

My Education, Our Future

A commitment to the **recovery and protection of learning** in Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean is facing its greatest educational crisis in history. More than two years into the pandemic, the region's 170 million children and young people have gone through one of the longest school closures in the world.

Although many schools have reopened their doors, the educational crisis is not yet finished, it has simply become less visible. Despite significant efforts from all countries, not all of the region's students have returned to class and millions have lost so much in terms of learning that they are now at risk of abandoning school altogether.

The critical impact that COVID-19 has had on education calls for large-scale urgent and coordinated action to rescue the present and future of children and young people in the region and, through it, hope.

The World Bank, The Inter-American Dialogue, UNESCO and UNICEF have joined forces to call on all Latin America and the Caribbean nations, and all education-related national and international stakeholders, to achieve education recovery via four key commitments:

- i** **Place the education recovery at the top of the public agenda as a key factor in the social and economic recovery following the pandemic**
This means: (i) ensuring adequate financing for the sector; (ii) aligning the regulatory frameworks according to the actions that are most urgent and necessary for recovery; (iii) strengthening the institutional framework to streamline process implementation and resource management; and (iv) having in place optimal and sufficient human resources in all sector-related instances (from classrooms to ministries).
- ii** **Reintegrate all the children that abandoned school and ensure they stay in it**
This means: (i) keeping schools open over the course of new COVID-19 outbreaks; (ii) implementing strategies to locate those students at risk of dropping school and urge them to return to classes; (iii) establishing early warning systems to identify those at risk of abandonment; and (iv) supporting them so that they stay in school.
- iii** **Recover lost learning and ensure the socio-emotional well-being of children**
This entails the development and implementation of large scale education recovery strategies for millions of children by way of: (i) Diagnostic assessments for purposes of improvement; (ii) curricular prioritization with a focus on foundational skills; (iii) pedagogical strategies to catch-up and recover, including by taking advantage of digital technologies, among other tools. It also means to diagnose, look after and monitor the health and well-being of the entire educational community, taking into account the trauma and loss that the pandemic has brought to many.
- iv** **Value, support and train teachers**
This means: (i) taking care of their health and well-being; (ii) reinforcing their pedagogical and digital skills; (iii) supporting their socio-emotional capacities to guarantee their own well-being and support for their students; (iv) strengthening professional development via pedagogical strategies for changing environments; which demand innovation and creativity and, (v) addressing the lack of professionals evident in many countries of the region.

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The actions that constitute this Commitment to Education Recovery demand the most ambitious investment in the history of the region. This larger financing is backed by the Paris Declaration of the Global Education Summit (2021) and by the recent plea from the Secretary-General of the United Nations while convening the Transforming Education Summit (TES). Both instances call on everyone to reassume the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and to come up with strategies to guarantee adequate and sustainable financing, adapted to the needs of each country.

States' efforts to guarantee the continuity of education via distance education methods were considerable. Taking into account the political, social and economic characteristics of each country and the restrictions on connectivity present in millions of regional households, there is a need to redouble efforts to eliminate inequalities and achieve educational justice, prioritizing the most vulnerable students.

In case no urgent and immediate action is taken to achieve an educational recovery, millions of students across the region could be at risk of abandoning school because they lack the appropriate level of learning to continue their education. An entire generation could experience profound and lasting consequences at an educational, social and economic level.

We call on governments, international cooperation organizations and all citizens to pledge a renewed political and financial commitment, and to take concrete action to avert a generational catastrophe.