



# THE YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND STRATEGIC LINES

Realization:



Campaña  
Latinoamericana  
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This text is a summary of the document *“The Youth and Adult Education situation in Latin America and the Caribbean in the pandemic context”* commissioned by the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE) with the purpose of contributing from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), in the perspective of the right to education as a fundamental human right, to the process of the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII) to be held in Morocco in 2022.

The descriptive and analytical document was prepared from June to September 2021 and includes the analysis of secondary sources and the collection of primary sources. The documentary secondary sources were based on research on websites and forums from various international and civil society organisations - including the CONFINTEA VII regional preparatory meeting<sup>1</sup> - and on an intensive search for information in eighteen countries of the region, with a focus on guidelines and documents produced during the pandemic. The qualitative primary sources included virtual discussions: professionals from ministries of education, specialists and educators from different countries were invited; five discussions were held with a total of twenty-three participants. Due to the intentional and voluntary nature of the invitation, the results are not suitable for generalisation. Nevertheless, the richness and depth of the discussions, together with the extensive systematisation of secondary information, provide a broad overview of the situation of Youth and Adult Education (Y&AE) in LAC in pandemic times.

The study starts by recovering normative frameworks from different conventions and agreements, and does so with a view to the current challenges facing humanity. The starting point is the First International Conference on Adult Education (1949) and the study continues by linking the context with conceptual frameworks and commitments made by countries. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are placed as a universal reference framework whose value is recognised, however, the lack of presence of Y&AE in these goals and a lack of vision to understand the enormous potential of Youth and Adult Education in the development of all the proposed goals and targets is pointed out.

Among the references that articulate and give coherence to the text, two fundamental perspectives stand out: the focus on the right to education as a fundamental human right and the positioning of education of young people and adults. The focus on the right is based on a relational, historical and value-based vision that highlights the dignity of the subjects as a condition for achieving social justice and the capacity of Y&AE to defend rights and exercise citizenship. The substitution of the word “of” for the term “with”, which is generally used in the literature, contains an epistemological vision that gives a new position to Y&AE by recognising the subjects, their practices and methods as protagonists in the configuration of knowledge and ways of developing both policies and

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1 UNESCO, CONFINTEA VII: Social mobilisation for Youth and Adult Education (Y&AE) in Latin America and the Caribbean: <https://es.unesco.org/node/339521>

pedagogical links; in this area, Latin America and the Caribbean have a rich and vast experience to be recovered and contributed from the perspective of popular education and social participation.

The right to education and the epistemological revitalisation of education with young people and adults are situated in a context characterised by a profound multidimensional and systemic crisis. This crisis is described as a “crisis of civilisation”. From this perspective, the challenge is to find solutions that require profound changes based on ethical and value imperatives; in this respect, various voices point to proposals based on the “Good way of living”. Following this general, universal vision, the text analyses particularly complex conditions faced by the Latin American and Caribbean region, trapped in high and historical inequality as well as low growth, aggravated in the pandemic context.

The second chapter corresponds to the collection and analysis of secondary data. Systematisation includes the analysis of information and proposals in pandemic times from the point of view of international organisations, cooperation agencies and civil society organisations. A first observation is the scarce availability and dispersion of sources, which hinders an updated systematisation of the situation of education with young people and adults. The lack of statistical information is compounded by the low visibility of Y&AE. It is often noted that, from an international perspective, Y&AE is not visible either as a modality within the system or as subjects of the right to education. Mention of young people and adults is linked to support for children and adolescents, and the right to their own educational development is not perceived.

The systematisation of secondary sources was recorded in files for each of the eighteen countries in the region; the information was organised along five axes: institutional framework, conditions for the use of technology, subjects of the pandemic, pedagogical dimension and financing. As can be understood, the actions and reactions of the countries undergoing the pandemic are not independent of the policies and situations prior to the impact of COVID-19. One problematic knot is the institutional weakness in projecting long-term policies; in pandemics, the dominant tendency has been the omission of Y&AE or uncritical subordination to the general orientations of the education system. Countries that have achieved educational continuity in pandemics have previous experiences and policies, generally related to flexible programmes, from which adaptive responses that offer partial alternatives are organised.

As it is clear, the capacity to respond is associated with access to networks and the availability of digital devices; these conditions are related to people’s life situation, so that the effects of the pandemic aggravate inequalities and further violate the right to education with young people and adults. In most countries, as a pedagogical response to the pandemic, adaptations were made to select the most relevant aspects of the curriculum, while educational materials already available

were digitised and incorporated as images on web platforms. Some ministries and secretariats report orientations for Y&AE teachers. In exceptional cases, there is mention of actions aimed at people and groups with linguistic and cultural diversities, in situations of mobility or in conditions of confinement. Nor is there any evidence of gender-affirmative action. It is not easy to measure the effective impact of the pandemic on Y&AE; there is no systematised information available, and only partial data referring to localities or centres are mentioned, which can only be found after an exhaustive search, which is always partial. Nor is there any information on budgets or additional resources to deal with the pandemic; rather, the opposite is reported: school closures, cuts in food supplies, lack of sanitary implements, lack of contributions for the safe movement of teachers.

The third chapter systematises the perspectives, experiences and opinions shared in meetings with professionals working in ministries and secretariats of education, specialists and Y&AE teachers. The systematisation was organised with reference to the same five dimensions of the documentary analysis. Institutional responses to pandemics are not homogeneous. Some countries simply disengage from the modality, while others delay its continuation, affected by changes of government. The permanence of programmes is favoured when there are social mobilisation actions and/or when the programmes have territorial and community roots. The identification of Y&AE subjects is particularly relevant for understanding responses to the pandemic, among which the role of educators stands out: the meetings unanimously highlighted experiences of renewal, commitment and creativity in dealing with the pandemic. The testimonies point to a rapid acquisition of technological tools for which solidarity and mutual support were fundamental, as well as the capacity to build multiple care strategies with young people and adults that included personal interaction, affectivity and socio-emotional aspects. The pandemic also brought to light the precarious working conditions of teachers, who were often subject to specific actions that did not continue during the pandemic.

Regarding access to technologies, the digital gap associated with people's living conditions is unanimously recognised. The common perception of the lack of technological skills as an obstacle to online adaptation, the lack of access to connectivity and technological devices stands out. The most frequent contacts are reduced to devices to which people have access, mainly whatsapp, communication that has clear limits. There are other non-visible limits, which have to do with the willingness to adapt to on-line systems, fears about the use of technology. Mention is also made of the place of adults in their own home, the scarcity of resources and the priority given to the continuity of their children's studies. The forced adaptation to digital platforms is also positively assessed in terms of the possibilities for communication and the development of skills needed in today's world. The danger, especially for youth and adult education, is the experience of new exclusions and a weakening of the offer due to the digital gap.

In relation to the pedagogical dimension, the responses are associated with the pandemic's intermittency, with temporary fluctuations that alternate between face-to-face and semi-presential sessions. If there is one strong idea that emerged in all the discussions, it is the irreplaceable value of face-to-face educational action. The perspective of articulation between disciplines and the development of learning cores, makes it possible to have an experience for an authentic curricular revolution, from an interdisciplinary approach. At the pedagogical level, socio-emotional training is relevant, and as a communication device, the importance of radio as an instrument at the service of the community of undeniable educational value is re-emerging. The issue of the availability of resources and funding for Y&AE is critical; as has been pointed out, budgets are related to the projects of the governments in power and, in pandemic, to the limited importance of Y&AE in education systems. There is also a strong tendency to subsidise demand and to prioritise populations, when the right to education should be universal.

The fourth chapter draws conclusions, makes recommendations and proposes strategies. Among the conclusions, policy aspects are highlighted, warning about the risk of accentuating the invisibility of Y&AE, as well as the lack of recognition of young people and adults as subjects with the right to education and not only as "support" for the continuity of education and emotional support for their children. The role of teachers, the value of mutual learning, the capacity to generate strategies of human and pedagogical links in the pandemic are highlighted. The accentuation of inequality due to lack of access to technology and the media is pointed out, and radio is revalued as a means of communication and learning. In Y&AE, there is a lack of data, a lack of systematised information and a lack of research, key issues for the renewal of the area. A particularly relevant point is the well-founded perception of the exhaustion and limits of the current model: in the pandemic, intergenerational and intercultural learning gained importance, opened up a transversal dialogue in homes and in community and work spaces; strategies of support and solidarity emerged; the context was redefined, challenging the system to rethink the educational offer. Recognising and valuing this meeting space is also a way of valuing young people and adults as subjects of rights and as producers of knowledge and culture.

Consistent with these strong ideas, recommendations are made which seek a dialogue with the CONFITEA VII process. In this dialogue, previous agreements are retrieved and the essence of the call "to contribute to the culture of human rights, social justice, common values and sustainability" is highlighted, from there elements that shape proposals with a vision for the future are placed. The recommendations are framed by the need to construct a new narrative of Y&AE, i.e. other ways of understanding education with young people and adults that allow the expansion and redefinition of its field of action and the generation of knowledge that contributes to the design and implementation of policies and practices to guarantee the full exercise of the right to education. This is the starting point for the recovery of the Latin American tradition of fundamental



education, renewed with contributions from the regional knowledge developed from popular education, as well as systematisation of governmental experiences that have favoured the right to education for the most disadvantaged people.

From the conclusions and recommendations proposals for strategic lines emerge, which are also part of the reflection on the current CONFINTEA process, in which an opportunity is perceived, but also the risk of reiteration of discourse and commitments that are not fulfilled, resulting in the delegitimisation and ineffectiveness of the way in which the scenario for Y&AE is shaped at the international level.

Placing at the centre the construction of a new narrative for Y&AE constitutes an opportunity for convergence, deepening and projection of adult and youth education in a context of crisis which at the same time represents a hopeful time.

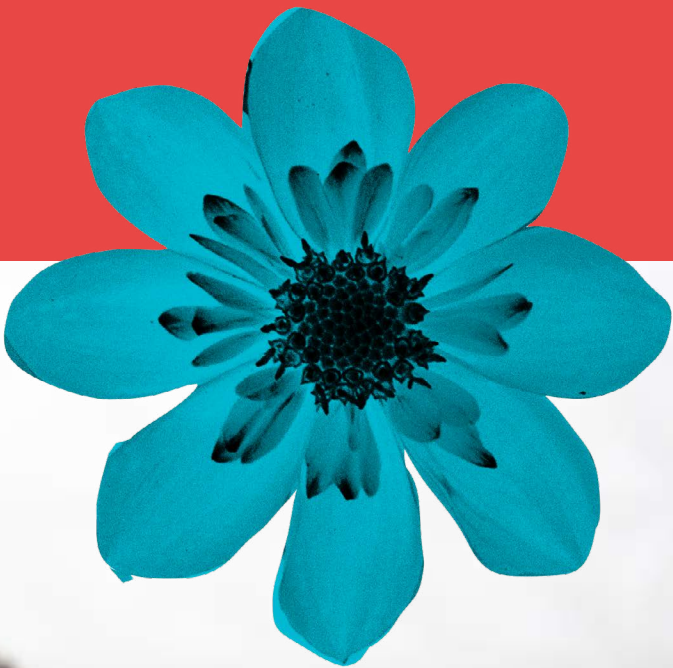


Photo: Getty Images



# TOWARDS CONFINTEA VII: RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## CONCLUSIONS

In crisis situations, social problems and phenomena that often tend to be hidden or minimised are seen more clearly. The current crisis generates uncertainty, but also hope, because it highlights the need for profound changes in lifestyles and ways of inhabiting the planet. Although it is not the first crisis humanity has faced, in the current pandemic it takes on a civilisational meaning that puts the exercise of human rights at risk. After the end of the World War, more than seventy years ago, agreements between nations led to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and its principles are still fully valid, being updated according to particular contexts and situations.

We begin with this reflection because the study on Youth and Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, requested by CLADE, assumes this double perspective: the crisis as a need for profound changes and human rights as a fundamental reference to support and guide transformations. From these perspectives, we highlight the study's main conclusions.

### *Invisibility of Youth and Adult Education is accentuated in pandemic.*

Although Y&AE continues as an educational offer in ministries and secretariats, in most cases it is limited to an inertial type of public policy that places it at the end of all processes and budgets. Invisibility is widespread, even among people who are sensitive to social injustices and committed from the perspective of the right to education. In times of pandemic, invisibility of Y&AE in Latin America and the Caribbean has been accentuated. Not only because of the low priority given to Y&AE by governments, but also by international organisations themselves. UNESCO in the pandemic forgot about Y&AE in LAC, it does not appear in the reports, it is not even mentioned to remind us of its omission. The difficulties increase because those who participate in education with young people and adults, in pandemic, have seen accentuated their job insecurity, because they do



not have access to connections or digital devices, because they have to face the multiple difficulties of their families. These difficulties are accentuated by the lack of programmes that make Y&AE visible through specific resources and support to encourage continuity of study.

***Uncritical continuity of policies in the education system is encouraged by the place given to Youth and Adult Education.***

The immanence of the invisibility of Y&AE is functional to the education system itself; it is the place reserved for what did not work in the regular system for children and adolescents. Y&AE has become a pigeonholed space, reluctant to innovate and with little stimulus for its development and growth. There are few experiences that refer to changes in the conception, management and actions that make it possible to exercise the right to education. The regulations on compulsory years of schooling that most countries have enacted do not translate into achievable goals due to deficiencies in coverage, retention and quality of the school system, generating a circle that feeds back into the permanence of Y&AE as a residual, remedial and compensatory space open to offer a weak alternative to those who have been excluded from the system. The reasons for dropout are not only to be found in factors external to the system, but also in the educational policies and actions themselves, and increasingly, there is a youth population for whom regular education has become a tedious space.

***Policies do not guarantee the right to education or progress towards the SDGs.***

The lack of valid, reliable and transparent information makes it difficult to develop and monitor Y&AE policies. The scarce data available are scattered and/or discontinued, and there are no official and comparable statistics. At the Latin American level, there is no specific module that captures information on education with young people and adults; a source usually used at LAC level, such as SITEAL, does not have information on Y&AE.

In addition to the lack of sources of information, there is also a lack of insight into the context and living conditions of young people and adults to support the design and monitoring of policies and programmes. This is reflected in the lack of flexibility of educational offers, in irrelevant methodologies and contents and rigid forms of assessment, in few systematic instances of teacher training, and in irrelevant curricular and pedagogical adjustments. There is a lack of a systemic approach that places Y&AE in the social context, otherwise the right to education of all people is not guaranteed. The inadequacy and irrelevance of policies is accentuated in times of pandemic, generating an even greater gap between people's needs and the system's capacity to respond. The precariousness

of support only contributes to limiting its scope and to reproducing the conditions it is intended to address. Linked to this is the low relevance of policies for the achievement of the SDGs in an integral manner.

Likewise, while the SDGs themselves do not recognise the existence and potential of Y&AE for their fulfilment, neither are the policies assumed in the pandemic condition contributing, as they present such rigidity and make invisible the diversities; also the complex and participatory dynamics of communities does not help; neither the central role of educators in maintaining educational work and its emergent aspects.

*In pandemics, the lack of recognition of young people and adults as subjects of rights is exacerbated in specific populations.*

Most of the available studies on the pandemic do not refer to education with young people and adults. However, the reports of countries and international organisations appeal to the need for mothers, fathers, caregivers or responsible adults to support their children with their homework, to accompany them in their lessons, to give them emotional support, to generate opportunities for recreation, in short, to be intermediaries in the learning that has been transferred from the school to the home. Young people and adults are not perceived as subjects of rights; they are perceived as help, support for the new generations. This place is internalised by the young people and adults themselves with parental or family responsibility; if there is any available resource, it is the children who are the priority; people do not believe it is legitimate to exercise their right to education.

The lack of recognition of the right to education is accentuated in specific populations. Societies require social support to sustain and give continuity to their own existence. This support is primarily provided by women and, in many communities, by older women. Women who live in this situation are not recognised as subjects of rights; they themselves usually internalise a subordinate position, which partly explains the difficulty of motivating them to initiate a training process. In a pandemic situation, women's position as the main caregivers in the domestic sphere and for family members has placed them in a situation of greater vulnerability and economic and labour inequality, as well as inequality in access to education.

In the logic of structural exclusion, other populations are experiencing a worsening of conditions of inequality and marginalisation in the education system. Racism and xenophobia are recurrent expressions of this situation, expressed towards marginalised indigenous populations who do not have access to basic conditions to continue their studies, migrant populations who must prioritise subsistence, and people in prisons who have hardly been able to continue their education. It is also the case with populations who have little

command of reading and writing, among whom it has been very difficult to adapt to non-face-to-face formats.

In turn, in all countries and regional studies, the data warn of children and adolescents dropping out of school. In pandemic situations, the education system and the policies and plans have been insufficient to respond to the emergency, and the continuity of studies has often been left to the capacity of families. Students from places with fewer opportunities are those who are most exposed to the interruption of their educational trajectories. It is these children and young people who will find a place to continue in the provision of education with young people and adults.

The scenario analysed shows that specific policies and actions for these populations are practically non-existent in a pandemic situation. With few exceptions, they are not even mentioned. The uniqueness of diversity is neither recognised nor addressed, but rather inserted into the framework of what is done for young people and adults in general, without consideration of nodal aspects such as languages, territorial status or cultures.

*In pandemics, the value and commitment of educators and mutual learning are redefined as key to the necessary training processes.*

It is evident that the creativity, capacity for dialogue and organisation based on the commitment and professionalism of teachers have been key to sustaining Y&AE in pandemics. The study shows that the multiple teaching strategies have allowed the continuity of processes, contact with participants through technological means and/or home visits, and even economic support from their own initiative, as well as the knowledge and use of community codes managed by teachers were relevant to support socio-emotional and cognitive aspects, even at the risk of their own health. In this process of forced adaptation to the virtual world, mutual support and the possibility of intergenerational dialogue between the teachers themselves have made it possible to discover capacities and reinforce the self-esteem and identity of male and female educators. These processes are highlighted by the need for systematic, up-to-date training that also recognises teachers as subjects with rights.

*Lack of access to technology and media accentuates inequality.*

As it can be seen in the study, the possibilities of virtual communication are very limited, not only because of the access to technology but also because of the value of recognising oneself together with others in a space of belonging and encounter that allows to discover one's potential and to recognise oneself as a "legitimate learner". The digital gap, which is widely acknowledged, generates



a double exclusion for young people and adults, due to the lack of support and to visible and non-visible obstacles to access an online educational modality. The widely used form of communication is whatsapp because it is the only widespread technological access. However, it is a unidirectional tool and its use has the fundamental purpose of generating communication networks and emotional support, while at the same time demanding economic conditions for its use at the personal, family and community levels. The revaluation of radio as a means of communication and learning was another of the lessons learned during the pandemic due to its greater availability and coverage in the localities. The use of podcasts to work with and from orality is also emerging, especially with populations in literacy processes.

Forced adaptation to digital platforms also has positive aspects in terms of the possibilities for communication and the development of competencies needed in today's world. The danger, especially for youth and adult education, is the experience of new exclusions and the weakening of the offer generated by the digital gap, an expression of the multiple inequalities in the current Latin American context.

*In pandemics, the exhaustion and limits of a model are clearly perceived.*

The importance of intergenerational and intercultural learning is evident. New learning spaces and times challenge us to find new meanings and value in education.

There are many situations of intergenerational learning that the pandemic makes visible, not only as a functional exchange of young people and children helping older people with technology or mothers or fathers teaching housework. Pandemics open up the possibilities of a different dialogue, a transversal dialogue that takes place in homes, in community and work spaces. In these times of crisis, spaces for dialogue open up as a livelihood strategy in collective kitchens, popular canteens, productive workshops. Pandemics redefine the context, challenging the system to rethink the educational offer, while the name "formal" produces distancing and encapsulates it as a closed system, outside of what happens in the contexts and in people's lives. It is in the context where Lifelong Learning becomes transparent and possible, not as a compensation or as a broad vision where everything has a place. Intergenerational learning, the recognition and valorisation of this meeting space is also a way of valuing young people and adults as subjects of rights and as producers of knowledge and makers of culture.

Educational continuity, health care, community building and citizenship, the achievement of learning advances for children, young people and families, social organisation for the preservation of the environment, solidarity, respect for

shared knowledge, cultural reflection and recovery, the creation of sustainable production and consumption projects, are some of the fields that a living Y&AE articulates and promotes from everyday experience, in family and community spaces and networks.

### *Insufficient research hinders the production of knowledge about Y&AE.*

In the field of Youth and Adult Education it is not only difficult to access public, valid and reliable data. There is a lack of research to produce knowledge. The lack of research is associated with the scant encouragement of state policies on the subject, and also reflects the limited importance of Y&AE in universities and other centres of knowledge production. As can be seen, this study only mentions one initial experience of a Doctoral Programme in Y&AE in LAC. It is reasonable to think that the academic community itself omits Y&AE, favouring its marginal character; we are thus witnessing a double omission, that of the educational field itself and the one of society.

The enormous research potential of Y&AE is often neglected. Little research has been done on the identity it builds in articulation with other social networks and institutions, beyond the formal educational sphere. The generation of a specific transdisciplinary field of knowledge, in which various disciplines from the social and biological sciences converge, has not been appreciated. The enormous importance of deepening the construction of knowledge from participatory political and pedagogical processes has not been valued. Little has been systematised about people's learning needs as a basis for the design of policies and programmes; and, specifically, in pandemics, a field is opening up to recognise new possibilities at the level of curricular innovations and strategies supported by educators.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the current crisis situation, the preparatory processes for CONFITEA VII represent an opportunity to build alternatives in Y&AE. The very notion of crisis refers to change, to transit, to a process of definition in order to improve the path already travelled, and it also means a perspective for the future. It should also be kept in mind that the Conference "will analyse effective adult learning and education policies from a lifelong learning perspective and taking into account the United Nations development goals".

It is also necessary to mention that the preparatory processes call for "contributing to the culture of human rights, social justice, common values and sustainability" as relevant perspectives for a time that demands social changes

and transformations also in the way we have coexisted with the environment. Within the framework of the Subregional Consultation on Youth and Adult Education in Latin America. On the way to CONFINTEA VII, four strategies were considered: knowledge generation, strengthening the promotion of alliances, capacity building and support for the formulation of policies, reference elements that allowed the dialogue in the preparatory processes and that are now advancing towards CONFINTEA VII. In order to contribute to this process, recommendations derived from the study and with a vision for the future are set out below.

### *Constructing another narrative of Y&AE*

The conditions that the pandemic exhibits and deepens demand the construction of another narrative since the study shows the limits and exhaustion of the model of definition and action of Y&AE. Another way of understanding Y&AE that allows more forceful actions to redefine its field of action and generate knowledge that contributes to the design and implementation of policies and practices to guarantee the full exercise of the right to education. This is the main challenge from which the recommendations that follow make sense.

To recover the Latin American tradition of fundamental education renewed with contributions from regional knowledge built from popular education, as well as the systematisation of governmental experiences that have favoured the right to education of the most disadvantaged people. To move towards an expanded Y&AE, which does not revert to its marginal and remedial character, and which recovers a humanist perspective in order to develop actions with young people and adults, their groups, needs and interests. It implies other educational relations from an intercultural perspective understood as a dialogue with gender, generation and ethnicity in order to build another pedagogical link.

Lifelong learning and the values that support it can be enriched by sustainability, with values such as solidarity and cooperation that the pandemic itself has placed on the social agenda. It is essential to ratify education also for social and natural life, with categories and approaches such as biopolitics, bioethics and good living.

The lines recommended for the construction of another narrative do not ignore its contribution to the fulfilment of the SDGs, however, it is necessary to broaden the view and build a long-range perspective that explicitly places Y&AE, its social meaning and its educational potential for the whole of society and the improvement of the environment.



### *Making another Y&AE visible in national and international spaces*

Its visibility in international spaces implies looking at the contexts from other comprehensive frameworks and at the people of Y&AE as subjects of rights, establishing cooperation and public policy commitments. Within the framework of national education systems, it implies, in addition to strengthening specific areas, recognising its cross-cutting nature insofar as it contributes to the enrichment of education in general and is the bearer of perspectives and actions for the achievement of social goals.

### *Renewing the relationship between Y&AE and national education systems*

The construction of educational subsystems for Y&AE within the framework of the National Education Systems which, while consolidating their identity, would be articulated with other actions in a mutually reinforcing manner. The mission of these subsystems would be to manage, in an intersecting manner, bodies and councils with intersectoral and inter-institutional representation and actions to guarantee the right to education and strengthen its public and free nature. Another form of management that understands the current educational condition given the intermittency and displacement of educational territories that reformulate the times and spaces of both people and the educational processes themselves in their various modalities. The cross-cutting role that Y&AE occupies should be recognised and can enhance not only the achievement of institutional objectives but also, and above all, the right to education.

### *Moving towards renewed and contextualised policies*

To build state policies that give rise to actions that guarantee the right to education for all. It suggests government initiatives in the form of funding, strengthened institutions, inter-institutionalism, intersectorality and cooperation. It is necessary that policies make their purposes a reality in areas such as financing, the construction of contextualised educational alternatives in accordance with the participating subjects, flexible institutions with a sense of cooperation and solidarity.

Reviewing the conceptions from which policies define the public problem to be addressed, with which actions, strategies and agendas are defined. It also implies the design and implementation of policies that articulate dimensions such as the local, state and national levels in their implementation. At this level, there is a social and cultural resource to build policies also from the local level.

### ***Renewing Institutional***

Institutional vulnerability must be overcome with timely actions, resources and an intersecting perspective of rights and education throughout life and for social and natural life. Its renewal demands flexibility in times, spaces, pedagogical models, forms and times of accreditation of knowledge acquired in life and in Y&AE educational spaces. At the same time, renewal demands the contextualised and critical recovery of the institutional mission, vision and ethics that show their capacity for coherence among their purposes and actions, within the framework of their social responsibility and the contact they establish with people and their right to education.

### ***Recognition of diversity and subjects of rights in Y&AE***

Guarantee the recognition of everyone as subjects of rights and not only as the support for the education of children, adolescents and young people, as the study showed. Similarly, it is necessary that Y&AE policies carry out concrete initiatives to ensure that diversity does not turn into inequality, as happens with indigenous and rural communities, given that the precarious possibility of educational continuity has worsened in the pandemic context.

It is necessary to recognise those who are subject to rights as subjects of dialogue, with proposals capable of building common purposes based on diversity. Their participation and the recognition of ways of doing so, for example through social movements, is crucial in order to build solidarity and social agreements.

### ***Revaluating and dignifying the teaching profession***

Recognition of educators as subjects of rights; greater support in terms of material, transport, infrastructure, with accessibility devices and data. Pedagogical support in the sense of free, systematic and relevant training with the demands of teaching and learning that the context demands and in areas such as socio-emotional and health which support their daily work.

The educational experience that Latin America and the Caribbean region has historically carried out and is currently doing during the pandemic through the educational practices of teachers, is a key contribution to developing better pedagogical encounters. That is why its systematisation and impact on educational models and practices is recommended.

### ***Digital citizenship***

The shift of educational processes towards digital technologies and the media represents a challenge and a commitment by governments to provide free access, guarantee safety in their use, training for their use and social and community infrastructure conditions for their effectiveness.

Promotion and encouragement of digital citizenship that preserves the right of access to new communication and information technologies from a critical position. Support to the constitution of people not only as consumers of platforms, websites, social networks and other media that favour the enrichment of large communication consortiums. It is essential to understand the relationships that are established through these media, their wide possibilities and their limits, as they support, but never replace social relationship, nor pedagogical link.

### ***Knowledge generation***

Producing knowledge in and about Y&AE in its broad sense is a means of understanding and transforming contexts; it is also essential to know in order to enable decision-making. Knowledge is a public good to which one has rights, and this can be made a reality through educational processes that allow us to overcome a utilitarian view and reposition its place in the construction of subjectivities, actions and life or society projects.

The value of affectivity, of the socio-emotional as a central part of both the production and the appropriation and use of knowledge in educational and research processes has been noted, and it is therefore necessary to recognise these areas.

### ***Build monitoring system***

Build a monitoring system that enables accountability to society while supporting decision-making and educational research in Y&AE. A system with up-to-date, accessible, transparent, valid and reliable data containing indicators that support the monitoring of the right to education is required.

### ***Increased funding transparency and consistent use***

The above recommendations are only possible if governments allocate larger budgets for the realisation of their purposes. This is another way of making Y&AE

visible by giving it the dimension of budgetary justice in order to guarantee the right to education.

In addition to the government's obligation in this area, there is a need for equitable distribution and consistent use of funds, as well as the need for transparency.

### *Renewing the meaning and structure of International Adult Education Conferences*

Renew postulates and actions through the collective construction of relevant agendas with a future perspective towards a fairer world and in coexistence with the environment. Provide content that ratifies previous challenges and gives rise to emerging challenges that the pandemic has brought about, such as the presence of digital and electronic technologies in people's lives.

The structure of dialogue and participation in the Conferences, as well as the commitments that are established, allows synergies to be built in order to give continuity to the frameworks for action that emerge from them. The commitment to its implementation in its articulating sense for the generation of knowledge and monitoring of public policies are fundamental responsibilities.

## **STRATEGIC LINES**

In the 21st century, it is clear that public policies require the participation of diverse actors in decision-making and a multidimensional and intersectoral approach in order to address issues of inequality and the development of societies. In Latin America and the Caribbean, it is only possible to understand and assume diversities by comprehending the deep roots of social inequality, with an inclusive perspective that recognises everyone's potential and rights; with the incorporation of an intercultural approach as a space for respectful and egalitarian encounters; with expectations of social transformation; and with the desire to achieve well-being and social justice.

The challenge is how to move forward from the paradigm of the right to education as a fundamental human right, as a State duty enshrined in the Constitution of most Latin American and Caribbean States, with a view to a future in which policies on learning and education with young people and adults assume in all their complexity and extent the fact of diversities and structural crises. This perspective requires innovative public policies and strategies that articulate initiatives from governments, civil society organizations, local communities, intersectoral agencies, businesses and the private sector, and international cooperation.



With these considerations in mind, and with the intention of establishing concrete guidelines that will enable states to make policy and action decisions regarding Y&AE in relation to both the cyclical situation of the pandemic and the challenges involved in renewing it and making it more visible, some strategic lines are outlined that can be discussed and analysed in each country and in the region as a whole. These lines are derived from the conclusions and recommendations that precede them, as well as from some of the commitments established in the Belém Framework for Action, which, in light of the study, are still pending. An essential assumption and condition for the development of each of them is the dialogue and participation of all the aforementioned sectors and actors.

## **1. RENEW THE NARRATIVE OF Y&AE AS A HUMAN RIGHT, AS WELL AS ITS FOUNDATIONS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS.**

- a.** To constitute, with governments, civil society organisations, international bodies, and all actors and subjects of Y&AE, an initiative of analysis and renewal of the narrative of Youth and Adult Education, from a perspective of rights, lived experiences and the framework of the civilisational crisis.
- b.** Establish an explicit and public position on Y&AE from international and regional organisations, as well as from national governments, based on a new narrative.

## **2. TO MAKE Y&AE VISIBLE BOTH IN INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXTS, WITH A PERSPECTIVE OF RIGHTS AND SOCIAL LEGITIMISATION.**

- a.** Include Y&AE in various areas of regional and international cooperation, associated with its multiple fields of development and social contribution.
- b.** Implement national and local communication policies that create favourable social environments towards Y&AE as an inalienable and enabling right, its personal benefits and social contribution, and the value and dignity of those who participate in it.
- c.** Rooting the offer of Youth and Adult Education in the community with a territorial approach, so that it is recognised and legitimised as a space that offers learning opportunities to the whole population, including all diversities.

- d.** Articulate community initiatives and programmes for education, training and entrepreneurship related to different sectors of the economy, by recovering the productive work that people and collectives do for their own benefit, and with accompanying actions.
- e.** Disseminate the possibilities and social contributions of Y&AE through community radio, social networks, spaces for collective and territorial interaction (health centres, schools, municipalities, etc.) and, especially, through direct communication actions supported by the availability and location of community organisations and groups.

### **3. DEFINE FAR-REACHING STATE POLICIES AND PLACE Y&AE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND THEIR STRUCTURES.**

- a.** Establish specific legal frameworks, from the constitutional sphere to national and local education laws, norms and regulations, which strengthen and support the exercise of Y&AE as a right and the State's obligation to comply with it.
- b.** To create specific Y&AE subsystems in national education systems, which provide visibility, autonomy and articulation from an intersectoral and intersecting perspective.
- c.** Develop a broad and articulated intersectoral strategy to strengthen local capacities for management and social participation, including education and specifically Y&AE.
- d.** Systematically validate and apply participation mechanisms with civil society and all Y&AE actors, which are public and transparent, for the definition and evaluation of policies, programmes, curricula, materials, training and educational and operational management.
- e.** Generate flexible reintegration programmes for young people and adults excluded from the school system.

### **4. RENEW AND STRENGTHEN THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR Y&AE IN THE STATES.**

- a.** Redefine the core of the institutional framework for public policies from a rights-based perspective, with an emphasis on excluded groups; work with territorial diversities and subjects; sustainable development; and digital citizenship.

- b.** Strengthen and expand the sectoriality and intersectoriality of Y&AE, making it part of the programmes linked to the achievement of the SDGs and cross-cutting axes present in the policies, programmes and actions of education, health, employment, environment, family welfare, community development and others, so that the strategic lines, approaches and channelled resources are harmonised and fully exploited.
- c.** To deepen the articulation, synergy and commitment of different levels of government, from national to local, for the design and implementation of strategies and lines of action in Y&AE.
- d.** To advance in the integration of study and employment qualifications frameworks for mobility, and therefore in the systems of Recognition, Accreditation and Validation of Knowledge and know-how acquired in any field and at any time of life.
- e.** Strengthen the management of resources to improve the conditions of educational spaces, as well as support for food, transport and financing, such as scholarships.

## **5. IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF Y&AE WITH AN INCLUSIVE PERSPECTIVE ON DIVERSITY.**

- a.** Participatory renewal, strengthening and implementation of curricula, regulations and management of Y&AE learning, in order to make them useful, relevant and pertinent in local contexts. Incorporate emerging issues and lines of sustainable development, as well as provide the temporal and spatial flexibility they require in the diversity of their specific contexts.
- b.** To encourage the creation of networks between Y&AE participants with a view to legitimising the territory and the community as a space for knowledge, life and learning.
- c.** Stimulate the creation of their own programmes in specific areas of interest, allowing training in areas such as philosophy, artistic expression or sport, as well as training in trades or preparation for further studies.

## **6. RECOGNISE AND GUARANTEE ACCESS TO Y&AE FOR EXCLUDED GROUPS AND DIVERSITIES.**

- a.** To make visible the characterisation and problems of the various groups and collectives that participate in Y&AE, as well as their socio-educational needs and demands, with an intersectional perspective.
- b.** To implement and reaffirm gender, linguistic, cultural relevance and attention to specific conditions and needs such as the situation of incarceration, as well as their transversal monitoring in public programmes and actions of all sectors linked to the field of Y&AE.
- c.** To recover and develop specific educational proposals for the different groups and collectives of diversities, with inclusion, relevance and quality.

## **7. TO DEVELOP A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF PROFESSIONALISATION OF Y&AE EDUCATORS AND TEACHERS.**

- a.** Conduct studies to understand the participation, working and salary conditions of adult educators, with a view to carrying out cross-sectoral actions to improve them.
- b.** Design and implement teacher policies for Y&AE, including participation and training programmes; recognition and incentives; socialisation of practice; and participation in the determination of policies and in the formulation and adaptation of methods and materials.
- c.** Recover and design strategies for the creation or deepening of synergies with academic and educational institutions, specialists and local stakeholders, and generate commitments for ongoing support and participation in training.
- d.** Establish a framework of qualifications and criteria for the recognition, validation and accreditation of teaching knowledge, regardless of where it was acquired.
- e.** To carry out experiences, models and training processes for teachers and educators at different educational levels and modalities, from a perspective of impact on emerging situations such as socio-emotional well-being, the appropriation of technologies and intergenerational learning in the family and in the community.



- f.** Implement teacher education or teacher training programmes for the graduation of teachers with specific dedication to Y&AE.
- g.** Establish virtual and face-to-face networks for training and permanent exchange between educators that, in coordination with universities, support strategies to improve the quality and relevance of Y&AE, and take advantage of and strengthen the capacities of trainers and educators at local levels.

## **8. DEVELOP DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP.**

- a.** Carry out in-depth diagnoses to find out the real conditions of infrastructure and digital access of the different subjects of Y&AE.
- b.** Establish the conditions to guarantee equitable access to devices and connectivity for the digital inclusion of Y&AE subjects, in all their diversities, as well as care and respect for their privacy and rights in digital access.
- c.** Formulate and establish regulatory frameworks that regulate the terms and conditions of private participation in digital services for Y&AE actors and subjects.
- d.** Develop free educational and training programmes for the understanding and critical and reflective use of digital technologies needed in Y&AE, both for educators and teachers, as well as for young people and adults.
- e.** Promote the right to participation of Y&AE actors and communities in the use of digital technologies as a tool for transformation.

## **9. GENERATE COLLABORATIVE, RELEVANT AND INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE SPECIFIC TO Y&AE.**

- a.** Create knowledge generation initiatives in Y&AE through synergies between higher education and research institutions and civil society in design, contributing to decision-making, educational practices, training and monitoring.
- b.** To strengthen capacities for research and systematisation of policies and practices in Youth and Adult Education, establishing networks that, through projects and/or specific lines of action, link universities, specialised centres, state and/or national public entities, NGOs and civil society institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- c.** Linking school and non-school through research, experiences and programmes that strengthen sector transversality and community management in adult learning.

## **10. ENSURE ADEQUATE, SUFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATELY IDENTIFIED FUNDING FOR Y&AE.**

- a.** Increase targeted investment in Y&AE as part of national education systems.
- b.** Formulate programme-budget matrices that specify the investment needed to develop different quality offers in Y&AE.
- c.** Create alternative sources of financing and new mechanisms for mobilising resources that the public, private and social sectors provide or can provide, creating or adapting the necessary regulatory framework.
- d.** Design indicators that make it possible to visualise direct and indirect investment in Y&AE and literacy, as well as in the cross-sectoral programmes that involve them, and the mechanisms for their transparency, monitoring and accountability.
- e.** Institutionalise incentive systems for companies, organisations and other civil society groups to promote and facilitate their workers, members or affiliates to participate in Y&AE.

## **11. CARRY OUT PERMANENT MONITORING ACTIONS AND SYSTEMATISE EXPERIENCES IN Y&AE.**

- a.** Generate norms, guidelines and indicators that allow for the evaluation of public policy in Y&AE, with the fulfilment of the right to education as a fundamental axis.
- b.** Create and maintain mechanisms for the participation of public authorities, civil society organisations, the private sector, communities, educators and learners in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes.
- c.** Design and apply indicators that make it possible to visualise the actions carried out in the field of Y&AE at the national and local levels, as well as in the intersectoral programmes that involve them, and the mechanisms for monitoring and have an accountability to society.

- d.** Design and implement monitoring processes with indicators that make it possible to visualise and communicate the contribution of Y&AE to society and sustainable development at national and territorial levels.
- e.** Generate processes of accompaniment and local monitoring of the initiatives and practices of collectives and communities, in order to promote them and systematise and socialise the experience.

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**12. TO CREATE AND MANAGE, FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, A DYNAMIC AND PERMANENT OBSERVATORY OF Y&AE IN THE REGIONAL SPHERE, WHICH COLLECTS, SYSTEMATISES, PRESENTS AND DEBATES CONTINUOUS DATA AND INFORMATION ON POLICIES, PROGRAMMES, ACTIONS, EXPERIENCES, MONITORING AND PROBLEMS IN THE FIELD IN EACH COUNTRY.**

**13. RENEW THE PERSPECTIVE, STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF CONFINTEA.**

- a.** Articulate the specificity of Y&AE and its new narrative in a field, module or area that names Youth and Adult Education, Adult Learning and Education (ALE) as a priority and explicit line of work within those managed by UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and UNESCO Regional (OREALC).
- b.** Invite all actors and subjects of Y&AE at the regional level to participate in permanent dialogues, establish commitments and concrete cooperation mechanisms, and issue binding recommendations.





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