

Second Meeting of the Board of the Regional Intergovernmental Committee of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean - EFA/ PRELAC

Minutes

1. The Honourable Deputy Education Minister of Brazil, Mr. André Lazaro, officially inaugurated the Second Meeting of the Board of the Regional Intergovernmental Committee of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean - EFA/PRELAC on 25 November, 2010, in Rio de Janeiro. The Argentine Education Planning Undersecretary, Mr. Eduardo Aragundi, chaired the meeting, which was moderated by UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Mr. Qian Tang.
2. The Brazilian deputy minister thanked UNESCO for its efforts in contributing to the design of improved education policies and to building a common agenda, and highlighted the pertinence of such a meeting in cooperation with MERCOSUR and UNASUR, with participation by other sub-regional groups like the CECC/SICA and CARICOM. He underscored the progress that has been made in the region in terms of sovereignty, freedom, democracy and development, and the fundamental role that education has played in building these ideals, and in preventing setbacks in development.
3. The EFA/PRELAC chairmanship, represented by Mr. Miguel Vallone, made a call that the education situation in the region is to be seen within the framework of the EFA/PRELAC. He stated that there is significant convergence of policies and innovations in the region's educational processes; however income distribution and inequity are hindering progress and these issues must be addressed with the support of UNESCO, modifying the EFA/PRELAC to respond to these challenges. Lastly, he highlighted the work that OREALC does to coordinate the regional education agenda.
4. The Assistant Director-General for Education Mr. Qian Tang stated that UNESCO considers Latin America and the Caribbean to be a very significant region for strengthening cooperation, especially South-South cooperation. He called attention to the problem of marginalisation of disadvantaged groups and said that UNESCO is focussing its efforts on the quality of education, with emphasis on reinforcing the capacities of teachers and overcoming inequities. He highlighted regional initiatives in these areas, and the importance of the EFA/PRELAC as a policy platform to contribute to public policy decision-making and South-South cooperation.
5. UNESCO Santiago Director, Mr. Jorge Sequeira, put forward the role of the EFA/PRELAC Board as an instrument for strengthening and harmonising the region's political will in education. He emphasised the need to continue to join forces to overcome inequality in the region, the corollary of which is low quality education. He discussed the need to continue improving the management of the education systems, to pay special attention to secondary school desertion, and to work to strengthen the area of teachers in all of its dimensions. He called attention to the need to improve preparation and response to natural disasters, which

significantly affect educational achievements and progress. Lastly, he placed emphasis on the importance of furthering South-South Cooperation between the countries of the region, acknowledging the progress made and the knowledge that has been accumulated.

6. Next, the Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean presented the actions that the organization has undertaken in compliance with the recommendations of the First EFA/PRELAC Board Meeting.
7. The Santiago Office then presented the progress report on the workplan of the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education, LLECE, in developing the Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study, TERCE, and on the planning that they are undertaking to organise the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) that the Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC, will hold in 2011.
8. The Assistant Director-General for Education, Mr. Qian Tang presented the results and follow-up actions to the five World Summits organised by UNESCO between 2008 and 2010.
9. The Director of UNESCO Brasilia Office, Mr. Vincent Defourny, presented the office's joint planning with the UIS to develop and implement monitoring indicators as a follow-up to CONFINTEA VI.
10. UNESCO Santiago presented the report "The state of education in Latin America and the Caribbean", to conclude the first session.
11. In the afternoon session the representatives of the sub-regional organizations MERCOSUR, UNASUR and CARICOM presented their respective education priorities. The CECC/SICA representative sent a written report on their priorities. Therefore all of these associations were represented, with the aim of harmonising the region's agendas.
12. The meeting ended with the following conclusions and recommendations:
 - With regard to EFA/PRELAC, the following is requested of UNESCO:
 - a) having approved the terms of reference proposed by UNESCO, undertake both exercises for an evaluation and implementation of a communications strategy for the EFA/PRELAC
 - b) revitalise the EFA/PRELAC by reorienting its action i) with a defined workplan for the period 2012-2015 with achievable results and measurable impact, and ii) bearing in mind the post-2015 scenario, in harmony and synchronisation with the upcoming international commitments (MDGs, EFA, etc)
 - c) present at the 36th UNESCO General Conference, October 2011, and to the Ministers of the Intergovernmental Committee at their meeting in 2012, the progress achieved through the EFA/PRELAC to attain the EFA goals by 2015.
 - d) organise the meetings of the EFA/PRELAC Board every two years, as well as the thematic meetings. In this respect, the EFA/PRELAC will end in 2015.
 - e) the EFA/PRELAC to also foster technical-political forums for the exchange of ideas and experiences between Ministers; the setting up of a working group composed of policy-technical personnel, responsible for defining indicators to assess the quality of education systems in the region is also approved, the first

meeting of which will be held in Argentina during the regional ECOSOC meeting by the UNASUR countries and other guests.

- With regard to technical assistance for the design of public policies, the countries request UNESCO to:
 - a) consolidate actions under way in response to the recommendations proposed by the EFA/PRELAC Board in 2009
 - b) organise the next EFA/PRELAC technical meeting jointly with UNDESA in Argentina during the first half of April 2011, bearing in mind the ECOSOC meeting of July 2011
 - c) support the development of a system of indicators on literacy and adult education, combining the efforts of the institutions involved, as a direct follow-up to the Declaration stemming from the World Conference CONFINTEA VI, Brazil, December 2009
 - d) consider the possibility of leveraging international events to promote priorities of the educational agenda; in particular the Football World Cup (2014) and the Olympic Games (2016) in Brazil, to organise meetings of Heads of State to support education
 - e) continue efforts to incorporate information from regional sub-groups (CARICOM, UNASUR, MERCOSUR, CECC/SICA, etc.) in the region's educational analysis through a document that includes priorities and actions, with a view to harmonising agendas
 - f) prepare a working document underscoring education quality indicators, bearing in mind UNESCO's concept of quality of education
 - g) to consider inasmuch as possible national education targets when presenting studies on educational progress in a particular country
 - h) to consider the need to expand the articulation of agendas with the Ministries of Education, Social Welfare/Development and Health
 - The Member States of the EFA/PRELAC Board commit to:
 - a) fulfilling their EFA/PRELAC commitments and cooperating closely with UNESCO in actions that favour the achievement of EFA in the region, as much as is possible
 - b) furthering educational investment and education interventions as part of South-South Cooperation mechanisms, as well as innovative financing for education, in association with UNESCO and availing of its added value in terms of networks, information, international commitments, and technical capacity
- fostering coordination between the agencies working in education in the region