Education in Latin America and the Caribbean at a crossroads
Regional monitoring report SDG4 - Education 2030
September 8th, 2022
The context: social and economic trends in Latin America and the Caribbean
The pandemic has deepened the structural problems of inequality, poverty and informality.

- The **social and economic context** of the region is relevant to understanding the opportunities and obstacles faced by education systems.
- The pandemic emerged in a **complex scenario**: 7 years of low growth, increasing poverty and growing social tensions.
- The pandemic **deepened structural inequalities** with high levels of informality and lack of social protection, exposing critical knots in health, education and care.
- The consequences of the **war in Ukraine** and **inflationary pressures** are being added to this year's situation.
- The **prolonged social crisis** imposes new challenges on countries to ensure compliance with SDG4 and sustain the achievements of recent decades in education.
- **Efforts must be articulated and integrated** with other dimensions of development to break through the critical nodes of exclusion.
As a result of the situation caused by the pandemic, the region experienced the most important crisis of the last century.

In 2020: drop in GDP of 6.8% and the worst economic performance among all the regions of the world.

The growth trend in the region had slowed prior to the crisis.

The economic "recovery" in 2021 (6.5% of GDP) has not been enough to mitigate the social and labor effects of the pandemic.

Estimated GDP growth of only 2.7% in 2022.

Data source: CEPAL, Estudio Económico de América Latina y el Caribe 2022

Notes: a/ projection presented in CEPAL (2022)
In 2020, poverty and extreme poverty increased for the sixth consecutive year. In 2021, despite the recovery, a 27-year reversal is projected with an increase in extreme poverty.

Data source: ECLAC, based on the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
Notes: b/ projection.
Inequality increased between 2019 and 2020 and broke a downward trend that had been observed since 2002.

- The Gini Coefficient increased by 0.7 for the regional average between 2019 and 2020.
- The deterioration in the distributional situation in 2020 is linked to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data source: ECLAC, based on the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).
Notes: a. Simple averages calculated on the basis of information from the closest year with available data for each of the 15 countries.
Fiscal policy and increased social spending were key to respond to the crisis caused by the covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, **central government social spending** reached an **all-time high** in 2020: 13.6% of GDP in LAC (up 2.3 percentage points) and 13.3% of GDP in the Caribbean (up 2.1 percentage points).

**Central government social spending**
(as % of GDP and total public spending). Years 2015-2020

Latin American countries

Caribbean countries

Data source: ECLAC, based on official information from the countries
Notes: a/ Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica y Trinidad y Tobago
In LAC the disruption of face-to-face education was among the highest in the world. The digital media played a key role in the continuity.

**Latin America and the Caribbean (19 countries): Proportion of schools with access to the Internet for pedagogical purposes (SDG 4.a.1), by level of education (in %)**

- **Primary**: 40.6% (2015) vs. 42.8% (2018)
- **Secondary**: 67.1% (2015) vs. 67.0% (2018)

**Latin America (10 countries): Persons aged 5 to 20 living in households without Internet access, by income quintile, circa 2019 (in %)**

- **1st Quintile**: 47%
- **Average**: 33%
- **5th Quintile**: 7%

*Source: United Nations Statistics Division. SDG Global Database, disponible en [https://on.unesco.org/3KkXw9L](https://on.unesco.org/3KkXw9L).*

- **Less than half of primary schools had connectivity** and only 67% of secondary schools (no progress).
- **In 2019, 33% of children and youth** (between 5 and 20 years old) in these 10 countries lived in households without Internet access. Access is also **very unequal** between countries in the region and by socioeconomic level.
- **Education with digital media** is a change that is here to stay.
- **It is urgent to advance in the universalization of digital access and in the development of skills**
SDG 4 Agenda - Education 2030 review: Five major trends
1. Continuity of growth of educational attainment

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
2a. Most recent improvement in access and completion

Gross enrollment rate early childhood development programs

Completion rate for lower secondary education

Completion rate for upper secondary education

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
2b. Reduction of gaps

Completion rate, upper secondary education, by income quintile and zone

SDG 4.1.2

By zone

By income quintile

Gap: 29.3

Gap: 52.1

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
3a. Slowdown in the improvement of some indicators

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
3b. Slowdown in the improvement of some indicators

**Five-year changes in the completion rate**
*(in percentage points)*

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<tr>
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<th>Upper secondary</th>
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<td>2015-2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>+2.1</td>
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*Data source:* UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
4a. Worrying stagnation in key indicators

Percentage of primary education students with minimum proficiency level (%)

SDG 4.1.1

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<td>27,9%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TERCE 2019</td>
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<td>17,2%</td>
<td>17,2%</td>
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</table>

4b. Worrying stagnation in key indicators

Percentage of secondary education students with minimum proficiency level (in %)

SDG 4.1.1

Data source: OECD. PISA database
5a. Expansion of higher education with widening of gaps

**Gross enrollment rate and total enrollment in tertiary education**

SDG 4.3.2

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
5b. Expansion of higher education with widening of gaps

Gross enrollment rate in tertiary education, by income quintile and sex

Data source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Education (UIS). UIS Database
Education financing

Expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure
SDG 1.a.2

Expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP
SDG 1.a.gdp

Challenges for education policies in the region
Ten challenges to face stagnation and crisis

- Education as a human right
- Intersectoral coordination
- Learning (recovery and quality)
- Systemic curriculum vision
- Re-imagining education
Diez desafíos para enfrentar el estancamiento y la crisis

- Focus on teachers
- Lifelong learning
- Secondary education
- Higher education
- Educational financing
Thank you

More information:

https://en.unesco.org/Education2030Report
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