

Education for All (EFA) in Latin America and the Caribbean: Assessment of progress and post-2015 challenges

30 – 31 October 2014, Lima, Peru

Lima Statement

Preamble

1. We, the Ministers of Education of Latin America
2. and the Caribbean (LAC), high-level government officials, UN agencies, representatives of civil society organizations and development partners, gathered at the meeting on “Education for All (EFA) in Latin America and the Caribbean: Assessment of progress and post-2015 challenges”, in Lima, Peru, from 30 to 31 October 2014.
3. We thank the Ministry of Education of Peru for facilitating and hosting this important event for the region.
4. Having deliberated on progress towards EFA in the region, the Muscat Agreement adopted at the Global EFA Meeting (GEM) in Muscat, Oman, 12-14 May 2014, and the outcome document of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals, and having examined the unfinished EFA tasks in the region, as well as the challenges and priorities that will configure the post-2015 education agenda for the region, we adopt the present statement.
5. We endorse the principles and targets set forth in the Muscat Agreement, noting that the overarching goal “ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030” reflects the aspiration of the LAC region for education and development as well as the roadmap established by the first meeting of the ministers of education of CELAC in Cuba in February 2013.

Perspectives of the LAC region on the post-2015 education agenda

6. We reaffirm that education is a fundamental human right, a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights, and essential for peaceful and inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth and prosperity in the LAC region.
7. Since a major challenge to social progress in the region is inequality, we believe that a driving principle of the post-2015 education agenda should be to contribute to the reduction of inequality and poverty through the provision of inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all, and we value the rich cultural diversity of the LAC region.
8. Achieving equity and inclusion requires securing the right to education of all children, young people and adults, and their rights within and through education to realize their potential and aspirations. This also requires responding to the diversity of needs among all learners by increasing their participation in learning, and by reducing exclusion from and within education.
9. We acknowledge that, in our quest to meet the right to inclusive quality education for all, our countries have made recognizable progress. We also take stock of the unfinished tasks which will lead to renewed efforts for a more contextualized and expanded vision of education and learning that recognizes and values our multicultural and multilingual diversity and our respective national development processes towards sustainable development.

Priority areas for the LAC region

Equity, quality and inclusion

10. We commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and discrimination, disparities and inequalities, in access to and in the completion of education and learning cycles, processes and outcomes. We will remove barriers to equal opportunities, and support those who are disadvantaged or marginalized by developing comprehensive education strategies to foster their participation in education and completion of their education cycles, through intercultural, multicultural and

multilingual education programmes, and programmes that respond to the diverse education needs (e.g. school feeding programmes). The needs of people with disabilities will also be addressed at all levels of the education. Beyond numerical parity, we will accelerate progress towards gender equality by addressing the causes of disparities in learning achievements at all levels.

11. Interculturality is an indispensable aspect of quality education. Schools are not the only providers of education. It is important that families, communities, social organizations and the media accept their responsibility in education, with the support of educational institutions.

Inclusive and equitable lifelong learning for all

12. Inclusive and equitable access to quality learning should be ensured for all - children, youth and adults, at all levels of the education system, from early childhood care and education (ECCE) to tertiary and higher education. As ECCE plays a crucial role in building strong foundations for learning and development, the continued expansion of quality ECCE services should be prioritized with emphasis on the holistic development of children. We recommend the provision of at least 12 years of free, compulsory and quality formal education for all by 2030 that includes at least one year of pre-primary education. Every effort should be made to ensure access to quality learning opportunities through community-based and parenting programmes, in school and education centers. When needed, relevant alternative learning pathways should also be provided and accredited. We are committed to education and literacy for young people and adults through formal and non-formal programmes from the perspective of lifelong learning. We resolve to consolidate the expansion of tertiary and higher education with quality programmes and the strengthening of science and technology, including research, innovation, and local and traditional knowledge that contribute to national development.

Skills and competencies for life and work

13. In light of the rapid social, economic and environmental transformations in the LAC region, all learners should acquire the life skills as well as the technical and vocational ones for decent work, entrepreneurship and for a life of dignity, so that they become more creative and innovative, think critically, communicate effectively, solve problems independently, and be able to adapt to socio-economic change as well as to improve their quality of life and that of their communities.

Education for Sustainable Development

14. We commit to developing programmes in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCEd) so that learners a) acquire the knowledge, values and attitudes to promote human rights, gender equality and a culture of peace and non-violence, b) become the beings they want to be and enjoy secure lives, participate responsibly in

society, embrace diversity, live and work together harmoniously and c) contribute to sustainable development, the protection of the environment and life on the planet and be able to confront the challenges of climate change.

Quality of education

15. We commit to excellence in public education for all. Quality of education is a key concern for the LAC region. It is an essential condition for tackling inequality and poverty and for creating more inclusive societies. It is a broad, multi-faceted concept that implies a holistic approach towards lifelong learning. Quality education is defined by five dimensions: equity, relevance, pertinence, efficiency and effectiveness. We highlight the importance of assessing the process and outcomes of learning and the generation of research evidence. We resolve to develop comprehensive national support and evaluation systems that consider all quality dimensions, and generate sound evidence for policy formulation and management of education systems.
16. In the framework of improving the quality of education, we also commit to expanding the use of ICTs and harnessing their full potential in the teaching and learning processes, for improved learning outcomes and environments, and to reduce the digital gap and facilitate the entry of young people in the workplace.
17. Learning environments should be safe, healthy, gender-sensitive, inclusive and conducive to learning, embracing cultural diversity, and responsive to comprehensive monitoring and quality assurance systems.
18. We decide to increase actions and build bridges between formal, non-formal and informal education and will strengthen the role of families so that they can become more involved and better support the education of their children.

Teachers, educators, school principals and school leaders

19. We consider that it is important that the SDGs include a core target on teachers that recognizes the need to underscore teachers as key actors in the post-2015 agenda, and not just as means of implementation as in the current OWG proposal. Teachers, educators, school principals and school leaders are key actors in achieving quality education. We commit to reinforcing a regional strategy for teachers and school principals so that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers in well managed schools, in collaboration with the “International Task Force on Teachers for EFA”. We also commit to providing continuing professional development for teachers, educators, school principals and school leaders, taking into consideration good practices in the region and sharing information on these.

Governance and financing

20. We are determined to establish policy frameworks that promote accountability and transparency, and enhance the participation of all stakeholders (such as civil society, communities, families, teachers, students and other local partners) at all levels of the education system, We commit to strengthening public education as a guarantee for the construction of democracy and the right to education. Governments will remain the primary duty-bearers and custodians for efficient, equitable and sustainable management and financing of education and schools.
21. We declare that financing of education is an investment in development. There should be an enhanced focus on diversified financing that supports quality public education in line with the cultural, social, political and collective rights of all citizens. Public investment should help ensure the equitable distribution of resources across education sub-sectors and locations as

well as targeted programmes to support marginalized groups. We recognize efforts made by countries of the region to increase investment in education. In accordance with the fiscal space of our countries, we recommend gradually reaching the international benchmarks of 6% of GDP and 20% of total public expenditure for education, and move towards a further increase of these percentages by 2030. While emphasizing that strong public financing is crucial to success, we also acknowledge the importance of development partners in achieving the post-2015 education goals and call upon them to increase and better target their assistance to education, aligned with and under Government's coordination. We welcome South-South and North-South-South cooperation. We call on international financing mechanisms e.g. the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in particular to support the implementation of the post-2015 education agenda according to the needs and priorities of the respective countries.

Towards the World Education Forum, May 2015

22. We request UNESCO, along with UNICEF and with the support of the EFA co-convening agencies, as well as civil society, and the international, regional and sub-regional groups and partners, to continue leading the coordination of the development of the post-2015 education agenda, and the development of the corresponding Framework for Action, through a broad "Alliance for Education" in the region for the cycle 2015-30, that considers the mandates, priorities, social agendas and agreements of countries and other international organizations working on education in the region. We further recommend that UNESCO continue to lead, coordinate and provide technical support for the implementation, monitoring and accountability of the future post-2015 education agenda, including reinforcing innovative tools like the flagship EFA Global Monitoring Report.
23. We pledge to promote the future education agenda in upcoming intergovernmental negotiations. We will also work to ensure that the outcomes of the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development to be held in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan, on 10-12 November 2014, are taken into account in the future education agenda. We commit to working towards an alignment of the education goal and targets of the global post-2015 development agenda (SDGs) to be adopted by the UN Summit in September 2015 with the education agenda to be adopted at the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea on 19-22 May 2015. To this end, we will actively participate in future consultations, and will facilitate and lead the debates in our countries.

Lima, 31 October 2014