existence of these differences with parity in the conservation of timely coverage shows that school trajectories are such that there would be less tolerance for female than for male repetition. Then, a female student that is to repeat a grade has a greater likelihood of dropping out of school than a male student in the same condition. Therefore, girls who remain in the system tend to be in a better situation in regard to behind grade schooling. Here again is evidence of the above-mentioned *Darwinian* patterns of discrimination that operate in education systems, with negative impacts on those who are most vulnerable.
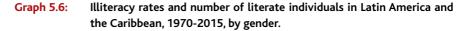
Beyond some specific situations that should be met by national education systems, the general one is of a clear trend toward gender parity in the variables considered – or in various cases toward a change in the direction of traditional disparities which today tend to be recorded with greater frequency against the female population.
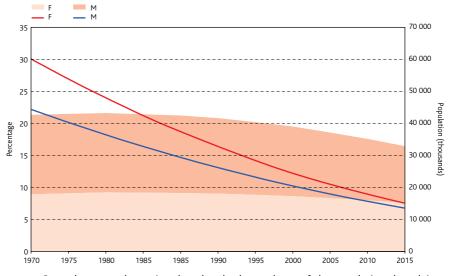
This should not be understood as synonymous with the inexistence of gender problems or regarding discrimination against women and girls. The countries of the region have progressed significantly toward parity between males and females in the variables considered above. However, this important progress should not lead us to disregard other phenomena that create gender inequalities. It is vital to treat aspects such as educational practices and the kind of stereotypes that these can produce. It is clear that in some countries with large indigenous populations, the disparities between females still need to be considered in different aspects – in particular among the older population.

For example, observation of illiteracy rates during the last 35 years clearly shows various phenomena that should be highlighted:

First, there is a clear trend toward reduction of both the rates as well as the gender gaps associated with them. Thus, in 2005 the male illiteracy rate of the region as a whole reached the equivalent of 0.39 of that of 1970, while the female rate showed a value of 0.34. This difference in the reduction of rates clearly shows a closing of the gap. Thus, the parity index during the same period went from 1.36 to 1.17, still denoting a disparity against the female population. It is expected that by the year 2015 the regional rates will be 0.67 of that of 1990 for males

125

and 0.62 for females. These figures will not make it possible to attain the goal of reducing by one-half the rate established at Dakar unless decided efforts are made in this sense.[4]

Graph 5.6: **Illiteracy rates and number of literate individuals in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1970-2015, by gender.**

Second, we can determine that the absolute volume of the population that claims not to be able to read and write varies in a markedly different way. On the one hand, the male population in such a condition has only been reduced between 1970 and 2005 by 6.9%, staying at nearly 17 million, while the female population has fallen by 17.4%, and thus going from 25 to slightly more than 20 million people in the period considered. This behavior of the data translates into a projection for the year 2015 showing that the number of males that claim not to know how to read and write will surpass 15 million, while the number of females in such condition will surpass 17 million.

It is thus clear that progress observed in regard to access to and completion of primary education has resulted in a reduction of the gap between males and females in regard to this variable as well, and that the limitations observed still do not universally guarantee even basic levels of reading and writing skills.

(b) Equity in regard to areas of residence[5]

Available information at this level of disaggregation is limited. Note that this does not necessarily mean that countries do not generate this information; rather that the international data collection does not consider this dimension since it is very difficult to ensure homogeneous definitions that make data comparable. Thus, although many indicators may be brokendown according to this criterion, this cannot always be done without problems. The fact that education systems generate information based on schools, and not on the attributes of individuals introduces a first difficulty in regard to this and to other disaggregations. A second difficulty is related to the use what type of disaggregations are possible with available population projections? Do these correspond to the observation units defined in education information systems?

4   Note that available information does not reflect recent mass literacy training campaigns in Venezuela - which have would translate into the highest rate of improvement of the corresponding countries as well as the region as a whole.
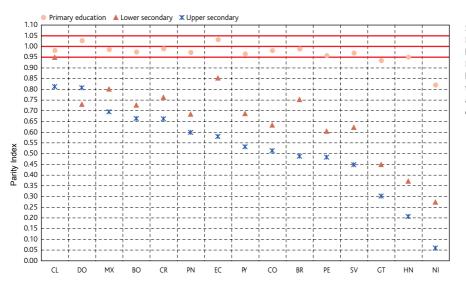
5   See the technical notes for details on definitions and the implications of information used for this section.

Thus, for this section it has only been possible to use information on estimated parity of access rates and on the level of completion of studies of the different education levels in populations of recent completion ages.

The estimated parity of access rates[6] shows that with the exception of three countries (Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) that present, moreover, low levels of completion of primary education, parity between areas of residence has been achieved for each level. However, the differences between areas of residence at the other two levels of education considered (lower and upper secondary) systematically show disadvantages for rural areas in all countries with information, being greater at the at the highest level considered.

Graph 5.7: **Parity index in attendance rates between rural and urban areas, by level of education**

Source:
Household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All information has been organized according to ISCED 97. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.
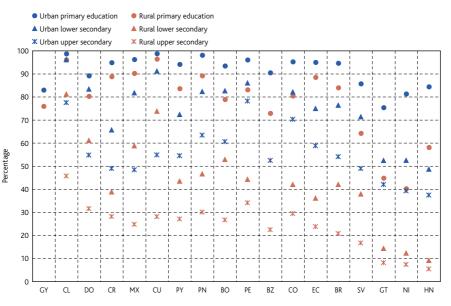
For its part, the proportions of persons of recent graduation ages (15 to 19 years in the case of primary education and 20 to 24 years for secondary education) who have completed the different levels of education show systematic disparities to the disadvantage of rural populations in all countries. In fact, only two countries (Cuba and Chile) show a situation of parity, but only limited to primary education. It should be noted that the disparities are, in general, more pronounced than those observed between males and females, and that these become very marked in going from primary to secondary education. In fact, in ten countries (Costa Rica, Paraguay, Panama, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras) the gaps grow more between lower secondary and primary than between upper and lower secondary.

The following graph shows the observed values in each one of these countries for the three education levels considered. As can be seen, the proportions of individuals who are inhabitants of rural areas with complete secondary education (lower or upper) show very low levels in a significant number of countries. Complete upper secondary is only achieved by less than one in ten rural inhabitants in three countries (Guatemala; Nicaragua, and Honduras) and by less than one in four in another five countries (Mexico, Belize, Ecuador, Brazil, and El Salvador).

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6   Population censuses and household surveys tend to ask about "attendance" for different possible disaggregations according to the source, but present significant difficulties that cannot be dismissed. For this reason, we are only considering the use of relative differences between different population groups (in this case, urban and rural populations) and not the values of such rates. For details regarding these difficulties, see the methodological notes.

Graph 5.8: Percentage of individuals inhabitants of urban and rural areas 15 to 19 years of age (primary education) and 20 to 24 (secondary education) who have completed their studies. 2004.

Thus we see that the proportion of individuals residents of urban areas who have completed primary school is double that observed in rural areas in Nicaragua; 70% greater in the case of Guatemala, and 50% greater in Honduras. These differences increase up to 5.4 times in the case of lower secondary in Honduras; and 6.9 times for upper secondary of that country. That is, while in urban areas of Honduras 37.4% of persons 20 to 24 years of age have completed upper secondary, this figure 5.4% in rural areas. In the same country, fewer than one in every ten people 20 to 24 years of age and inhabitants of rural areas have completed lower secondary education.

(c)   Equality in regard to membership in ethnic groups[7]

In contrast to the disaggregations by areas of residence, in this case it has only been possible to have information from a limited number of countries on education variables ac-cording to membership in an ethnic group for the case of the percentages of people of recent graduation age who have completed the different levels of education.

Completion rates show that the proportions of individuals 20 to 24 years of age (15 to 19 years in the case of primary education) who have completed the different levels of education reveal systematic disparities against *indigenous* populations. There is no country with available information that does not show disparities in regard to at least one level of education. In fact, only one country (Cuba) shows disparities only in regard to upper secondary. Another three countries (Peru, Brazil, and Chile) attain parity in primary education. All other cases show clear disparities for completion of the three levels of education considered. It should be noted that the disparities are in general more marked than those observed between males and females and between areas of residence, and that these are very marked in going from primary to secondary education. In six countries (Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Guatemala, and Panama) the gaps grow more between primary and lower secondary than between lower

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7   See the technical notes for details about the definitions and implications of information used for this section and the way, in each case, that the groups here called "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" groups are composed.
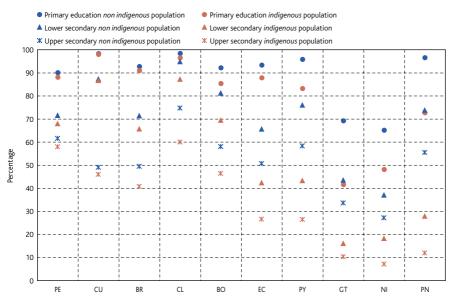
and upper secondary, which is the case of the other four countries with information (Cuba, Brazil, Chile, and Nicaragua).

The following graph shows the values observed in each one of these countries for the three levels concerned. As can be seen, the proportions of individuals belonging to *indigenous* ethnic groups with complete secondary education (lower or upper) show very limited values in the countries. The highest value for upper secondary (Chile) is only 60%; while the lowest (Nicaragua) is equivalent to 7.1%. In five countries (Ecuador, Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama) less than one in three indigenous persons 20 to 24 years of age has concluded upper secondary. In the case of lower secondary, the situation is slightly better, since in two countries (Cuba and Chile) completion levels of the *indigenous* population surpass 80%, and in only three countries (Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama) is completion attained by less than one-third of the *indigenous* population 20 to 24 years of age.

However, of note are the limited completion levels, even of primary education, among the *indigenous* inhabitants of some countries. In two of them (Guatemala and Nicaragua), completion of primary education among the *indigenous* population 20 to 24 years of age does not surpass 50%, although in the other countries (except in Panama) it surpasses the threshold of 80%.

Graph 5.9:   **Percentage of persons, by ethnic group and 15 to 19 years of age (primary education) and 20 to 24 years (secondary education) who have completed their studies. 2004.**

Source:
For Caribbean countries and Aruba: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) For Cuba: information from the population census of 2002. For Latin American countries: household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All information has been organized according to ISCED 97. See the data appendix for values and explanatory notes.
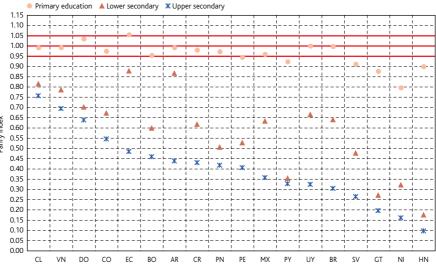
We thus see that the proportion of persons belonging to a *non-indigenous* ethnic group who complete primary education is 66% greater than the proportion observed in the indigenous group in Guatemala, 35% greater in Nicaragua, and 33% greater in Panama. These differences increase up to 2.7 times in the case of lower secondary in Guatemala, 4.7 times for upper secondary in Panama. That is, while among the *non-indigenous* population of Panama and Guatemala 73.7% and 43.4% of persons 20 to 24 years of age, respectively have completed their upper secondary education, this proportion is 11.9% and 10.3% among the *indigenous* inhabitants of the respective countries. Note also that in Nicaragua and Guatemala less than one in five people 20 to 24 years of age belonging to *indigenous* groups have completed lower secondary school.

(d)   Equity in regard to income and condition of extreme poverty[8]

For this section it has only been possible to use information on estimated parity of access rates and on levels of conclusion of studies of the different education levels for populations of recent exit age from schooling.

The estimated parity in access rates[9] shows that, with the exception of six countries (Peru, Paraguay, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras) parity between the extreme quintiles of income distribution has been achieved for primary education. However, differences between income quintiles for the other levels of education considered (lower and upper secondary) are seen in all countries with information available in disadvantage to lower income populations.

Graph 5.10:   Parity index in attendance rates between upper and lower quintiles of income, by level of education

Note that the disparities are, in general, more pronounced than those observed between genders, areas of residence, and ethnic groups, and that these are very marked in the transition from primary to secondary education. In thirteen countries (Chile, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras) the gaps grow more between primary and lower secondary and between lower and upper secondary.

Completion rates show that the proportions of people 20 to 24 years of age (15 to 19 years in the case of primary education) who have completed the different levels of education show systematic disparities disfavoring the populations with lower income levels. The only situations of parity observed are in the cases of primary education in Chile and in Argentina, given their proximity to universal completion of that level.
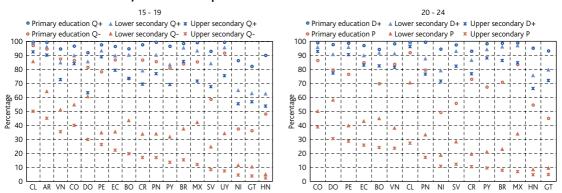
It should be noted that the disparities are, in general, more pronounced than those observed in the disaggregations previously considered, and that these become more marked as

8   See the technical notes for details about the definitions and implications of information used for this section.
9   Population censuses and household surveys tend to ask about "attendance" for different possible disaggregations according to the source, but present significant difficulties that cannot be dismissed. For this reason, we are only considering the use of differentials between different population groups (in this case, urban and rural populations) and not the values of such rates. For details regarding these difficulties, see the methodological notes.

schooling levels increase from primary to lower and then upper secondary education. In fact, in most countries the gaps tend to grow more between primary and lower secondary than between lower and upper secondary. Only in seven countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Uruguay) is this situation not observed when we consider differences by quintiles of the population, and in five of these (Bolivia, Chile, Dominican Republic, and Mexico) when the disparities between the population in the upper income decile and the extremely poor are taken into account.

Graph 5.11: **Percentage of persons by level of income and condition of extreme poverty 15 to 19 years of age (primary education) and 20 to 24 years (secondary education) who have completed their studies. 2004.**

The graph also shows that the proportions of persons 20 to 24 years of age living in extreme poverty who complete upper secondary education is not above one-third, except in one country (Colombia) and below one-fifth in nine countries (Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay) and not even one-tenth in five of these (Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Paraguay). Similarly, the proportion of this group of persons who are able to complete lower secondary is less than 50% in all countries except three (Colombia, Chile and Dominican Republic) and is less than one-third in seven countries (Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay).

This situation contrasts with that observed for the population 20 to 24 years of age members of households part of the 10% of those with highest incomes. In fact, possessing a complete lower secondary education is the case for more than 90% of this group in all countries except six (Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), and complete upper secondary is the case for at least three out of four persons in all the countries considered except three (Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua). These latter countries show that, in addition to serious problems of equality, they have an absolute problem of completion (as seen in the corresponding section in the chapter on *efficacy* (p. 88 ff.) which effects even the elite, with the resulting consequences for possibilities of these countries' general development.

Moreover, we observe that the proportion of persons in the upper decile of the income distribution that complete primary education is double that of the indigenous population of Nicaragua and Guatemala. These differences reach up to 9.1 times in the case of lower secondary in Honduras, and 15.1 times in upper secondary in Guatemala. That is, while in the upper decile of the latter country, 72% of persons 20 to 24 years of age have completed secondary schooling, this proportion is 4.8% in the case of the case of the extremely poor population. In fact, in this same country, less than one in ten extremely poor people who are 20 to 24 years of age have completed lower secondary school. A very similar situation is seen in Honduras, where the corresponding values are 66.3%, 4.7%, and 8.3%. In this case, however, the disparity is less than in Guatemala due to the lower level of completion for upper secondary, even among the population in the upper decile of income distribution.

(e)   What kinds of social conditions are most associated with education inequality?

In spite of significant progress in achieving key education goals in the region -outlined in the chapter on efficacy-, there are still important general challenges or deficiencies that have been that section. But the information presented here allows us to look at it in the light of the basic concern of equity. Actually, available information indicates that education deficiencies do not effect the entire population of a country homogeneously, and that they systematically have the most impact on the most vulnerable populations and are part of the marginalization of these populations.

In fact, the information considered in this report shows systematic differences to the disadvantage of the *rural population, indigenous population*, and *those with the lowest incomes*, particularly those who live in extreme poverty. Education deficit are part of the *social structure of systematic marginalization of particular population groups. In this sense, education is not able to aid in compensating for other social differences; rather it contributes to reproducing them*.
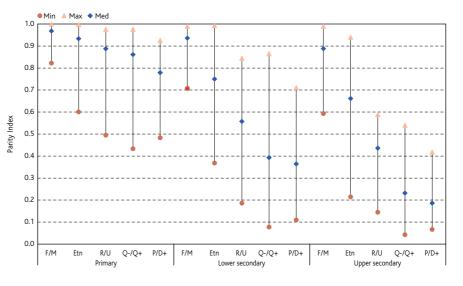
On the other hand, available information shows that education differences are systematically stronger when they are viewed in relation to income and condition of extreme poverty of the population, and are weaker in regard to area of residence, ethnic pertinence, and gender.

In fact, as the following graph indicates in the case of completion of studies for those of recent graduation ages, the lowest parity indices are consistently found in the disaggregations by income. Thus, even the highest values of the parity indices of these disaggregations tend to be lower than those recorded in other disaggregations, even in the case of primary education completion.

Graph 5.12:   **Parity indices of completion of levels of education of the population 15 to 19 years of age (primary education) and 20 to 24 years (lower and upper secondary). Minimum, maximum, and median[10] values observed.**

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10   In order to observe central trends, we have used, in this case, median values. These indicate the value that divides the distribution into two equal parts in terms of the number of observations.

In addition to the above, note that, given the characteristics of the information used, it has not been recommendable to conjugate disaggregation criteria and observe, for example, what is the situation of the poor, indigenous female population inhabiting rural areas. Although it has not been possible to proceed in this fashion, it is logical to assume that the different criteria used for disaggregating the information may have combined effects that are quite complex and that make none of these dimensions negligible. Although it is not possible to quantify the joint impact of two or more criteria, it is necessary to assume that such an effect exists and to take it into consideration in order to design interventions that these forms of exclusion demand, as well as the resulting violations of the right to education here identified.

(f)   Final remarks

Although the subject of education equity can encompass a broad area, the information available for carrying out an international analysis only permits a limited set of inquiries that, nevertheless, well illustrate the seriousness of the situation found.

If to the above, we add evidence coming from practices of discrimination reproduced daily in classrooms, and which are among the factors that explain the inequities here documented,[11] the situation becomes even more dramatic, and therefore it is arguable that the need for decided intervention clearly cannot be delayed.

Among the pending themes is the generation of new information on student achievement. The Second Comparative Study of UNESCO, being carried out in almost all countries of Latin America, will make it possible to move forward in this sense, incorporating relevant information on teacher classroom practices and strategies for working under adverse and heterogeneous situations. For the time being, however, we have evidence from the first such study held in 1997, as well as the benefit of numerous national studies[12] that consistently show significant disparities in student achievement and factors associated with the socio-economic levels of their families.

This reality, added to the almost exclusive emphasis on the understanding of the quality of education as identical with levels of student achievement produces, given that students in families with greater resources tend to attend private, paid schools, the false impression that such schools are better than others. The fact is that differences in achievement levels are principally explained by the socio-economic conditions of families. This false representation weakens even more the image of public schools that, although they do not guarantee students the right to learn, operate with significant limitations of resources and skills and serve a population with greater necessities. It is imperative to concentrate efforts on strengthening public schools so that they can develop their tasks more successfully.

In this scenario, it is good to know that there are schools that, serving a population with a high level of needs, are able to achieve better academic results,[13] and demonstrating that the social origins of students do not impede them from learning. They introduce greater challenges, but do not make the task of assuring learning impossible. This demonstrates that with appropriate regulation, sufficient resources, and solid action and professional and emotional commitment of the actors involved; schools can contribute decidedly to creating better opportunities for people, guaranteeing their right to education.

Last, but not less important, it is necessary to mention, although systematic evidence is lacking in this regard, that the conditions of discrimination observed are worsened among populations that, precisely due to a lack of information in their regard, tend to become invis-

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11   See in this regard UNESCO (2006)

12   In order to have access to the reports of the national studies, the reader may visit the web page of the Partnership for Education Revitalization in the Americas (PREAL) in the corresponding section: http://www.preal.org/Grupo.asp?Id_Grupo=3&Id_Seccion=29&Id_Seccion2=139

13   In this regard, see UNESCO (2002b)

ible: those with disabilities or other special education needs. Actually, if adverse education conditions exist for a given part of the population, such adversity is worsened in the case of situations of disability that are less visible, and consequently less served. In this sense, efforts such as those of the Peruvian Congress to make visible and this problem by placing it on the agenda and having ways to approach it, are particularly worthy of praise.[14]

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14   See the nine volume series, Estudios sobre discapacidad en el Peru under the responsibility of the *Comisión Especial de Estudio sobre Discapacidad del Congreso de la República del Perú* (Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Peru, Lima) in particular, volume 2, Aprender Vida, dedicated to the subject of education.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The need to establish clear and concrete lines of action in order to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA), following the principles and focuses established by the Ministers of Education of the region in the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), demands a solid component of follow-up and description of the state of education in the region in order to be able to identify strengths and weaknesses, as well as levels of progress and pending challenges. While the goals established by EFA for 2015 determine the horizon to be measured in terms of expected results, the integral nature of the parts that make up the map of inter-relations among education actors and processes requires including areas of analysis and monitoring in order to facilitate the identification of those components that require the development of policies and actions in order to ensure achievement of the proposed objectives.

2. From this point of view and paying attention to the elements and goals of EFA and their regional form as expressed in PRELAC, ***The State of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean***, 2007 is an effort aimed at describing the education situation in the region based upon a rights-based approach applied to education. This has implications as well for what we understand to be quality education for all (UNESCO 2007).

3. The construction of meaning and the development of capacities assume a link with the challenges of development that people and countries must face (*relevance*) and with the particular conditions of persons (*pertinence*). It has, moreover, a non-incidental, but very substantive relation with the way people operationalize some of the objectives of education policy (*efficacy*) and reinforce operational principles proper to contemporary society (which include *efficiency* in the use of public resources). Thus, there is a link between the contemporary notion of the universe of civil, political, and social rights that touch the lives of all people as citizens (*equity*)

4. In this sense, and following the dimensions and indicators proposed, we have found evidence that allows us to conclude the following:

In regard to relevance

4.1. In most countries of the region there are orientations that refer to the four pillars of learning *(learning to be, to do, to know*, and *to live together*), although with unequal emphasis. *Learning to know* and *learning to live together* are more developed, both on the regulatory level as well as in general lines of the curriculum and in some programs of study. On the other hand, the objectives of *learning to do* and *learning to be* do not appear as systematically and with the same emphasis in the different areas of learning or subjects of study.

4.2. Curricular reforms have produced important advances in regard to the recognition of students as the center of interactive teaching and learning processes. However, the active participation of students is not generally considered in order to develop the capacity to reflect on one's own learning process and for assuming responsibility for that process. This coincides with the scant relevance given to the objectives of strengthening student identity and autonomy, the ability to endevour, to exercise leadership and to work in teams, and the development of creative and innovative capacities.

4.3. There is need to move forward in strengthening the internal coherence of curricula in order to lend priority to fundamental objectives and for these to be made concrete in each subject of study or area of learning – especially in terms of the development of ethical behaviors and attitudes both in *learning to be* as well as *learning to live together*. This is linked to training students in the construction of

a personal and social ethic based on understanding of and adhesion to human rights, as well as in respecting and giving value to ourselves and others.

Significant progress has been made in various countries in regard to the integration of cross-cutting and basic objectives linked to interdisciplinary integration supported by a clear and consistent framework with specific guidelines that allow teachers to make effective the intention of integrating learning.

In regard to pertinence

4.4   We must move forward in the development of policies of inclusion in education, focusing on the transformation of schools so that all students, whatever their condition, can participate and learn. The current regulations are aimed principally at valuing the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students. But we must strengthen the design of strategies and regulations in order to make these rights and education principles effective.

On the one hand, it is necessary to develop policies and programs to serve diversity – assuring coherence among principles, policies, programs, and the ways to make them effective. On the other, there must be coordination among the different operational levels of education systems in order to develop mechanisms that allow the different actors of the system to take ownership of these principles, policies, and programs.

4.5   It is imperative to develop the regulatory area as well as levels of supervision and assessment of services provided – both those of schools and the different levels of administration and participation in the development of educational services. This imperative should accompany the processes of decentralization.

4.6   Training, technical assistance, and monitoring of the major actors, especially teachers, has become of vital importance for the development of inclusive schools, with emphasis on the issues of inter-culturality, given the realities of our region.

In regard to efficacy

4.7   The goals established in Dakar continue to be a horizon that, although now closer, remains a scenario that requires re-doubled efforts. Progress in this sense have been modest and require greater efforts if we are to achieve the goals by 2015 – including in regard to the most elemental aspects such as assuring universal completion of primary education, as well as the achievement of basic learning that is vital for all persons.

The presence of groups living in less-favorable conditions – residents of rural areas, the poor, and indigenous peoples – and those to whom the right to quality education is denied, even in countries where there has been greater progress in regard to goals such as universal completion of primary education – shows the need to improve the design of public action in education and to develop specific actions to achieve quality education for all.

4.8   Note should be made of the growth observed in regard to access to early childhood care programs – seen here only through access to pre-school programs – placing the region in a privileged position compared to other parts of the developing world. However, this situation which in general is auspicious obliges us to note the significant disparities among countries and among population groups.

4.9   Levels of access to and completion of secondary education are heterogeneous as well. Although levels of access in a significant number of countries reach at least three of every four children of the age to engage in such programs, this is

not a situation easily attained by other countries where access and completion levels are under 50%. There are few countries that attain completion levels of upper secondary education of at least half of the population, and there are even a reduced number of countries in which less than one in three persons complete this level of study.

4.10   However, the strongest discriminating factor among countries in the region is in access to tertiary education. The differences in volumes of students – compared to the size of the population – are so striking that the maximum observed proportion is 14 times that of the minimum value. Thus, the relative volumes of enrollment tend to be greater in Latin America, while international mobility is more prevalent among the Caribbean countries.

4.11   Millions of people in the region claim to not know how to read or to write. This group, as with those who have not completed their primary or secondary studies, should be a central concern of education policies for young people and adults in order to reestablish their right to a quality education that has been denied in past decades. Ensuring the universal completion of primary schooling and the corresponding learning will assure that education systems of the region will not continue to "produce" new illiterates.

In regard to efficiency

4.12   High levels of students who are above age for their grades have characterized the region for decades. Late entry, grade repetition, and drop-out are factors that have been part of educational processes, with the consequential impact that these have on decreasing the probabilities of completion and the continuation of studies.

4.13   Education systems systematically hold back or expel their students. Only 60% of persons who enter the first grade of primary education in a timely manner maintain that condition up to the final grade of that level. On the other hand, the magnitude of students who are delayed in their progress is inversely related to levels of completion. Thus, the more that systems delay or expel their students, the lower are the completion levels.

4.14   Grade repetition, the pedagogical value of which is questioned, is not only a problem in that it negatively affects education trajectories, reducing the probability of completing studies; it also represents doubled spending for the entire national community – through the State – and directly for the families affected. Available information shows that the financial weight caused by grade repetition is more than 11 billion US dollars in the case of primary and secondary education together. This waste of resources is concentrated in Latin American countries, not only due to the sizes of their populations, but also because the practice of grade repetition is not characteristic of the Caribbean countries.

4.15   In recent years we have witnessed a constant increase in the public resources allocated to education in the region. This has been a product of economic growth and in tax revenue, and not due to greater priority being given to the sector. Thus, the percentage of total public spending going to education has remained stable. Achieving a balance that would enable us to spend *more* and ***better***, diminishing the above-cited levels of inefficiency, continues to be a priority for education and for inter-sectoral policies.

In regard to equity

4.16   Available information allows us to take a first look at this theme through the analysis and comparison of population groups defined by criteria such as gen-

der, residence, income levels, condition of poverty, and membership in ethnic groups. The situations of inequity encountered within countries show the urgent need to channel efforts in order to meet the demands of the most vulnerable groups, identified as those who inhabit rural areas, belong to indigenous groups or Afrodescendents, or, and principally those of lower income or the extremely poor. These disparities are present not only in the case of access to schooling. Rather, they intensify even more in terms of completion of studies, especially for the higher levels of education.

4.17 The availability of information in regard to discriminatory practices reproduced daily in classrooms will allow us to approach the analysis in a more complete manner, making it possible to have more data to aid policy design.

4.18 It is imperative to concentrate efforts on public schools in order that they may develop their tasks with greater success and counterbalance the differences in education outcomes associated with socio-economic conditions of students. Public schools suffer from a serious lack of resources and skills, while serving a population with a complex volume of needs. In this scenario, it is good to know that there are schools that serve populations with great needs and yet are able to obtain better results; thus proving that the social background of students does not impede them from learning. This confirms that with appropriate regulation, adequate resources, and solid and professional, emotionally committed actors, public schools can decisively contribute to creating better opportunities for people and guarantee their right to education.

5 Latin American and Caribbean countries present a complex mix of progress and challenges in regard to achieving the goals of Education for All and toward guaranteeing the right to education. Much needs to be done to assure quality education for all. Such education requires consolidating and sustaining the progress achieved, as well as facing pending challenges here identified through the focus of rights and *in each of the dimensions identified*.

6 Progress in the area of national education legislation and prescribed curricular frameworks requires that they be accompanied by the development of mechanisms that allow us to assure that they are translated into practice at the school and in the classroom. It is important to guide, train, and assist schools using a comprehensive approach so they may reorient their activities and culture, developing practices that serve diversity. It is therefore of vital importance to assure that the whole set of different resources allocated to education contributes in these directions.

7 One must emphasize the achievement of the central goals that have been formulated, both on the international and national levels as part of quality education for all. Comprehensive early childhood care and education, universal completion of primary education, attention to the needs of young people and adults, reduction of illiteracy, learning that is relevant to the needs of the modern world, and decreasing equity gaps continue to be essential goals. The capacities of education systems to stop reproducing social inequalities is a critical element of their performance, and one which must be improved in order to guarantee the right of a quality education for all.

8 Finally, this monitoring report highlights once again the need to have access to information that is pertinent to the challenges raised in the institutional and political frameworks of the education sector that assure relevant conclusions for the goals proposed. In this sense, it is vital to strengthen and improve education information systems at the regional and national levels. During recent years, many countries of the region have implemented mechanisms in order to consolidate processes involved in

the regular production of reliable and timely information. But the dialogue between decision-makers and those responsible for information systems needs to be encouraged and strengthened in order to improve conceptual frameworks and indicators systems, identifying not only lacks of information, but also exploring better ways of its presentation and taking best advantage of existing processes.

9   Given that on the international level, the conceptual frameworks of indicators systems have not been designed based on a rights-based approach applied to education, as has been stated in ***Quality Education for All: A Human Rights Issue*** (UNESCO, 2007), this report required special efforts in re-reading the available information using this perspective, as well as the production of specific information in regard to the dimensions of relevance and pertinence.

10   There is, nevertheless, much information that we lack and which should be confronted through specific research and through efforts to improve education indicators available on the regional level in order to make them closer to current approaches to education, and thus increasing their ability to produce timely, reliable, and above all, relevant information. Much of the current efforts of UNESCO within the framework of EFA/PRELAC are directed at serving these areas. But the commitment and participation of all countries in the region are necessary in order for us to have information that better responds to the needs of the education policy agendas of the region.

SUMMARY INFORMATION BY COUNTRY

This section includes a graphic summary with selected information for each country. In addition to general information, the following information is included:

The graph corresponding to **relevance** comprises information for 15 indicators (the identification number herein used corresponds to what appears in the graph):

In relation to *learning to live together*:
1. Education fosters learning aimed at mutual understanding through respect for diversity, pluralism, and the ability to peacefully resolve conflicts.
2. Education is directed toward learning to value and act with fairness, based on transparency and honesty.
3. An objective of education is knowledge and exercise of human rights.
4. Education fosters the exercise of democracy, stimulating civic attitudes of cooperation, solidarity, and responsible participation.

In relation to *learning to know*:
5. Education fosters the development of skills that make it possible to take ownership of and lend meaning to the contents of universal culture.
6. Education fosters the development of critical and systemic thinking.
7. Education develops the ability to learn to learn throughout life, fostering processes of metacognition.

In relation to *learning to do*:
8. Education develops people's innovative and creative skills.
9. Education develops people's enterprising skills, leadership, and the ability to work in groups.
10. Education is directed at training people committed to the environment and to sustainable development.
11. Education fosters the use of ICTs as learning, productivity, communication, and research tools.

In relation to *learning to be*:
12. Education fosters the development of self-identity and autonomy.
13. Education develops personal projection ability.
14. Education fosters the ability to establish empathetic relations.
15. Education is directed at developing moral judgment and ethical behaviours based on respect for the dignity of people.

These indicators are represented acoording to the following conventions:
- 🔴 No evidence was found;
- 🟡 Evidence was found for few criteria;
- 🟢 Evidence was found for more than half of the criteria;
- 🔵 Evidence was found for most criteria. The detailed criteria can be found in Appendix 1.

The graph corresponding **pertinence** comprises information for 13 indicators (the identification number herein used corresponds to what appears in the graph):

In relation with *position towards respect, valuation of diversity and the participation of all*:

1. Contemplates basic rights that guarantee life-long quality education for all.
2. Fosters and protects the rights of indigenous peoples, those of African descent, migrants, and other religions and linguistic minorities, to receive an education that values and includes their languages and cultures into teaching.
3. Basic educational principles are established to respond to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students.

In relation with *system flexibility*:
4. The education system as a whole and regular education, possess regulations and conditions that enable attention to diversity without discrimination or exclusion.
5. Different alternatives and modalities are offered for full access, participation, and continued learning of all persons.
6. The regular curriculum for all students is adaptable and enriched according to different individual needs and life contexts of students.
7. Flexible assessment criteria and procedures are available in order to meet the needs of diversity.
8. The existence of conditions and procedures for autonomy and participation in decision-making, so that schools can meet the needs of diversity.

In relation with *adaptability procedures*:
9. The existence of procedures and regulations for adapting the curriculum and teaching to a diverse body of students.
10. The existence of conditions and procedures that encourage collaboration among and participation of all students.
11. Teachers are provided with tools, procedures, and learning opportunities in order to adapt the curriculum, they are teaching, and to meet the needs of diversity.
12. Support systems are implemented to ensure response to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students.
13. Provision of resources and infrastructure are adapted to the different cultures, contexts, and individual conditions of students.

These indicators are represented acoording to the following conventions:
- 🔴 No evidence was found;
- 🟡 Evidence was found for few criteria;
- 🟢 Evidence was found for more than half of the criteria;
- 🔵 Evidence was found for most criteria.

The detailed criteria can be found in Appendix 1.

The graph corresponding **efficacy** comprises information for 11 indicators (the identification number herein used corresponds to what appears in the graph):
1. Total coverage for the population 3 to 18 years of age (age-specific enrollment rate)
2. Net enrollment rate. Pre-primary education.
3. Net enrollment rate. Primary education.
4. Net enrollment rate. Secondary education (lower and upper combined)

5. Percentage of population 15-19 years of age who have completed primary education.
6. Percentage of population 20-24 years of age who have completed lower secondary education.
7. Percentage of population 20-24 years of age who have completed upper secondary education.
8. Percentage of current completion. Primary education.
9. Percentage of current completion. Lower secondary education.
10. Percentage of current completion. Upper secondary education.
11. Percentage of population 15-24 years of age who claim being able to read and write.

The graph corresponding **efficiency** comprises information for 5 indicators (the identification number herein used corresponds to what appears in the graph):
1. Ratio Average number of passed grades / School life expectancy. Primary education.
2. Ratio Average number of passed grades / School life expectancy. Secondary education (lower and upper combined)
3. Percentage of repeaters. Primary education.
4. Percentage of repeaters. Secondary education (lower and upper combined)
5. Preservation of timely coverage coefficient (timely coverage at the final grade / timely coverage at first grade) Primary education.

The graph corresponding **equity** comprises information for 23 parity indexes (the identification number herein used corresponds to what appears in the graph):
In relation with *gender* (Female / Male)
1. For net enrollment rate. Primary education.
2. For net enrollment rate. Secondary education. (lower and upper combined)
3. For the percentage of people 15 to 19 years of age who have completed Primary education.
4. For the current completion of Primary education.
5. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Lower secondary education.

6. For the current completion of Lower secondary education.
7. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Upper secondary education.
8. For the current completion of Upper secondary education.

In relation with *household income* (Lowest quintile / Highest quintile)
9. For net enrollment rate. Primary education.
10. For net enrollment rate. Lower secondary education.
11. For net enrollment rate. Upper secondary education.
12. For the percentage of people 15 to 19 years of age who have completed Primary education.
13. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Lower secondary education.
14. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Upper secondary education.
In relation with *residence areas* (Rural / Urban)
15. For net enrollment rate. Primary education.
16. For net enrollment rate. Lower secondary education.
17. For net enrollment rate. Upper secondary education.
18. For the percentage of people 15 to 19 years of age who have completed Primary education.
19. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Lower secondary education.
20. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Upper secondary education.
In relation with *ethnic affiliation* (Indigenous / Non Indigenous)
21. For the percentage of people 15 to 19 years of age who have completed Primary education.
22. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Lower secondary education.
23. For the percentage of people 20 to 24 years of age who have completed Upper secondary education.
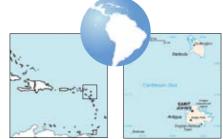
(AG) ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
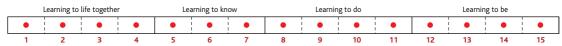
General Information:

Population:. . . . . n.d.
Territory (km²): 443
Compulsory education (number of years): 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000: 11 567
Human Development Index (2006): 0.808
Percentage of rural population: 56.6
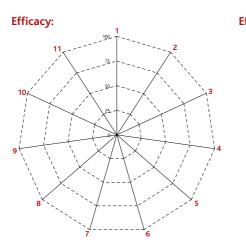
Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know				Learning to do				Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

143
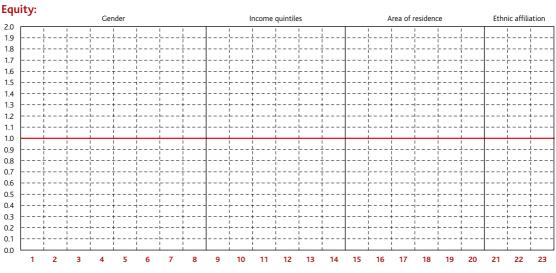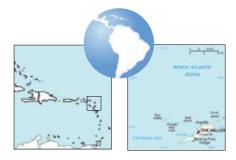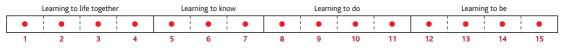
(AI) ANGUILLA

General information:

Population:. 12 217
Territory (km²): 102
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index:. . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 0

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
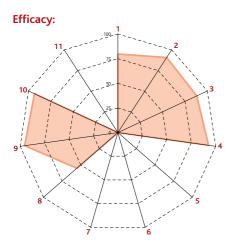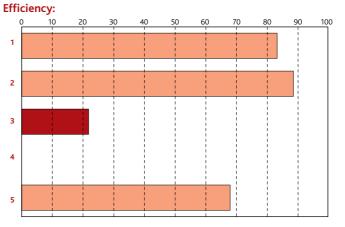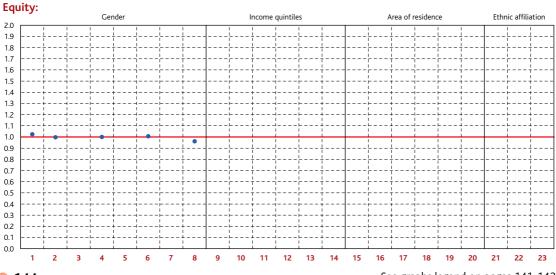
(AN) NEDERLANDSE ANTILLEN

General information:
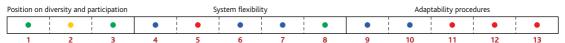
Population:. 175 850
Territory (km²): 960
Compulsory education (number of years):. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 40.5

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(AR) REPÚBLICA ARGENTINA

General information:
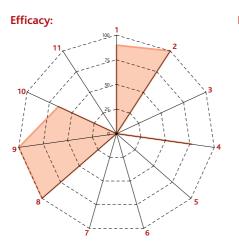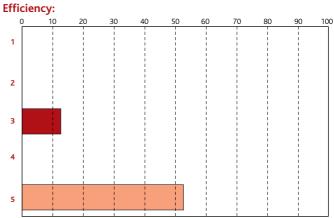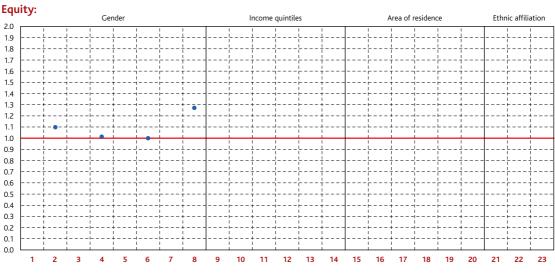
Population:. 38 371 529
Territory (km²): 2 766 890
Compulsory education (number of years):. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 12 222
Human Development Index (2006): 0.863
Percentage of rural population: 26.9
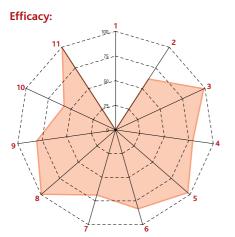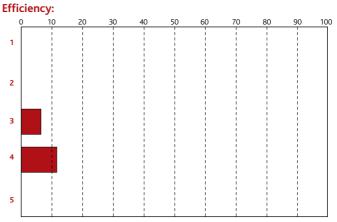
Relevance:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(AW) ARUBA

General information:

Population:. 96 170
Territory (km²): 193
Compulsory education (number of years):. 11
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 6

Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know				Learning to do				Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility					Adaptability procedures			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

147

(BB) BARBADOS

General information:
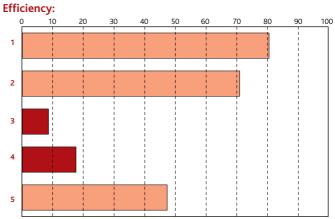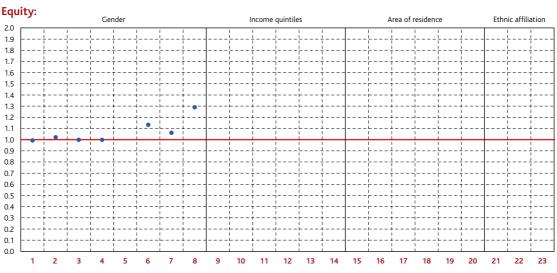
Population:. 268 127
Territory (km²): 431
Compulsory education (number of years):. 11
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): 0.879
Percentage of rural population: 8.4
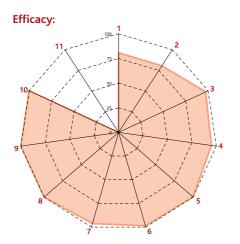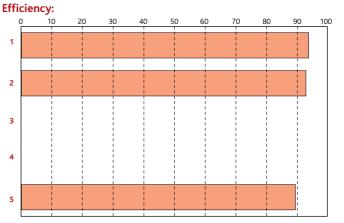
Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
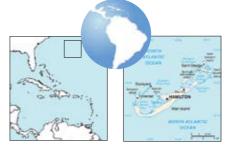
(BM) BERMUDA

General information:
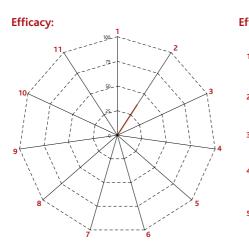
Population:. 62 059
Territory (km²): 53,3
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 48.2

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

149
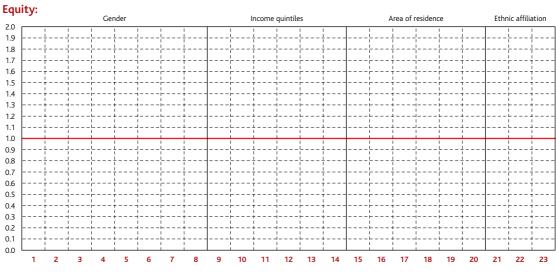
(BO) REPÚBLICA DE BOLIVIA

General information:
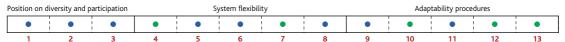
Population:. 8 841 319
Territory (km²): 1 098 580
Compulsory education (number of years):. 8
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 2 499
Human Development Index (2006): 0.692
Percentage of rural population: . . . . n.d.
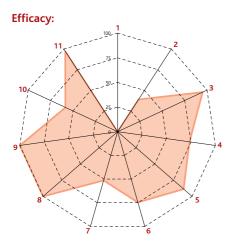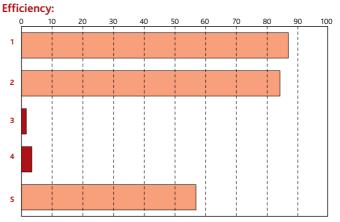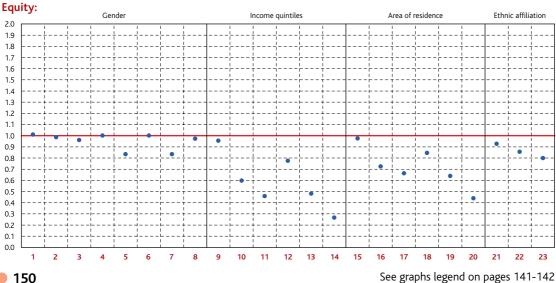
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(BR) REPUBLICA FEDERATIVA DO BRASIL

General information:
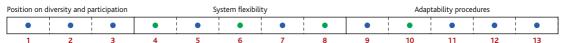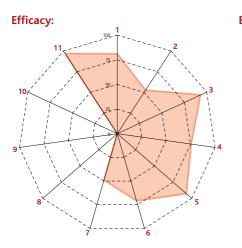
Population:. 183 912 537
Territory (km²): 8 511 965
Compulsory education (number of years):. 8
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 7 531
Human Development Index (2006): 0.792
Percentage of rural population: 31.7
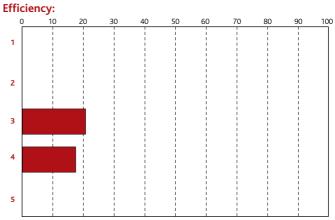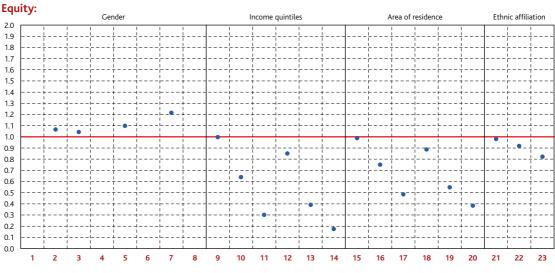
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

(BS) COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
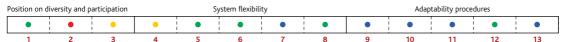
General information:
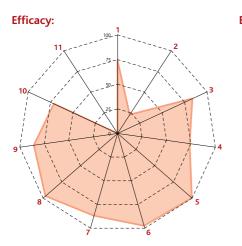
Population:. 314 498
Territory (km^2): 13 940
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 16 399
Human Development Index (2006): 0.825
Percentage of rural populationl:. 56.3
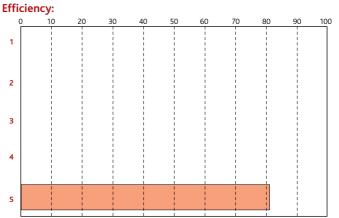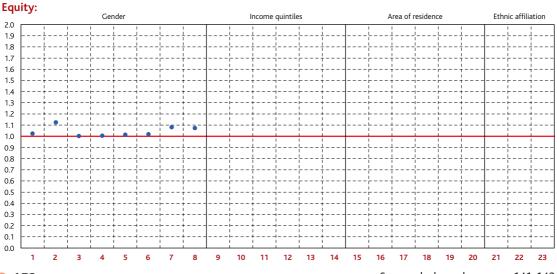
Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(BZ) BELIZE

General information:
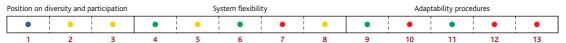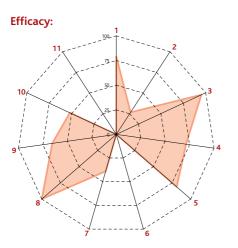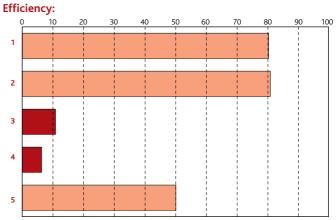
Population:. 258 902
Territory (km²):. 22 966
Compulsory education (number of years):. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita(USD PPP 2000): 6 201
Human Development Index (2006): 0.751
Percentage of rural population: 40.9

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
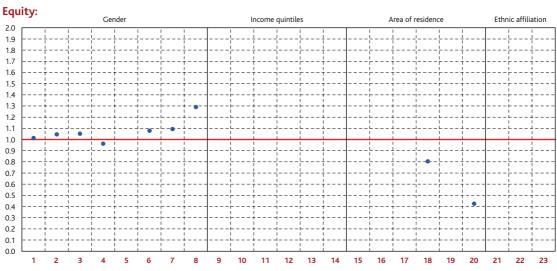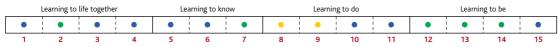
(CL) REPÚBLICA DE CHILE

General information:
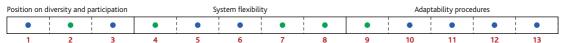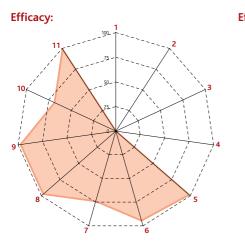
Population:. 16 123 813
Territory (km²): 756 950
Compulsory education (number of years):. 8
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 9 993
Human Development Index (2006): 0.859
Percentage of rural population: 20

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
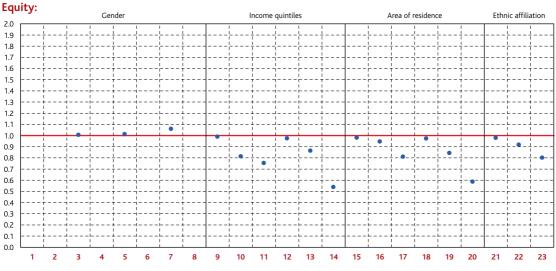
(CO) REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA

General information:
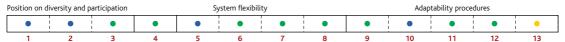
Population:. 44 915 017
Territory (km²): 1 138 910
Number of years of compulsory education:. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 6 669
Human Development Index (2006): 0.790
Percentage of rural population: 31.2

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
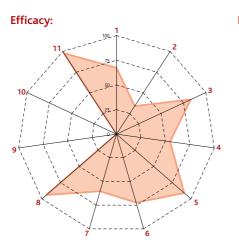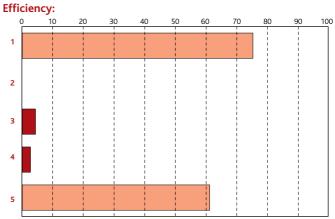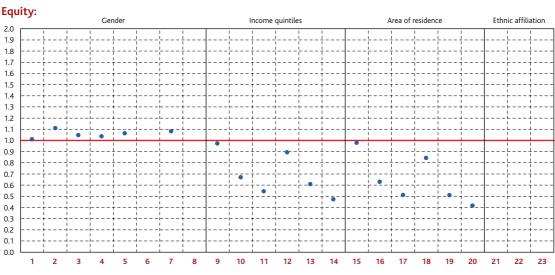
(CR) REPÚBLICA DE COSTA RICA
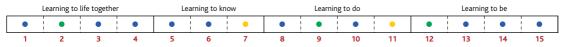
General information:
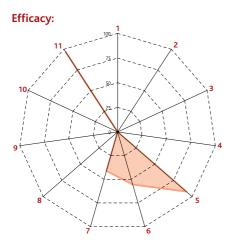
Population:. 4 253 037
Territory (km²): 51 100
Compulsory education (number of years): 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 8 714
Human Development Index (2006): 0.841
Percentage of rural population: 21.5
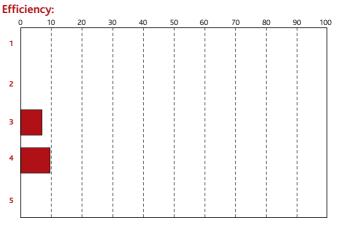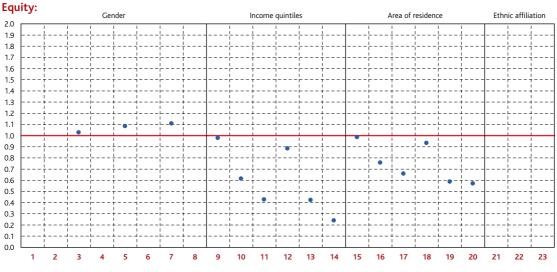
Relevance:
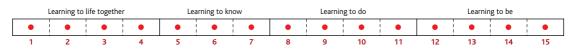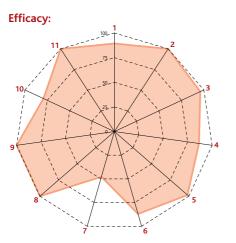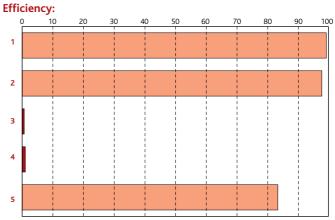
Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

156

(CU) REPÚBLICA DE CUBA

General information:

Population:. 11 216 498
Territory (km²): 110 860
Compulsory education (number of years):. 9
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): 0.826
Percentage of rural population: 23.8

Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
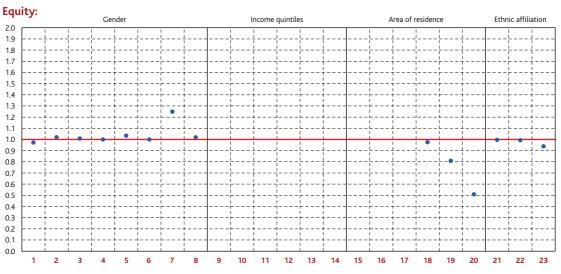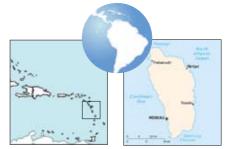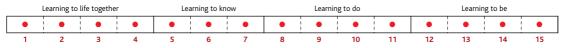
(DM) COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

General information:
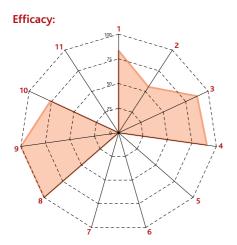
Population:. 67 027
Territory (km²): 754
Compulsory education (number of years): 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 5 186
Human Development Index (2006): 0.793
Percentage of rural population: 33
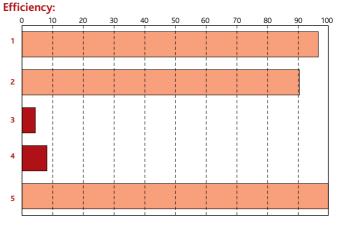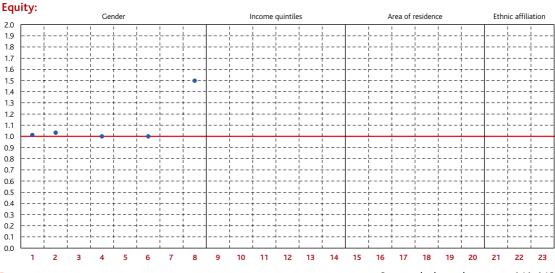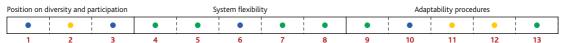
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(DO) REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA

General information:

Population:. 8 644 924
Territory (km²): 48 730
Compulsory education (number of years): 9
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 6 846
Human Development Index (2006): 0.751
Percentage of rural population: 37.4
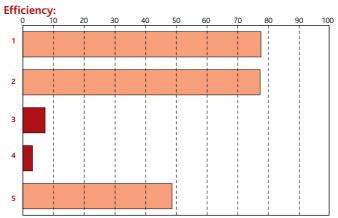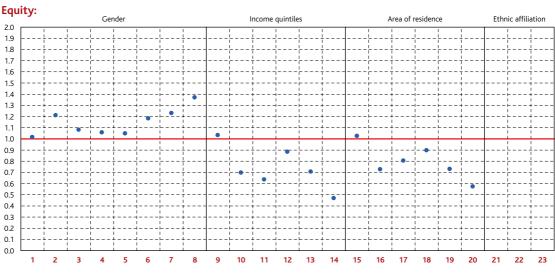
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(EC) REPÚBLICA DEL ECUADOR

General information:

Population:. 12 660 372
Territory (km²): 283 560
Compulsory education (number of years):. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 3 642
Human Development Index (2006): 0.765
Percentage of rural population: 50.6

Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
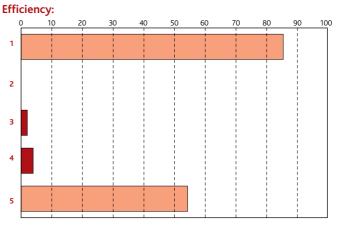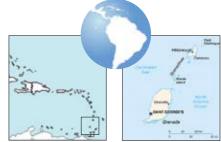
(GD) GRENADA

General information:
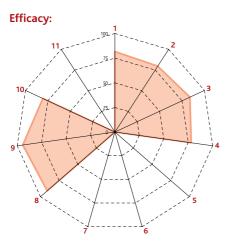
Population:. 108 187
Territory (km²): 344
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 7 372
Human Development Index (2006): 0.762
Percentage of rural population: 55.8
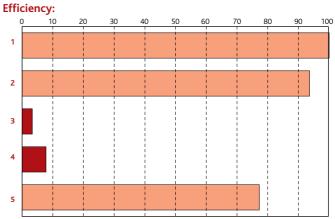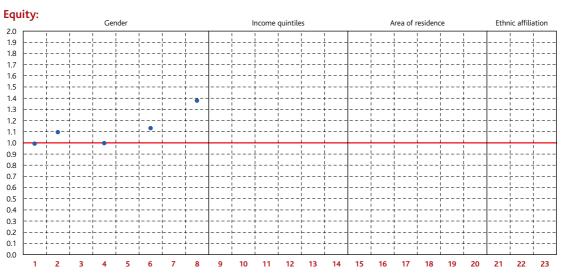
Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(GT) REPÚBLICA DE GUATEMALA

General information:
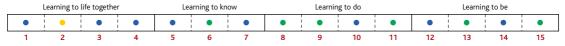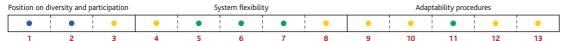
Population:. 12 294 795
Territory (km²): 108 890
Compulsory education (number of years):. 9
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 3 964
Human Development Index (2006): 0.673
Percentage of rural population: 51.6

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
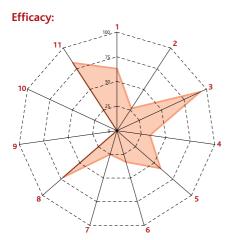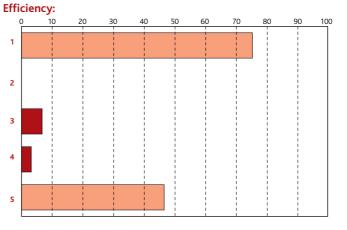
See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(GY) COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
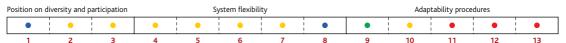
General information:
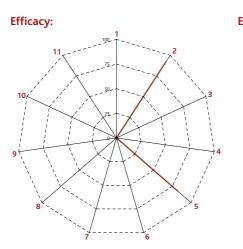
Population:. 748 122
Territory (km²): 214 970
Compulsory education (number of years): 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 4 080
Human Development Index (2006): 0.725
Percentage of rural population: 46.8
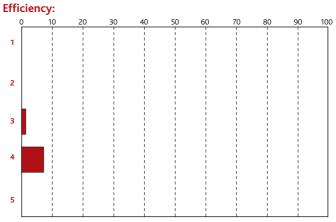
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(HN) REPÚBLICA DE HONDURAS

General information:

Population:. 7 048 328
Territory (km²): 112 090
Compulsory education (number of years):. 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 2 644
Human Development Index (2006): 0.683
Percentage of rural population: 28.2
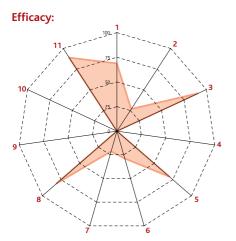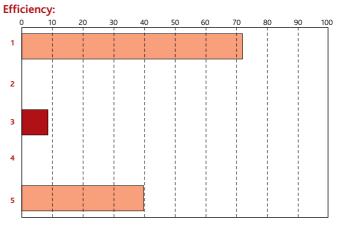
Relevance:

Learning to life together	Learning to know	Learning to do	Learning to be

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation	System flexibility	Adaptability procedures

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

Gender · Income quintiles · Area of residence · Ethnic affiliation
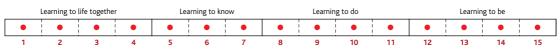
See graphs legend on pages 141-142
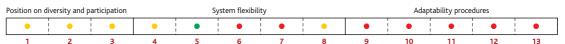
(HT) REPUBLIQUE D'HAITI
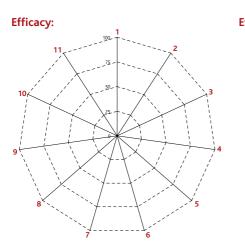
General information:

Population:. 8 291 446
Territory (km^2): 27 750
Compulsory education (number of years): 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 1 739
Indice de Desarrollo Humano (2006): 0.482
Percentage of rural population: . . . . n.d.

Relevance:

Learning to life together	Learning to know	Learning to do	Learning to be
1 2 3 4	5 6 7	8 9 10 11	12 13 14 15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation — System flexibility — Adaptability procedures

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

Gender — Income quintiles — Area of residence — Ethnic affiliation

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
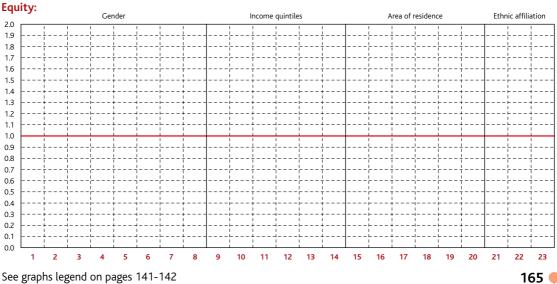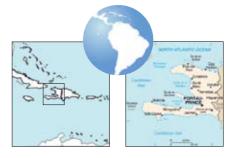
(JM) JAMAICA

General information:
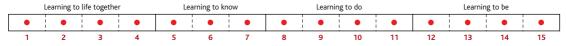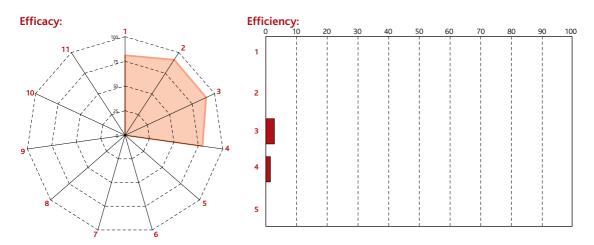
Population:. 2 624 384
Territory (km^2): 10 991
Compulsory education (number of years):. 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 3 826
Human Development Index (2006): 0.724
Percentage of rural population: 45.8

Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
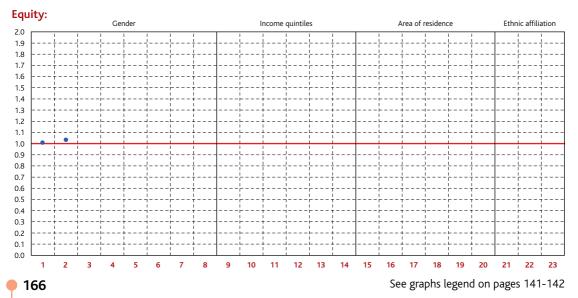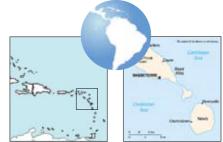
(KN) FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

General information:
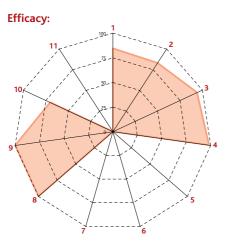
Population:. 42 175
Territory (km²): 261
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 11 674
Human Development Index (2006): 0.825
Percentage of rural population: 67.5
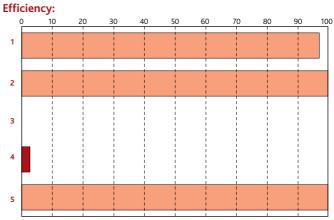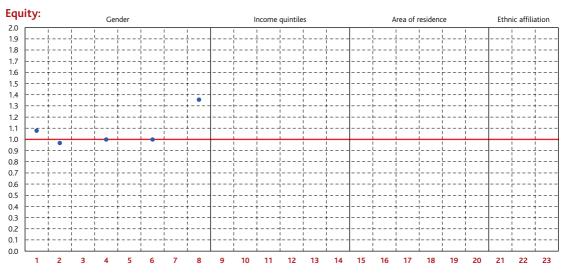
Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
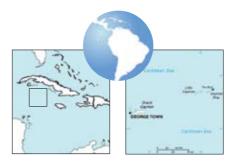
(KY) CAYMAN ISLANDS

General information:
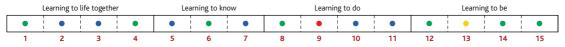
Population:. 42 351
Territory (km²): 262
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 11.7

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
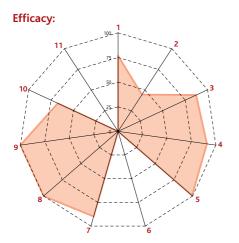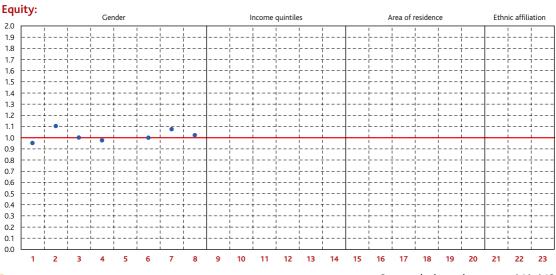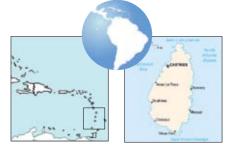
See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(LC) SAINT LUCIA
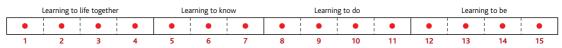
General information:
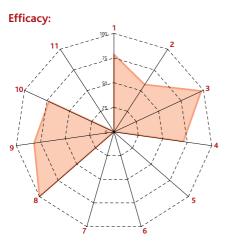
Population:. 158 419
Territory (km²): 616
Compulsory education (number of years): 11
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 5 812
Human Development Index (2006): 0.790
Percentage of rural population: 31.4

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
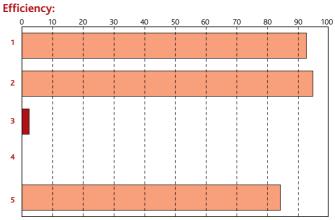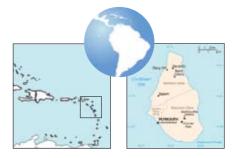
(MS) MONTSERRAT

General information:

Population:. 4 318
Territory (km²): 102
Compulsory education (number of years):. 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: 83.1

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
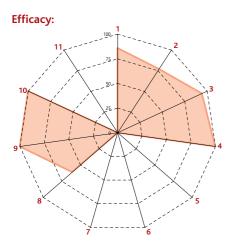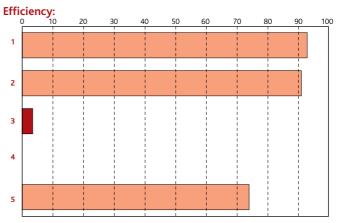
(MX) ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS

General information:
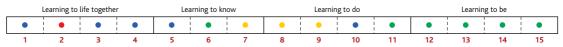
Population:. 104 286 298
Territory (km²): 1 972 550
Compulsory education (number of years): 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 9 010
Human Development Index (2006): 0.821
Percentage of rural population: 20.5

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
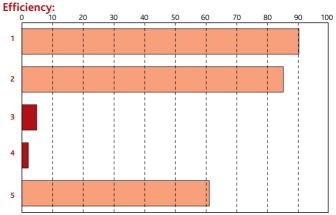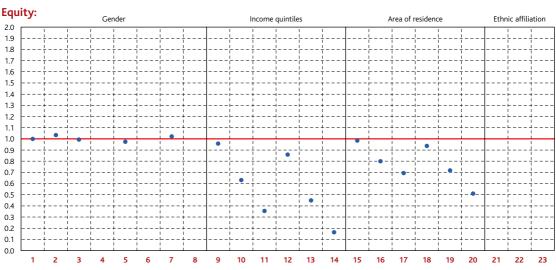
(NI) REPÚBLICA DE NICARAGUA

General information:

Population:. 5 376 139
Territory (km^2): 129 494
Compulsory education (number of years): 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 3 340
Human Development Index(2006): 0.698
Percentage of rural population: 28.9

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(PE) REPÚBLICA DEL PERÚ

General information:
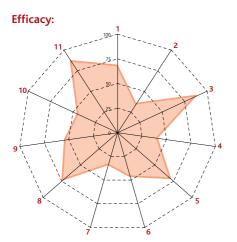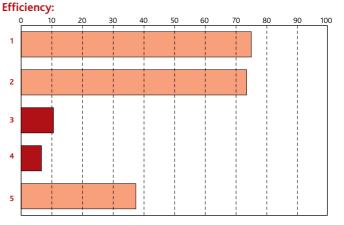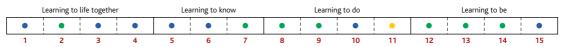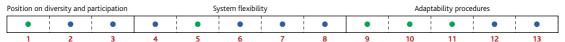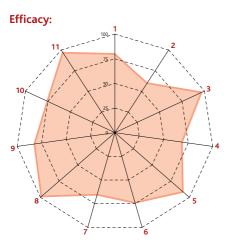
Population:. 27 562 392
Territory (km²): 1 285 220
Compulsory education (number of years):. 11
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 5 219
Human Development Index (2006): 0.767
Percentage of rural population: 28.8

Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
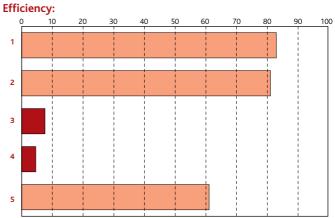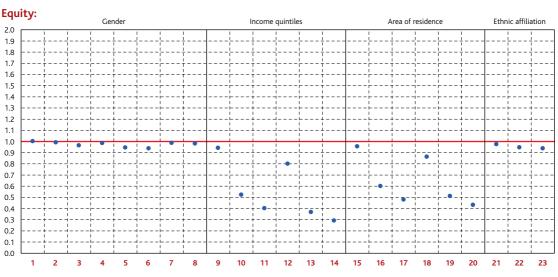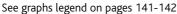
(PN) REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
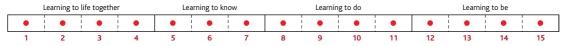
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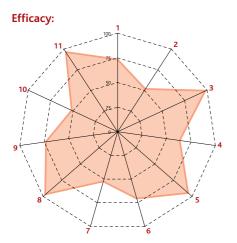
Population:. 3 175 357
Territory (km²): 78 200
Compulsory education (number of years): 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 6 689
Human Development Index (2006): 0.809
Percentage of rural population: 36

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
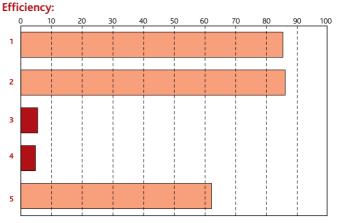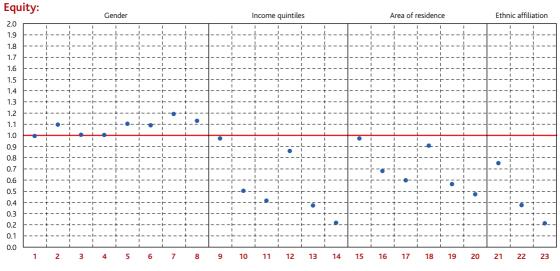
(PY) REPÚBLICA DEL PARAGUAY

General information:
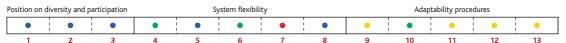
Population:. 6 017 197
Territory (km²): 406 750
Compulsory education (number of years): 9
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 4 423
Human Development Index (2006): 0.757
Percentage of rural population: 26.2

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

175
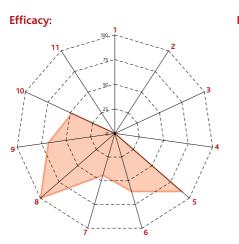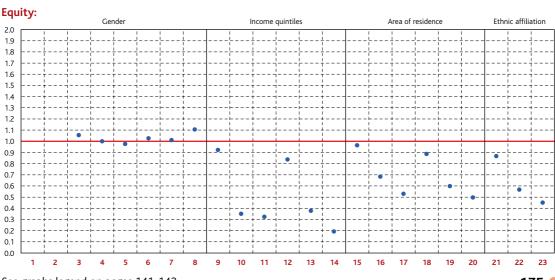
(SR) REPUBLIEK SURINAME

General information:

Population:. 442 985
Territory (km²): 163 270
Compulsory education (number of years):. 6
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): 0.759
Percentage of rural population: 18.4

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
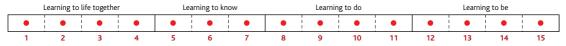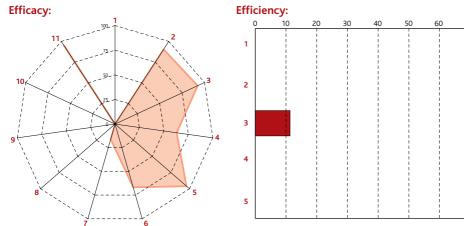
(SV) REPÚBLICA DE EL SALVADOR

General information:
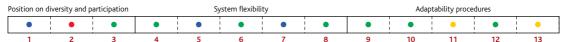
Population:. 6 643 298
Territory (km²): 21 040
Compulsory education (number of years):. 9
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 4 633
Human Development Index (2006): 0.729
Percentage of rural population: 36.4
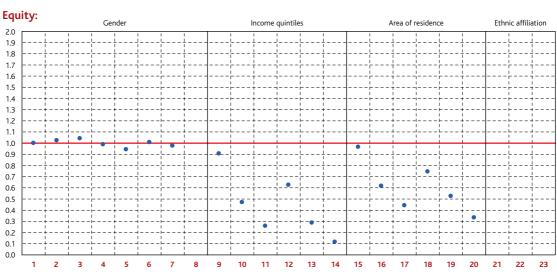
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
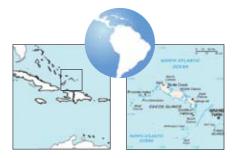
(TC) TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

General information:
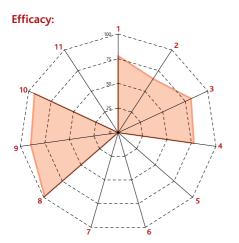
Population:. 20 365
Territory (km²): 430
Compulsory education (number of years):. 13
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population: . . . . n.d.

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
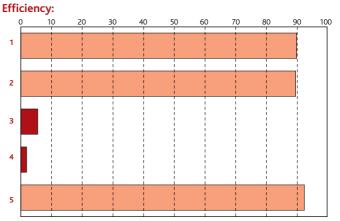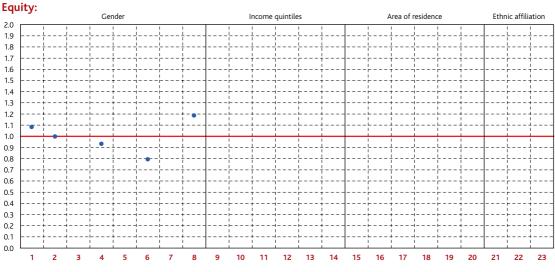
(TT) REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

General information:
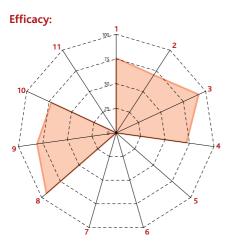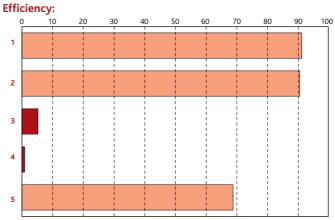
Population:. 1 298 182
Territory (km²): 5 128
Compulsory education (number of years):. 7
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 11 196
Human Development Index (2006): 0.809
Percentage of rural population: 20.3
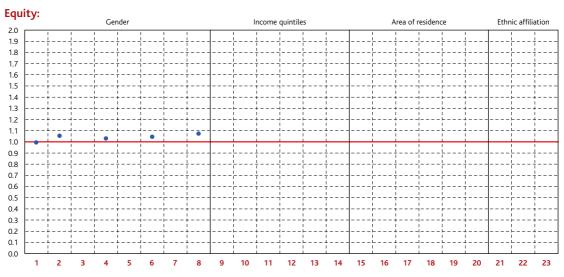
Relevance:

	Learning to life together			Learning to know			Learning to do			Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142

(UY) REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY

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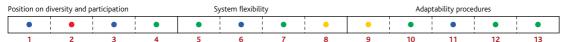
Population:. 3 439 470
Territory (km²): 176 220
Compulsory education (number of years): 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. 8 658
Human Development Index (2006): 0.851
Percentage of rural population: 7.2
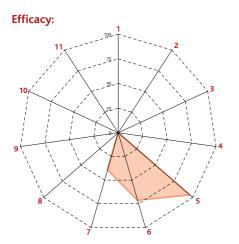
Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
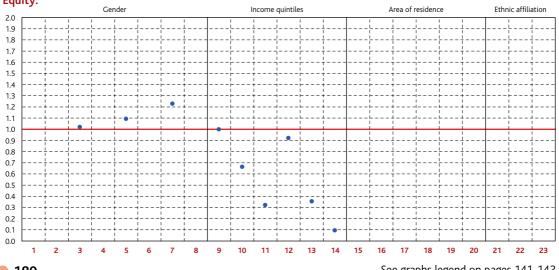
See graphs legend on pages 141-142
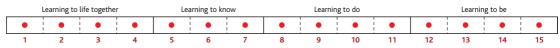
(VC) SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
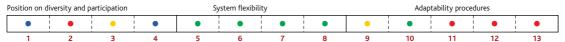
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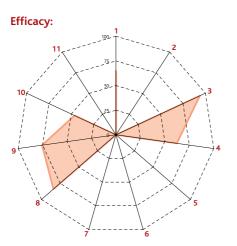
Population:. 117 316
Territory (km²): 389
Compulsory education (number of years): 11
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 5 880
Human Development Index (2006): 0.759
Percentage of rural population: 63.2

Relevance:

	Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:
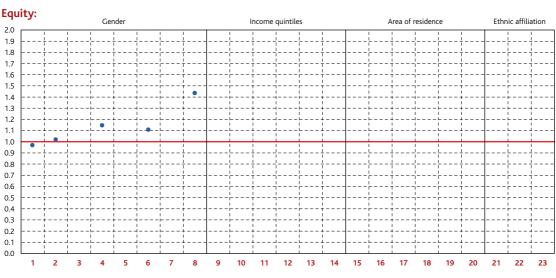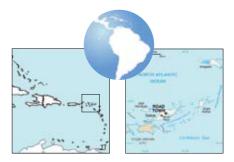
(VG) BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
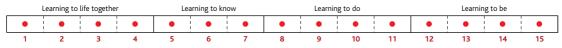
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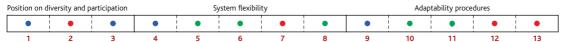
Population:. 20 992
Territory (km²): 153
Compulsory education (number of years):. 12
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000):. . . . . n.d.
Human Development Index (2006): . . . . n.d.
Percentage of rural population::. 13.8

Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be			
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation			System flexibility					Adaptability procedures				
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

See graphs legend on pages 141-142
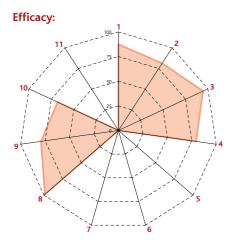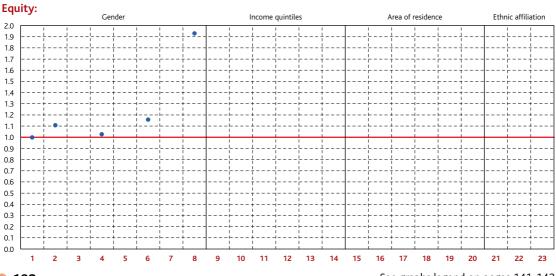
(VN) REPÚBLICA BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA

General information:
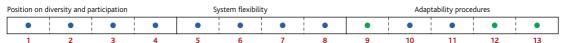
Population:. 25.826.547
Territory (km²): 912.050
Compulsory education (number of years): 10
Gross Domestic product per capita (USD PPP 2000): 5.554
Human Development Index (2006): 0.784
Percentage of rural population: 6
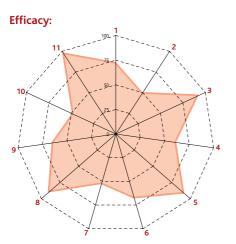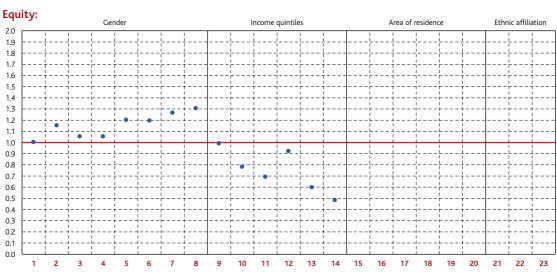
Relevance:

Learning to life together				Learning to know			Learning to do				Learning to be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Pertinence:

Position on diversity and participation				System flexibility				Adaptability procedures				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Efficacy:

Efficiency:

Equity:

183

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

This section provides methodological details corresponding to the principal information and procedures used, including technical aspects regarding the education indicators considered.

1. International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) revision 1997.

The ISCED is a methodological framework that makes it possible to compare the various structures of education systems and the programs that comprise them. It is therefore a key tool for assuring international comparability of information. In effect, information corresponding to education programs classified in the same way is comparable in that it refers to education programs equivalent in content.

The ISCED classifies education programs into seven levels:

- 0. Pre-primary
- 1. Primary
- 2. Lower secondary
- 3. Upper secondary
- 4. Non-tertiary post secondary
- 5. Tertiary (university and non-university)
- 6. Advanced programs (doctoral porgrams)

as well as according to three orientations:

- A. Academic
- B. Technical vocational
- C. Terminal (aimed at entry into the labor market)

The manual containing classification specifications and details may be consulted in UNESCO (1997).

2. In regard to the dimensions of the **relevance** and **pertinence** of education, a methodological guide has been developed in order to carry out documentary analysis based on a series of criteria or indicators that make it possible to identify the key aspects to be considered by legal frameworks and curricular policy. For each of these indicators and their corresponding descriptors, we have recorded the existence of evidence in the information collected, identified the sources, and assigned a global assessment of each indicator. Detailed information is presented in Appendix 1.

3. For some of the dimensions, specific information has been identified available for some countries in particular and which is detailed in each case, specifying the sources and methodologies used.

4. Definition of indicators used

    a. In order to treat the **efficacy** of education systems:

    The indicators used to approach this dimension consider information relative to: student *access, completion,* and *academic achievement*, as well as information on *levels* of *literacy*, and on teachers who meet *minimum certification requirements* within their countries.

      i.   In regard to access

        - The so-called *age-specific enrollment rates* for 3- to- 18- year-old children. These rates show the percentage of persons of each age, or age ranges, who are enrolled in some kind of educational program at any level. In this sense, it describes the total coverage provided by the education system to the population considered, while its complement indicates the proportion of persons not served by the system (i.e., those out of the school).

The rates used in this report have been calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics from different sources, including the enrollment information produced by ministries of education generally using their own statistical events (school censuses) or, in a few cases, from school enrollment records, along with the population information produced by the UNDP. Potential biases in one of these elements, or in both, may bias the calculated indicators. Thus, over-reporting of enrollment that is seen in some countries affects the value of indicators by biasing them upward. The same effect results from under-estimations of population figures. Otherwise, response rates of education statistics events can result in an under-estimate of enrollment values and affect the value of the indicator, biasing it toward lower values – an effect that is also produced by potential over-estimates of population values.[1]

One part of these problems (over-estimation of the indicator) becomes evident when the value of the indicator passes its logical limit of 100%. In these cases, the established practice of UIS is to cap the value, leaving it at 100%. Note that when the value is less than 100%, the problem can be present as well, but not evident.

In any case, non-systematic evidence suggests that potential biases of over or under-estimates tend to be limited in magnitude and therefore the value of the indicator may be considered valid as a general indicator of the situation in question. However, as in the case of any numerical information, this represents the situation described with more or less accuracy to the extent that the measure is conceptually consistent, both in its definition and its use (as is the case of this indicator, given that it directly measures that which it seeks to measure), and to the extent that potential measurement errors are controlled.

It is important to consider that information on access to pre-school education tends to be limited to those programs that are classified as corresponding to level 0 of ISCED 97; that it, school-based programs at directed at children of at least three years of age. This means that international data collection does not yet take into account the important diversity of non-formal programs or parent-based programs – a lack that one hopes will be corrected in the near future.

Moreover, it should be remembered that for countries with small populations, the rates that combine enrollment with population may show erratic components due to errors that, even if small in absolute magnitude, affect calculated indicators in a high degree.

Finally, it should be noted that enrollment rate calculations we have only considered educational programs corresponding to the levels 0 –pre-primary, 1-primary, 2 –lower secondary, and 3 –upper secondary, of ISCED 97. This means that information for higher ages may be underestimated due to not taking into account enrollment in post-secondary programs.

---

1   This reflection shows the need to move ahead in strengthening education information systems in order to identify potential biases with greater precision and to develop instruments that would allow to control and correct (for example, estimations procedures in the case of census omissions)

- *Net enrollment rates* by level of education. These rates indicate the percentage of persons of the age ranges officially considered to be appropriate for being at a particular level of education who are in fact enrolled in a program at such a level. In this sense, the indicator shows a fraction of the coverage corresponding to the education level expected for a given age. Its complement, however, is not the population not served, since a portion of this group may be enrolled in a program at a different level.

  The rates used in this report have been calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for the levels of education considered: pre-school; primary education; and secondary education (lower and upper secondary combined) using official information reported by countries through annual UIS surveys or by those conducted by the OECD in the case of Mexico. This information, including that collected by the OECD, is part of the UIS international database.

  Note that when treating age ranges, it is not possible to identify this indicator with timely coverage, since it is perfectly possible to find people who, being within the age range established for a given level, are enrolled in an academic grade not corresponding with their age. Thus, this indicator does not necessarily provide information on levels of individuals behind in grade for their ages.

  Thus, as with all indicators based on information according to the ages of people, there are potential biases due to the differences between curricular prescriptions and regulations regarding the ages for entering and completing given levels or grades and the reference periods used for collecting educational information and the way age information is recorded in statistical events. It is thus necessary to think about the correspondence between the reference periods used to determine the ages corresponding to the numerator of many indicators (enrollment) as well as that used for information regarding the denominator (population). In some cases these issues produce information that is sufficiently biased for UIS and the technical teams of countries to have agreed to not publish some indicators. Thus the indication of "not available" in some cases is the result not of the non-existence of information, but rather of its lack of reliability given these biases.

- In the case of *tertiary education* we have used information on *enrollment volumes*, given that in this case, the calculation of proportions makes less sense, since there are no official age ranges for enrollment at this level due to the fact that it is open to people of any age who meet entry requirements.

  Given the fact that in some countries (especially in the Caribbean) there is a high level of international mobility related to study at the tertiary level, we have considered both enrollment recorded within each *territory* as well as the enrollment of *permanent residents* of countries who study in countries different from their habitual residence, calculating the total enrollment of permanent residents of each country independently of the geographical location of the institution that offers the educational program.[2]

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2   We have taken enrollment in the territory, less the fraction of it corresponding to permanent residents of other countries, plus the enrollment of permanent residents in other countries.

As noted by the representatives of countries participating in a recent technical workshop that addressed these themes,[3] calculating enrollment indicators based on information on permanent residence and not on geographical enrollment makes it possible to have information of greater pertinence for the policy tasks of ministries of education.

Thus, the indicator used to treat tertiary education (enrollment in tertiary education per 100,000 inhabitants) has been calculated by the team responsible for this report in two manners: in terms of the geographical location of programs, and in terms of the permanent residence of students. Possessing both values shows the impact of the effect of international mobility in several countries.

In both cases, the calculation is based on geographical enrollment and international mobility information of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and population information of the United Nations Population Divisions (UNPD) which is the same information used by UIS for calculating its indicators.

- Due to the fact that international collection of comparable information on the education of young people and adults is not carried out systematically, we have used *attendance rates* in educational programs of the *20 to 29 year-old population who have not completed upper secondary education*. The source of this information is household surveys of Latin American countries that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) collected and processed for this report. We have considered only the population that has not completed upper secondary education in order to see to what extent the education programs aimed at young people and adults do in fact serve the population whose education has been delayed. Thus, we have excluded from the calculation the fraction of the population attending higher education or that has completed secondary education and is not currently enrolled in any kind of educational program.

It should be noted that this information is based on the practice established in household surveys and population censuses where one usually asks if the respondent "attends and educational program". This question tends to exhibit significant problems in its formulation and in the lack of definition or imprecise definition of its purpose and in key factors such as the time reference period considered. For example, in the case of on-going surveys this question is even formulated outside the school year; or it is not clear if a person who is enrolled and studying in a given program but who due to some circumstance not attending should respond "yes" or "no". To a certain extent, this question tends to be used in order to estimate a measure taken as equivalent to enrollment rates, producing in this way redundant information with that

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3   Technical workshop held on December 4 and 5, 2006 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Organized by UNESCO within the framework of its collaboration with the Education Indicators Project of the Summit of the Americas (PRIE), with the collaboration of the American Institutes for Research of the United States and the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago. Participants included technical representatives of Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Santa Lucia, Surinam, and Trinidad and Tobago.

generated by sectoral education statistics events,[4] when the information could be useful for determining something different (what time fraction of an education program is lost due to non-attendance)[5]

ii. In regard to *completion* we have used:

- *The percentage of persons of particular age groups who have complete a given level of education*. This information corresponds to what is known as levels of educational attainment of the adult population. This information provides a direct measure of the proportion of people of a given age group who in fact have completed a particular level of education. However, this information necessarily refers to an age group that has gone through the education system (at the levels being considered) in the past, whether recent or distant.

  Given that people go through the education system at different moments in time that are typically linked to their respective ages, this indicator (when it is observed for different age groups) shows the historical trend of the percentages of people who have completed their studies of a particular level of education.

  It should be noted that since this is a direct measure of completion, its values are the result of the past performance of the education system and not of its current performance. Therefore, its utility is great in describing the state of education in general, but not for indicating the current performance of education systems.

  In order to calculate this indicator, we have used information on educational attainment of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for the countries of the Caribbean and Aruba. In the case of Cuba, we have used information from the 2002 population census. For other Latin American countries, we have made use of information from household surveys collected and processed by ECLAC. All of the information has been processed in accordance with ISCED 97.[6]

  Details regarding the surveys used, their year and breakdowns, is shown further on in this same section in the description of equity (p. 197)

- In order to have current information on completion, we have developed a methodology for estimating current conclusion levels for persons of an age to enter particular levels of education (see box).

  This indicator describes the proportion of persons of the age to complete a level who do so or who are expected to do so in the future, given current completion patterns.

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4 This information is not only redundant; it also presents additional problems, given that there is not adjustment between the periods of reference used for the generation of information and the school calendars that affect it; particularly in the how ages are defined and especially when the source does not yield information on the dates of birth nor ages in years completed. (For example, if for a net rate of primary one needs the population 6 to 11 years of age at the beginning of the school year, and the survey or census are carried out at the end of the school year, it will be practically impossible to find the 6 year-old population, which would result in an underestimation)

5 Within this framework, it is particularly important to consider the joint efforts of ECLAC and UNESCO that look at the need to revise these kinds of questions within the framework of policies aimed at strengthening national statistics systems which take best advantage of cooperation between national statistics offices or institutes and the ministries of education as responsible for sectoral statistics.

6 For a methodological discussion on different ways to approximate the measurement of completion of studies, see Guadalupe and Louzano (2003), as well as UNESCO 2004.

In order to calculate this indicator, we have used information on the current structure of enrollment by single ages for the final grade of each level, as well as the proportion of grade repeaters contained in the database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries in the annual surveys conducted by UIS. In the case of countries that report information using the joint UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat forms that do not contain this level of detail, the data on enrollment by age and grade level was requested from Regional Information System (SIRI) national focal points.

CURRENT COMPLETION

FOR A GIVEN POPULATION COHORT, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COMPLETED STUDIES AT A PARTICULAR GRADE LEVEL DO SO AT VARIOUS POINTS IN TIME. THUS, A FRACTION WILL CONCLUDE STUDIES IN THE YEAR T, WHILE ANOTHER FRACTION WILL CONCLUDE THEM IN THE YEARS T+1, T+2, AND SO ON.

A LONGITUDINAL VIEW OF A POPULATION COHORT WILL ALLOW, FOR EXAMPLE, TO OBSERVE FOR A COHORT OF AGE TO ENTER IN YEAR I, HOW MANY CONCLUDE IN THE YEAR T (EQUAL TO I+D, WHERE D IS EQUAL TO THE DURATION OF THE LEVEL IN YEARS) THAT IS, THE POPULATION THAT COMPLETES WHILE HAVING AN AGE EQUAL TO THE ENTRY AGE +D, AND IN THE SUBSEQUENT YEARS WHEN THEY WILL HAVE SUBSEQUENT CORRESPONDING AGES. WE CAN THUS IDENTIFY A THE PROPORTION OF PEOPLE WHO CONCLUDE THE LEVEL IN A TIMELY FASHION, THOSE WITH A ONE YEAR DELAY, THOSE WITH A TWO-YEAR DELAY, AND SO ON.

IN FACT, HAVING A CONSISTENT SERIES OF LONGITUDINAL DATA WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO CARRY OUT SUCH A MEASUREMENT DIRECTLY. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE CURRENT AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION, AND ASSUMING A CERTAIN STABILITY IN THE BEHAVIOR OF ENROLLMENT, IT IS POSSIBLE TO TAKE THE DATA FROM ONE ACADEMIC YEAR ONLY AND ESTIMATE COMPLETION BY CALCULATING THE PROPORTIONS OF THE POPULATION THAT IN THIS MOMENT IN TIME CONCLUDES IN A TIMELY MANNER OR ONE OR MORE YEARS OF EITHER OVER-AGE OR UNDER-AGE.

THUS, IT IS POSSIBLE TO CALCULATE THE PROPORTION OF PERSONS 11 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER, FOR EXAMPLE, WHO COMPLETE AT A GIVEN TIME. THE SUM OF THESE PROPORTIONS WILL GIVE THE PROPORTION OF PERSONS WHO DO INDEED COMPLETE, GIVEN CURRENT ENROLLMENT PATTERNS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, DUE TO THE FACT THAT WE DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION ON THE PERSONS WHO COMPLETE EACH LEVEL OF EDUCATION, THIS VALUE CAN BE ESTIMATED BY USING DATA ON ENROLLMENT AND ON THE NUMBER OF GRADE REPEATERS.[7]

As a final commentary on this section we note that the use of direct measures of completion as here utilized clearly shows a great descriptive capacity while at the same time revealing the insufficiency of traditional measures based on measures of volume or the use of reconstructed cohorts (through so-called *survival rates*) This is not only due to using direct measures, but also, and principally to the non-applicability of some basic assumptions of reconstructed cohort models (non re-entries, for example) that lead to the fact that in the region these models tend to under-estimate student progress. These limitations also lead to the need to approach in another manner the analysis of efficiency – usually based on such models, as well will see in the following section.

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7   Technical document under development.

iii.   Academic achievement:

Although during the last 15 years, countries have developed national student performance assessment systems, internationally comparable information in this area is still limited.

The research with the greatest coverage of countries in the region is the First International Comparative Study developed by UNESCO in 1997 (by its Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education – LLECE). It is expected the forthcoming second study will provide new information for most Latin American countries.

Another study of increasing importance is the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) developed by the OECD and in which a growing number of countries of the region participate.

Thus, for this report, we have used data available from both studies. In the case of information from the *First Comparative Study* of UNESCO, we have used information on the results of student performance on standardized tests in mathematics, and have grouped the different items in order to use data on student performance in the recognition of objects and elements, as well as simple and complex problem-solving. These domains correspond with those applied in the Second Study which is currently underway. The development of the indicators chosen was based on classical item response theory, adjusting the two test models used by the study through a regional-level regression model.

In the case of the results of PISA, we have considered information for countries of the region that have participated in at least one of the rounds for which results are available to date. The first round, which focused on reading and writing skills, took place in 2000 and 2001. The second round, focusing on math skills, was carried out in 2003.

FIRST LATIN AMERICAN STUDY OF 1997

IN 1997, UNESCO, THROUGH ITS LATIN AMERICAN LABORATORY FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION (LLECE) CARRIED OUT THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ACHIEVEMENT IN LANGUAGE, MATHEMATICS, AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS IN 13 LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES (ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, CHILE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, CUBA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HONDURAS, MEXICO, PARAGUAY, PERU, AND VENEZUELA).[8] THE STUDY MEASURED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF CERTAIN CURRICULAR CONTENTS IN BOTH AREAS, TAKING THESE CURRICULA AS FRAMES OF REFERENCE WITHOUT MAKING JUDGMENTS AS TO THEIR SUFFICIENCY AND RELEVANCE IN REGARD TO THE DEMANDS OF TODAY'S WORLD.[9]

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8   Data for Costa Rica are not part of the summary of results of the study "since they were not delivered according to the requirements and normalization established by the Laboratory" (UNESCO 1998, p.12). Brazil pre-selected three of its states (Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais, and Ceará), of a total of 26 states and the Federal District, and within each of these states three municipalities with high, medium, and low scores on the UNDP Human Development Index.

9   For details on the First Study, see UNESCO (1998, 200b, 2001)

Design and performance levels of PISA

The *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) was designed to be a study on the skills of 15 year-olds, regardless of their educational status (whether enrolled or not in an education system or in a particular level of education) with the understanding that it is necessary to know whether people who are of an age near the completion of compulsory schooling and approaching adulthood are equipped with basic tools needed to face the challenges of contemporary society. At the same time, given the near universal offer of educational services in the age range of compulsory schooling in OECD countries (for which this study was originally conceived) it was feasible to assume that the totality of young people 15 years of age could be studied through procedures based operationally on educational institutions. However, in Latin American countries this raised some important challenges, given levels of over-age students and school drop-out. Thus, although operationally a homogeneous criteria was maintained through which the sample of the 15 year-old population only included persons enrolled in the system and who moreover were enrolled in a school grade above the sixth (that is, beyond primary education in most cases and even a part of secondary in the other), this led to the sample being, in effect highly representative of the 15 year-old population enrolled in a grade above the 6th, but not of the 15 year-old population as a whole.

In the case of OECD countries, excluding Mexico, this filtering allowed the population studied to be equivalent to 95.9% of the 15 year-old population in the year 2000 and to 92.7% of the 15 year-old population in 2003.

This is not the case for Latin American countries, where the population not represented by the study (due to being in grades lower than the 7th or outside the system - that is, in a presumably less favorable situation than the rest of the population) varies between 12.6% and 49.6% in the year 2000, and between 25.9% and 44.0% in 2003.

On the other hand, the tests were constructed based on criteria of what was considered necessary for a 15 year-old to know in the contemporary world. This led to define proficiency levels in a conceptual rather than empirical way. These levels are presented below.

Language

Level 1. People are only able to complete less complex tasks developed by PISA such as identifying a single unit of information, identifying the main theme of a text, or making simple connections using daily knowledge.

Level 2. People are able to carry out basic tasks such as locating direct information, making low-level inferences, finding the meaning of defined parts of a text, and using some knowledge to understand it.

Level 3. People are able to carry out moderately complex tasks such as locating various units of information, associating different parts of a text, and relating texts with knowledge with which they are familiar.

Level 4. People are able to carry out more complex tasks such as locating hidden information, constructing meaning from language matrices, and critically evaluating a text.

Level 5. People are able to to carry out sophisticated reading tasks. They can relate the information presented in texts with that with which they are not familiar, show detailed understanding of complete texts, and critically evaluate and establish hypotheses with the ability to resort to specialized knowledge and manage concepts that may be contrary to their expectations.

Mathematics

Level 1. People can answer questions involving familiar contexts where all relevant information is present and the questions are clearly defined. They are able to identify information and to carry out routine procedures according to direct instructions in explicit situations. They can perform actions that are obvious and follow immediately from the given stimuli.

Level 2. People can interpret and recognize situations in contexts that require no more than

DIRECT INFERENCE. THEY CAN EXTRACT RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM A SINGLE SOURCE AND MAKE USE OF A SINGLE REPRESENTATIONAL MODE. STUDENTS AT THIS LEVEL CAN EMPLOY BASIC ALGORITHMS, FORMULAE, PROCEDURES OR CONVENTIONS. THEY ARE CAPABLE OF DIRECT REASONING AND MAKING LITERAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE RESULTS.

LEVEL 3. PEOPLE CAN EXECUTE CLEARLY DESCRIBED PROCEDURES, INCLUDING THOSE THAT REQUIRE SEQUENTIAL DECISIONS. THEY CAN SELECT AND APPLY SIMPLE PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES. YOUNG PEOPLE AT THIS LEVEL CAN INTERPRET AND USE REPRESENTATIONS BASED ON DIFFERENT INFORMATION SOURCES AND REASON DIRECTLY FROM THEM. THEY CAN PREPARE SHORT COMMUNICATIONS REPORTING THEIR INTERPRETATIONS, RESULTS AND REASONING.

LEVEL 4. PEOPLE CAN WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH EXPLICIT MODELS FOR COMPLEX CONCRETE SITUATIONS THAT MAY INVOLVE CONSTRAINTS OR CALL FOR MAKING ASSUMPTIONS. THEY CAN SELECT AND INTEGRATE DIFFERENT REPRESENTATIONS, INCLUDING SYMBOLIC ONES, LINKING THEM DIRECTLY TO ASPECTS OF REAL WORLD SITUATIONS. YOUNG PEOPLE AT THIS LEVEL CAN UTILIZE WELL-DEVELOPED SKILLS AND REASON FLEXIBLY, WITH SOME INSIGHT, IN THESE CONTEXTS. THEY CAN CONSTRUCT AND COMMUNICATE EXPLANATIONS AND ARGUMENTS BASED ON THEIR INTERPRETATIONS, ARGUMENTS AND ACTIONS.

LEVEL 5. PEOPLE CAN DEVELOP AND WORK WITH MODELS FOR COMPLEX SITUATIONS, IDENTIFYING CONSTRAINTS AND SPECIFYING ASSUMPTIONS. THEY CAN SELECT, COMPARE, AND EVALUATE APPROPRIATE PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLEX PROBLEMS RELATED TO THESE MODELS. YOUNG PEOPLE AT THIS LEVEL CAN WORK STRATEGICALLY USING BROAD, WELL-DEVELOPED THINKING AND REASONING SKILLS, APPROPRIATELY LINKED REPRESENTATIONS, SYMBOLIC AND FORMAL CHARACTERIZATIONS, AND INSIGHT PERTAINING TO THESE SITUATIONS. THEY CAN REFLECT ON THEIR ACTIONS AND CAN FORMULATE AND COMMUNICATE THEIR INTERPRETATIONS AND REASONING

LEVEL 6. PEOPLE CAN CONCEPTUALIZE, GENERALIZE, AND UTILIZE INFORMATION BASED ON THEIR INVESTIGATIONS AND MODELING OF COMPLEX PROBLEM SITUATIONS. THEY CAN LINK DIFFERENT INFORMATION SOURCES AND REPRESENTATIONS AND FLEXIBLY TRANSLATE AMONG THEM. YOUNG PEOPLE AT THIS LEVEL ARE CAPABLE OF ADVANCED MATHEMATICAL THINKING AND REASONING. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN APPLY THIS INSIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING, ALONG WITH A MASTERY OF SYMBOLIC AND FORMAL MATHEMATICAL OPERATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS, TO DEVELOP NEW APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES FOR ATTACKING NOVEL SITUATIONS. YOUNG PEOPLE AT THIS LEVEL CAN FORMULATE AND PRECISELY COMMUNICATE THEIR ACTIONS AND REFLECTIONS REGARDING THEIR FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS, ARGUMENTS, AND THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THESE TO THE ORIGINAL SITUATIONS.

iv.   Illiteracy:

Issues linked to access to and completion of studies and academic achievement of students translate into the development of basic competencies. A manifestation of this is given by the degree of reading and writing skills and numeracy by the population.

In fact, these skills are a continuum that needs to be measured as such. However, to date we only have the traditional "illiteracy rates" which for their part present two crucial problems: the dichotomy that they offer (knows/does not know how to read and write) do not describe a phenomenon which is by its nature a continuum (reading and writing skills); and they are based on self-declarations or on information on attainment levels of the population used as a proxy.

In spite of these limitations, these rates provide us with a general indication of those persons who identify their situation as one of maximum educational exclusion. This at least provides a "floor" for viewing the magnitude of the problem.

The rates used in this report correspond to those from the September, 2006 publication of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) which em-

ployed various information sources (censuses and surveys) from various years, depending on the country. We have used the 2002 publication for historical data.

v. Teachers with minimum qualifications

Teachers are key actors in the educational process. However, the production of systematic information about them and their activities and which corresponds to analytic frameworks in accordance with conceptual approaches based on the right to education is still a pending task on both the regional scale and within individual countries.

An important area for which we have internationally comparable information deals with the *percentage of teachers who possess the minimum requisites of training or certification* that countries demand for those teaching at each level of education.

Note, however, that this information does not tell us what are the minimum levels required by each country. Hence, it cannot be taken as synonymous with satisfying specific levels of training generally applicable to all countries.

The rates used in this report have been calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries through the annual surveys that UIS conducts, or by the OECD in the case of Mexico. This information, including that collected by the OECD, is part of the UIS international database.

b. The **efficiency** of education systems

In order to treat this dimension, we have used information regarding the following aspects: timely access and coverage; the relation between the number of grades passed by a student and the number of years of schooling; the relation between being behind age and completion; and the loss of financial resources associated with grade repetition.

i. *In regard to timely access and coverage* we have used:

- *The net intake rate into the first grade of primary education*. This measures the proportion of persons who, being of the official age to enter the first grade, do so in the current academic year. In this sense, it informs on timely entry to the education system for the population considered.

  The rates used in this report have been calculated the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries through the annual surveys that UIS conducts, or by the OECD in the case of Mexico. This information, including that collected by the OECD, is part of the UIS international database.

- *Timely coverage* is defined as the percentage of individuals enrolled in the grade corresponding to their ages. Timely coverage of each grade describes the effective probability that a population cohort enters in a timely way in the system and progresses through it in the expected manner; that is, without dropping out or repeating grades. The variations in timely coverage between two consecutive ages shows the ability of the system to preserve previous levels. Stated in another way, it shows the extent to which the education system delays the progress of or expels students during the school careers.

To this purpose, we have calculated a *preservation of timely coverage coefficient* in primary school, equivalent to the relation between the timely coverage corresponding to the population of an age to be in the final grade of primary education and that corresponding to being in the first grade. The latter shows the enrollment situation that the system "receives" from society, while the former shows what the system achieves during the school careers of students.

Ideally, this analysis should be carried out with time series information in order to use values corresponding to the age for being in the first grade at year 1, and then for each subsequent age in the following year in order to be able to follow up a specific cohort of the population. However, gaps and inconsistencies found in available information have prevented such an analysis. But having found a degree of stability in these values, we have used only the data corresponding to the last academic year available.

This indicator reveals some characteristics of education trajectories without depending on the assumptions that make application of reconstructed cohort models problematical, while allowing a direct and unbiased view of a key variable of the education system (timely coverage) that directly affects the possibilities of student progress.[10]

The coverage rates used in this report have been calculated the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries through the annual surveys that UIS conducts. This information is part of the international data base of UIS. In the case of countries that report information using the joint UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat formats that do not contain this level of detail of information, such information (enrollment by age and grade) was requested of the national focal point correspondents of the Regional Information System (SIRI).

ii. In regard to the relation *between grades passed* and *years of schooling*, we have used:

- *The number of grades that on the average one can expect that a person of the age to enter the education system will spend at a given level of education*. This value has been calculated using current patterns of enrollment by ages and grades.[11]

  This indicator is a new methodological development which, in a way analogous to the *school life expectancy*, calculates an education trajectory which in this case refers to grades passed rather than the number of years of schooling as is the case for the life school survival expectancy.

  In order to calculate this indicator, we have used information on current enrollment structure by single ages and grades, as well as the percentage of grade repeaters for each level of education contained in the database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries through the annual surveys that UIS conducts. In the case of countries that report information using the

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10   For a detailed methodological discussion, see Guadalupe, Rodríguez and Silva (in Guadalupe ed. 2002) and Guadalupe (2002)

11   Details on the procedures for calculating this indicator can be consulted in Guadalupe and Taccari (2004)

joint UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat forms that do not contain this level of detail of information, such information (enrollment by age and grade) was requested from the Regional Information System (SIRI) national focal point.

- The *school life expectancy* is an indicator that has been used for various decades to calculate the number of years an individual is expected to be enrolled in the education system. It has been calculated by summing all of the age-specific enrollment rates (expressed as fractions of one), obtaining the number of years expected, given current patterns of coverage for each age.[12]

  As with many other indicators, it is particularly useful for calculating investment needs. On the other hand, it is possible to modify the calculation procedure in order to estimate it by levels of education in order to be able to calculate, for example, the number of years an individual is expected to be enrolled in primary education.

  For *school life expectancy*, we have used values calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries and based on annual surveys that UIS conducts, or those organized by the OECD in the case of Mexico. This information, including that collected by the OECD, is part of the UIS international database.

- The comparison between these two indicators (average grade passed and school life expectancy) provide a direct measure of efficiency, since they show what typically a student achieves after an investment given in number of years.

iii.   In regard to *being behind in grade and completion*
- Intuitively, one can state that being behind in grade reduces the probability of concluding studies due to the fact that, among other things, it increases the opportunity costs of continuing in school. However, having robust information on those behind in grade, inefficiency, and completion of studies has allowed us to readily document this relation, providing clear empirical evidence in this regard.

  Actually, the high correlation observed between the *deterioration of timely coverage* described above and the completion measures utilized and also described previously, allows us to document this fact, providing solid arguments regarding the need to revise educational practices that lie behind inefficiency and the behind grade phenomenon.

iv.   In regard to the wastage of *financial resources due to grade repetition*
- In order to quantify the loss of economic resources caused by grade repetition, we have counted on available information on the percentage of enrollees who are grade repeaters in primary and secondary education, as well as the amounts of investment in these levels.

  The calculation here presented assumes that investment in a given level of education corresponds to its enrollment and that therefore the percentage of grade repeaters indicates a double investment,

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12   Methodological details on this indicator may be consulted in the UIS Technical Guidelines available at http://www.uis.unesco.org

or waste. This tends to over-estimate the calculation since it assumes that all investment is a function of enrollment, and does not take into account fixed costs (there is evidence that these are quite limited, which makes the assumption appear valid).

The two values used for calculating these factors (the percentage of enrollees who are grade repeaters and the percentage of GDP invested in education and its distribution by educational level) have been calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) using official information reported by countries and based on annual surveys that UIS conducts, or those organized by the OECD in the case of Mexico. This information, including that collected by the OECD, is part of the UIS international database. Conversion to equivalent US dollars according to purchasing power parity in constant year 2000 values (USD PPP 2000), has been carried out using GDP values in each of the monetary units published by the World Bank.

c.   The **equity** of education systems

In order to treat this dimension, we have considered information regarding disparities of access, completion of studies, and illiteracy. This information has been used considering the following breakdowns: gender; area of residence (urban/rural); ethnic affiliation; income levels; and state of poverty.

Parity indices have been calculated in all cases. The parity index compares the value of the same indicator for different populations. For this purpose, one divides the value of the indicator for one of these populations by the corresponding to the other. This results in three possible situations: (i) when both values are equal, the value of the index will be one; (ii) if the value of the indicator for the population considered in the numerator is less, the value of the index will be less than one; (iii) if the value of the indicator for the population considered in the numerator is higher, the value of the index will be more than one.

In general, we have placed in the numerator the population sub-group assumed to be underprivileged. Finally, we have considered values of the index between 0.95 and 1.05, that is, 1 ± 0,05, to be situations that can be considered as parity.

In the case of access, due to having only net national and gender specific enrollment rates, we have made use of the attendance rates calculated by ECLAC based on household surveys for the rest of the variables considered in the analysis of this dimension. As already noted, these rates present serious conceptual and operational problems. For this reason, in no case have we used the values, but only the parity indexes obtained, assuming that the bias caused by problems of definition and operationalization are equivalent for any sub-population.

The information used corresponds to that of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in the case of information according to gender, and to ECLAC for other breakdowns based on household surveys. Details of the surveys used, years, and breakdowns, are shown in the following table.

Note that in the cases of Argentina and Uruguay, the survey is representative of urban areas only. However, given the high urban population rate of both of these countries (91,8% and 91,9% respectively), they have been incorporated in the analyses presented and are considered to be representative of the country as a whole in the sections regarding the situation of the region. In the case of Venezuela, the sampling design used does not allow the information to be brokendown by area of residence.

Country	Income		Area of residence		Race or languege
	Quintiles	Poverty	Urban	Rural	
Argentina	2005		2005		
Bolivia	2004	2002	2004	2004	2004
Brazil	2005	2002	2005	2005	2005
Chile	2003	2000	2003	2003	2003
Colombia	2005	2002	2005	2005	
Costa Rica	2005	2002	2005	2005	
Ecuador	2005	2001	2005	2005	2005
El Salvador	2004	2001	2004	2004	
Guatemala	2004	2002	2004	2004	2004
Honduras	2003	2002	2003	2003	
Mexico	2005	2002	2005	2005	
Nicaragua	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001
Panamá	2005	2002	2005	2005	2005
Paraguay	2005	2001	2005	2005	2005
Peru	2003	2001	2003	2003	2001
Dominican Republic	2005	2002	2005	2005	
Uruguay	2005		2005		
Venezuela	2005	2002			2005

In the case of ethnic affiliation, we have constructed two groups, roughly labeled as "aboriginal" and "non-aboriginal". As can be seen, this has resulted in placing in one group the indigenous or afro-descent population, and in the other those primarily of European origins. The following table shows the classification in detail by country.

Tabla 6: Definition of ethnic groups used in the report

Country	Non-aboriginal group	Aboriginal group
Bolivia	Persons who claim they are not members of a native group.	Persons who claim they are members of a native group.
Brazil	Persons who claim they have white skin or that different from dark or black, including non-specified	Persons who claim they have dark or black skin.
Chile	Persons who claim they are not members of a native group.	Persons who claim they are members of a native group (afro/indigenous).
Ecuador	Persons who claim to be white, mestizos, or others.	Persons who claim they are indigenous, negro, or mulato.
Guatemala	Persons who claim they are foreigners, white, or mestizo.	Persons who claim they are indigenous.
Nicaragua	Persons who claim they are white, mestizo, criollo, and others	Persons who claim they are creole, negro, or indigeneous.
Panama	Persons who claim they are not indigenous.	Persons who claim they are indigenous.
Paraguay	Persons who claim to speak Spanish, Spanish and Guaraní, or another language	Persons who claim to speak only Guaraní.
Peru	Persons belonging to households in which the head of the household claims to be Caucasian, white, negro, mulato, zambo, or mestizo.	Persons belonging to households in which the head of the household claims to be Quechua, Aymará, or of an Amazonian indigenous group.

These groupings have been constructed in order to have a dichotomous classification that avoids sampling power problems given the sampling nature of the information, and clearly identifies a "disfavored" group. The categories used correspond to the definitions and concepts used in each of the surveys.

For breakdowns by income levels and condition of poverty, we have followed the procedures that ECLAC regularly uses when working with information from household surveys. (ECLAC, 2005)

Urban/rural areas are those thus defined in the household surveys themselves – which does not necessarily guarantee that we here have equivalent or comparable definitions.

ANNEX 1:

Information and guidelines for the documentary analysis

These guidelines for the documentary analysis are organised into two sections. The first one refers to the analysis focused on relevance, while the second pertains to pertinence.

The documentary analysis of relevance was structured according to the four pillars of education for the XXI Century (UNESCO 1996) and for each of them a set of indicators was developed. In turn a set of descriptors was developed for each indicator.

The documentary analysis of pertinence was structured according to three major strands (position regarding respect, valuation of diversity and the participation of all; system flexibility; and adaptability procedures) and for each of them a ser of indicators was developed. In turn a set of descriptors was developed for each indicator.

In both cases, the guidelines were structured as follows:

I Issue to be assessed
I.1   Indicator used.
    I.1.1   Descriptors to assess the indicator.

Relevance

I Learning to live together
I.1   Education fosters learning aimed at mutual understanding through respect for diversity, pluralism, and the ability to peacefully resolve conflicts.
    I.1.1   Education is directed toward students learning to identify and eliminate prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination, seeking ways to overcome them.
    I.1.2   Education fosters valuing pluralism as a basis for living together.
    I.1.3   Education fosters the knowledge and use of conflict mediation techniques.
I.2   Education is directed toward learning to value and act with fairness, based on transparency and honesty.
    I.2.1   Education is directed toward students valuing, understanding, and acting with honesty.
    I.2.2   Education fosters learning honesty through practicing academic honesty.
    I.2.3   Education fosters transparency as a value that generates closer ties between government and society.
    I.2.4   Education teaches that corruption should not be tolerated and that it is damaging to all members of society.
I.3   An objective of education is knowledge and exercise of human rights.
    I.3.1   Education recognized that rights are based on the equality of human beings although people express themselves differently and live differently.
    I.3.2   Know the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its relation with the fundamental rights expressed in the constitution and the mechanisms to make rights and duties effective.
    I.3.3   Know, respect, and foster the rights of those groups who have been and are deprived of their rights.

I.3.4 Know in their immediate environment those rights that should be observed for harmonious relations.

I.4 Education fosters the exercise of democracy, stimulating civic attitudes of cooperation, solidarity, and responsible participation.

I.4.1 Understand that the objective of cooperation is the mutual benefit of human relations based on the principle of mutual respect.

I.4.2 Understand the importance of basic values of harmonious citizenship such as solidarity, care, and good treatment in respect for oneself and for others, practicing these values daily.

I.4.3 Foster solidarity as a value that is reflected in action since it deals with concern for and commitment to others.

II Learning to know

II.1 Education fosters the development of skills that make it possible to take ownership of and lend meaning to the contents of universal culture.

II.1.1 Develop basic skills in the areas of language and mathematics.

II.1.2 Develop basic skills in the areas of scientific, artistic, social, and cultural knowledge.

II.1.3 Developing basic skills to understand and use knowledge associated with information: locating, selecting, assessing, and summarizing information needed; as well as to think, to reflect, to interpret, utilize and value information.

II.2 Education fosters the development of critical and systemic thinking.

II.2.1 Education is directed at fostering the processes of analysis, synthesis and to integrate knowledge.

II.2.2 Education is directed at fostering processes that aid in problem solving.

II.2.3 Education is directed at fostering processes that lead to developing assessment ability or to one's own judgment about information.

II.2.4 Educationist directed at fostering processes that make decision-making possible.

II.3 Education develops the ability to learn to learn throughout life, fostering processes of meta-cognition.

II.3.1 Education makes possible self-reflection regarding students' strengths, weaknesses, difficulties, progress, and achievement.

II.3.2 Education fosters strategies of self-assessment as a regulating process of cognition and the result of student learning. To asses one's own learning process.

II.3.3 Education fosters in students the regulation of cognition through their own planning and organization of learning.

II.3.4 Education fosters the ability to adapt to changing circumstances which is a primary objective of on-going education.

III Learning to do

III.1 Education develops people's innovative and creative skills.

III.1.1 Education is directed at developing the ability to offer alternatives and to foresee proposals.

III.1.2 Education fosters creativity in students.

III.1.3 Education fosters innovating thinking.

III.2 Education develops people's enterprising skills, leadership, and the ability to work in groups.

III.2.1 Education develops the traits of an enterprising person.

III.2.2 Education fosters in students the exercise of leadership.

III.2.3 Education helps students to work in groups.

III.3 Education is directed at training people committed to the environment and to sustainable development.

III.3.1 Education fosters awareness of the environment (realities and problems).

III.3.2 Education is directed at fostering citizen awareness about the need and possibilities for sustainable development.

III.3.3 Education seeks to teach students that development should take into account the needs of the present without compromising the possibilities for future generations.

III.4 Education fosters the use of ICTs as learning, productivity, communication, and research tools.

III.4.1 Education fosters the use of ICTs as productivity tools in order to collaborate in the building of models broadened by technology for the preparation of publications and to carry out creative tasks.

III.4.2 Education fosters the use of technology in order to locate, assess, and collect information from a variety of sources.

III.4.3 Education fosters employing technology in the development of strategies for solving real-world problems.

IV Learning to be

IV.1 Education fosters the development of self-identity and autonomy.

IV.1.1 Education fosters learning self-knowledge.

IV.1.2 Education is aimed at developing self-esteem.

IV.1.3 Education fosters self-control and mastery of basic emotions.

IV.1.4 Education leads to knowledge fostering self-care.

IV.2 Education develops personal projection ability.

IV.2.1 Education fosters the ability to make free and aware decisions.

IV.2.2 Education fosters the development of life plans and personal projects.

IV.2.3 Education fosters the ability to act with responsibility, recognizing one's own rights and limitations.

IV.3 Education fosters the ability to establish empathetic relations.

IV.3.1 Education fosters learning that makes possible effective communication through the development of the abilities to listen and to express oneself.

IV.3.2 Education fosters the importance of developing relations between men and women that encourage their equal participation in the economic, social, and cultural life of the family.

IV.3.3 Education is directed at students learning to be responsible for others.

IV.4 Education is directed at developing moral judgment and ethical behaviours based on respect for the dignity of people.

IV.4.1 Education is directed at developing discernment regarding personal actions and those of others in regard to the common good.

IV.4.2 Education helps one to know, understand, and according to the ethical principle that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Pertinence

I.1   Contemplates basic rights that guarantee life-long quality education for all

    I.1.1   The right of every person, without regard of individual, social, or cultural condition, to receive a life-long quality education is affirmed.

    I.1.2   The right of all students to not be discriminated due to colour, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, social condition, or other differences is established (Convention regarding the struggle against discrimination in teaching, 1960).

    I.1.3   The right of all students to participate in activities carried out by the school, without discrimination is established.

    I.1.4   The right of all students to receive an education that enables them to develop and strengthen their own identity in the face of others is established.

    I.1.5   Gender equality in access to quality education affirmed

    I.1.6   The right of all persons with special education needs to receive a quality education under equal opportunities is affirmed.

    I.1.7   The right to freedom of belief in the sphere of teaching is established.

I.2   Fosters and protects the rights of indigenous peoples, those of African descent, migrants, and other religions and linguistic minorities, to receive an education that values and includes their languages and cultures into teaching.

    I.2.1   The right of students belonging to indigenous minorities to receive an intercultural education that allows them to deepen their knowledge and appreciation of the own culture and participate in the world society is affirmed. (ILO Art. 29)

    I.2.2   The right of students to receive an education in their native language and a bilingual education of maintenance and development is affirmed. (ILO Art. 28)

    I.2.3   The right of indigenous peoples, those of African descent, migrants, or other cultural minorities to participate effectively in the construction and development of their own education programs and services, in order that these respond to their needs and interests is affirmed. (ILO Art. 27)

    I.2.4   The right of indigenous peoples, those of African descent, migrants, or other cultural minorities to train intercultural teachers who are members of their groups is established. (ILO Art. 27)

I.3   Basic educational principles are established to respond to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students.

    I.3.1   The need to foster specific learning in terms of different contexts, cultures, gender, and individual needs of students is established.

    I.3.2   Respect for individual, social, and cultural diversity of students is considered to be a value that contributes to teaching and learning processes.

    I.3.3   The need for common basic learning to be accessible to all is established.

    I.3.4   It is recognized that all children without exception can learn and develop the basic necessary skills if they are offered quality educational opportunities.

    I.3.5   It is recognized that people possess multiple talents and the need is established for schools to help develop them.

    I.3.6   It is established that students should have the supports necessary in order

to facilitate their maximum development and autonomy, whatever their social and cultural origins and their individual characteristics.

I.3.7 It is established as a principle that students are at the centre of teaching. Teaching methods should be based on the cultural, social, and individual experiences of children.

I.3.8 The need is established to train and have teachers trained to foster the participation of all students and to adapt the curriculum and their teaching to the diversity of contexts, cultures, and individual characteristics of students.

I.3.9 The need is established to incorporate the family and local community as an effective and fundamental support in the construction and improvement of educational processes and of school activities.

I.3.10 Attention to diversity is considered to be a responsibility of the school as a whole.

II System flexibility

II.1 The education system as a whole and regular education, possess regulations and conditions that enable attention to diversity without discrimination or exclusion.

II.1.1 There are administrative units to assure adequate attention to the specific needs of different groups within the framework of general policy: those with special educational needs; the poor; the gifted; cultural or ethnic minorities; migrants or displaced persons; working children, etc.

II.1.2 The administrative units aimed at different groups are integrated and active within the regular education administration.

II.1.3 Conditions are established so that schools can include all children of the community, without regard of their condition, culture, or gender.

II.1.4 There are conditions and sanctions for avoiding discrimination against students due to gender, race, etc. in processes of access to or integration into public schools.

II.1.5 Safeguard regulations and measures exist in order to avoid expulsion or the cancellation of enrolment of students in vulnerable situations (pregnant, poor, exhibiting disruptive conduct, etc.)

II.2 Different alternatives and modalities are offered for full access, participation, and continued learning of all persons.

II.2.1 Transitions: Guidelines and regulations exist for facilitating transitions: of the home, school, between levels, from primary to secondary, at the termination of compulsory schooling and into higher education, continued education, and employment.

II.2.2 Alternatives: There are alternative programs that link the school with the labour market as well as offering other training opportunities for students who have not enjoyed high academic achievement.

II.2.3 Modalities: The system offers various education modalities according to the needs of the population: distance education; dual education; tutorial education; intercultural bilingual education; community education; informal education, or others.

II.2.4 Certification: Flexible certification systems are available (acquired skills certification, work certification)

II.3 The regular curriculum for all students is adaptable and enriched according to different individual needs and life contexts of students.

II.3.1 The common curriculum states some basic objectives for all students and offers some opportunities to respond to differences.

II.3.2 The curriculum is specified centrally in terms of broad objectives more than detailed contents.

II.3.3 Free time is established (percentage of time, sectors or sub-sectors that may be added)

II.3.4 Areas or sectors of learning are emphasized over disciplines (greater or lesser tendency toward multi-disciplinarity or integration of contents)

II.3.5 Preference given to fulfilling learning cycles over courses (greater tendency to achieve certain skills or longer range learning objectives)

II.3.6 There are specific norms for individual curricular adaptations.

II.4 Flexible assessment criteria and procedures are available in order to meet the needs of diversity.

II.4.1 Assessment is related to broad objectives upon which the curriculum is based more than to performance in specific contents.

II.4.2 Grade promotion is organized in terms of cycles of two or three years each, weakening the link between advancement and assessment (grade advancement is not determined by achievement)

II.4.3 Various assessment mechanisms are suggested based on individual processes and progress: self-assessment, co-assessment, hetero-assessment, criteria-based, training-based, etc.

II.4.4 Various assessment procedures are suggested, meeting the type of information that one hopes to obtain and the characteristics of students: diagnosis, process, meta-cognitive, term-based.

II.4.5 Norms exist for grade advancement of student with special educational needs that favour continuity in their group of reference.

II.5 The existence of conditions and procedures for autonomy and participation in decision-making, so that schools can meet the needs of diversity.

II.5.1 Autonomy is granted and skills, resources, and training assigned to schools so they may construct their own education projects in response to diversity.

II.5.2 Opportunities and mechanisms are organized in order to represent and express the school community demands in the construction and development of school projects.

II.5.3 There is flexibility to establish a school calendar according to geographic and climatic regions, customs, or local holidays.

II.5.4 Availability established of a social-educational and local cultural information system (institutional, municipal, regional) that makes it possible to offer educational services adjusted to needs.

II.5.5 Regional educational entities are assigned authority, resources, and training in order to carry out different educational programs in the region aimed at the economy, society and culture of the region.

II.5.6 Authority, resources, and training are offered to local entities (municipal, provincial, departmental) for participatory planning, programming, and budgeting of educational projects within their domains.

II.5.7 Mechanisms and regulations are established so that education programs and services aimed at indigenous peoples and local communities in general are developed with their cooperation and respond to their aspirations.

II.5.8 Regulations are in place requiring regional, provincial, and local education authorities to be publicly accountable in a transparent and periodic manner to the community.

III Adaptability procedures

III.1   The existence of procedures and regulations for adapting the curriculum and teaching to a diverse body of students.

III.1.1   Schools are offered programs, guidance, and materials in order to include within their curricula content relevant to the contexts referents of students: native language, cultural content (history, world view, knowledge, techniques, and value systems) and religious beliefs.

III.1.2   Recommendations are made and mechanisms established in order that schools can incorporate cultural agents, elders, or other relevant members of the community in educational activities.

III.1.3   Measures are taken so that curricular plans can be adapted to the diversity of education needs and interests of students: by gender, future employment and study plans, etc.

III.1.4   Recommendations and mechanisms are established for adapting the curriculum and teaching for persons with special education needs, the gifted or other conditions.

III.2   The existence of conditions and procedures that encourage collaboration among and participation of all students.

III.2.1   Recommendations and mechanisms are established so that the school community can strengthen social relations that make possible active participation of all members (students, families, community, teachers and school officials).

III.2.2   Recommendations and mechanisms are established so that schools can offer opportunities for participation adapted to different interests and needs of students.

III.2.3   Recommendations and mechanisms are established to avoid discrimination and segregation between students and between groups.

III.2.4   Recommendations and mechanisms are established for fostering student participation in decision-making processes.

III.2.5   Recommendations and mechanisms are established for fostering the participation of different groups within schools.

III.3   Teachers are provided with tools, procedures, and learning opportunities in order to adapt the curriculum, they are teaching, and to meet the needs of diversity.

III.3.1   Guidelines are furnished to teacher training institutions so that they include in their curricula attention to diversity (individual, social, and cultural) as a cross-cutting subject and specialized subject.

III.3.2   Recommendations are given and training offered to teachers regarding the inclusive focus in order to plan the learning and participation of all students.

III.3.3   Recommendations are given and training offered to teachers to foster intercultural education for all that makes possible understanding, valuing, and maintaining dialogue with other cultures.

III.3.4   Teachers who are placed in indigenous areas know the culture, master the language of the community, and are trained with an intercultural focus.

III.4   Support systems are implemented to ensure response to the individual, social, and cultural diversity of students.

III.4.1   Cooperative networks are established between teachers and other professionals in order to serve the needs of diversity.

III.4.2   Schools receive guidance and tools to aid them in organizing and implementing support mechanisms in order to serve the needs of diversity.

III.4.3   Specialized support services are organized in order to serve schools and

communities: school-based teams, travelling services, extension services in special schools, district or municipal service centres; complementary education.

III.4.4 Services to support diversity involve comprehensive, multi-sectoral activity.

III.4.5 Recommendations are issued to schools to establish support networks with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, higher education, community organizations, and others.

III.5 Provision of resources and infrastructure are adapted to the different cultures, contexts, and individual conditions of students.

III.5.1 Recommendations are issued and mechanisms created so that material, human, and technological resources are distributed in a fair manner in order to foster inclusion and attention to the diversity of students.

III.5.2 Educational texts and complementary learning materials are developed and made available that are adapted to diverse cultures and languages at all levels.

III.5.3 A set of materials are developed and distributed specifically adapted to support processes of attention to diversity in regular schools.

III.5.4 Measures are carried out and regulation issued so that school texts incorporate diversity criteria, non-stereotyping, and non-discrimination in their lay-out, content, and pedagogical focuses.

III.5.5 Norms and regulations exist for schools to eliminate architectural barriers to students with special education needs.

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>
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>
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>
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>
> Ciencias Naturales y Educación Ambiental
>
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>
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>
> Matemáticas
>
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ANNEX 2:

Statistical data

		Education System Structure								
		Duration (years)				Compulsory education (years)				Starting age
		ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 1
	Source	UIS								
Anguila	AI	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Antigua and Barbuda	AG	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Argentina	AR	3	6	3	3	1	6	3	0	6
Aruba	AW	2	6	2	3	0	6	2	3	6
Bahamas	BS	2	6	3	3	0	6	3	3	5
Barbados	BB	2	6	3	2	0	6	3	2	5
Belize	BZ	2	6	4	2	0	6	4	0	5
Bermuda	BM	1	6	3	4	0	6	3	3	5
Bolivia	BO	2	6	2	4	0	6	2	0	6
Brazil	BR	3	4	4	3	0	4	4	0	7
British Virgin Islands	VG	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Cayman Islands	KY	2	6	3	3	0	6	3	3	5
Chile	CL	3	6	2	4	0	6	2	0	6
Colombia	CO	3	5	4	2	1	5	4	0	6
Costa Rica	CR	2	6	3	2	0	6	3	1	6
Cuba	CU	3	6	3	3	0	6	3	0	6
Dominica	DM	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Dominican Republic	DO	3	6	2	4	1	6	2	0	6
Ecuador	EC	1	6	3	3	1	6	3	0	6
El Salvador	SV	3	6	3	3	0	6	3	0	7
Grenada	GD	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Guatemala	GT	4	6	3	2	0	6	3	0	7
Guyana	GY	2	6	3	2	0	6	3	1	6
Haiti	HT	3	6	3	4	0	6	0	0	6
Honduras	HN	3	6	3	2	0	6	0	0	6
Jamaica	JM	3	6	3	2	0	6	0	0	6
Mexico	MX	2	6	3	3	0	6	3	1	6
Montserrat	MS	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	0	5
Netherland Antilles	AN	2	6	2	4	0	6	2	2	6
Nicaragua	NI	4	6	3	2	0	6	0	0	7
Panama	PN	2	6	3	3	0	6	0	0	6
Paraguay	PY	3	6	3	3	0	6	3	0	6
Peru	PE	3	6	3	2	0	6	3	2	6
Saint Kitts and Nevis	KN	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	2	5
Saint Lucia	LC	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	1	5
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	VC	2	7	3	2	0	7	3	1	5
Suriname	SR	2	6	4	2	0	6	0	0	6
Trinidad and Tobago	TT	2	7	3	2	0	7	0	0	5
Turks and Caicos	TC	2	6	3	2	2	6	3	2	6
Uruguay	UY	3	6	3	3	0	6	3	1	6
Venezuela	VN	3	6	3	2	0	6	3	1	6

Enrolment by Education Level (number of students)						
	ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 56
Source	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	499	1 433	647	429	60	a
AG	1 636	13 025	3 288	1 988	1 288	a
AR	1 266 472	4 674 869	2 049 007	1 450 174	a	2 101 437
AW	2 836	10 185	3 341	3 632	a	1 704
BS	3 771	36 070	16 183	14 674	n.a.	a
BB	5 901	22 327	12 848	8 452	3 620	7 979
BZ	3 765	48 996	23 809	7 415	3 022	722
BM	n.a.	4 810	2 336	2 467	a	1 960
BO	226 119	1 545 797	445 445	618 036	n.a.	346 056
BR	6 991 823	18 919 122	15 519 627	9 072 942	a	3 994 422
VG	663	2 824	1 248	459	1 136	a
KY	580	3 361	1 587	1 114	80	390
CL	394 314	1 755 997	605 927	989 039	a	580 815
CO	1 065 885	5 259 033	3 016 923	1 033 602	a	1 112 574
CR	102 339	558 084	243 090	96 673	a	108 765
CU	483 831	906 293	512 117	420 221	19 775	396 516
DM	1 812	9 872	5 190	2 287	1 872	a
DO	183 549	1 281 885	308 224	474 466	a	293 565
EC	221 197	1 989 665	572 928	423 607	a	n.a.
SV	245 918	1 045 485	326 454	169 755	a	120 264
GD	3 376	15 819	8 934	4 726	1 100	a
GT	425 825	2 280 706	474 585	223 976	a	114 764
GY	35 423	114 161	49 270	14 244	2 300	6 933
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	a	n.a.
HN	189 578	1 257 358	311 260	243 550	a	122 874
JM	153 114	331 286	163 267	82 266	48 123	45 770
MX	3 742 633	14 781 327	6 960 113	3 443 740	a	2 322 781
MS	122	468	178	106	17	a
AN	5 972	22 667	7 132	8 136	445	2 285
NI	199 422	941 957	290 510	125 895	a	103 577
PN	73 154	429 837	155 043	98 857	6 670	128 558
PY	146 490	935 722	310 980	199 901	1 553	143 913
PE	1 089 540	4 133 386	1 823 619	838 261	263 593	896 501
KN	1 910	6 394	2 405	1 498	751	a
LC	3 957	23 821	9 344	4 865	2 127	191
VC	3 861	17 536	7 588	2 810	1 194	a
SR	17 049	64 659	29 924	11 076	a	5 186
TT	29 905	137 313	60 937	44 444	8 677	16 751
TC	886	2 117	929	587	580	a
UY	103 691	365 423	184 128	159 489	3 514	101 298
VN	914 920	3 453 379	1 383 891	569 615	a	983 217

	3-18	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Source	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	79.9	94.2	100.0	100.0	88.3	96.4	91.2	100.0	90.5	80.8	91.2	83.2	88.8	100.0	63.6	6.9	n.a.
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AW	85.8	0.4	79.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.7	100.0	100.0	99.3	97.4	100.0	90.1	82.5	69.9	40.1
BS	74.1	14.5	30.6	87.6	86.0	87.8	97.2	98.4	99.2	94.7	76.0	100.0	100.0	90.7	80.1	30.9	7.3
BB	80.7	63.8	99.8	100.0	100.0	98.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	93.3	100.0	100.0	97.4	94.5	55.9	13.3	1.2
BZ	79.1	18.3	66.6	99.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	86.8	71.2	55.1	36.6	19.0
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BR	80.8	16.4	34.6	56.5	82.4	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	95.7	85.9	76.2	53.6
VG	87.4	83.6	91.7	89.1	100.0	99.7	91.8	100.0	92.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	91.1	93.8	76.5	49.2	21.6
KY	76.5	26.2	85.5	79.4	89.0	86.7	88.9	98.1	100.0	95.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	83.0	60.7	17.3	0.2
CL	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CO	67.4	13.9	29.4	70.6	70.3	87.4	92.2	92.5	92.7	84.6	81.4	79.0	73.6	71.9	59.6	42.7	29.7
CR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CU	89.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.4	96.8	94.1	95.2	95.0	99.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.5	55.4	31.0
DM	83.3	61.1	80.9	85.2	88.9	92.6	99.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	89.8	67.2	39.5	20.4
DO	68.8	10.5	18.2	68.2	73.6	86.8	92.0	92.1	96.6	92.1	97.5	92.5	80.2	66.6	56.2	45.7	33.3
EC	69.0	n.a.	14.1	79.4	98.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.7	87.3	75.1	65.4	59.6	53.7	44.7	24.4
SV	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GD	81.7	82.6	100.0	80.8	89.3	88.1	89.8	88.2	85.8	85.8	75.5	89.9	87.3	84.5	83.7	62.4	31.5
GT	62.9	5.9	11.7	29.8	75.6	92.4	98.0	98.7	98.3	92.6	91.2	84.6	68.6	57.8	42.1	34.9	26.1
GY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	68.6	4.1	25.1	54.0	80.7	95.4	100.0	99.7	95.6	100.0	90.9	94.7	89.6	59.7	39.7	23.2	37.9
JM	81.1	70.6	100.0	100.0	84.6	92.7	96.1	97.1	94.0	86.7	90.2	92.5	94.8	80.2	62.2	33.2	8.5
MX	77.0	20.7	63.7	93.3	98.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.2	92.3	83.9	61.8	51.6	39.5	18.2
MS	85.9	95.3	95.5	100.0	77.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	83.3	100.0	84.0	10.2	n.a.
AN	89.7	6.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.4	100.0	100.0	94.2	69.3	42.9
NI	67.8	25.3	43.5	64.1	66.5	87.7	93.9	95.0	99.1	95.9	93.6	82.8	70.8	63.8	40.1	31.6	22.6
PN	73.3	n.a.	29.9	74.8	99.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.1	85.5	90.2	83.4	72.5	62.7	54.5	24.8
PY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
PE	80.0	43.8	64.4	81.8	87.6	99.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	92.6	87.2	84.0	72.0	38.0	19.5
KN	84.4	83.2	100.0	89.4	95.8	98.9	100.0	94.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	91.5	100.0	90.6	70.3	25.1	8.1
LC	78.3	53.2	81.4	99.0	100.0	99.4	97.8	100.0	96.5	92.0	87.3	76.5	74.4	75.9	69.0	34.9	13.0
VC	64.7	n.a.	15.5	60.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.7	84.7	79.8	77.5	84.5	67.6	63.7	49.3	33.1	16.7
SR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TT	75.7	62.1	97.4	100.0	95.0	95.8	97.7	94.8	97.5	100.0	91.1	85.1	85.6	79.4	58.7	20.8	7.0
TC	77.8	65.2	63.0	86.7	82.6	83.7	92.2	90.5	78.2	89.7	80.5	92.7	77.2	92.3	100.0	42.8	12.5
UY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VN	71.8	26.3	56.0	75.4	90.1	92.6	100.0	100.0	98.7	93.4	89.5	87.8	80.4	65.7	50.8	26.9	11.4

Total coverage -Age-specific enrolment rate (%)

223

	Net Enrolment Rate (%)									Net Intake Rate to First Grade (%)	Number of Tertiary Ed. Students per 100 thousand inhabitants*	
	ISCED 0			ISCED 1			ISCED 23					
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F		Territorial	Residents
Source	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	91.0	97.5	85.1	88.3	87.2	89.4	92.9	93.0	92.8	71.5	a	622
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	a	n.a.
AR	61.7	61.4	62.0	98.8	99.2	98.4	79.1	76.3	81.9	90.7	5 477	5 490
AW	90.3	87.5	93.2	96.6	96.9	96.2	74.3	73.5	75.2	83.9	1 772	1 875
BS	22.6	22.7	22.4	83.7	82.8	84.7	73.8	69.6	78.2	61.7	n.a.	n.a.
BB	80.6	82.1	79.0	97.2	97.6	96.8	95.1	92.7	97.6	94.0	n.a.	n.a.
BZ	26.7	27.4	25.9	95.2	94.6	95.9	71.4	69.8	73.1	67.0	279	573
BF	36.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3 158	4 900
BO	39.0	38.7	39.2	95.2	94.8	95.7	73.6	74.1	73.1	71.1	3 914	3 954
BR	52.6	57.5	47.4	92.9	n.a.	n.a.	75.7	73.3	78.1	n.a.	2 172	2 182
VG	81.3	79.2	83.4	94.7	94.7	94.6	79.5	75.4	83.5	67.1	a	1 320
KY	44.5	47.6	41.3	87.2	89.3	85.2	90.9	86.5	95.6	58.1	n.a.	n.a.
CL	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3 602	3 606
CO	33.9	33.7	34.1	83.2	82.7	83.7	54.9	52.1	57.9	57.3	2 477	2 513
CR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2 557	2 559
CU	100.0	98.3	100.0	96.2	97.5	94.8	86.6	85.8	87.4	98.8	3 535	3 423
DM	55.5	56.2	54.8	87.7	87.1	88.3	90.4	88.9	91.8	45.9	a	958
DO	28.1	27.7	28.5	86.0	85.3	86.8	49.3	44.6	54.1	59.3	3 396	3 416
EC	62.5	62.3	62.6	97.7	97.2	98.2	52.2	51.8	52.5	85.1	n.a.	n.a.
SV	45.7	44.7	46.8	92.3	92.1	92.5	48.1	47.4	48.7	59.4	1 810	1 835
GD	79.7	76.1	83.3	83.9	84.2	83.6	78.2	74.7	81.8	60.5	a	409
GT	26.7	26.6	26.8	93.0	95.4	90.5	33.7	35.1	32.4	69.2	933	953
GY	91.5	91.6	91.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	98.9	927	1 063
MT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MN	26.6	26.1	27.2	90.6	89.7	91.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	60.2	1 743	1 760
JF	91.4	89.7	93.3	90.6	90.2	91.1	79.2	77.9	80.6	74.3	1 744	n.a.
FX	73.7	73.5	73.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	63.8	62.7	64.8	89.3	2 227	2 246
FS	77.1	74.6	80.0	94.3	96.0	92.1	100.0	92.0	97.7	62.7	a	926
AN	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	76.9	73.3	80.6	74.5	1 299	1 456
NI	34.5	34.0	35.0	87.9	88.5	87.4	40.7	38.3	43.3	37.7	1 927	1 960
PN	51.7	51.1	52.3	98.2	98.5	98.0	63.7	60.8	66.7	87.9	4 049	4 106
PY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2 392	2 419
PE	60.2	59.8	60.6	97.1	96.9	97.2	68.8	69.0	68.7	76.1	3 253	3 288
KN	83.2	77.4	89.5	94.0	90.6	97.7	98.3	100.0	96.8	66.4	a	806
LC	57.0	53.3	60.8	97.6	99.0	96.1	71.1	67.9	74.3	71.2	121	768
VC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	93.9	95.4	92.5	62.3	61.7	62.9	61.9	a	464
SR	90.5	90.1	91.0	92.4	89.6	95.5	63.2	53.2	73.5	71.1	1 171	1 437
TT	69.9	70.0	69.8	92.2	92.4	91.9	71.9	70.0	73.9	68.3	1 290	1 593
TC	65.1	66.7	63.7	81.5	78.2	84.7	77.7	77.7	77.6	54.6	a	599
UY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2 945	3 000
VN	49.3	48.8	49.7	92.1	91.8	92.3	61.2	56.9	65.7	63.5	3 807	3 835

	Population 20-39 years of age who has not completed upper secondary and attend an educational programme (%)	School Life Expectancy			Expected Average Passing Grade**			Grade Repeaters (%)		Timely Coverage					
										ISCED 1					
										First Grade			Final Grade		
		ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 23	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 1	ISCED 23	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Source	ECLAC	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	n.a.	2.3	6.6	4.7	5.5	8.2	9.9	21.8	n.a.	74.0	61.0	92.7	50.2	54.8	45.8
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	2.2	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	5.9	8.5	10.3	6.4	11.5	100.0	100.0	98.7	72.8	71.9	73.6
AW	n.a.	2.0	6.9	5.1	5.5	7.2	8.5	8.5	17.5	83.9	86.3	81.4	39.7	34.7	44.8
BS	n.a.	0.6	n.a.	n.a.	5.1	7.3	9.5	n.a.	n.a.	61.7	62.1	61.3	50.0	45.9	54.2
BB	n.a.	1.8	6.4	5.4	6.0	9.0	11.0	n.a.	n.a.	94.0	93.8	94.2	84.1	84.1	84.0
BZ	n.a.	0.6	7.5	5.2	6.0	9.2	10.2	10.8	6.3	75.0	76.8	73.1	37.5	34.4	40.6
BM	n.a.	0.5	6.2	6.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	3.0	1.0	6.9	5.4	6.0	7.8	10.4	1.6	3.4	71.0	n.a.	n.a.	40.5	n.a.	n.a.
BR	6.9	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	20.6	17.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VG	n.a.	1.8	7.6	4.9	6.5	9.1	10.5	4.1	9.5	74.9	n.a.	n.a.	50.7	n.a.	n.a.
KY	n.a.	0.9	5.6	5.8	5.4	8.6	10.9	n.a.	n.a.	58.1	60.0	56.1	71.5	72.8	70.2
CL	1.7	1.5	6.1	5.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	2.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CO	1.1	1.1	5.6	4.6	4.2	n.a.	n.a.	4.3	2.6	51.9	51.8	52.0	31.7	30.0	33.5
CR	5.1	1.3	6.7	3.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.9	9.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CU	n.a.	3.5	6.0	5.6	5.9	9.0	11.3	0.7	1.0	102.2	103.4	101.0	85.1	84.1	86.1
DM	1.3	1.3	6.7	5.3	6.5	9.8	10.9	4.3	8.1	51.8	49.9	53.9	70.6	71.2	70.1
DO	6.7	1.0	6.7	4.2	5.2	6.5	8.4	7.3	3.1	54.1	55.1	53.0	26.3	23.4	29.2
EC	2.1	0.8	7.0	3.7	6.0	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	3.9	88.3	88.0	88.6	47.9	46.6	49.2
SV	1.8	1.5	7.0	3.7	5.2	7.0	9.0	6.7	3.2	64.6	64.3	64.9	30.0	28.4	31.7
GD	n.a.	1.6	6.4	5.2	6.9	9.5	10.9	3.4	7.8	63.7	64.9	62.6	49.3	46.3	52.2
GT	2.0	1.2	6.9	2.5	4.8	n.a.	n.a.	13.3	3.1	75.0	76.4	73.5	21.8	22.0	21.7
GY	n.a.	2.3	7.7	4.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	7.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	4.3	1.0	6.9	3.3	4.9	n.a.	n.a.	8.5	n.a.	61.2	60.2	62.2	24.2	22.0	26.6
JM	n.a.	2.8	5.7	4.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.8	1.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	2.3	1.7	6.6	4.8	5.9	8.3	9.7	4.8	2.1	89.3	89.5	89.2	54.5	52.4	56.6
MS	n.a.	1.9	7.5	5.7	7.0	10.0	12.0	3.4	n.a.	62.7	54.1	73.3	46.3	35.7	57.7
AN	n.a.	2.3	n.a.	n.a.	5.8	7.9	10.4	12.6	n.a.	91.7	90.4	93.0	48.2	39.7	56.7
NI	4.4	1.4	6.7	3.2	5.1	6.7	7.3	10.5	6.7	47.3	49.3	45.2	17.7	16.9	18.4
PN	2.1	1.1	6.8	4.2	5.8	8.0	9.5	5.5	4.8	91.1	90.9	91.3	56.7	54.1	59.5
PY	2.1	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	7.1	8.5	7.3	1.1	67.0	65.9	68.2	35.4	32.7	38.1
PE	1.0	1.8	6.9	4.7	5.7	8.0	9.3	7.6	4.6	76.6	76.4	76.9	46.7	46.4	47.1
KN	n.a.	2.0	7.1	4.7	6.9	10.0	11.9	n.a.	2.7	69.1	68.3	69.8	79.1	82.3	75.8
LC	n.a.	1.4	7.4	4.1	6.9	9.0	10.3	2.3	n.a.	80.7	83.4	77.9	67.9	67.7	68.1
VC	n.a.	1.7	7.4	3.9	6.5	8.9	9.7	6.4	9.6	67.9	69.3	66.5	43.7	38.8	48.7
SR	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	11.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TT	n.a.	1.7	7.1	4.2	6.5	8.9	10.2	5.2	0.9	72.7	73.4	72.0	49.9	47.6	52.4
TC	n.a.	2.1	5.6	4.7	5.1	7.5	9.2	5.5	1.9	54.6	50.3	58.7	50.4	52.6	48.1
UY	4.2	1.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.3	10.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VN	n.a.	1.7	6.3	3.6	5.2	7.3	8.1	7.3	8.4	66.1	66.3	65.8	42.9	40.0	46.0

	Completion											15+ years of age	15-39 years of age
	Population who has completed Primary education (%)***												
	15-19 years of age												
	Total	M	F	Urban	Rural	Aboriginal	Non abor..	High. Quin.	Low. Quin.	High. Dec.	Ext. Poverty		
Source	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC
AI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	97.1	96.6	97.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	99.4	94.6	100.0	n.a.	90.9	96.7
AW	97.5	97.4	97.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	91.4	95.0
BS	99.9	99.8	99.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	98.8	99.1
BB	99.8	99.8	99.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	99.7	99.9
BZ	81.2	79.2	83.4	90.5	72.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	72.3	76.3
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	88.7	90.5	86.8	93.5	78.9	85.4	92.2	94.8	73.4	94.3	69.8	60.9	76.2
BR	92.6	90.6	94.6	94.6	84.0	91.0	92.7	98.5	83.9	98.8	70.8	76.5	87.1
VG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
KY	99.4	99.2	99.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	97.2	98.5
CL	98.3	98.0	98.7	98.7	96.1	96.5	98.5	99.5	97.1	99.3	92.0	86.2	95.7
CO	91.1	89.0	93.2	95.2	80.5	n.a.	n.a.	96.7	86.5	99.1	86.4	76.3	87.0
CR	92.3	91.0	93.7	94.9	88.8	n.a.	n.a.	97.6	86.7	93.0	72.9	81.6	89.2
CU	98.2	97.7	98.7	98.8	96.4	98.0	98.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	87.9	97.4
DM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
DO	86.1	82.8	89.7	89.2	80.2	n.d	n.d	92.0	81.5	97.8	79.6	67.1	80.6
EC	92.8	91.9	93.7	95.0	88.5	87.8	93.4	96.4	86.8	97.1	84.8	79.3	90.1
SV	76.1	74.4	77.9	85.7	64.2	n.a.	n.a.	92.9	58.6	97.5	55.7	57.9	70.6
GD	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GT	58.3	64.1	52.7	75.3	44.8	41.6	69.3	82.2	36.2	93.2	45.0	42.7	52.0
GY	82.0	77.7	85.7	83.0	75.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	69.7	78.7
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	70.6	66.8	74.4	84.4	58.1	n.a.	n.a.	90.1	48.1	95.2	54.6	53.0	64.8
JM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	93.9	94.2	93.7	96.2	90.2	n.a.	n.a.	99.2	85.4	99.0	83.5	75.3	88.7
MS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NI	71.3	67.7	75.2	81.3	40.2	48.1	65.1	86.3	37.4	94.5	49.2	58.5	67.6
PN	95.0	94.8	95.2	98.1	89.1	72.7	96.6	99.4	85.6	99.5	79.6	84.4	92.2
PY	89.5	87.1	92.0	94.2	83.6	83.2	95.9	96.5	80.9	98.4	67.4	72.5	84.8
PE	91.6	93.1	90.0	96.0	83.1	88.1	90.1	97.6	78.3	98.8	76.5	67.8	85.5
KN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
LC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SR	95.9	96.6	95.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	89.5	93.9
TT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
UY	96.4	95.4	97.5	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	99.4	91.7	n.a.	n.a.	86.8	96.3
VN	91.5	89.1	94.0	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	94.6	87.5	98.3	83.7	82.4	89.8

	Completion											20+ years of age	20-39 years of age
	Population who has completed lower secondary (%)***												
	20-24 yeasrs of age												
	Total	M	F	Urban	Rural	Aboriginal	Non abor..	High. Quin.	Low. Quin.	High. Dec.	Ext. Poverty		
Source	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC
AI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	83.2	80.7	85.7	83.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	96.0	64.2	97.5	n.a.	62.1	76.4
AW	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BS	97.4	96.8	98.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	90.1	95.5
BB	98.7	98.2	99.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	78.1	96.1
BZ	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	74.5	81.4	67.8	82.5	52.8	69.3	81.1	90.2	43.4	91.7	44.8	46.3	61.9
BR	70.9	67.6	74.2	76.3	41.9	65.6	71.3	95.3	37.4	96.1	22.8	47.6	60.6
VG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
KY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CL	94.3	93.7	95.0	96.0	81.2	87.2	94.8	99.0	85.6	99.0	70.4	74.3	89.4
CO	72.3	69.9	74.5	82.1	42.0	n.a.	n.a.	89.8	54.7	95.8	50.0	48.5	62.4
CR	55.5	53.3	57.9	65.6	38.7	n.a.	n.a.	79.0	33.7	86.5	19.3	42.5	49.3
CU	87.0	85.6	88.5	91.1	73.7	86.6	87.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	68.8	87.4
DM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
DO	75.8	74.0	77.6	83.3	61.0	n.a.	n.a.	85.5	60.5	90.6	58.1	52.4	66.7
EC	63.3	62.7	63.9	74.9	36.0	42.2	65.6	89.7	35.3	89.8	42.9	45.7	58.4
SV	58.4	60.1	56.9	71.3	37.8	n.a.	n.a.	84.1	24.6	92.9	28.2	38.8	52.8
GD	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GT	33.2	36.4	30.3	52.4	14.2	16.0	43.4	62.7	10.3	79.6	9.4	21.1	28.2
GY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	28.9	25.1	32.5	48.6	9.1	n.a.	n.a.	62.5	4.9	75.6	8.3	21.3	27.0
JM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	74.1	75.1	73.2	81.7	58.7	n.a.	n.a.	93.2	42.0	96.9	33.9	50.3	66.4
MS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NI	46.3	42.1	50.4	52.4	12.2	18.1	36.9	64.9	11.4	79.0	18.5	29.9	41.8
PN	70.7	67.2	74.3	82.2	46.5	27.8	73.7	90.2	33.8	87.5	33.2	55.1	65.5
PY	61.1	61.8	60.4	72.3	43.4	43.2	75.9	83.3	31.7	94.2	21.0	40.3	53.0
PE	73.8	75.8	71.8	85.9	44.2	67.9	71.5	93.2	34.7	95.7	39.7	52.9	67.3
KN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
LC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SR	66.6	64.5	69.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	50.6	63.5
TT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
UY	71.3	68.1	74.5	71.3	n.d	n.a.	n.a.	95.5	34.1	n.a.	n.a.	51.9	68.4
VN	67.6	61.5	74.0	67.6	n.d	n.a.	n.a.	84.7	51.0	91.1	38.0	51.4	62.3

	Completion												
	Population who has completed upper secondary (%)*												
	20-24 yeasrs of age											20+ years of age	20-39 years of age
	Total	M	F	Urban	Rural	Aboriginal	Non abor..	High. Quin.	Low. Quin.	High. Dec.	Ext. Poverty		
Source	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	UIS/ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	CEPAL	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC
AI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	68.7	65.0	72.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	90.2	45.0	94.6	n.a.	50.4	62.8
AW	70.6	68.4	72.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	56.0	69.1
BS	86.9	83.5	90.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	70.9	82.6
BB	96.3	94.5	98.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	67.2	91.8
BZ	38.9	37.1	40.5	52.4	22.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	24.8	32.7
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	51.4	56.2	46.9	60.6	26.7	46.3	58.0	73.5	19.6	82.4	24.0	30.6	41.2
BR	48.8	44.1	53.6	54.0	20.8	40.7	49.4	85.6	15.2	86.3	7.8	33.3	42.5
VG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
KY	89.9	86.2	92.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	78.7	87.5
CL	73.9	71.7	76.1	77.5	45.6	60.0	74.7	92.5	50.0	96.2	27.1	49.8	65.3
CO	60.3	57.8	62.6	70.3	29.4	n.a.	n.a.	84.1	40.0	92.8	38.8	39.2	51.7
CR	41.2	39.0	43.4	49.0	28.1	n.a.	n.a.	69.4	17.0	76.8	10.3	32.6	37.8
CU	47.9	42.7	53.3	54.8	28.0	46.0	49.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	29.0	38.1
DM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	35.3	45.0
DO	46.9	42.2	52.0	54.8	31.5	n.a.	n.a.	63.3	29.8	77.3	30.4	29.0	38.1
EC	48.3	47.4	49.3	58.8	23.7	26.6	50.7	79.4	22.2	83.0	25.8	35.3	45.0
SV	36.5	36.9	36.1	49.0	16.6	n.a.	n.a.	67.7	8.2	82.3	12.1	25.0	34.1
GD	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GT	24.9	26.7	23.3	42.0	8.1	10.3	33.6	56.8	3.7	72.0	4.8	14.3	21.4
GY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	31.1	44.4
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	21.4	18.6	24.2	37.4	5.4	n.a.	n.a.	53.7	2.3	66.3	4.7	15.2	20.1
JM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	40.6	40.1	41.0	48.4	24.8	n.a.	n.a.	71.5	11.9	84.7	6.8	27.5	35.0
MS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NI	33.9	31.0	36.7	39.2	7.3	7.1	27.1	55.4	4.4	71.6	10.7	22.9	31.3
PN	52.6	48.1	57.3	63.4	30.0	11.9	55.5	76.9	16.9	76.6	17.0	39.6	48.4
PY	43.9	43.6	44.1	54.4	27.1	26.4	58.3	69.1	13.5	88.1	9.4	28.8	38.7
PE	65.3	65.7	65.0	78.2	34.1	57.9	61.6	89.0	26.2	90.5	28.6	46.4	59.2
KN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
LC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SR	15.9	13.3	18.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.7	12.5
TT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
UY	39.2	35.2	43.2	n.d	n.d	n.a.	n.a.	75.4	7.3	n.a.	n.a.	29.6	38.0
VN	52.5	46.4	58.8	n.d	n.d	n.a.	n.a.	72.6	35.4	81.4	23.6	38.0	46.8

	Completion								
	Current completion (%)**								
	ISCED 1			ISCED 2			ISCED 3		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Source	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	55.3	55.7	55.6	95.8	95.8	96.5	93.7	96.2	92.4
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	99.5	100.0	97.3	80.6	83.8	77.5	57.4	63.0	52.0
AW	100.0	100.0	100.0	91.1	85.5	96.9	29.5	25.9	33.4
BS	96.8	96.6	97.0	85.7	84.9	86.5	71.1	68.6	73.6
BB	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.4	100.0
BZ	100.0	104.0	100.0	65.5	63.1	68.0	52.0	45.5	58.6
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	58.3	59.2	57.5
BR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VG	98.6	97.3	100.0	79.3	73.4	85.0	68.1	46.7	90.0
KY	100.0	100.0	97.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	67.4	66.7	68.2
CL	97.3	95.6	98.9	97.3	97.4	97.2	68.4	71.7	65.1
CO	94.2	92.5	96.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CU	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	79.3	78.6	80.1
DM	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	76.3	61.0	91.3
DO	90.8	88.2	93.4	72.8	66.8	79.1	24.8	20.9	28.7
EC	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SV	88.5	88.8	88.1	66.7	66.3	67.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GD	91.0	91.1	90.8	94.3	88.3	100.0	80.6	68.0	93.6
GT	72.3	77.6	67.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	81.1	78.9	83.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
JM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	99.2	n.a.	n.a.	78.5	n.a.	n.a.	38.6	n.a.	n.a.
MS	61.0	56.6	65.5	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0	101.6	100.0
AN	100.0	98.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	64.9	57.2	72.7
NI	73.7	70.3	77.1	53.6	48.9	58.4	44.1	38.4	50.1
PN	97.1	96.9	97.3	73.1	70.1	76.3	51.1	48.0	54.3
PY	100.0	100.0	100.0	68.1	67.2	69.1	48.4	45.9	50.9
PE	98.4	99.0	97.8	82.2	84.7	79.6	75.4	76.0	74.7
KN	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	70.2	59.3	80.3
LC	100.0	100.0	100.0	81.8	82.5	81.2	72.6	63.5	81.8
VC	84.1	78.3	89.8	75.7	71.8	79.6	46.5	38.3	54.9
SR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TT	93.7	92.3	95.2	81.1	79.4	82.9	72.6	70.0	75.2
TC	98.6	100.0	93.3	89.4	99.5	79.1	93.5	85.7	101.7
UY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VN	89.6	87.2	92.1	64.4	58.8	70.3	47.5	41.3	53.9

	Illiteracy†											
	Population 15+ years of age						Population 15-24 years of age					
	%			(number)			%			(number)		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Source	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AR	2.8	2.8	2.8	756 287	364 586	391 702	1.1	1.3	0.9	71 379	42 932	28 447
AW	2.7	2.5	2.9	1 890	811	1 079	1.0	1.1	0.8	110	62	48
BS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BB	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BZ	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	13.3	6.9	19.3	683 049	175 198	507 852	2.7	1.5	3.9	43 188	11 887	31 301
BR	11.4	11.6	11.2	15 051 896	7 457 934	7 593 962	3.2	4.2	2.1	1 122 581	755 091	367 490
VG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
KY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CL	4.3	4.2	4.4	495 479	238 071	257 408	1.0	1.2	0.8	26 253	15 784	10 468
CO	7.2	7.1	7.3	2 216 528	1 063 884	1 152 643	2.0	2.4	1.6	167 407	102 596	64 810
CR	5.1	5.3	4.9	137 754	72 607	65 147	2.4	2.8	2.0	17 969	10 780	7 189
CU	0.2	0.2	0.2	17 911	8 553	9 358	0.0	0.0	0.1	668	328	340
DM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
DO	13.0	13.2	12.8	730 625	373 387	357 238	5.8	7.0	4.6	102 120	62 509	39 611
EC	9.0	7.7	10.3	740 511	314 786	425 726	3.6	3.6	3.5	88 240	45 359	42 882
SV	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GD	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
GT	30.9	24.6	36.7	2 034 504	770 146	1 264 358	17.8	13.6	21.6	420 916	158 855	262 061
GY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	20.0	20.2	19.8	773 274	390 854	382 419	11.1	13.1	9.1	152 497	91 170	61 327
JM	20	26	14	339 800	215 598	124 202	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
MX	9.1	7.6	10.4	6 521 246	2 624 692	3 896 554	2.4	2.5	2.4	492 439	249 303	243 136
MS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NI	23.3	23.2	23.4	691 266	339 501	351 764	13.8	16.4	11.2	153 687	92 095	61 592
PN	8.1	7.5	8.8	162 819	75 266	87 554	3.9	3.5	4.4	21 353	9 612	11 741
PY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
PE	12.3	6.5	17.9	2 270 534	606 444	1 664 090	3.2	2.2	4.3	173 989	59 447	114 543
KN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
LC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SR	10.4	8.0	12.8	32 401	12 184	20 217	5.1	4.4	5.9	4 539	1 955	2 584
TT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
UY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
VN	7.0	6.7	7.3	1 166 409	560 099	606 309	2.8	3.7	1.9	136 634	90 464	46 170

Source	Trained teachers (%)				Investment per Student (constant 2000 USD PPP)††		Public Investment on Education	
	ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 1	ISCED 23	as % of GDP	as % of Total Public Expenditure
	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS	UIS
AI	65.8	67.0	61.0	58.1	n.a.	n.a.	7.4	n.a.
AG	45.1	46.9	40.7	62.0	n.a.	n.a.	3.8	n.a.
AR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 242	1 626	3.5	12.0
AW	100.0	100.0	95.2	95.2	n.a.	n.a.	4.6	13.8
BS	59.8	94.8	97.9	97.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BB	88.9	74.6	62.9	62.6	n.a.	n.a.	7.3	17.3
BZ	68.2	51.4	43.0	43.1	955	658	5.1	18.1
BM	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	78.6	90.6	19.4	73.1	410	325	6.4	18.1
BR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	799	827	4.1	10.9
VG	20.4	82.3	69.3	68.6	n.a.	n.a.	4.7	17.8
KY	95.5	99.6	99.1	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CL	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 293	1 433	3.7	18.5
CO	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 114	1 069	4.9	11.7
CR	91.5	97.4	83.7	86.2	1 494	1 581	4.9	18.5
CU	100.0	100.0	77.0	80.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	19.4
DM	77.8	63.6	36.3	35.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
DO	77.4	79.3	87.1	79.4	343	91	1.1	6.3
EC	71.7	70.9	69.7	69.2	109	207	n.a.	n.a.
SV	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	438	419	2.8	20.0
GD	32.5	68.0	30.4	31.2	904	993	5.2	12.9
GT	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	260	141	n.a.	n.a.
GY	45.9	57.5	57.0	57.3	1 044	897	5.5	18.4
HT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
HN	63.9	87.2	65.4	62.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
JM	67.0	79.5	n.a.	n.a.	483	838	4.9	9.5
MX	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 403	1 520	5.8	23.8
MS	100.0	86.4	68.4	72.7	n.a.	n.a.	4.9	n.a.
AN	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NI	22.2	74.6	42.4	53.6	304	358	3.1	15.0
PN	49.2	74.3	82.0	85.5	664	846	3.9	8.9
PY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	547	614	4.3	10.8
PE	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	305	419	3.0	17.1
KN	46.4	55.0	35.5	35.3	829	3 536	4.4	12.7
LC	55.2	77.8	60.9	59.9	924	1 096	5.0	n.a.
VC	59.2	72.1	42.0	42.4	1 142	1 121	11.1	20.3
SR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
TT	25.0	81.0	55.6	55.6	1 278	1 510	4.3	n.a.
TC	62.7	91.4	100.0	100.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	16.5
UY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	501	556	2.2	7.9
VN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source	Gross Domestic Product per capita (constant 2000 USD PPP)	Percentage of population ...†††		... living in rural areas	Gini coefficient for Income Distribution†††
		living in ...			
		Poverty	Extreme Poverty		
Source	WB	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC
AI	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	n.a.
AG	11 567	n.a.	n.a.	61.6	n.a.
AR	12 222	29.4	11.1	8.2	0.537
AW	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	55.3	n.a.
BS	16 399	n.a.	n.a.	10.0	n.a.
BB	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	47.1	n.a.
BZ	6 201	n.a.	n.a.	51.4	n.a.
BM	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BO	2 499	62.4	37.1	35.8	0.614
BR	7 531	38.7	13.9	16.6	0.621
VG	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	34.6	n.a.
KY	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
CL	9 994	18.7	4.7	13.4	0.552
CO	6 669	50.6	23.7	23.4	0.575
CR	8 714	20.3	8.2	37.4	0.488
CU	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	23.9	n.a.
DM	5 186	n.a.	n.a.	27.3	n.a.
DO	6 846	44.9	20.3	34.4	0.544
EC	3 643	49.0	19.4	37.2	0.513
SV	4 633	48.9	22.1	42.2	0.525
GD	7 372	n.a.	n.a.	57.8	n.a.
GT	3 964	60.2	30.9	50.0	0.543
GY	4 080	n.a.	n.a.	61.5	n.a.
HT	1 739	n.a.	n.a.	58.2	n.a.
HN	2 644	77.3	54.4	52.1	0.588
JM	3 826	n.a.	n.a.	47.8	n.a.
MX	9 010	37.0	11.7	23.5	0.516
MS	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	86.2	n.a.
AN	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	29.9	n.a.
NI	3 340	69.3	42.3	43.1	0.579
PN	6 689	34.0	17.4	34.2	0.515
PY	4 423	61.0	33.2	41.6	0.570
PE	5 219	54.7	21.6	27.4	0.523
KN	11 674	n.a.	n.a.	68.1	n.a.
LC	5 812	n.a.	n.a.	68.7	n.a.
VC	5 880	n.a.	n.a.	39.5	n.a.
SR	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	22.8	n.a.
TT	11 196	n.a.	n.a.	23.8	n.a.
TC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
UY	8 658	15.4	2.5	8.1	0.455
VN	5 554	48.6	22.2	7.2	0.500

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This document provides a comprehensive look at the state of education in Latin America and the Caribbean. The trends provoking change in education, usually associated to process of education reform, have been increasingly influenced by the recognition of education as a fundamental human right and by an "expanded vision" of education best expressed 17 years ago in Jomtien by the world initiative of Education for All.

This report reviews and assesses the progress of countries in regard to guaranteeing the basic right to education. In so doing, it takes into account the internationally agreed-upon goals of Education for All (EFA) as well as the strategies and principles which, in its Regional Education Project for the Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), the region has identified as key. From this perspective, it is both a response to an explicit request of the ministers of education in this regard, as well as an effort that directly touches on UNESCO`s role as an intellectual ally of its members in the search for fulfilling those key principles and rights that have determined the activities of the United Nations since its creation.

Thus, this report, rather than being a compendium of "data", is an analysis grounded on evidence of the state of education. It has been written with the understanding that quality education for all is a basic human right. For this reason, it has been organized taking into account dimensions that on the one hand, define this right and on the other, characterized public action in the field of education. Thus, it seeks to treat the **relevance**, **pertinence**, and **equity** of education, as well as the **efficiency** and **efficacy** of the operation of education systems.