**TENTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE** OEA/Ser.W/XIII.6.10

**INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION** CIDI/CIE/doc.8/24

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VIRTUAL

**Progress Report on Compliance with the Work Plan of the**

**Inter-American Committee on Education (WPCIE) 2022-2025**

**Systematization of dialogue**

**Dialogue and Exchange of Experiences on Public Policies and Programs under the Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Reparation and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E)**



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| **Event:** Dialogue on Public Policies and Programs and Exchange of Experiences under the Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Reparation and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E) | **Date:** November 28, 2023 |
| **Purpose of the Event:** To promote dialogues, reflections, and analysis on the design and implementation of public policies for effective and equitable educational recovery, supporting the transformations that education systems need to address the growing inequality that has worsened in recent years and that allow the consolidation of perspectives and recommendations for the region. | |
| **Participating Countries (19)** Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, United States  **Activity Led by:** Authorities of Working Group 1 (Colombia and Peru) on Systemic Approach for Building Resilient Education Systems | |

The Dialogue and Exchange of Experiences under the framework of the Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Repair and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E) led by the Authorities of Working Group 1 on systemic approach to building resilient education systems was held on November 28, 2023, and lasted approximately three hours. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministries of Education of 19 participating countries.

The Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Reparation and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E) seeks to carry out dialogues, reflections and analysis around the design and implementation of public policies for effective and equitable educational recovery, supporting the transformations that education systems need to address the inequality gaps that have widened in recent years. This virtual event revolved around the socialization of the countries’ progress, and the exchanges made during breakout sessions to working groups that allow consolidating perspectives and recommendations for the region. To this end, the event focused on three components: policies and programs, teacher training and educational resources, and research within the framework of the recovery, repair, and reactivation of the education sector in contexts of change. The activity was structured into five moments.

The activity began with welcoming remarks by Jesús Schucry Giacoman Zapata, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment (DHDEE) of the Organization of American States (OAS), who offered a brief explanation of the building process of the CIE Work Plan and its four hemispheric programs, their components, and expected results. Each of these programs has a clear path to 2025. In addition, he highlighted that the Program for the Recovery, Repair and Reactivation of the Education Sector has, as an expected result, a regional mechanism for scientific dissemination for public education policies in contexts of change and that this meeting represented the starting point to achieve this result. He concluded his remarks by indicating that a structure with three large areas was proposed in this dialogue, so the session was organized with three working groups, one for each of these pillars.

In a second moment, the topics to be addressed through the planned activities were introduced and framed by Ms. Marcela Cascavita, Deputy Director of Skills Development, Ministry of National Education of Colombia as Chair of Working Group 1 of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE) on Systemic Approach for Building Resilient Education Systems. The third moment was a panel focused on sharing the experiences and lessons learned from Chile, Ecuador, and the United States regarding initiatives implemented around the topic. Following the panel, the discussion in the working groups started addressing the components of policies and programs, teacher training, educational resources and research. Fourthly, a summary of the contributions of the different countries during the discussions on the working groups was shared in the plenary. Finally, the event concluded by establishing the next steps and conclusions.

This document compiles the contributions and exchanges of ideas produced in this virtual meeting. For this document, the knowledge shared at the event is structured in four sections: Framing the conversation, panel, discussion in working groups, conclusions, and next steps. It also includes a summary of the initiatives shared through the digital form sent with the call to Member States. In this case, 9 contributions were received. It should be noted that the countries' contributions are presented alphabetically in all sections.

# **Framing the Conversation**

* Marcela Cascavita, Deputy Director of Skills Development, Ministry of National Education of Colombia

**Highlights include:** Resilience and strengthening in post-pandemic education, regional collaboration and dialogue, expanded perspectives to be able to face educational challenges, overcome historical inequalities with collaborative policies, build inclusive and contextualized policies with communities.

Deputy Director Cascavitas, representing the Ministry of Education of Colombia as chair of working group 1 on the systemic approach to building resilient education systems, began her speech by focusing on the Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Repair and Reactivation of the education sector, aiming to analyze and strengthen policies that promote resilient education systems in the context of the three "R's": recovery, repair and reactivation.

The importance of regional collaboration and the need to address today's day-to-day education systems' challenges, particularly in emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic was hughlighted. The next Meeting of Ministers of Education in 2025 was mentioned as the space where the progress derived from these talks will be presented.

The highligths of Colombia's experience during the pandemic, were group in four key moments: mandatory isolation and academic work at home, smart isolation with the provision of educational services in alternation mode, selective isolation with individual and responsible distancing, and finally, the return to face-to-face learning. Another important point was the three simultaneous lines of work during these times, focused on the supplement and strengthening of capacities in the secretariats of education and educational establishments, providing resources to educational institutions, and implementing pedagogical strategies with the support of teachers and directors. Flagship programs, such as **"Todos a Aprender,"** stressed the importance of effective communication and collaboration with families. In addition, the Ministry of National Education's approach to comprehensive, inclusive, equitable education with an emphasis on comprehensive training through art, culture, sports, science, and technology was summarized. In addition, the "**CRESE"** strategy was presented, which seeks citizen education for reconciliation, anti-racist, socio-emotional, and climate action. It was mentioned that five challenges had been raised for preschool, primary, and secondary education, including reducing inequalities, recognizing teachers, building peace scenarios, and establishing ambitious agreements with the state's and other ministries' participation.

Finally, she emphasized the need to build resilient education systems, address current and future challenges, and highlight the importance of regional collaboration and the active participation of the education community.

# **Panel**

* Chile: "Educational Reactivation Plan" - Joaquín Walker Martínez, Executive Secretary of the Educational Reactivation Plan, Ministry of Education

**Highlights include**: Intersectoral strategy, focus on the exacerbation of post-pandemic educational challenges, three axes: coexistence and mental health, strengthening of learning, improvement of attendance, actions for disengagement and school dropout at different socioeconomic levels, guidance to schools for efficient use of existing resources, training of principals and those in charge of coexistence in alliance with universities, early detection of the lag in reading and plan National Tutoring System, monitoring and reporting system for early warnings to identify at-risk students.

The presentation on the Educational Reactivation Plan of the Ministry of Education of Chile highlighted that it is a strategy promoted to address the educational challenges aggravated by the pandemic. The approach seeks an intersectoral response involving the Ministry of Education and other ministries, civil society, and academia.

The plan includes the creation of a presidential advisory council composed of 23 leading figures in the field of education in Chile. This council provides recommendations to strengthen educational reactivation measures, recognizing the importance of addressing the problem as a state mission, not just a governmental one.

**The plan has three axes: coexistence and mental health, strengthening of learning, and improving attendance and educational paths**. Emergency measures and actions to improve basic conditions, such as infrastructure and teaching staff, are mentioned. The strategy also guides schools and establishments to use existing resources efficiently. In terms of coexistence, a focus on training school principals and those in charge of coexistence stands out, with alliances established with universities. Programs that address coexistence with cultural relevance are implemented, seeking to learn how to relate to each other after two years of closure. In terms of learning, a focus was presented on the early detection of reading lag, with diagnoses and tools to address the problems identified. In addition, a national tutoring plan is highlighted. In reference to attendance and regulation, a monitoring and reporting system is implemented for all schools to identify students at risk of dropping out. The importance of hiring staff to contact families and recover those who have dropped out of the system was emphazised. In addition, measures to improve the basic conditions of the education system, such as infrastructure, connectivity, and teaching staff, are mentioned. The importance of involving educational communities in implementing the plan was also emphasized.

He highlighted the national dimension of educational reactivation as a fundamental cause, with concrete goals and evaluations to measure progress toward improving and recovering the education system.

* Ecuador: "National Plan to Learn in Time" – Hilda Carolina Díaz, Analyst of the National Directorate of Initial and Basic Education, Ministry of Education

**Highlights include:** focus on key competencies, strategic pillars that include socio-emotional aspect, class attendance and pedagogical leadership, implementation at the national level, assigned pedagogical promoters, continuous monitoring, creation of educational resources, collaboration with international organizations, mandatory evaluation for all institutions as of 2023.

The initiative presented by Ecuador started as a response to educational difficulties aggravated by the pandemic and low performance in international and local assessments, especially in mathematics and language.

The plan, launched in October 2021, focuses on leveling and recovering learning, focusing on communication and mathematical skills. In addition, it addresses five pillars, including socio-emotional, learning recovery, class attendance, and pedagogical leadership. It is implemented nationally, identifying educational institutions that need to recover learning outcomes. A pedagogical promoter is assigned to each institution to work on the five axes. The promoters visit the institutions regularly, and the learning process is monitored through initial and final evaluations. The results are shared at the central and local levels, providing feedback to the institutions to adjust strategies.

The geographical complexity of Ecuador was highlighted, with scattered regions, which required adapting visits according to availability. In addition, the importance of the social-emotional component in students' lives was highlighted, as well as how the plan addressed this area from the return to school. During the 2022-2023 school year, institutions were evaluated voluntarily. However, starting in 2023, all institutions would participate in these evaluations. In addition, more than 500 worksheets have been developed to support teachers, including a pilot program with the Inter-American Development Bank for remote tutoring in mathematics. Resources such as "Entre Profes", videos of innovative educational practices, and learning experience sheets have also been created.

Finally, Ecuador highlighted that the "**National Plan to Learn in Time"** is a comprehensive initiative to address educational difficulties, with significant results in learning recovery at the national level.

* United States: "Raise the bar" - Danny Carlson, Chief of Staff, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education

**Highlights include** : main pillars of the strategy, tutoring for academic recovery, after-school programs for additional support, comprehensive and rigorous educational approach, challenges in teacher recruitment and retention, mental health priority, global engagement pathways, collection and promotion of school success stories, internal and monitoring metrics.

The presentation on the "Raise the Bar" strategy began acknowledging the challenges the pandemic has posed to schools and students in the United States. The "American Rescue Plan," a $130 billion law passed by the U.S. Congress to support schools recover from the pandemic, was highlighted.

In 2022, following the publication of the Nations Report Card, which indicated that students continued to fall significantly behind academically due to the impact of the pandemic, the "Raise the Bar" strategy was launched as a call to action. The strategy is designed to guide the education department in prioritizing funding, programs, and policies to address school and student challenges.

**"Raise the Bar"** comprises three main pillars: accelerating student learning, achieving academic excellence, and improving learning conditions. An overview of strategies within these pillars was offered, emphasizing the importance of mentoring, after-school programs, and comprehensive and rigorous education. The strategy also addresses challenges such as teacher shortages, stressing the need for competitive pay, improved working conditions, and support for new teachers.

Improving learning conditions also focuses on mental health, aiming to increase the number of mental health professionals in schools. In addition, the creation of routes for global engagement is highlighted, emphasizing secondary schools linked to professional life, dual enrolment, work-based learning, and multilingualism. The "Raise the Bar" strategy was shown as a call to action and guidance framework for the Department of Education. The importance of proof points, where success stories from schools across the country are collected and promoted to inspire progress, was discussed. Internal metrics and tracking systems were highlighted to monitor the department's progress in achieving its goals.

Overall, "Raise the Bar" serves as both a public and internal strategy, intending to support schools and districts to help students recover and thrive.

# **Discussions in Working Groups**

Summary of the highlights of each working group

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| **Policies and Programs** | |
| * Processes of transformation and educational reform that were already present before the pandemic were highlighted. * Emphasis on improving learning in language and mathematics and strengthening reading. * The need to provide educational texts and curriculum reforms to address lags was mentioned. * Importance of teacher training for the use of educational platforms, considering digital equity. * The possibility of a global, flexible curriculum for the Americas, focused on digital equity, was suggested. * Emphasis on the transversality of reading comprehension, mathematics, and the socio-emotional aspect. * The need to strengthen training for students, families, and teaching teams. * They highlighted the importance of information systems for decision-making and early warnings to identify at-risk students. * The relevance of consolidating the Hemispheric program was recognized, not only for recovery but also for contexts of change. * Country experiences were shared, including using laptop programs, summer programs to address learning gaps and mental health support programs. * The importance of school feeding programs, teacher support through coaches, and collaborations with organizations were highlighted. * Efforts to support students and teachers in special situations, such as in shelters due to the pandemic or volcanic eruptions, were mentioned. * The crucial role of schools as community resources that provide education, health, and social support was underlined. | |
| **Teacher Training and Hemispheric Course** | |
| **Components to Consider in the Course**  ***Learning Networks and Communities:***   * Seek the formation of networks or communities where teachers can communicate and share experiences. * Encourage the creation of a community of teachers for the exchange of ideas.   ***Course Modality:***   * Reflect on the modality of the course beyond virtual approaches. * Consider the technical essentiality for a better engagement and dedication of the teacher.   ***Course Certification:***   * Highlight the importance of certification endorsed by the OAS and recognition at the National level. * Enable access to requalification and professional opportunities for teachers.   ***Digital Materials and Creativity:***   * Emphasize the use of available digital materials and guides. * Encourage the creativity of the teacher in the use of these resources.   ***Virtual Forums and Communities:***   * Underscore the importance of establishing forums and virtual communities for discussion and collaboration. | **Contents to include**  ***Competencies for Life and Work:***   * Focus on the development of essential competencies for life and the work environment. * Strengthen students' self-esteem to face the challenges of the world of work.   ***Social-Emotional Skills and Mental Health Support:***   * Address social-emotional skills, especially in the face of challenges arising during the pandemic. * Consider violence prevention, exclusion, migration, and xenophobia. * Prioritize mental health support for all involved in education, including students, teachers, and families. * Recognize the importance of addressing emotional well-being along with academic recovery. * Find an appropriate balance between students' social-emotional and academic needs. * Reflect on whether academic recovery has been over-prioritized to the detriment of emotional needs.   ***Financial education, sustainable development, technology in innovation, and active and didactic methodologies.***   * Include topics such as financial education and sustainable development in the curriculum. * Adapt to the demands of the new generations and address technology, innovation, and teaching methodologies.   ***Adaptation to Generational Changes, Gaps in Digital Use, and Adaptation of the Curriculum to Virtual Education:***   * Recognize the generational change accelerated by the pandemic and adjust methodologies and didactics. * Ensure that education adapts to the changing needs of teachers and students. * Address the gap in digital use, considering the availability of hardware and connectivity and their effective use. * Evaluate teachers' preparation in the use of technology. * Adjust the curriculum to support virtual education without overwhelming students or teachers. * Consider flexibility in difficult situations, such as pandemics or natural disasters.   ***Support for students attending the diversity presented:***   * Provide training to teachers to address the specific challenges of virtual education for students who require support and adjustments in their educational processes. * Ensure equity and inclusion in education.   ***Support for Student Socialization and Transition:***   * Address the challenges of socializing and transitioning students between educational levels, especially during disruptions such as the pandemic. * Consider strategies to facilitate students' adaptation to new educational environments. |
| **Research** | |
| * Line of research on chronic absenteeism, its causes, profiles of educational exclusion, and institutional mechanisms to predict it. Mixed study (quantitative and qualitative) with emphasis on vulnerable groups. * Research strategies for specific educational needs that allow students to remain in the educational system and recovery of learning. * Definition of concrete actions to measure the impact of strategies on curricular transformation. * Relationship between both lines of research to understand inequalities and evaluate the impact of educational policies. * Acceleration of learning as a response to the pandemic, including methods such as intensive tutoring. * Emphasis on evidence- and research-based strategies for pedagogical policies and practices in schools. * Implementation and effects of Full-Service Community Schools as comprehensive community centers. * Research on students' and families' social and emotional well-being, impacting school success. * Analysis of the residual effects of COVID-19 on education and student success, particularly on children's education and dropout rate. * Recognition of the persistence of the effects of COVID-19 and the importance of understanding and mitigating future challenges. | |

Summary of initiatives through the form

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| Countries: Argentina-Dominican Republic-Ecuador-Guatemala-Paraguay-United States |

Topics addressed in the initiatives:

Associated Components:

Contributions by country:

* **Antigua and Barbuda: In Antigua and Barbuda**, the focus of post-COVID education shifted to addressing the "digital usage divide" beyond the mere provision of devices. Emphasis was placed on building resilience, strengthening the hybrid approach to teaching, and continuous capacity building in the digital space. A critical reflection questioned the education system's prioritization of academic recovery over social and emotional well-being, advocating for a balanced and holistic approach.

**Concerns about the vulnerability of primary school students were raised, leading to a vulnerability consultancy**. Laptops were procured for public schools, specifically for vulnerable primary school pupils. Over two years, summer intervention programs were launched for the primary and secondary levels to address pandemic-related learning disruptions.

A noteworthy aspect was the reintroduction of physical and sporting activities to fill the gap created by their absence. Initiatives included student participation in sports and athletics, contributing to mental health and well-being, and the resocialization process. Health and wellness exercises facilitated by counselors were extended to various education stakeholders, recognizing the importance of wellness for all in the education sector in challenging times. **The comprehensive approach aimed to effectively address academic and emotional needs for a more sustainable recovery.**

* **Argentina:** Two implemented programs were highlighted. The first, called "**Towards the Universalization of the Full or Extended Day"** known as "Hora Más," sought to expand hours in primary schools. Although Law 26.206 of 2006 established extended school days, only 22% of schools had achieved it. The program proposed a staggered modality, adding an extra hour to the 4-to-5-hour day, prioritizing language, mathematics, and scientific thinking. The implementation led to an 83% increase in schools with a 25-hour weekly workload.

The second program**, "Books to Learn,"** started in 2022, provided textbooks and literature to state school students. 19 million books were delivered in 2022, benefiting nearly 9 million students at all levels of education. Both programs, universal and aimed at balancing opportunities, generated synergies that optimized class time and fostered reading habits by providing textbooks for the students' property and were shared through the form.

They stressed the importance of strengthening the trajectories of preservice teachers, promoting dialogue with schools, and renewing teaching practices. They focused on professional development, curricular development, and institutional management to adapt to the post-pandemic context. They emphasized the importance of continuing teacher education addressing inclusion and professional development issues.

**Many concerns in education were addressed, particularly in educational planning. The responsibility for determining planning at the national and provincial levels and monitoring priority education policies was highlighted. The importance of accompanying students' educational paths was underlined, especially during the pandemic, when transitions and disrupted paths became more challenging.**

Priority policies were mentioned, including projects for learning recovery, with special attention to language and mathematics. The line of socio-educational policies was also highlighted, focusing on expanding the cultural universe of students and addressing aspects such as art, environmental education, and comprehensive sex education.

**Three main lines of work were identified: the curricular organization, the academic structure, and the updating of school formats, particularly in secondary education**. In addition, mention was made of the new agenda related to the organization of teaching and training, with a focus on research. An effort towards equity was highlighted, including universalizing the 3-year room rate, but the need to address resistance in some communities was recognized. The challenge of inclusion and educational quality and the importance of building plans with a gender focus were emphasized.

Concern was shared about the individualized follow-up of boys and girls in the education system and the need to address the low rate of young people who have completed secondary education. The importance of assessing the state of learning and identifying programs significantly impacting capacity building was highlighted. A format change in the education system was proposed, prioritizing secondary school as a pending subject. Although the inclusion rate in primary education is high, the challenge of retaining young people was pointed out, with many entering but not advancing.

In addition, through the form, information was shared related to the **"Pedagogical Support to Schools"**  initiative, which proposes the strengthening of the teaching profession, especially in post-pandemic scenarios; the improvement and renewal of teaching and learning practices in schools; the training of in-service teachers and the strengthening of the initial training of teachers in training and the initiative **"Projects for the Institutional Strengthening of State-run Higher Institutes of Teacher Training (ISFD**)" which is structured around the following axes: the integrality of the training system, the strengthening of institutions, the challenges of teaching in the new pedagogical scene and the protagonism of students in their training.

* **Bolivia:** The intervention focused on training, resilience, and life projects, especially for the initial, primary, and secondary levels. The negative influence of the pandemic on students' self-esteem was highlighted by addressing this issue through audiovisual material and tutorials for teachers. Work in early childhood was also mentioned, with emphasis on the transition and abilities of students and the need to strengthen existing educational programs.

In addition, the importance of providing a solid framework for training, focusing on reaching departmental and district authorities, educational units, and students, was highlighted. The need for audiovisual and digital material to support training, seeking positive and sustainable results was also mentioned as well as the importance of adapting to the reality of each country and working gradually.

* **Colombia:** Strategies implemented to address educational challenges arising during the pandemic were highlighted. The focus on strengthening learning, coexistence, work with teachers, and strategic alliances was highlighted. Creating learning networks and communities to share experiences and face the challenges of educational repair and reactivation was proposed.
* **Costa Rica:** The initiative called "**Route to Education"** was presented, highlighting the importance of incorporating competencies to be a responsible citizen, competencies for life, and employability in the curriculum. The fundamental role of teachers in developing skills and improving students' self-esteem was highlighted, and psychological aspects affected by the pandemic were addressed.
* **El Salvador:** A new educational reform focused on universalizing printed educational materials, including books on mathematics, language, science, and technology. This approach reached 100% of the educational community, ensuring that all students have access to these resources.

The national literacy plan was highlighted, with special attention to early childhood and students up to sixth grade. A comprehensive diagnosis was carried out that included interviews between teachers and students to identify weaknesses in literacy. From this diagnosis, specific strategies were designed and printed, and digital materials were provided to address individual student needs.

In addition, technological strategies were implemented, such as the "Fiction Express" platform, which allowed students to interact with authors and actively participate in creating stories. This platform contributed to increased reading times and fostered a taste for reading.

The key aspects were optimizing class time by reducing copying time thanks to books and incorporating technological strategies. The delivery of computers and tablets to the entire student population, from early childhood to high school, was also highlighted.

In line with other countries, the importance of actions focused on improving literacy and mathematical skills, addressing weaknesses evidenced during the pandemic, was highlighted. Together, these initiatives were part of a comprehensive process of educational transformation in El Salvador.

* **United States:** Education challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic were numerous and overlapped with experiences shared by other countries. The challenge of transitioning to virtual or in-person classrooms was significant, catching many nationwide off-guard. The Department of Education, states, and districts recognized the critical role of distance learning and worked to provide resources for educational continuity in a virtual environment. The impact varied nationwide, with some areas facing more significant challenges.

Mental health and well-being emerged as major concerns for students and staff, contributing to a problem of teacher shortages. Initially, the Department of Education emphasized academic recovery, but later highlighted the immense emotional and social impact, leading to legislative action allocating substantial funding to school mental health staff.

A balanced approach was advocated that prioritized social and emotional needs over academic recovery, reflecting a commitment to comprehensive and sustainable educational recovery. Efforts during the summer and after-school time were intended to address learning loss, emphasizing a shared commitment to overcoming setbacks.

Two key lines of research for mutual learning and collaboration were highlighted. The first line focused on accelerated learning, urging the adoption of evidence-based strategies to help students catch up academically. The second line explored the interrelated aspects of student and teacher mental health, advocating for fully serviced community schools and comprehensive services to support students holistically. The holistic approach recognizes the interplay between academic success and well-being and underscores the importance of a supportive community environment for effective learning.

* **Guatemala:** Implemented various strategies to address the areas of opportunity identified in mathematics, communication, and language through the Learning Improvement Strategy (EMA). A diagnostic assessment was conducted to detect areas of weak performance, especially after the pandemic. The EMA strategy was implemented through tutorials with the support of graduate students trained as tutors through a platform. Facing socio-emotional challenges and internal migration, Guatemala took an inclusive approach, printing educational materials in Spanish and other local indigenous languages. Textbooks were provided for primary and secondary education levels, prioritizing competencies from the emerging curriculum.

The "Learn More" formative assessment was implemented as a virtual response to the assessment difficulties established before the pandemic. This approach enabled learning assessment and was applied at the national level. Intercultural bilingual education was strengthened with local curricula and specific actions for minority languages. Educational materials were developed in 15 national languages, promoting cultural diversity.

Guatemala responded to the COVID-19 emergency with curricular processes, prioritizing essential competencies, designing scope tables and sequences, and creating an emergent curriculum to level and consolidate learning. Curricular transformations were made in pre-primary and secondary education, including a new curriculum design that meets the educational needs of children aged four to six.

A teacher certification program in digital competencies was implemented in educational technology, using technological kits to create mobile classrooms. These kits, even in places without electricity, incorporate solar panels. The continuous training of teachers was carried out through a virtual community, promoting their training in the effective use of technological tools in the classroom.

Through the form, information was shared related to the Diplomas for Teacher training in inclusive education, which focus on developing competencies that can respond to and value inclusive education practices with a rights-based approach; their purpose is to empower and strengthen the role of the teacher in inclusive educational centers with good practices that promote inclusive education, in such a way that they allow us to respond to and value the rights of students from diversity, identify and act to minimize the barriers that hinder inclusive education, generating and applying strategies, techniques, tools and teaching-learning methodologies, for the benefit of the population with special educational needs associated or not with disability in the classroom, educational center and community in general.

* **Panama:** Several post-pandemic programs were implemented for the recovery of learning. During the pandemic, televised and radio classes were held. Subsequently, they focused on students outside the education system due to the implementation of the virtual modality. A program was established with an educational retention and reintegration network, implemented in each educational region. In addition, the **Accelerated Learning Program** was launched, designed to reinforce, recover, and level the learning of students who fell behind during the pandemic. This program was divided into two cycles: one of recovery and approval and one of leveling. It seeks to establish a public policy law for flexible modalities, allowing the incorporation of vulnerable students into the regular education system, especially those between 12 and 14 years of age who face access barriers. This flexible approach aims to address the issue of disengagement and provide more inclusive educational opportunities.

The need to include interdisciplinary strategies and motivational approaches to address the region's common weaknesses and challenges in learning recovery was emphasized. The importance of teamwork, active methodologies, time and resource management, and the effective evaluation of learning was highlighted. In addition, the crucial role of technology in education and the need to strengthen teachers' technological skills were underlined.

They focused on the need for a framework for training, highlighting the importance of having effective resources for implementation. Emphasis was placed on the blended modality, using virtual platforms, digital materials, forums, and virtual communities. The importance of involving supervisors and principals in the follow-up of the training and practical training in the classroom was highlighted. Educational videos were seen as a valuable resource.

* **Paraguay:** In response to concerns about educational exclusion aggravated by the pandemic, challenges were addressed to improve care for affected children and adolescents. They internally identifed specific impacted groups, especially those of school age. The need to generate effective learning strategies and gather information to serve seriously affected students, aligning them with ministry objectives, was highlighted.

Recently, a study on profiles of educational exclusion was carried out, alerting about the situation of this population that used indicators of unique student records to analyze the potential dropout. In addition, a study was incorporated to identify bottlenecks and make the populations visible in educational exclusion situations. The lesson of the need to implement a system or mechanism in student information systems to identify students at risk of being left out of the education system was recognized. The importance of generating strategies to retain these students within the system was emphasized. This approach resulted in the formulation of key questions on research topics, seeking to address urgent needs and improve educational inclusion. The importance of exploring different realities was highlighted, from situations of violence to specific problems of the indigenous population. The final proposal aims at a line of research that comprehensively addresses vulnerable populations excluded from Paraguay's education system.

Through the form, they shared information about the Study Out-of-School Children and Adolescents: Profiles and Barriers of Exclusion in Paraguay, the second national study of children and adolescents out of school, including exclusion profiles, barriers, and bottlenecks. The study of exclusion profiles focuses on a statistical analysis with existing government databases that allows the development of profiles of children and adolescents outside the education system or at risk of exclusion and identifies the moments and factors in the school path where exclusion develops and worsens.

* **Peru:** Peru's tutoring and educational guidance team emphasized the relevance of students' social-emotional skills and mental health, especially during the pandemic. Issues such as violence, human trafficking, substance use, and teenage pregnancy were addressed, highlighting the need for teachers to be prepared to handle situations beyond their teaching area. A differentiated approach was also proposed for students in initial teacher training and those already in the classroom.

They mentioned the Peru Educa platform, which offers virtual resources and pedagogical materials. The importance of reviewing each country's national curricula and considering local regulations when addressing issues such as tutoring and educational guidance was highlighted. It was proposed to share local materials and tools to address issues such as socio-emotional accompaniment, entrepreneurship, and financial education. Emphasis was placed on aligning training with the national curriculum.

* **Dominican Republic:** Through the digital form, they shared information about the Impact Programs to strengthen students' learning in the Dominican educational system. The programs aim to promote a comprehensive and strategic response for the recovery and reactivation of the Dominican educational system. Among the prioritized aspects stand out: the training of teachers, the equipping of educational centers for the innovation of the teaching-learning process, and the accompaniment of teachers in implementing plans, projects, and interventions. In addition, partnerships have been made with the private sector to obtain additional resources to improve infrastructure and provide educational resources.
* **Saint Kitts and Nevis:** In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in Saint Kitts and Nevis, the education system adopted a rapid return to face-to-face learning, initially prioritizing students facing crucial exams abroad. Several initiatives were launched to address evolving needs, including increasing the number of counselors, introducing staff well-being breaks, and increasing teaching support through paraprofessionals and teaching assistants. A shift towards mixed-ability settings and away from streaming was facilitated, recognizing the need for additional support, especially in core subjects like Math and English.

The figure of instructional coaches was introduced, focusing on the initial levels to improve professional development. Training exercises for teachers and principals covered leadership, online work, and differentiated instruction, addressing the challenges posed by hybrid or online learning. Recognizing the digital divide, a learning continuity improvement project provided devices with a learning management system to track and analyze learner data.

The holistic approach aimed to create a sustainable and supportive educational environment after the pandemic, reflecting a commitment to teacher’s well-being, student support, and overall system improvement. In addition, a thoughtful discussion highlighted the often-overlooked aspect of students' and families' social and emotional well-being during the pandemic. Concern was expressed about the emotional damage suffered, compounded by the lack of certain services, such as school meals. The loss of jobs and reduced household incomes further intensified the emotional burden on families, highlighting the importance of recognizing and addressing their challenges' emotional and socioeconomic dimensions. The need to prioritize research on emotional well-being beyond academic considerations for collaborative efforts was emphasized.

* **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:** The education system faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and a volcanic eruption. When schools closed, there was a shift towards online learning, particularly for students preparing for exams. A summer program offered additional classes focused on intense teaching and training sessions to get students to the desired level to address potential learning losses.

In the aftermath of COVID, a CARICOM regional learning recovery initiative was launched, providing training for school principals and teachers in assessment, leadership, and formative assessment. Adjustments were made to external examinations to accommodate learning loss caused by emergencies. UNICEF provided psychological support programs to address mental health issues, including online sessions for teachers and assistance to students in shelters during the pandemic.

Distance learning consisted of providing tablets to students, virtual classes through platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Google, and resources on the curriculum development unit's website. The discussion shifted to recovery, emphasizing the need for a curriculum that supports teachers in difficult situations, with a particular focus on digital teaching. However, various levels of technological competence among teachers persisted, requiring continuous and adapted training. Innovative measures were adopted to address socio-psychological challenges, such as the school feeding program delivering food supplies to students' homes. Returning to school posed challenges, especially for preschool children, who needed additional support from teachers and counselors for their socialization. Trauma and coping skills for students and teachers were addressed, acknowledging the potential threat of events such as volcanic eruptions.

Students with special needs faced greater challenges during the pandemic, especially with the shift to online teaching. In developing a curriculum for recovery, inclusion, and equity were emphasized, particularly in mainstream classrooms for students with special needs. The observation underscored the need for targeted strategies and support within curriculum development and recovery initiatives to address the unique challenges students with special needs face.

* **Uruguay:** They highlighted the education system's capacity to maintain face-to-face classes during the pandemic and attributed this success to the teaching staff's strength and the plan's previous existence, which provides devices and connectivity to students from primary to secondary education. Despite the continuity during the pandemic, structural problems were recognized, such as disengagement in secondary education and socioeconomic inequality in learning. The answer is Educational Transformation, with five key guidelines. The first seeks to reduce internal inequality, focusing on the most vulnerable sectors with the María Espínola Centers, offering extended time, food, and optional workshops. The second deals with the comprehensive transformation of the curriculum from initial education to upper secondary education, highlighting a competency-based approach. Other guidelines include strengthening school management, promoting integrated learning communities, establishing a national teacher policy, and moving towards university recognition of education training careers. Although no specific program was implemented for the pandemic's effects, it coincided with the ongoing educational transformation.

In relation to training, the importance of developing socio-emotional skills in teachers and students, noting that teacher training should include guidance on these skills was highligthed. The issue of inclusion, highlighting the diversity of students in the classroom and the need for continuous training in this aspect addressed. In addition, two often omitted topics were shared: financial education and entrepreneurship, advocating for their inclusion in teacher training.

They have addressed the problem of educational inequity with a focus on evidence. Recognizing the need for appropriate responses, the importance of designing evidence-based education policies was highlighted. The focus was on consolidating national strategies through tools such as an education statistics portal, addressing access, context, resources, and outcomes.

The conceptual framework highlighted the relevance of information systems for management at various levels, from supervisors to central policy decisions. Progress was made in developing a single student file, seeking to manage unified social information through a digital application accessible at the national level.

The persistent problem of school absenteeism in early childhood and primary education was identified as a substantive challenge. Collaborative efforts, including an experimental and exploratory study, were undertaken to understand behavioral aspects, evaluate communication initiatives, and analyze patterns of absenteeism. They recognize the need to deepen these research lines to consolidate future educational policies.

An educational transformation focused on curricular organizational change has been implemented. Significant steps have been taken, including annual consultations with teachers, principals, and other actors in the system. These consultations address key dimensions of implementing comprehensive curriculum transformation, aligning with the current administration's education policy. Emphasis has been placed on the management of schools and governance, also addressing coexistence in schools and the level of adoption of pedagogical innovations. This comprehensive approach seeks to complement the curricular perspectives, considering the country's situation and identifying the key points of attention in this phase of educational change.

# **Conclusions and next steps**

As a result of the Dialogue and Exchange of Experiences under the framework of the Hemispheric Program for the Recovery, Reparation and Reactivation of the Education Sector (3R4E), a fruitful exchange of policies, programs, teacher training and possible lines of research were achieved. Among the topics discussed, it was possible to corroborate that the context of COVID-19 intensified existing inequalities, and educational transformation processes prior to the pandemic were highlighted.

The need to reform curricula focusing on comprehensive training and developing human potential, considering equity, was stressed. Emphasis was placed on the transversality of language, mathematics, and the socio-emotional aspect. The relevance of information and early warning systems was highlighted, consolidating hemispheric programs for recovery and change. In addition, the crucial role of schools as community resources providing comprehensive education and support was underlined. These experiences made it possible to initiate a process of co-creation of knowledge and know-how for building resilient education systems.

As part of the ministerial process, the Technical Secretariat of the CIE has supported member countries in the systematization of the strategies, actions, and programs implemented to guarantee educational continuity in contexts of change. This document synthesizes the steps discussed to help strengthen public policies in the region.

Likewise, the value of this type of exchange was recognized so that, with the leadership of Working Group 1 and the support of the Technical Secretariat of the CIE, other spaces for dialogue will be established during 2024 to continue the conversation and exchange of documentation.

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A screenshot of a video conference

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