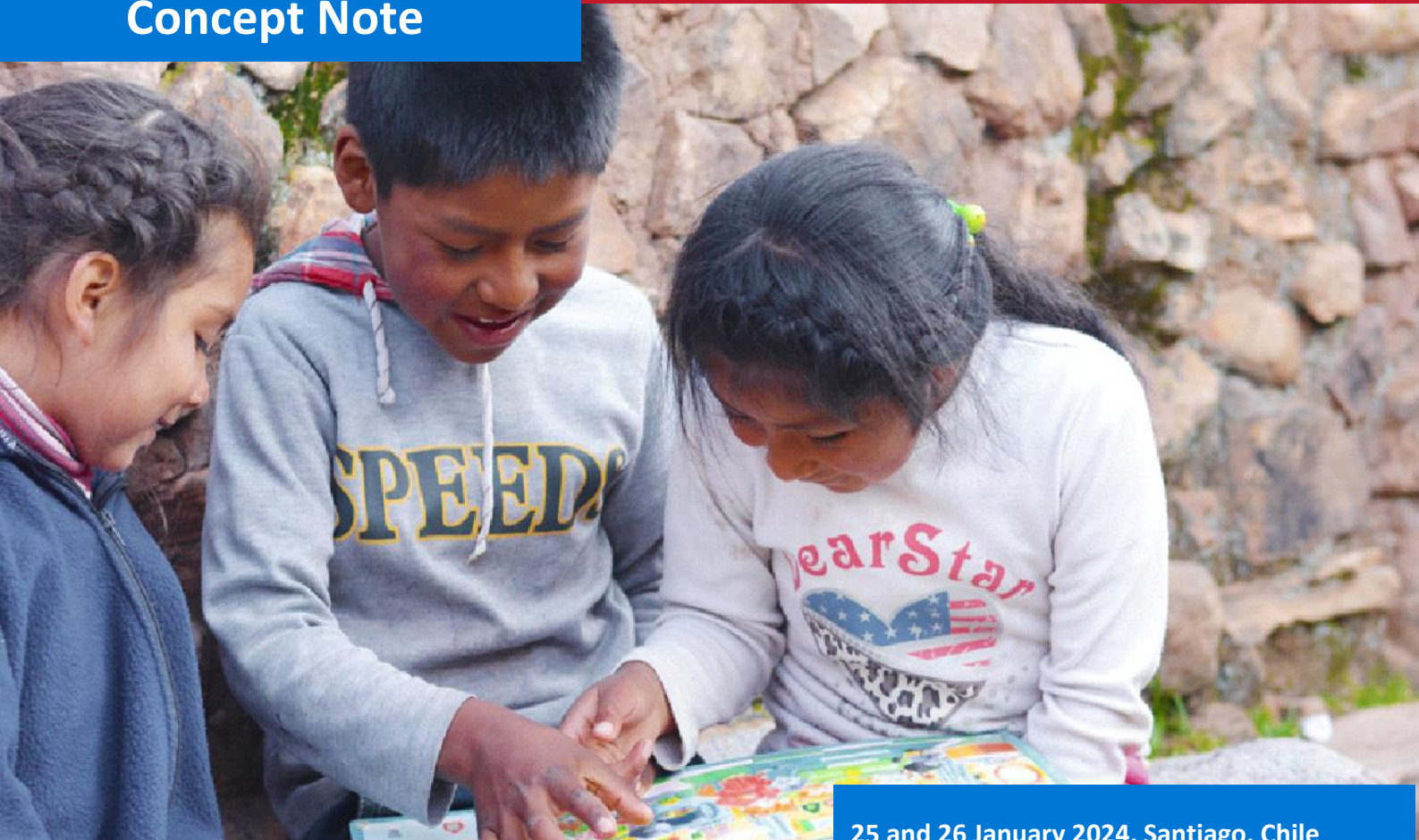


# SANTIAGO 2024 - MINISTERIAL MEETING OF EDUCATION

## Concept Note



25 and 26 January 2024, Santiago, Chile

## **Extraordinary Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean, "Towards a regional framework for educational reactivation, recovery and transformation" (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF CHILE, UNESCO, CAF, CEPAL y UNICEF)**

The Extraordinary Meeting of Ministers of Education Latin America and the Caribbean (*Santiago 2024 - Ministerial of Education*), will take place on January 25-26, 2024, in Santiago de Chile, in the premises of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). This meeting will convene the high authorities of the region in education to address and exchange policy experiences and advance in the development of a *regional framework for educational reactivation, recovery and transformation policies*.

This initiative responds to the regional educational context marked by structural and systemic aspects, as well as conjunctural, that demand to deepen joint efforts and advance in educational integration processes, leveraging the trajectory of more than 60 years of regional cooperation and multilateralism in the field of education in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

According to the *First Regional Monitoring Report of SDG4 "The crossroads of education in Latin America and the Caribbean"<sup>1</sup>*, prepared by OREALC/UNESCO Santiago, the UNICEF Regional Office (LACRO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), many indicators such as access, coverage and completion, which had been progressing at a very important pace since the beginning of this century, show signs of slowing down<sup>2</sup>.

One of the most complex findings of this report is the stagnation in learning achievements at regional level. When comparing the latest results of UNESCO's Latin American Laboratory for Quality Assessment ERCE 2019 study with the previous one, it appears that the region failed to improve in the areas of reading, mathematics and science, remaining at unsatisfactory levels of achievement. In secondary education, for the ten Latin American countries participating in PISA, in 2018, the results also show that the average of the region in the three areas evaluated did not vary with respect to the previous measurement in 2015. Again, the percentages of students who reach minimum proficiency levels in reading (51%), math (37%) and science (48%) are low.

The fulfillment of SDG4 by 2030 was not secured before the pandemic and since then educational inequalities were exacerbated and the right to education of the most vulnerable limited. The region experienced the longest disruption of face-to-face education in the world. Between February 2020 and March 2022, schools were completely closed for 33 weeks and partially closed for 37 weeks, affecting more than 170 million students and their families.

Before this massive school closure, the percentage of the population that did not have access to primary and secondary education in Latin America and the Caribbean was estimated at 10.4 million children and young people. The effects of the pandemic add greater fragility to trajectories and projected increases in disengagement and educational abandonment, an effect that has been hidden during the years in which

<sup>1</sup> Presented in September 2022.

<sup>2</sup> While, in the five-year period from 2010 to 2015, the secondary school completion rate increased by about 6 percentage points, in the following five-year period, 2015-2020, this increase was three times lower.

education was organized in remote and hybrid formats and that, now, begins to become more evident with the normalization of presential classes.

In view of this reality, Latin American countries are working with a sense of urgency on educational recovery and overcoming the gaps that were deepened by the pandemic. At the same time, they are undertaking an important effort to adapt to the process of educational transformation demanded by the current context.

Furthermore, LAC has developed the Regional Coordination Mechanism for SDG 4, a technical-political dialogue strategy that aims to deepen educational cooperation efforts that support countries on their way to achieving the SDG 4 targets. This mechanism, established in 2018, is led by the 33 ministers of education of the region and supported by the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) and OREALC/UNESCO Santiago as Executive Secretariat. The RSC is composed of eleven Member States, representatives of the sub-regions of South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and nine regional organizations working in the field of education (OEI, OAS, CECC-SICA, CARICOM, CLADE, Education International and UNICEF).

The *Santiago 2024 Ministerial of Education* is part of an active, participatory and dynamic multilateral initiative that has defined the commitments of recovery and educational transformation in the [2022 Declaration of Buenos Aires](#)<sup>3</sup> to accelerate the achievement of the SDG4, and mobilized the participation of the region in the [Transforming Education Summit \(TES\)](#)<sup>4</sup> convened by the United Nations. The TES visualized efforts to overcome the education crisis derived from the pandemic and reimagine the education systems of the future. It allowed as well renewing the global commitment to education as a public good, through the mobilization of action and searching for common solutions within the framework of existing commitments.

In this goal of moving "**from commitments to action**" and leveraging the great social mobilization generated by TES, the regional coordination mechanism of SDG4, proposes in its Work Plan 2022 -2025<sup>5</sup> the *Santiago 2024 Ministerial of Education* as a milestone of political and technical dialogue.

At this meeting, the ministers will share best practices, progress, strengths, opportunities, challenges, difficulties and setbacks in the field of public policies. They will also exchange ideas on innovative approaches and **how to design and implement effective policies to recover and transform education**, both of which have been identified **as accelerators of SDG 4**, taking education financing as an enabling condition around which it is important to discuss and identify good practices.

Given that more than 30% of the countries in the region still fail to meet the 4% of GDP target for education spending, and fifteen countries have reduced their public spending on education since 2015, education cooperation efforts are even more crucial and urgently needed. As such, this invitation is

---

<sup>3</sup>The objectives of educational recovery and transformation were established in the [2022 Declaration of Buenos Aires](#), which was endorsed at the [III Regional Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean](#), held in May 2022 in Buenos Aires, in preparation for the TES.

<sup>4</sup>In preparation for the TES, 20 LAC countries developed national consultation processes on how to transform their education systems, 18 Member States participated in the Pre-Summit in Paris from June 28 to 30, 2022 and 20 Member States participated in the Summit in September 2022 in New York.

<sup>5</sup>The 2022 – 2025 Work Plan was reviewed at the [Regional Steering Committee Meeting](#) on May 15 and 16 (Patzcuaro, Mexico), and approved by 15 votes in favor on August 1, 2023. This Committee meeting at Patzcuaro took place in preparation for the *Santiago 2024 Ministerial Meeting*.

addressed to the ministers of finance with the aim of promoting a comprehensive and well-balanced dialogue with the ministries of education of the region, in line with the discussions held at the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Spring 2023 meetings regarding the need to prioritize, increase and improve the financing of education as a fundamental condition for the recovery and acceleration of learning. To this extent, they will seek to advance in the development of a regional framework for the implementation of public policies for educational recovery and transformation.

This meeting is convened by the Ministry of Education of Chile and UNESCO, and co-organized with the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF), World Bank, ECLAC, and UNICEF.

This call takes on special relevance due the 70th anniversary of Chile's entry into UNESCO and Chile's re-entry into CAF. This initiative will influence 33 Ministries of Education serving approximately 1.25 million students and 6.9 million teachers<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, it will allow progress in the definition of public policies aimed at the reintegration and integration of 12 million children and adolescents who are currently excluded from the formal education system.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, this event will count with the collaboration of the Chilean national television (TVN) and JC DECAUX with which UNESCO will reach more than 46 million viewers<sup>8</sup> and be present in 13 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>9</sup>

## General objective

Advance in the development of a regional framework for the implementation of educational reactivation, recovery and transformation policies.

## Specific objectives

- Exchange good practices and learn about the progress made in the countries of the region around educational reactivation, recovery and transformation.
- Identify and discuss basic guidelines to develop a *regional framework for the implementation of public policies for educational reactivation, recovery and transformation*, distinguishing areas of opportunity and pending challenges
- Identify opportunities for regional and sub-regional cooperation and joint initiatives to accelerate educational reactivation, recovery and transformation.
- Establish a permanent and systematic mechanism for the exchange of experiences at the regional level around the *regional framework for the implementation of public policies for educational reactivation, recovery and transformation*.

## Methodological proposal

---

<sup>6</sup> UIS 2020.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/node/11716>

<sup>8</sup> Through its national, international and Internet platforms, TVN reaches 98% of Chile's population and 20 million of subscribers.

<sup>9</sup> JC DECAUX has 540,000 advertising furniture that they make available to UNESCO in the region at specific times. Countries: Chile, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru and Paraguay .

Three sessions are proposed: 1. Education financing, 2. Educational Reactivation and Recovery, 3. Educational Transformation. The first one seeks to address the financing of education, one of the enabling and essential elements for educational recovery and transformation. Moreover, this session represents a first milestone on balanced dialogue between ministers of education and finance, providing guidelines or recommendations that enable mutual understanding between management approaches and objectives, which, although different, seek the same goal of development and welfare.

Then, the educational reactivation and recovery session will address strategies, policies and programs in place to improve fundamental learning, school re-entry, socio-emotional well-being and other dimensions being developed by countries to overcome the resulting health emergency crisis.

Nonetheless, as evidenced in several studies, progress cannot be made within an inadequate mechanism that does not guarantee the achievement of SDG 4 targets. Education systems must be transformed in order to achieve quality, inclusive and equitable lifelong education. In this regard, the third session proposes to delve deeper into strategies, policies and programs to support teachers, educational innovation and digital learning as drivers of educational transformation.

Each session would be developed in three moments:

- a. ***Inputs for discussion:*** Moment in which strong ideas, data and evidence will be presented, in a quick and summarized way, in order to contextualize and focus the ministers' discussion on the proposed topic.
- b. ***Minister's roundtables:*** Ministers will discuss key issues, challenges and opportunities related to the actions they are implementing to finance, reactivate, recover and transform education. This dialogue will emphasize on the expected and actual outcomes they are achieving. In addition, they will identify the **key principles and linking factors** to achieve effective and relevant policies for financing, reactivating, recovering and transforming education in the region. These elements will be included as conclusions in each session as a key input to further develop a *regional framework on educational reactivation, recovery, and transformation policies*.
- c. ***Educational exhibition:*** Sharing experiences and best practices of the countries in educational reactivation, recovery and transformation. During the months prior to the meeting, an identification and selection process of good practices will be carried out, so countries can display their experiences in at least one of the sessions of the ministerial meeting. Then, by using audiovisual and multimedia resources and backed by a structured guideline, the experiences will be presented in stands with information on the implementation, achievements, critical points, and challenges of the selected initiatives.

Finally, the *Santiago 2024 - Ministerial of Education* will hold a session to integrate the conclusions of the three previous sessions to develop a regional framework on public policies for educational reactivation, recovery and transformation. In addition, the Declaration of the Extraordinary Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean will be agreed upon.

Along with the development of the main sessions on financing, reactivation and recovery, and transformation the *Santiago 2024 - Ministerial of Education* will offer parallel initiatives such as **preparatory meetings and side events** to contribute in conceptualizing, extending and deepening each

of the three themes of the meeting. These initiatives will rely on the contribution of the different organizations and stakeholders working in education in the region.

Through a focused thematic approach, preparatory meetings and side events will provide an opportunity to share research, innovations, national challenges, and best practices, while promoting dialogue and collaboration in areas of particular interest. These activities may include presentations, discussions, workshops and other activities that allow participants to explore key issues and engage with regional stakeholders and partners. More information can be found in the document "Guidelines on Parallel Initiatives, Santiago 2024 - Ministerial of Education".