

LLECE Up-to-Date

Newsletter for the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment Of Quality of Education

September 2011

Editorial

As we share with you our third issue of LLECE up-to-date, we're beginning to think that this newsletter may be here to stay. Last month, again, was a month of changes, but also a month of exciting developments. For example, the high-level technical advisory board was formed, which is composed of renowned experts from across the region and the globe. In this issue, we present them and tell you about our first meeting. Furthermore, we welcome a new Project Leader of our implementation partner MIDE UC, Daniela Jiménez, our new Programme Assistant, Roxana Riveros, and a new column: *focus on*. In it, we intend to interview a National Coordinator every month. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

World class advice for the Third Study



At the XXVIIth meeting of the General Assembly of National Coordinators of the Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE), the General Assembly asked the Coordinator of LLECE to set up a High-Level Technical Advisory Board (CTAN) for the *Laboratorio's* Third Study (TERCE). This Board should meet as soon as possible, as the period up to September was identified as a unique window of opportunity, given that the study is in a strategically important phase, where key decisions about its design have to be taken.

Consequently, on 10 and 11 September, the opening meeting took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, with the kind support of the National Coordinator of Uruguay, Dr Andrés Peri. Three out of four members of the CTAN, which were elected by the General Assembly, attended the meeting: Dr Felipe Martínez Rizo (University of Aguas Calientes), Dr Wolfram Schulz (ACER) and Dr Eugenio González (ETS / IEA).

The fourth member, Dr Martin Carnoy (University of Stanford, United States), participated in part of the meeting through Skype. Furthermore, the NCs of Uruguay and Perú (Ms. Liliana Miranda) attended in representation of the GA, as well as the Laboratory's Senior Advisor, Dr Ernesto Treviño and the Coordinator, Mr. Moritz Bilagher.

The meeting, which focused on two major themes, led to crucial input into the Strategic Plan of TERCE as well as the studies of factors associated with learning outcomes. Furthermore, the sampling strategy and an 'add-on' module concerning the impact of use of ICT on learning were discussed. The meeting was considered a success by all participants, and concrete recommendations will be sent out soon, for discussion by the GA.

For more information see: http://portal.unesco.org/geography/es/ev.php-URL_ID=14603&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

The New Chief of the MIDE UC Project: Daniela Jiménez



Tell us a little about yourself. What country / city are you from? Where did you study? What did you do before working for this Project?

I'm originally from Valdivia, in the south of Chile, and I moved to Santiago when I began studying Psychology at the *Universidad Católica*. I've just recently returned to Chile after studying for 3 years in Germany, completing my PhD in Education. Previously, I worked with the Chilean teacher evaluation system, specifically in building evaluation instruments.

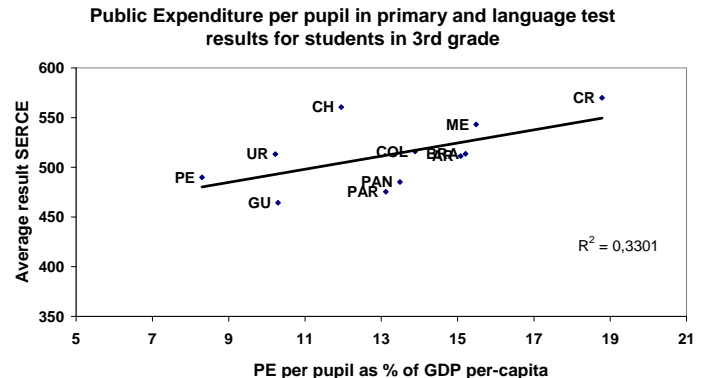
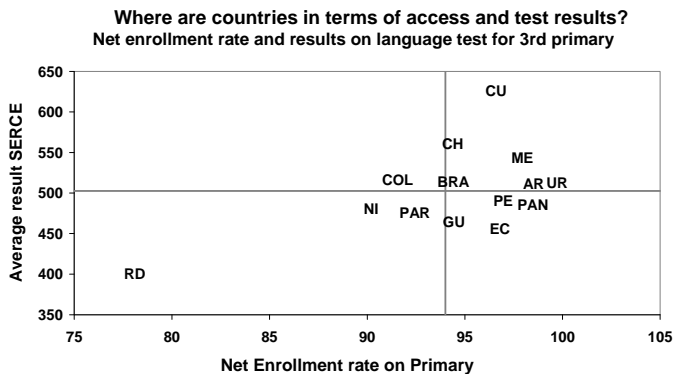
What are your expectations of your work on this Project?

To be able to contribute to the optimal development of the project, because it is a valuable source of information that can guide future educational policies in the region.

Do you have specific objectives you would like to achieve during your tenure as Chief?

Since our main area of work is the construction of tests and questionnaires for TERCE, there already exists a main focus to generate high-quality instruments, as well as the necessary methods so that the implementation is a success.

SERCE shows that investment in Education is related to Achievement



Public expenditure in education is a policy tool which may be targeted at increasing access to education or improvement of its quality. With this basic idea in mind, the new Technical Assistant of the LLECE, Mauricio Holz, re-analysed some of the SERCE data and created the graphs above.

As we can see in the graph on left, which juxtaposes net enrolment in primary education against SERCE results (a proxy measure of quality of education), we see that we can classify most countries in one of four quadrants: countries with a low enrolment but high quality (only Colombia); low enrolment and low quality (Nicaragua and Paraguay); high enrolment but low quality (Ecuador, Peru, Panama and Guatemala) and six countries with relatively high enrolment and high quality: Chile, Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Uruguay. The Dominican Republic is an outlier.

As countries in the region advance towards universal primary enrolment (the current regional rate is just above 95%), quality will take an ever more important position. As we can see in the graph on the right, which shows average scores in SERCE with respect to expenditures on primary education, the variables seem to be correlated. That is to say, in general, the more a country spends on education, the higher its results in SERCE are and, consequently, the better the quality of education is.

Four Questions for the LLECE National Coordinator of Costa Rica: Felix Barrantes Ureña

How long has Costa Rica been a member of LLECE?

Beginning in 2006, Costa Rica became a full member of LLECE, as to participate in the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE).

Could you describe the current educational assessment landscape in your country and explain its focus?

Educational assessment falls within two divisions: the Department of Learning Assessment (classroom evaluation) and in the Directorate of Management and Evaluation, which in turn has a section divided into two departments: Quality Assessment and Academic Assessment and Certification.

The classroom evaluation is guided by an Assessment Regulation to which all institutions and disciplines are bound. Classroom-based assessment is guided by Assessment Regulations of a binding character for all institutions and modalities. The Department of Quality Assessment is responsible for the evaluation of educational management.

The Department of Academic Assessment and Certification is responsible for carrying out diagnostic national evaluations (every three years), in the second and third cycle of basic, general education. This department also administers the certified evaluations for formal and non-formal education. In formal education, they create certification exams for those interested in obtaining a Bachelor in Secondary Education. In non-formal education they create exams for those who wish to obtain qualifications in the II and III cycles of the General, Basic Education, a Bachelor in Secondary Education, “High School Certificate for Experience” and the “High School Certificate for Long Distance Education”. These departments also administer the International assessments of PISA and LLECE (TERCE).

How have activities within the framework of LLECE helped to improve educational assessment in Costa Rica?

The results obtained as a result of Costa Rica’s participation and collaboration with LLECE is now incorporated in the diagnostic evaluations that are being implemented in our country. For example, the questionnaires on factors associated with academic achievement were very useful in informing the design of our own data collection instruments.

The reports on SERCE results served as both a theoretical reference and as a pertinent source to refer to in interpreting the results of the Costa Rican diagnostic exams of the II and III cycles as well as for the preparation and structure of the reports on the results of the national diagnostic exams.

How can LLECE help Costa Rica strengthen and develop its capacities for educational evaluations?

Costa Rica’s technical capacity has been strengthened as a result of the national team’s participation in the SERCE and TERCE exams. This has been achieved by means of a permanent coordination with the LLECE staff members as well as with the participation in workshops and technical meetings that have taken place in different countries in Latin America. It is necessary to continue

with this type of support from LLECE. In Costa Rica, we implement exams with a diagnostic approach, with the objective of certification and, beginning in 2012, we plan to implement competency-based assessment.

A New Face in the Office: Programme Assistant Roxana Riveros Carreño



My name is Roxana Riveros Carreño, I'm married and I live in Providencia. However my family is from San Fernando, in the VIth Region. I studied to be a secretary at the John Kennedy Institute and later I studied English at Manpower. Prior to this position, I worked for three years as the managing secretary for a well-known construction company here in Santiago. I joined the Planning, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in September as an Assistant, working directly for LLECE, an area in which each day the work becomes increasingly more dynamic and I realize how team work is an indispensable aspect of the job. I have been fortunate and I am very proud to have joined this great organization, and I hope to give the best of myself and

to contribute to the work of UNESCO.

This month's activities:

- Meeting of the high-level technical advisory board (CTAN)
- Meeting on 'The right to a quality education for all in LAC' in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
- Finalisation of first version of the framework for associated factors
- Finalisation of the first version of item database, for review
- Development of the National Coordinators manual, sampling manuals
- Development of an strategic plan for TERCE

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the Technical Coordination of LLECE, which is part of the Section for Planning, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, and which is coordinated by the Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC) / UNESCO Santiago.

For further information or if you have any suggestion, please contact:

Mrs. Roxana Riveros
Email: r.riveros@uneso.org
Tel.: +56-2-4724659
Website: <http://www.llece.org>