Concept Note

“Towards a world without walls: global citizenship education in the SDG 4 – E2030 Agenda”

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Network Meeting on Global Citizenship Education

Santiago, Chile, 23-24 October 2017
1. Presentation

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO Santiago) and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), in collaboration with the University of Chile’s Chilean Observatory of Educational Policies (OPECH), are organizing the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Network Meeting on Global Citizenship Education; “Towards a world without walls: global citizenship education in the SDG 4 – E2030 Agenda” on October 23-24, 2017 in Santiago, Chile.

Introduction: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Education 2030

1. In September 2015, with the end of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), all 193 United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development after two years of intense negotiations and consultation processes with broad participation of civil society and other key stakeholders. The agenda, titled “Transforming Our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” aims to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, protect the environment and ensure prosperity for all through the achievement of 17 interconnected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Accompanying the goals there are 169 “aspirational and global” targets to reach by 2030. While guided by a global level of ambition, each government sets its own targets and decides on how to reach them according to national circumstances. It is therefore an agenda “of the people, by the people and for the people”.

2. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) focuses exclusively on education. Emerging as a stand-alone goal reflects the centrality education has in the realization of the other SDGs. The goal aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” and is composed of seven targets and three means of implementation.

3. The adoption of the Incheon Declaration for Education in May of 2015 constituted “the commitment of the education community to SDG4-Education 2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. Subsequently, the Education 2030 Framework for Action, adopted at UNESCOs’ General Conference in November 2015, provides guidance to governments and education partners on how to turn SDG4-Education 2030 commitments into action at country, regional and global levels.

4. As mentioned, many of the global commitments require contextualization so that they reflect regional and national education priorities. In an effort to regionalize the SDG 4 – E2030 Agenda to the Latin America and the Caribbean region, UNESCO Santiago together with the Ministry of Education and Sports of Argentina organized the Regional Meeting of Education Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean in January 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. At that meeting, LAC Ministers of Education reaffirmed their commitment to
SDG 4 – E2030 with the adoption of the Buenos Aires Declaration. The Declaration takes stock of the region’s main educational challenges, spells out guiding principles and strategic objectives for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 – E2030 in the region and provides action-orientated guidance to Member States and the education community.

Vision, rationale and principles: the role of Global Citizenship Education in the SDG 4 - E2030 Agenda

5. No other education target captures the transformative ambitions of the SDG Agenda as target 4.7 and makes the links with the other SDGs so explicitly. It says:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

Target 4.7 introduces global citizenship education (GCED), sustainable development education and other related topics. It emphasizes the social, humanistic and moral purposes of education and puts into evidence that education is expected to contribute not only to the fulfilling of individual and national aspirations, but also to making the world a better place for humanity.

6. GCED became a UNESCO priority when the UN Secretary-General launched the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) in 2012. Since then, there have been a series of global events and efforts to “clarify the conceptual underpinnings of global citizenship education and provide policy and programmatic direction” for Member States. In September 2013, there was the Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education, and this was followed by the First, Second and Third UNESCO Fora on Global Citizenship Education on December 2013, January 2015 and March 2017 respectively. While these have resulted in pedagogical guides and reports grounded on research and consultations with diverse experts worldwide, there is a lack of consensus as to how to best approach global citizenship education in the face of rising inequality, weak institutions and safety nets, globalization, and complex regional, national and local contexts. In addition, assessing GCED is a challenge because establishing indicators and ways of measuring the learning of non-cognitive skills that are associated with GCED such as values, attitudes, motivations, and social competencies, is very difficult.

The development of citizenship identity is complicated. It has been inconsistent, often exclusive and inaccessible to the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society, including indigenous and afro-descendant communities, women, children and the poor. UNESCO defines global citizenship as “a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity,” and which “emphasizes political, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global.” Target 4.7 highlights the importance of Global Citizenship Education and other related key thematic
areas, such as human rights, intercultural education, and education for sustainable development. GCED functions on different levels and has varied ramifications on policy and curricula, as well as the process of teaching and learning, but its strength lies in its holistic and transformative powers and its ability to build the “knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world.” However, there is still a necessity to ensure that GCED is well implemented, contextualized and accessible to individuals who lack the mobility and “privilege to act without great concern for retaliation” and oppression.

7. Commitment of actors around the world to promote Global Citizenship Education has contributed highly in the development of GCED, including raising awareness and catalyzing action. Target 4.7 captures the clear call for an education that addresses the needs of the twenty-first century, empowering learners to act towards a more peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable world. GCED reflects the aim of the SDG 4 – E2030 and is an integral part of its accomplishment. In various global and regional events, stakeholders across the spectrum have identified the tasks needed to develop GCED, both at the conceptual and implementation levels. For instance, the Regional Workshop on Guidance and Capacity Building on Global Citizenship Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in September 2015 in Santiago, Chile, brought together representatives from government, academic community, civil society and international agencies. The purpose was to identify the needs, challenges and possible actions and strategies for the effective integration of GCED in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region. One thing that came out of the regional GCED workshop was the understanding that GCED required further contextualization to LAC realities, which involved a better comprehension of citizenship building at the local, national and regional levels.

The meeting also resulted in a list of priorities and a plan of action for GCED in the LAC region. Some of the actions included: facilitating dialogue and exchange of regional experiences, creating and fortifying networks for the incorporation and implementation of GCED, and the mapping out of policies, programs, actors and institutions relevant to GCED in LAC.

Objectives of the meeting

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Network Meeting on Global Citizenship Education aims to advance GCED in the region and build on the work started at the first Regional Workshop on Guidance and Capacity Building on Global Citizenship Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in September 2015 in Santiago, Chile. The objectives this time around are to **consolidate a regional network** for Global Citizenship Education for Latin America and the Caribbean and to **advance the dialogue and development of the concept** taking into account the particularities and context specific differences within the region.

The goal is to solidify national, regional and global action on GCED. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO) and the Asia-
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Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) are calling on partners in the field of GCED in Latin America and the Caribbean to form a regional network with the following goals:

- Strengthen delivery mechanisms of GCED programmes towards improving impact within the region, ensuring inclusive participation of stakeholders
- Improve the scope and outreach of GCED programmes within the region, addressing the priorities and needs of different sub-regions and groups
- Catalyze political engagement and leadership to ensure commitment of stakeholders

The formation of a regional network for GCED comes at an important time of moving forward the agenda set by the SDGs. The aim is to strengthen the existing GCED and GCED-related initiatives of different partner organizations within the region through partnership, exploring possible synergies and solidifying region-wide action for GCED. The Network will compose of partners who are committed and have expertise in GCED and issues pertaining thereof, capacity to bring forth activities to spread awareness on GCED, and willingness to engage with stakeholders within the region.

**Conceptual Topics**

The meeting will generate debate and dialogue on the following topics in order to produce a common understanding of the contexts, challenges, and strategies for the implementation of GCED in LAC.

- Regional, national, local GCED contexts in LAC: Hidden and Excluded Citizenships.
  - The hidden others of global citizenship: Afro-descendants, indigenous, rural, migrants, children, women, displaced populations, and people living in precarious conditions.
- Regional, national, local GCED Contexts in LAC: Emerging Citizenships.
  - Social movements: women and youth.
- Peace, Education and Citizenship: The role of education systems & pedagogical strategies.
  - The role of formal, informal and non-formal education, spaces and pedagogies in the construction of a just, peaceful and more inclusive society.
- The relevance of global, regional and local measurements, evaluations and indicators of GCED.

**Expected results**

- The development of the Global Citizenship Education concept positioned within the regional context.
- The formation and consolidation of a LAC GCED network as part of the regional cooperation agenda.
• Defining GCED Network activities and joint actions for 2017 – 2018: articulation of the network’s role, functions and responsibilities, including a 2017-2018 roadmap with clear activities for each network member.

• The promotion of partnerships, cooperation, collaboration, dialogue and exchange of expertise, knowledge and practices among actors from civil society organizations, academic/research institutions and authorities from the region.

Participants

Approximately 45 representatives, ranging from members of civil society organizations, academic/research institutions and authorities from the region will be gathering to develop strategies towards the scaling-up of efforts in the global promotion of GCED.

Methodology

The meeting will take place in the city of Santiago on October 23 and 24, 2017. The meeting will include presentations, group discussion and a series of roundtables on the concept of GCED and the implementation of SDG 4 Target 4.7 in Latin America and the Caribbean. Participants will contribute to thematic discussions facilitated by a moderator. The first day will function at the conceptual level, grounding GCED in the varied contexts of LAC. The second day will function at the implementation level; deliberations will entail practical participatory and interactive work where participants will discuss strategies, formulate recommendations and map out the activities and goals of the regional network for GCED.

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1 UNESCO. 2015. GCED Topics & Learning Objectives. pp.7
2 UNESCO. 2015. GCED Topics & Learning Objective. pp.14
3 UNESCO. 2015. GCED Topics & Learning Objectives. pp.15