

# Declaration of Santiago 2024

## Extraordinary meeting of Ministers of Education from Latin America and the Caribbean

Towards a Regional Framework for Educational Reactivation, Recovery, and Transformation

January 25th and 26th, 2024  
Santiago, Chile

### Preamble

1. The ministers of education and high-ranking authorities representing the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Santiago, Chile, on January 25 and 26, 2024, express our gratitude to the Ministry of Education of Chile, UNESCO, the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF), the World Bank, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), UNICEF, and collaborating institutions, such as the Inter-American Development Bank, Santa María Foundation, among others for organizing this meeting, which marks a milestone in cooperation for the reactivation, recovery, and educational transformation of the region.
2. We recognize, renew, and reaffirm our commitments to the agreements established in the I Regional Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean (Buenos Aires, 2017), which outlined the regional educational vision for 2030 and reiterated our commitment to SDG 4. Likewise, we reaffirm the decisions made in the II Regional Meeting (Cochabamba, 2018), where educational quality, equity, inclusion, teaching staff, and lifelong learning were prioritized. Furthermore, we confirm the commitments made in the III Regional Meeting (Buenos Aires, 2022), aiming to deepen our efforts to drive educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation as accelerators for achieving the goals of SDG 4.
3. We congratulate the approval of the Roadmap for the Regional Coordination Mechanism for SDG 4, as well as its Work Plan for the period 2022-2025 by the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of SDG 4

4. We appreciate the efforts of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Colombia, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Argentina, and the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science, and Culture (OEI) during the period in which they represented the Latin American and Caribbean region in the High-Level Steering Committee of SDG 4-Education 2030.
5. We celebrate the election of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of Chile, as well as the re-election of the OEI, to represent the Latin American and Caribbean region in the High-Level Steering Committee of SDG 4-Education 2030 for the biennium 2024-2025. Additionally, we highlight that the President of the Republic of Chile, S.E. Gabriel Boric Font, has assumed the co-chairmanship of the Committee for the mentioned biennium.

### **We acknowledge:**

6. That the region has faced enormous challenges in achieving SDG 4, which have been further exacerbated by the impact of emergencies and prolonged crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic heightened educational inequalities and restricted the right to education, particularly for vulnerable and historically marginalized individuals. Additionally, indicators for SDG 4, which had shown significant progress in recent decades, especially those related to access, coverage, and completion, are now exhibiting signs of deceleration.
7. That the achievement of SDG 4 targets is more urgent than ever to ensure the exercise of the human right to education, making schools inclusive, safe, and healthy, ensuring fundamental learning and lifelong learning, promoting education as a necessary condition for sustainable development, active participation of all educational stakeholders, planned and monitored digital transformation addressing all kinds of gaps, including gender disparities, and prioritizing public investment in the education sector.
8. That the global education community at the Transforming Education Summit (TES), convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in September 2022, emphasized the need to move 'from commitments to action' and leverage the social mobilization it generated to take urgent actions that transform the fundamental elements of education: its purpose, content, and provision, elevating education on regional and national agendas. This call was reiterated at the regional level during the High-Level Meeting 'Commitment to Action on Basic Learning and its Recovery' (Bogotá, March 2023).
9. That the importance of implementing the agreements of the Commitment to Action for Basic Learning, signed by various countries in the region, emphasizing the need to reduce learning poverty.

## We highlight:

10. That reactivation, recovery, transformation, and financing are the priority axes for accelerating SDG 4 targets, with education financing being one of the essential enabling elements. Achieving SDG 4 requires a local and regional, comprehensive, collaborative, and coordinated response to ensure improved education systems in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
11. The importance of expanding the scope, financing, and deepening of actions that effectively address the reactivation, recovery, and transformation of educational systems, as well as the relevance of ongoing exchange of best practices, research, and lessons learned based on countries' experiences in these areas.
12. That education is a fundamental right, and its substantive and harmonious exercise with other rights, such as the right to a healthy environment, a life free from violence and discrimination, mobility, and citizen security, among others, allows for the reduction of inequalities and the strengthening of educational communities in the region.
13. That the learning crisis of the last decade was exacerbated by the closure of schools during the pandemic, impacting the well-being of girls, boys, adolescents, young people, and adults, despite the tremendous efforts of various educational stakeholders to prioritize the need for recovery and socio-emotional stability of educational communities.
14. That reactivation and recovery require strengthening educational management practices, pedagogical approaches, and enabling conditions for the application of shared experiences and methods among the countries of the region to enhance learning. This is particularly crucial for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and values recognized as essential for navigating a world undergoing multiple contextual changes. Examples include digital skills and education for sustainable development, enabling individuals to effectively, securely, freely, and opportunistically navigate an increasingly digital and interconnected world to address local and global challenges.
15. That educational transformation must recognize and strengthen the key role of teachers, prioritizing their training and professional development, promoting innovation, and embracing evidence-based pedagogical approaches where having information and assessments are relevant for comprehensive education and well-being, recognizing diverse purposes and modalities. These efforts should focus not only on enhancing cognitive skills but also on fostering socio-emotional and civic competencies in girls, boys, adolescents, young people, and adults.
16. That transformation entails rethinking what is taught and how it is taught, recognizing the need to implement pedagogies rooted in cooperation, solidarity, critical thinking, and dialogue. It involves developing and consolidating research and assessment of learning at the regional level, as well as designing curricula that draw from the richness of intercultural, interdisciplinary knowledge to advance in reducing all kinds of gaps, including gender disparities, and protecting educational trajectories.

17. That these actions are only possible if they are contextualized, placing the needs of our countries with their specific challenges at the center. This is to strengthen the resilience of educational systems in changing contexts, connecting responses to the educational emergency, sustainable development, and peacebuilding.
18. That young people be part of the educational discussions in our region, as reflected in the priorities and proposals presented in the 'Open Letter from Youth to Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean.' Likewise, we reaffirm the importance of having a permanent representative in the RSC and that in future meetings of ministers, they continue to be part of the discussion on education and the future of youth in our region.

**We reaffirm:**

19. Our commitment to promoting both equity and inclusion in our educational systems, fostering a culture that recognizes, values, and builds upon diversity to enrich the quality of the educational process. In this regard, the positive outcomes achieved during the International Meeting on Educational Quality, organized by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in November 2023, and reflected in the Caracas Declaration, as part of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of UNESCO's Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education, are highly appreciated.
20. That it is essential to ensure enabling conditions for educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation, safeguarding the interests of girls, boys, adolescents, young people, adults, teachers, and families, promoting their active participation in various processes. Digital technologies should be used to support innovative educational experiences based on human interaction, leaving no one behind, especially indigenous populations, Afro-descendants, people with disabilities, and those in mobility situations.
21. The need to prioritize education on the public agenda of our nations, ensuring adequate and sustainable financing to advance actions for educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation. This involves recognizing the necessity of finding optimal budgetary opportunities and practices to promote investment and efficiency in the use of these resources.

**Considering the above, we have decided:**

22. Expressing that the comprehensive response to educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation must consider that the educational process promotes not only fundamental cognitive learning and competencies but also socio-emotional and civic skills, including digital literacy, education for sustainable development, and a culture of peace and non-violence. Additionally, attention should be given to the attendance and reintegration of girls, boys,

adolescents, young people, and adults into educational systems to safeguard educational trajectories.

23. Strengthening a curricular policy within the framework of flexibility to ensure the development and evaluation of both basic learning and well-being, coexistence, mental and emotional health. This includes teaching and learning processes that acknowledge indigenous knowledge, different contexts, and promote memory, reconciliation, critical and creative thinking, arts, and sports.
24. To boost high-quality initial and ongoing training for our teachers, as well as for the supervision and pedagogical support systems in the classroom, which are essential to strengthen the capacities of teachers, pedagogical innovation, and the promotion of learning for girls, boys, adolescents, young people, and adults.
25. To promote education and literacy policies that foster equity and inclusion, implementing strategies to eliminate access barriers and fostering environments for learning that are free from gender stereotypes, among others, based on the recognition and appreciation of diversity.
26. To urge the states of the region, civil society, United Nations organizations, and cooperation entities to develop comprehensive actions, with national ownership and leadership, to protect the right to education and every educational space from any form of violence, and to provide effective support to families.
27. To strengthen the response to emergencies and prolonged crises, ensuring the continuity of existing initiatives and coordination mechanisms. Additionally, address the specific needs of those most affected by the consequences of pandemics, social and political crises, natural disasters, climate change, and forced displacement.
28. To reiterate that States are called upon to ensure the human right to education, coordinating and encouraging all societal actors who should be part of a comprehensive, plural, and diverse response for the reactivation, recovery, and transformation of education. Driven by a call to action, they should generate education plans with a regional perspective and long-term outlook.
29. To promote initiatives that foster regional cooperation in the design and implementation of policies aimed at ensuring the right to education and facilitating the regional integration of educational systems.
30. To maintain, seek, and expand financial sustainability alternatives for educational systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, keeping an ongoing dialogue with fiscal authorities and other national and subnational stakeholders involved.
31. That in this context, to generate new approaches for the financing of the education sector, policies and programs will be promoted for an efficient distribution and effective, equitable, and inclusive use of education resources. This involves seeking the integration of financial sustainability of the education sector with the guarantee of access, quality, and relevance of education. To achieve this

goal, the generation and installation of capacities that enable better resource management at all levels of the education system will be encouraged. For the development of this component, the support of specialized multilateral organizations and mechanisms may be sought.

32. To promote a conception of financial sustainability in education that, alongside the continuity and increase of educational investment, considers a logic of evaluation and support to enhance efficiency, participation, learning, and educational justice.
33. To promote that educational financing does not regress, but rather achieves and surpasses the financing goals already established at the international level to progress towards the targets of SDG 4.
34. To urge international organizations and multilateral banks collaborating in the educational field to facilitate lines of work and financing for the consolidation of the regional agenda defined in meetings of ministers of education.
35. To reiterate support for the continuity of the work carried out by cooperation agencies to conduct a comprehensive monitoring of all SDG 4 targets. Likewise, declare the intention to strengthen national and regional evaluation and monitoring mechanisms for decision-making for the Education 2030 Agenda, and national and regional data and information production, with special attention to the necessary disaggregation to visualize the educational situation of the entire population.
36. To emphasize the importance of considering the achievement of SDG 4 as a cross-cutting element in the discussion of various points on the agenda of the United Nations Summit of the Future (September 2024) and as a substantive element of the United Nations World Social Summit to be held in 2025.
37. To reiterate our commitment to ensuring the right to education for people in mobility situation. We are determined to advance collective, innovative, and intergovernmental actions such as the Regional Framework for Monitoring Students in Displacement, coordinated by UNESCO and the Regional Education Group.
38. To entrust the RSC, the conveners, and co-organizers of this meeting with the approval and establishment of an ad-hoc Working Group and a preliminary proposal for the creation of a *Regional Reference Framework on public policies for educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation*. This framework should serve as a practical reference to move 'from commitment to action' and accelerate the achievement of SDG 4 goals, deepening the dialogue on education financing as an essential enabling condition for these matters.
39. To entrust the RSC with establishing an ad-hoc Working Group to develop a preliminary proposal on inclusive and effective financing within the *Regional Reference Framework on public policies for educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation*. This Working Group should be composed of conveners, co-organizers, collaborating organizations, and strategic partners of this ministerial

meeting. Additionally, request UNESCO to provide technical support to the mentioned Working Group for a period of two (2) years, ensuring the prevention of duplication with other entities to enhance efficiency.

40. To promote the institutionalization of educational coordination mechanisms, for which we request the Executive Secretariat of the RSC to analyze and present scenarios for the establishment of this Ministers' Assembly as a platform for intergovernmental coordination.
41. With the aim of enriching the dialogue within the RSC, henceforth, it will be composed of all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, led by the countries representing us in the High-Level Steering Committee of SDG 4.
42. To express gratitude to the Government of Chile for its outstanding work in the preparation of this ministerial meeting and for its support, along with Brazil, for SDG 4 at the regional and global levels to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education, promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.
43. To recognize UNESCO, CAF, World Bank, ECLAC, UNICEF, and collaborating institutions, such as the Inter-American Development Bank, Santa María Foundation, among others for their technical and financial support for the realization of this meeting and their contribution to fostering discussions and the exchange of best practices and experiences on education. This constitutes a valuable exercise in knowledge building and mobilization from and for the region.