

PANEL 3

Education, Socioeconomic Status and Geographic Location

Here are some highlights of the analysis and recommendations of necessary education policies to improve inclusion based on the following factors of exclusion: social class and geographic location. The panel is made up of two authors of the background papers of the regional edition of the 2020 GEM Report: Carolina Kotovicz (whose case study focuses on Brazil) and Adriana Velásquez (whose case study has been centred on the Dominican Republic). Two regional experts complete the panel: Óscar Sanchez and Cristián Bellei, who will focus on recommending education policies from a regional perspective.

TOPIC 1: SOCIAL CLASS

PANEL OPENING

Education systems do not exist in a vacuum; they are shaped by the cultural and social patterns of the societies that sustain and create them. Gender, wealth, language, migration, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and other beliefs are some of the mechanisms that, in certain contexts, aggravate exclusion. It is essential to underline the effects that the socioeconomic gap has on the intergenerational reproduction of poverty. The fact that educational opportunities and achievements tend to be distributed based on the cultural, social and economic capital of students' families is the most consistent ascertainment made by the social sciences in regard to education. In Latin America, children and adolescents

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REMAINS THE MOST UNEQUAL REGION IN THE WORLD.

IN 21 COUNTRIES, THE RICHEST 20% ARE

ON AVERAGE, 5 TIMES

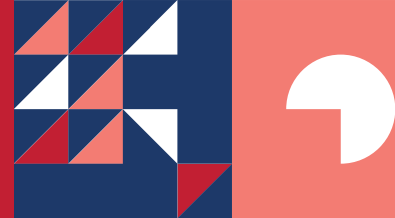
AS THE POOREST 20%

TO COMPLETE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL.

GEM-R LAC 2020.

PANEL 3

Education, Socioeconomics Status
and Geographic Location



IN THE CARIBBEAN

ONLY 4 OF 21
COUNTRIES

HAVE HAD A

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE
HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS
SINCE 2015

TO HELP DISAGGREGATE
EDUCATION INDICATORS
BY POVERTY.

GEMR LAC 2020.

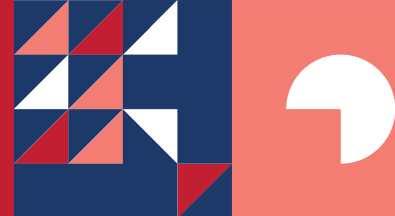
with the lowest income have five times fewer opportunities to finish school than those generating networks to influence public policies. It is highly advisable to take advantage of pedagogical practices that, despite not being systematised, serve as references for the institutionalisation of these types of equity initiatives within the framework of formal education from higher income families. In particular, initial education is a very important step in closing the socio-economic learning gap that marks individuals throughout their lives.

LAWS AND POLICIES

The policy agenda for educational equity should focus on:

- Education accessibility
- Conditions for teaching/learning
- Resources for teaching/learning
- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- School management, organisation and culture
- Time allotted to development and capacity-building—preschool (stimulation and integral development), basic education (literacy, fundamental cognitive, interpersonal and social skills) and secondary education (life projects, diversified skills, citizenship)

Likewise, it is necessary to promote universalist programmes and interventions, which guarantee not only access to but also the quality of learning, while addressing a deep understanding of the complexity of socio-educational inequity. The scale of the educational challenge that lies ahead of us spans multiple levels, as it involves students, classrooms, schools, the education system, and so on. In this regard, the experts' recommendation is that the problems be analysed and worked on in a comprehensive manner. The challenge is also multidimensional, since it involves material, social, cultural, political, pedagogical and curricular resources. Finally, it is longitudinal because it impacts the life cycle of people and the entire school trajectory (the educational experience itself is an increasingly relevant factor of subsequent educational opportunity).



- **Socio-educational programmes for school improvement:** The school as a unit, multidimensional work (resources, support, pedagogical innovation, educational management, school coexistence).
- **Breaking systemic barriers:** School desegregation, strengthening of public education, ending discrimination and selective logic.
- **The undeniable central role of teachers:** Training, working conditions, collective professionalism.
- **Beyond school:** Supporting a community-based approach, social policy, support centres and complementary training opportunities.

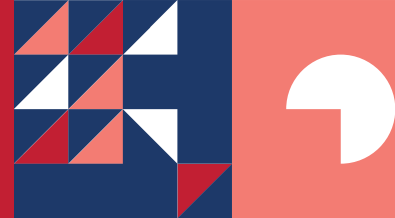
GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING

There is a direct relationship between quality of life and access to and continuity of education. Education has a transcendent role in upward social mobility. Equity and inclusion are essential promises of the 2030 Agenda. High levels of inequality persist. In particular, in the Dominican Republic, more than 40% of the school-age population (3 to 24 years) outside the education system belongs to the poorest sectors of society. Socio-economic status is a real barrier to formal education. Regardless of age, the poorest sectors have the lowest levels of school attendance.

Latin America and the Caribbean have made progress towards reducing poverty, but there is still a long way to go. There is still a need to redouble efforts on social and education policies. Lags in school attendance in the initial and higher education-age population are accompanied by the prevalence of socio-economic gaps in timely access to the school system.



A CAREFUL BALANCE BETWEEN COMMON AND DIFFERENTIATED SALARY SCALES IS NEEDED TO ENSURE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF GOOD TEACHERS. IN COLOMBIA, THERE IS A 15% BONUS ON THE BASIC SALARY FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WORKING AT REMOTE RURAL SCHOOLS



DATA SYSTEMS

In the Caribbean, only 4 out of 21 countries have had publicly available household survey data since 2015 to help disaggregate education indicators by poverty.

CURRICULUM, TEXTBOOKS AND ASSESSMENTS

Learning materials and curricula are intrinsically related to how cultural history is incorporated. Some of the authors of the 2020 GEM Report papers agree that the curriculum is sometimes discriminatory in itself. The recommended approach should be comprehensive and be supported by policies that take ownership for cultural diversity and the wealth of a nation, among other aspects.

SCHOOLS

The diagnosis is based on infrastructure and maintenance problems. In addition, among the context-based difficulties is the lack of connectivity in indigenous or rural schools and the high cost of educating a dispersed population in remote areas with low population density.

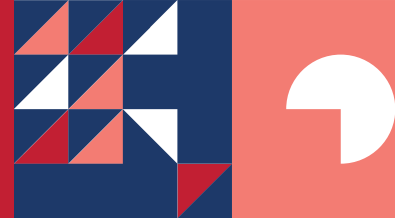
TEACHERS, MANAGERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Improving the performance of the teaching staff in schools with a higher number of disadvantaged students with lower achievement on learning exams implies a challenge—perhaps one of the main challenges which also relates to the equitable allocation of resources in Latin American societies.

STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

When poverty coexists with other types of vulnerability, disadvantages are reinforced. Alternative approaches to education can help guarantee the right to education in rural areas—elements such as community radio and educational television have made it possible to reach remote areas, although it has been difficult to reach the most marginalised groups. Community support has been critical.

With respect to the factors of exclusion that threaten education in contexts of political, armed, cultural and linguistic conflicts, specialists recommend investigating the epistemology, forms of socialisation and pedagogies of different minority groups to improve their understanding and broaden their perception to the entire population.



TOPIC 2: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

LAWS AND POLICIES

People living in rural areas represent 18% of the total population of Latin America and the Caribbean, and rural schools in turn represent 30% of all educational establishments in the region.

The greatest political challenge is to ensure secondary education in rural areas in order to guarantee real opportunities for economic insertion.

Recommendations:

- Two-way intercultural education policies—acknowledge and value the knowledge of others
- Intercultural bilingual education (IBE) beyond schooling—contributing to ensuring social, cultural, and political survival

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING

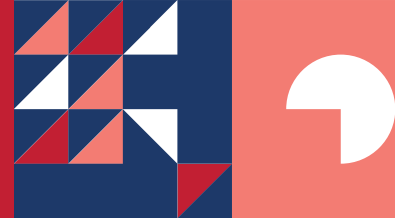
In general, funding does not consider remoteness as a factor when distributing educational funds. The perspective of teachers working in remote schools in the Amazon region in Brazil, for example, highlights the high costs and logistical problems of reaching all communities.

DATA SYSTEMS

Countries vary enormously in their ability to “counteract” the effect of students’ social origin on their educational outcomes—**how we organise education matters**. It is advisable to have data systems in place that help fully reflect a reality that is usually very distinct in different parts of the same wide and diverse territory.

CURRICULUM, TEXTBOOKS AND ASSESSMENTS

Flexible education models are critical to achieving equity in rural areas. It is possible to build curricula in rural areas that are in line with the challenges of global sustainability. It is essential to build a vision in which the environmental and cultural heritage of rural areas is valuable for the survival of humanity.



SCHOOLS

Some of the findings from the 2020 GEM Report confirm that demographic status accentuates the difference between rural and urban areas. The distribution of the population in the territory underlines social and educational differences. For example, 17% of people aged 15 and over in rural areas of Brazil are illiterate. Similarly, statistics in many countries in the region show that, if young people wish to increase their level of educational attainment, they must leave their communities and move to an urban centre.

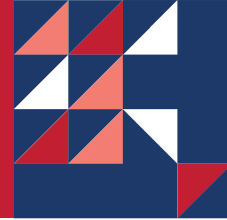
Recognising the multidimensionality of the rural school is key for developing multi-layered strategies suited to the heterogeneity of students.

Among some of the policies recommended by the experts is the strengthening of normal schools—which are the initial training instrument for teachers—so that this training is specialised in rural areas.

TEACHERS, MANAGERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Most of the teachers who work in rural areas have not had training on the subject matter they teach. In Colombia, 2 out of 3 teachers are female. The shortage of teachers and lack of specialisation of trainers are problems that should be addressed by political initiatives that promote a pedagogy that contributes to reconciliation and cohesion, inclusion, and flexible education.

An important achievement in the region: in indigenous schools in the Brazilian state of Amazonas, the majority of the teachers are indigenous community members and speakers of the indigenous language, who promote the rebirth of the culture and traditions of their people. This has been the result of specific tertiary and secondary education teacher training programs for teachers in indigenous and rural schools. Promoting work spaces and collaborative training, teacher networks, and rural micro-centres (territorial spaces for teacher training) are extremely valuable factors in this regard.



STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Inclusive education implies a deterritorialised vision of diversity. Educational institutions and communities do not work alone. The experience gained shows the importance of generating networks to influence public policies. It is highly advisable to take advantage of pedagogical practices that, despite not being systematised, serve as references for the institutionalisation of these types of equity initiatives within the framework of formal education.