

CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS
OF EDUCATION AND MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR
ECONOMIC PLANNING IN COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN

Convened jointly by Unesco and ECLA
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final report

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RECOMMENDATIONS

adopted by

the Regional Conference on the Planning and Organization
of Literacy Programmes in Latin Americana and the Caribbean
from 30 May to 4 June 1966
and endorsed by the Conference of Ministers

Considering that in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims the right of everyone to education, existing conditions and needs in Latin America demand that the efforts to implement this right be intensified;

Considering that at various earlier meetings the Member States of the region have adopted policies in favour of literacy work and adult education;

Considering that despite the fact of there still being more than 50 million illiterate adults in the region, conditions could rapidly be created to put an end to that situation;

Convinced that conditions in the countries represented permit and necessitate wider opportunities for access to education by the broad masses of the adult population;

Affirming that the needs and objectives of economic and social development, .the changes in structures and the solution of the key problems of the region are in close correlation with the major objectives of adult education, including literacy work;

Having noted with gratification that, in addition, to the satisfactory results achieved in certain countries of the region, new literacy and adult education programmes and projects are being prepared in others;

Endorsing the resolutions and relevant conclusions adopted by the United Nations, Unesco, and the World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy (Teheran, September 1965);

RECOMMENDS

To the Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean:

1. That far higher priority than at the present time be given, simultaneously with the efforts being made in other fields of education and particularly in primary education, to adult education and to the preparation and training of adolescents who have abandoned school prematurely and of adults who are either illiterate or insufficiently educated with a view to their total and effective incorporation in the tasks of national life;

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2. That each country identify the priority objectives in this field so as to be able to integrate the greatest possible number of adults in the achievement of its development aims and the attainment of its immediate and primary goals;
3. That adult education as a whole ranging from literacy work up to the higher levels of education, be directly incorporated in overall educational planning so as to avoid divorcing adult education from formal education efforts, on the one hand, and from development efforts in general, on the other;
4. That steps be taken to carry out one of the immediate essential tasks, namely, the harmonization or adoption of the set objectives to existing means, structures and methods.

In order to attain these general objectives, the Conference recommends more particularly to the governments of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean:

I. WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. That a consistent and far-sighted policy be adopted for adult education related to the policies established for overall educational development and to the demands of economic and social development;
2. That adult education be included as an essential component of all economic and social development projects, selecting priority sectors and establishing strategic pilot projects;
3. That steps be taken to quickening the processes of changes in the present inadequate economic and social structures, with the effective and corresponding expansion of adult education, linked particularly with agrarian reform and the introduction of modern agricultural techniques; with the plans for increasing national income and its rational distribution with efforts to promote more rapid industrialization with urban reform; with the processes of urbanization and the movement of large population groups from the agricultural and animal husbandry sector to the industrial and service sector;
4. That the programmes of the centres providing specialized training for adults be revised and brought up to date particularly those for women so as to adapt them to present techniques and to the demand for each speciality in the labour market;
5. That the desirability of concluding specific agreements with Unesco be urged upon United Nations Specialized Agencies, particularly FAO and ILO, with a view to the adequate incorporation of literacy work and adult education in the economic and social development projects sponsored by them.

II. WITH REGARD TO EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

1. That an adult education policy be adopted at the national level and a centralizing agency be established also at a national level, which would be responsible for the planning, guidance and implementation of adult education programmes, including in them the indigenous groups in those countries where such exist;
2. That the necessary measures be taken to build up an authentic educational system covering adult education in all forms and at all levels, including literacy work, and set up a competent central body for the purpose of framing national policy;
3. Adult education be established as a system integrated or linked with the educational plan depending on the level of development of the country, starting from the initial stage at which

literacy work will predominate, and integrating therein, to meet the corresponding requirements of primary, intermediate or vocational education, accelerated occupational training, civic training, job-oriented education, higher education, complementary education, family and moral education and refresher courses;

4. That the objectives of the Unesco Major Project for Latin America be pursued, with a view to eradicating the cause of illiteracy due to the fact that children are without school education.

III. WITH REGARD TO THE CORRESPONDING LEGISLATION

1. Literacy work and adult education plans be expressly embodied in the laws of the nation as part of the national education plan and general development plan.
2. That, parallel to educational legislation, the necessary encouragement be given to adult education through collateral juridical measures relating to agrarian reform, supervised credit, formation of co-operatives, industrial promotion, advancement of labour, etc.;
3. That steps be taken to ensure that public and private bodies which assume responsibility for literacy work among their employees, adhere to the objectives and norms of the corresponding ministerial bodies in order to facilitate co-ordination of activities and avoid dissipation and duplication of efforts, and interference with them.

IV. WITH REGARD TO ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL ORGANIZATION

1. That the agency directing adult education be dependent on the Ministry of Education, at a level of authority corresponding with the highest level of management in educational administration;
2. That in order to carry out the programme, the organizational structure should make provision for the following functions: management; research and planning; personnel training; production of materials; supervision; evaluation; administration; extension; follow-up;
3. That in accordance with the legislation and the needs of each country, national departmental and local co-ordination boards or councils be established, comprising representatives of official agencies, institutions, organizations and public-spirited forces;
4. That the assistance of various educational institutions (schools, community farms, school groups and others), production enterprises, co-operatives and organizations for economic and social advancement be enlisted in conducting functional literacy work and adult education.

V. WITH REGARD TO STAFF

1. That staff training for literacy work and adult education be carried out at various levels depending on the needs and resources of each country, through the training of literacy teachers and the training of volunteers and temporary staff. For these tasks the participation of all teaching and service institutions will be sought;
2. That at the national level, staff training should be done in teacher-training schools, which should include adult education in their curricula; in the universities, with research, training of specialists and the collaboration of student volunteers; and at teaching institutions of the intermediate or higher level;
3. That the Ministries of Education adopt the following measures among others: remuneration of adult education personnel in accordance with their training, duties and performance, with

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entitlement to the corresponding salary scales; establishment of the career of adult educator and provision of better opportunities to those who have completed national or international training courses for applying the knowledge acquired;

4. That in those countries where adult educators are not yet organized, associations of a technical nature be founded, and that those associations take steps to form an inter-American federation.

VI. WITH REGARD TO THE EDUCATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

1. That in national adult education programmes, special attention be paid to the indigenous populations that do not know the official language, to ensure that they are included in any development process;
2. That the vernacular language of those peoples be used in the initial stage of adult education, as far as the educational system of the particular country permits, proceeding thereafter to the national language without thereby establishing a principle of abandoning those vernacular languages rich in thousands of years of traditions and culture;
3. That necessary steps be taken to carry out the requisite anthropological and linguistic studies in accordance with the objectives of each programme;
4. That the teachers for an adult education programme be chosen by preference from within the same cultural group in which the programme is to be carried out.

VII. WITH REGARD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ADULT EDUCATION COSTS

1. That in formulating adult education programmes, all the components of an adult education programme that make it possible to analyse real costs be determined, taking into account that adult education should be integrated with economic and social development programmes.
2. That the programme budget method be used as the basic procedure, supplemented by the method of project analysis, the latter being recommended to facilitate co-ordination of programme implementation through the adequate distribution of financial burdens, the co-ordination of budget expenditure at the different governmental levels and the agency level in general by determining the most advisable financial method; and the co-ordination of public budgets as an instrument designed to encourage initiative through subsidies, financial grants, etc.;
3. That adequate measures be taken to reduce costs by concentrating on resources, e. g. by the establishment of regional technical centres for the production of teaching materials, and through economies that will enable more systematic use to be made of existing resources such as premises, the co-operation of volunteers of various kinds of members of the armed forces and of other organizations which are duly qualified to assist in literacy and adult education programmes, and so forth.

VIII. WITH REGARD TO SOURCES OF FINANCING

1. That in education budgets, larger amounts be earmarked for literacy work and adult education, and that provision be made for a steady and regular increase in those amounts;
2. That funds be obtained from the most varied public and private sources, that their use be controlled, and that in this way the percentage of the national income earmarked for literacy work and adult education be increased;

3. That a legally determined percentage of the resources to be invested in development programmes by public undertakings and especially by private concerns be earmarked for adult education;
4. That in those countries where it is necessary, tax reform measures be taken in order that the revenue collected may enable the governments to meet public expenditure, including the sums required for education in general and adult education in particular;
5. That the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean persist in their efforts to obtain reasonable and stable prices for their exportable raw materials, which constitute their main source of income, so as to be able to finance development including the education of those who help to achieve it from their own resources;
6. That without prejudice to the measures previously recommended, which are designed to provide adult education programmes with a sound financial basis, the countries adopt such supplementary measures as they deem best suited to their own specific conditions;
7. That international financial assistance, whether bilateral or multilateral, be co-ordinated and integrated with the plans of the respective governments and take account of this new approach that enables adult education to be seen as an investment producing an early increase in production and consumption alike.

IX. WITH REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The Conference recommends

1. That the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean intensify their mutual co-operation in this field, strengthen their solidarity with a view to concerting their efforts, and make the utmost use of the advisory services of those Latin American countries that are in a position to offer them;
2. That the countries of the region, particularly contiguous countries, and those which have common linguistic situations, co-ordinate their literacy plans, and support one another in their adult education efforts, making ever increasing use of the collaboration of bodies specializing in indigenous questions;
3. That international organizations and regional bodies, especially ECLA, OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, CREFAL, ILCE and IABE, give ever greater support to national literacy and adult education efforts;
4. That the Adult Education Centres of Venezuela and Ecuador, CREFAL and ILCE, give effect to the agreements made at their co-ordination meetings;
5. That Unesco continue, with the co-operation of other United Nations agencies and with the United Nations Development Programme, to assist the Member States, study the positive experiences of the Latin American countries, strengthen its Experimental Literacy Programme, increase the number of projects in this programme, and contribute to a satisfactory exchange of such experiences between the countries of the region, and between them and the other countries of the world;
6. That the Director-General of Unesco be invited to submit the present recommendations to the forthcoming Conference of Ministers of Education and Planning scheduled to meet in Buenos Aires from 20 to 30 June 1966, and that it be requested to consider and adopt this document;

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7. That the forthcoming Conference of Ministers of Education and Planning convened by Unesco and ECLA, to be held in the city of Buenos Aires, be requested:
To adopt and support these recommendations of the Regional Conference on the Planning and Organization of Literacy Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean;
To take into account these recommendations in framing the overall national and regional education development policy;
To adopt decisions and measures specially designed to:
 - (a) Establish priorities and targets in adult education and design the strategy for carrying out the respective programmes;
 - (b) Diversify the sources of financing that can be used for this purpose and evaluate the resources now being used and the costs entailed;
 - (c) Review the structure of education and the technical and administrative organization of adult education to adapt it to new demands;
 - (d) Carry out intensive action in the field of training at home and abroad of the various types of staff required;
 - (e) Endeavour to intensify the co-operation of international agencies and bilateral assistance for the development of adult education programmes and seek to use and co-ordinate this aid in the best possible manner.

8. That the Conference on Adult Education which is to meet in Lima (Peru) next December be invited to study the present recommendations.