

**EVALUATION OF THE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR BOOK PROMOTION  
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (CERLALC)  
– DRAFT REPORT –**

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**Executive summary**

The Regional Centre for Book Promotion in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC) is a UNESCO category 2 centre. The category 2 centres and institutes were created to contribute to the achievement of the objectives and sectoral or intersectoral programme priorities and themes as defined in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (C/4), as well as to the attainment of programme results at the Main Line of Action (MLA) level, as defined in the Organization's Approved Programme and Budget (C/5). The present report describes the results of CERLALC's evaluation in accordance with the revised integrated comprehensive strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO in order to inform the renewal of its agreement. More specifically, this report examines to what extent the activities carried out in recent years correspond to the Centre's objectives and functions; assesses whether these activities have achieved the expected results; and analyses to what extent they are aligned with the objectives and priorities of UNESCO (at both the level of the Headquarters as well as the regional and national offices), with the needs and policies of the Member States and with the demands of the private actors of the book ecosystem.

As indicated throughout this report, CERLALC has had a fundamental relevance for a good number of policies and measures carried out to promote books and reading in Ibero-American countries. Although various projects have not achieved the expected success, its projects, publications, and activities have contributed to the implementation of UNESCO's objectives and priorities.

At present, the Centre has a forward-looking leadership and a very dynamic team, and its work is now more crucial than ever. Indeed, what is at stake is nothing less than the revitalization of the publishing sector and reading practices in Ibero-American countries, in a context characterized by major social, economic and technological changes.

For these reasons, it is highly recommended to renew the CERLALC designation agreement as a category 2 centre. However, for this renewal it would be indispensable to take into account the recommendations set forth in section III, particularly with regard to the construction of a long-term Agenda for books and reading in Ibero-American countries that is fully synchronized with UNESCO's objectives, priorities and activities.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction: background and methodology</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>I. Functions, structure and programmes of CERLALC</b> .....	<b>5</b>
1. <i>Context of creation and functions</i> .....	5
2. <i>Internal structure</i> .....	7
3. <i>Financial structure and budget</i> .....	8
4. <i>Technical programmes</i> .....	10
<b>II. Initiatives and achievements</b> .....	<b>12</b>
1. <i>Reading and libraries</i> .....	13
2. <i>Book production, commercialization, and circulation</i> .....	14
3. <i>Copyright and related rights</i> .....	15
<b>III. A long-term strategy for books and reading in Ibero-American countries</b> .....	<b>17</b>
1. <i>Structural opportunities and challenges</i> .....	17
2. <i>The need for a long-term agenda: major goals and relationship with UNESCO</i> .....	18
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Annex 1: Recommendations</b> .....	<b>22</b>
1. <i>General framework</i> .....	22
2. <i>An agile, horizontal and networked approach</i> .....	24
<b>Annex 2: Bibliography</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Annex 3: Meetings with the CERLALC team (9-12 July, 2018)</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Annex 4: Interviews</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Annex 5: Online Survey</b> .....	<b>36</b>

## INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Regional Centre for Book Promotion in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC) is a UNESCO category 2 centre. The category 2 centres and institutes were created to contribute to the achievement of the objectives and sectoral or intersectoral programme priorities and themes as defined in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (C/4), as well as to the attainment of programme results at the Main Line of Action (MLA) level, as defined in the Organization's Approved Programme and Budget (C/5).

The present report describes the results of CERLALC's evaluation in accordance with the revised integrated comprehensive strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO in order to inform the renewal of its agreement. More specifically, the present report:

- examines to what extent the activities carried out in recent years correspond to the Centre's objectives and functions;
- assesses whether these activities have achieved the expected results;
- analyses to what extent they are aligned with the objectives and priorities of UNESCO (at both the level of the Headquarters as well as the regional and national offices), with the needs and policies of the Member States and with the demands of the private actors of the book ecosystem.

For the preparation of this report, the experts worked in five stages. The first stage consisted of the review of various documents, provided by both CERLALC and UNESCO. These documents included:

- the agreements signed in 1971 between UNESCO and the Government of Colombia for the creation of CERLALC and extended in 1977 and 1984;
- the Statute of CERLALC, in force since 2001 and amended in 2011 and 2013;
- the biannual technical programmes presented from 2009 onwards – including that of 2018-2019;
- the compliance reports of the technical programmes;
- numerous publications and internal documents of CERLALC;
- various normative documents of UNESCO including the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy (C/4), the Approved Programme and Budget 2016-2017 (38 C/5) and 2018-2021 (39 C/5) as well as the Integrated comprehensive strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, currently under revision, among others<sup>1</sup>.

The complete bibliography of the works consulted by the experts can be found in **Annex 2** of this report.

The second stage consisted of a series of meetings held in Bogotá with the general director of CERLALC and its team of collaborators, between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018. These meetings were useful for the purpose of analysing in detail:

- the general objectives and functions of CERLALC, its priorities and key projects;

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. UNESCO (2013, 2019a and 2019b).

- the biannual technical programmes;
- the financing mechanisms (both budgetary and extra-budgetary) and management of the Centre;
- the coordination schemes with UNESCO's Headquarters as well as with the regional and national offices;
- the activities and research projects, technical assistance, observatories, training and education initiatives, communications, publications and events.

The agenda and participants of these meetings are included as **Annex 3**.

In the third stage, the experts conducted interviews with different stakeholders of the book ecosystem in Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Spain, in order to exchange views about the programmes run by CERLALC. Specifically, the interviewees were asked about how they perceived the contents and participation mechanisms proposed by the Centre, which programmes should be reinforced or eliminated, what new or different activities could be carried out, whether they had detected positive or negative changes in recent years, and what their overall assessment of the Centre's function and work was. The list of participants in these interviews is shown in **Annex 4**.

As part of the fourth stage of the project, a survey was sent out by e-mail, with the aim of gathering the perspectives and opinions of the different stakeholders of the book ecosystem from the largest possible number of CERLALC Member States. The content of the form and the list of recipients was the result of a collaborative process between the experts and the CERLALC staff. The submitted form is included as **Annex 5**.

Finally, in the fifth stage of the project, all the elements collected and analysed in the previous stages were integrated into the current report. UNESCO, CERLALC, and the government of Colombia were consulted in the finalisation of this report, to be delivered in April 2019.

The main results of the evaluation are described below. The text is divided into 3 parts:

- I) Functions, structure, and budget of CERLALC;
- II) Initiatives, achievements and challenges;
- III) A long-term strategy for books and reading in Ibero-American countries.

Finally, **Annex 1** includes a comprehensive list of recommendations.

# I. FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMMES OF CERLALC

## 1. CONTEXT OF CREATION AND FUNCTIONS

CERLALC was formally created on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1971, coinciding with the celebration of International Book Day, through an International Cooperation Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Colombia. This agreement was part of a vast array of actions carried out by UNESCO to support the book sector worldwide, in a context of increasing inequality between developed and developing countries.<sup>2</sup>

Back in 1966, the 14<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO encouraged the creation of regional centres “for the publication and dissemination of books”,<sup>3</sup> while the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference in 1968 mentioned a meeting of experts to be held in 1969 and offered assistance to a “book institute” that could be created in Latin America after that meeting.<sup>4</sup>

In 1970, the General Conference approved the programme for the International Year of the Book, which was to take effect in 1972 and which was structured around four major objectives:

- promoting literary creation and translation, taking due account of copyright;
- stimulating the production of books and the development of libraries;
- promoting the habit of reading;
- highlighting the role of books as a vehicle for mutual understanding and international cooperation.

Likewise, the Book Charter – approved by UNESCO in 1971 and adopted the following year – recognized the right of everyone to read, the relevance of the book for education, the need for favourable conditions for the creative activity of authors and the publishing industry, the role of booksellers as a link between the publisher and the reader, as well as the importance of libraries and the free circulation of books.

When the efforts for the creation of CERLALC began, the elements of the regional diagnosis were not very precise, at least in quantitative terms. In the project presented by the Colombian government, some figures were mentioned that underlined the unfavourable situation of Latin America, as well as its heterogeneity:<sup>5</sup> literacy rates that could range between 8 and 50%, an annual production of 150 million copies, which represented only 3% of the worldwide sum – over two thirds of which were published by four countries – and 21,000 titles, equivalent to 4.2% of the total.<sup>6</sup>

Among the factors mentioned as limiting the sector’s development were, in addition to illiteracy, the high levels of poverty, the heavy dependence on imports from Spain –

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<sup>2</sup> Indeed, some thirty countries that represented 30% of the world population produced 81% of the titles, while Africa, Latin America and Asia (excluding China), with 49% of the world population, published only 12% of the total. Cf. Delavenay (1974, p. 13).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. UNESCO (1966, p. 239).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. UNESCO (1968, p. 104).

<sup>5</sup> In section III, heterogeneity among the countries of the region will be addressed as a central aspect for the definition of policies, programmes and priorities of CERLALC.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. CERLALC (2011, p. 37).

aggravated in many cases by tariff and administrative barriers – the inefficient distribution apparatus, the lack of a policy aimed at providing texts to the school system, the high costs of shipping, the lack of a modern technological infrastructure for the production of books and the instability of regional economic policies – exchange rates, controls on exports, among other aspects.

Within this complex context, at the time of its creation, CERLALC assumed the following 10 functions:

1. coordinating the efforts of public and private entities in the region for the production, dissemination and distribution of books;
2. promoting the application of measures to achieve the harmonization of the book sector so that a common market could be established across Latin America and the Caribbean;
3. stimulating the creation of national entities dedicated to book promotion;
4. compiling and making available to Member States statistics and documentation related to the production and distribution of and demand for books;
5. periodically collecting bibliography in Hispanic languages;
6. carrying out systematic research on reading habits, levels and interests;
7. carrying out studies among different educational and socioeconomic levels to establish the most appropriate strategies to promote reading;
8. launching training and professional promotion plans for the graphic, publishing and book distribution industries;
9. conducting studies related to copyright;
10. contributing to the strengthening of school and public library services, to the realization of regional plans in this area and to the training of librarians.

The original name was Centre for Book Promotion in Latin America (CERLAL) and in the agreement it was established that *effective members* could be any Spanish or Portuguese speaking country in Latin America and *associate members* Spanish or Portuguese speaking countries outside Latin America, allowing Spain and Portugal to become members. By 1975 CERLAL had 13 member states: Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Spain, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

In 1984, UNESCO and the Government of Colombia signed a new Agreement, which made it clear that the objective of the Centre was “the promotion of the production and distribution of books and in particular the promotion of reading, especially through education plans and the indispensable complement of adequate national systems of school and public libraries in each country”. The new agreement extended the geographical and idiomatic scope of the Centre, as it incorporated the Caribbean countries, and the name was changed to Centre for Book Promotion in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC). However, due to financial constraints, only Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean (Dominican Republic and Cuba) became members of CERLALC. Since the inclusion of Spain as a member in 1975, CERLALC has worked increasingly with an Ibero-American geographical perspective,<sup>7</sup> a situation that has consolidated with the accession of Portugal in 2005.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibero-America is the region in the Americas comprising countries or territories where Spanish or Portuguese are predominant languages, plus Spain and Portugal.

In order to fulfil its objectives in a comprehensive manner, through the 1984 Agreement the Centre was granted two new functions:

11. carrying out international cooperation projects;
12. promoting technical cooperation projects in the region.

In 2001, the current General Statute was approved – modified for the last time in 2013 – which ratified the functions contained in the 1984 Agreement. Finally, in 2009, the Executive Board of UNESCO recognized through decision 182 EX / 62 Rev that the scope of CERLALC extended not only to the sector of Culture but also to other sectors of UNESCO – more specifically, Education and Communication and Information – and recommended strengthening the intersectorality of reciprocal support for CERLALC as well as increasing joint programmes.<sup>8</sup>

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## 2. INTERNAL STRUCTURE

As established in the General Statute, CERLALC has two collegiate bodies: a Board and an Executive Committee.

The Board of CERLALC is its highest management body. It meets in an ordinary manner at least every two years and its main functions are to:

- set the basic guidelines for the Centre's policies, programmes and budgets;
- approve its general statute and its modifications;
- determine the value of the contributions of the Member States to the Centre.

The Board is composed of:

- a representative of the Director General of UNESCO;
- a representative of the President of the Republic of Colombia;
- a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one of the Ministry of National Education of Colombia;
- one representative for each of the 21 Member States.<sup>9</sup>

The Board is chaired by the representative of a Member State, elected during its ordinary session by two thirds or more of the representatives of the Member States present.

For its part, the Executive Committee is composed of:

- one representative from each of six Member States previously elected by the Board;
- a representative of the Director General of UNESCO;
- one representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one of the Ministry of National Education of Colombia.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. UNESCO (2009b, ff. 60-61).

<sup>9</sup> Currently, CERLALC has 21 Member States: Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela..

The Executive Committee meets in an ordinary manner at least once a year and its main functions are to:

- examine and approve the annual programmes and budgets of CERLALC;
- control the general operation of CERLALC and the execution of the programmes in accordance with the basic guidelines adopted by the Board;
- evaluate and study the reports that, in accordance with the Statute, must be presented by the Director of CERLALC and the others required by the Committee;
- approve the internal structure of CERLALC and its modifications.

The Executive Committee has a President, elected by majority vote for the period between the ordinary sessions of the Committee.

The Director of the Centre, meanwhile, is appointed for a period of two years and may be re-elected. The current director, since 2015, is the cultural journalist and publisher Marianne Ponsford. From 2009 to 2015 it was Fernando Zapata, a lawyer, who between 1986 and 2009 had served as General Director of the Copyright Office of Colombia. The operating structure itself has changed over the years.

CERLALC's system of governance is fully aligned with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, although its creation predates the adoption of the strategy. Indeed, it is independent from UNESCO (D.1.1), it has a governing body that meets once a year (D.1.2), and UNESCO is represented as a full member in both of its governing bodies (D.1.3).

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### **3. FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AND BUDGET**

According to the 1984 Agreement and the General Statute, the CERLALC budget establishes the income and expenses programmed for each annual exercise broken down by concept. It is prepared for annual periods by the Director, according to the general guidelines of the Centre, and must be submitted for the approval of the Executive Committee.

According to the Agreement, the Centre may obtain income from these sources:

- contributions from Member States (fees);
- contributions from Colombia in its capacity as Host State;
- contributions from UNESCO for technical assistance only;
- contributions from international organizations as well as public and private national and international entities;
- own resources obtained from the sale of assets;
- donations from natural persons or public and private entities;
- resources obtained from the provision of services derived from the activities of CERLALC;
- capital resources of CERLALC, arising from previous periods.

From 2000 on, the resources obtained through the provision of services – mainly provided to institutions of the Colombian government – began to grow steadily, to the point where in



2010 3.4 times more income was received for this concept (US\$ 1.35 million) than for the fees paid by the countries (US\$ 398 thousand). This model was viable thanks to the Colombian legislation, which enabled international organizations to make contracts for the provision of services with public bodies. But new legislation adopted in 2011 limited this possibility. The new situation led to a drastic reduction in service revenues – US\$ 835 thousand in 2014 and US\$ 478 thousand in 2015. In parallel, there were delays in the payment of Members fees and UNESCO was no longer sending financial contributions as of 2011. The drop in revenues, added to the increase in operating costs – particularly in the workforce – led the Centre to record four consecutive periods of budget deficit, from 2012 to 2015.

In 2015, the journalist and publisher Marianne Ponsford took over as director of CERLALC. The new management concentrated, in the first place, on restoring the financial situation of the Centre, mainly through the optimization of the general expenses and the improvement in the collection of the Members fees – which went from US\$ 322 thousand in 2015 to US\$ 608 thousand in 2018.

In 2016, for the first time since 2011, the balance was in a surplus of US\$ 51 thousand, while in 2017 it was slightly in deficit (US\$ 35 thousand) and in 2018 there was a surplus of US\$ 57.8 thousand.

In 2018, the budget closed with an income of US\$ 923.7 thousand, composed of 65% Member fees and 35% external resources. The expenditures (US\$ 865.9 thousand), classified according to the advice of the UNESCO office in Havana, are comprised of 63% for operational costs, 33% for the technical programme and 4% corresponding to the 2017 deficit.

The 2019 budget projects an income of US\$ 602 from Member fees (56.2% of the total income and slightly lower than 2018), US\$ 461.5 thousand from external sources (43.1% of the total) and US\$ 7.8 thousand applied from the previous year surplus (0.7%). The expenditures (US\$ 1,071.8 thousand) are comprised of 41% for operational costs and 59% for the technical programme. Furthermore, through Resolution 001/2018, the Executive Committee authorized the creation of the CERLALC Foundation. This initiative would help overcome the bureaucratic obstacles that prevent the contracting of projects with Colombian government institutions – as was mentioned above. The foundation was created according to Colombian regulations and has the following characteristics, as stated in its General Statute:

1. Its object and field of action are exactly the same as those of CERLALC.
2. The Executive Committee of CERLALC controls the operations of the Foundation. The Director of CERLALC must submit to the Committee annual reports on technical and financial execution.
3. The Director of CERLALC acts as the legal representative of the CERLALC Foundation on an *ad honorem* basis, and their appointment is understood as a free assumption of a service without financial compensation.
4. The Foundation does not have permanent staff, and works in the facilities of the CERLALC. Therefore, its existence does not imply any type of administrative cost until it starts developing projects, at which point the advisors will be hired for benefit of services.
5. The CERLALC Foundation does not generate maintenance costs for CERLALC.

6. The resources generated by the Foundation will be allocated to the development of projects of the Technical Program of CERLALC as indicated by the Executive Committee.

It is expected that the operations of the Foundation will begin in 2019, through the signature of contracts – carried out within the framework of the CERLALC mission and objectives – with the Government of Colombia, as the host country. The improvements obtained in the financial results in the last years, both from increasing incomes and optimizing general expenses, have allowed the Centre to reinforce gradually its technical programmes on a sustainable basis.

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#### **4. TECHNICAL PROGRAMMES**

In order to meet its objectives, CERLALC presents a Biennial Technical Programme prepared by the management and submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

Each one of the projects of the Technical Programme must contain a justification, objectives, activities, a schedule and responsible dependencies. In addition, for each year of execution, it must identify goals, deliverables and budget.

The 2016-2017 Technical Programme admitted that, in the past, CERLALC had failed “to concretize its action in orderly and systematic instruments” and that in the new context – characterized by technological change and by the transformation of societies – it would be necessary “to be stronger, clearer, more active (...), lighter, more flexible, more focused on our mission.” The document proposed an ambitious plan, aimed at reinforcing technical assistance, multiplying research and promoting the activities of its three regional observatories. In addition, it stressed the need to communicate more and better, and for that purpose it planned to rebuild the Centre’s website, reactivate the publications programme and disseminate more widely the support that is provided both to governments and the publishing sector. At the same time, it highlighted the importance of constructing indicators that would make comparisons in the region. Finally, it stressed the need to make available to Member States the accumulated knowledge about books and reading – which is considered dispersed – and to strengthen the role of CERLALC as a reference on good practices, regulations and intellectual debate.

As a result of the actions carried out in 2016, CERLALC proposed to its Board in an extraordinary meeting a reformulation of the Technical Programme for 2017. This change was due to the fact that the lack of financial resources had forced the Centre to limit its activities and to concentrate on those that were more viable and important for Member States.

The programme focused then on four strategic objectives:

1. protecting intellectual creation;
2. consolidating the book ecosystem;
3. developing practices and reading spaces;
4. promoting culture and reading in early childhood.

Later, the 2018-2019 Technical Programme simplified the formulation of the Centre's objectives to only two:

1. contributing to the strengthening of conditions that promote the circulation of books in Ibero-America;
2. promoting the development of public policy regarding reading and specialized knowledge in the field.

In March 2019, at the 57<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting of CERLALC executive committee, the committee noted the importance of aligning all of the Centre's initiatives and activities on the United Nations 2030 Agenda, as well as on the priorities of the 2005 Convention. The change can already be seen on the Centre's website, where webpages describing recent events are accompanied by the logos of the relevant SDGs.

## II. INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

From its foundation until now, CERLALC – through 14 different administrations – carried out a great variety of activities linked to its functions and objectives: training workshops, support and technical assistance, specialized publications, research, statistical compilations, awards, design of methodologies and other initiatives that had a long-term impact throughout the region. However, it must be noted that the programmes and priorities of the Centre have been greatly impacted by its fluctuating financial situation over the years, which means that it has not been always able to fulfil its 12 primary functions, listed in section I.1 of the present report. Notably, it could not extend its programmes to include activities linked to the Communication and Information sector, as stipulated by decision 182 EX/62 mentioned above.

Overall, the activities of the CERLALC for the period covered by this report meet the guidelines set out in the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO. Firstly, its activities are regional, since they involve 21 Ibero-American countries.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, the Centre's activities contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and global priorities, as well as its sectoral or intersectoral program priorities and themes, as defined in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (C/4). It also contributes to the attainment of programme results at the Main Line of Action (MLA) level, as defined in the Organization's Approved Programme and Budget (C/5).<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, CERLALC produces biannual Technical Programs that summarize its activities and include references to the different UNESCO programmes.<sup>12</sup>

*The mission, objectives and functions of CERLALC are very broad. Working on such a vast field, with interlocutors and countries that are so dissimilar represents a great challenge. A strategy and a clear sense of priorities are necessary to articulate the activities and programmes to be undertaken. One of these priorities is undoubtedly the establishment of a "common language", something apparently simple but very complex, particularly in a region that is so uneven.*

Daniel Goldin,  
Director of the Vasconcelos Library (Mexico).

CERLALC's March 2019 Executive Committee report lists 41 projects and 124 initiatives, some of which are long-running projects, while others are short-term events. CERLALC's activities fall under three broad thematic categories: 1) reading and libraries; 2) book production, commercialization and circulation; and 3) copyright. The first category is aligned with the goals and priorities of UNESCO's Education sector, while the second and third categories are aligned with the goals and priorities of UNESCO's Culture sector. In practice, many of the Centre's activities address intersectoral concerns.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. paragraph B.1.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. paragraph B.2.1.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. paragraph B.4.1.

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## 1. READING AND LIBRARIES

CERLALC's first area of activity, reading and libraries, is in line with UNESCO's Education 39 C/5 MLA 1 "Supporting Member States to develop education systems to foster high

*In a complex cultural ecosystem such as the present one, the development of readership is nourished by an interesting movement of projects born within the community. This change in roles –the community is no longer a mere audience to become an agent as well as a social and cultural mediator – confronts us with new challenges: giving more visibility to the diversity of reading and writing practices; experimenting with formats and dynamics in a creative dialogue between languages and expressive spaces; diversifying agents and strategies; identifying and mapping initiatives of this nature; and investigating/generating a shared knowledge network around the construction of bottom-up initiatives such as community libraries.*

Inés Miret, Co-founder of Neturity and international expert in digital projects in culture, education and reading (Spain).

quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all", in particular through activities aimed at the promotion of reading and the development of libraries. A specific example of CERLALC's activities in this sector include its *Observatorio Iberoamericano de Cultura y Educación para la Primera Infancia*, which is an early childhood information system that seeks to contribute to the creation, dissemination and implementation of public policies and educational, artistic, cultural and reading promotion initiatives for children from 0 to 6 years of age. Among other initiatives, the *Observatorio* aggregates and disseminates information and good practices, while providing a platform to facilitate the exchange of knowledge

about culture and reading in early childhood. This initiative is in line with UNESCO's 37 C/4 operational strategy on youth, while also helping to implement the Education sector's 39 C/5 MLA 1 ER 1: "Improved national education policies and plans to advance access to equitable and quality early childhood care and education (ECCE), primary and secondary education within a lifelong learning perspective."

In this area of activity, CERLALC also launched REDPLANES (*Red Iberoamericana de Responsables de Políticas y Planes de Lectura*), a network formed by those responsible for the design and implementation of national policies and reading plans of its member countries. The goal of this initiative is to strengthen efforts to promote the development and sustainability of reading policies and plans in Ibero-American countries, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences, to share good practices and to promote regional integration in this field. The initiative provides technical assistance, organizes meetings with stakeholders and publishes evaluations and policy reports. The growth of national reading plans registered since the early 2000s represents a tangible achievement linked to this project.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, different activities related to the definition of methodological standards

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Zapata (2014, p. 208).

and indicators for the measurement of reading behaviour, as well as the support for the library sector, have also contributed to achieving that goal.<sup>14</sup>

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## 2. BOOK PRODUCTION, COMMERCIALIZATION, AND CIRCULATION

CERLALC's second area of activity is concerned with book production, commercialization, and circulation. The specific initiatives undertaken by the Centre in this area are line with UNESCO's Culture Sector 39 C/5 MLA 2: "Supporting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions, the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, and the development of cultural and creative industries", with projects directed to strengthening the publishing sector and the distribution of books. Individual projects are aligned with various sectoral priorities, most notably the 2005 Convention's first goal: "Supporting sustainable systems of governance for culture."

For instance, CERLALC participated in the creation, strengthening and articulation of the national ISBN agencies, to which it provided technical support in a sustained manner. As of 2004, it promoted its own software – the RISBN – which was incorporated by 17 ISBN agencies and which contributed to the standardization of regional metadata. The version 5.3 of its RISBN software was implemented in Colombia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic Panama, and Paraguay in 2018, and in Peru, Honduras, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay in 2019. On the topic of ISBN, the Centre also organized many multi-stakeholder meetings and produced a significant number of publications, including *Panorama de la agencias del ISBN de Iberoamérica*, which was published in 2018. According to the March 2019 Executive Committee report, the Centre currently has 28 activities supporting ISBN agencies in one way or another. Moreover, CERLALC is currently encouraging the creation of a Catalogue of Latin American books, which could serve as a meeting

*Knowing the reality of the market in general and of the fairs in particular is extremely important for us. That is why it is crucial for CERLALC to keep a regular contact not only with public or state institutions but also with private organizations. Through the work of chambers, foundations and other entities, civil society plays a central role in the book and reading sector. If we grow together, in Latin America we will become stronger.*

Oche Califa,  
Institutional and Cultural Director of El  
Libro Foundation (Argentina).

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<sup>14</sup> CERLALC has a long tradition of collaboration with Spanish and Ibero-american international cooperation agencies such as SEGIB, OEI and AECID that is being revamped and strengthened by the present administration. Some of the most emblematic and ambitious initiatives of CERLALC, such as the Ibero-American Reading Plan (ILIMITA) and the Integrated Repertory of Latin American Books (RILVI) have been endorsed and adopted by the Ibero-american Conferences of Heads of State and Governments – also known as Ibero-American Summits – and were developed with the support of the Spanish and Ibero-american cooperation bodies. In the past, AECID was an important contributor of financial resources to the Centre with a peak of 255,000 Euros in 2011. From 2012 on, there was a drastic reduction and in 2018 it stopped completely. With OEI, a cooperation agreement has just been signed to develop joint projects on Reading and Education in Early Childhood. As a result of the collaboration with SEGIB, CERLALC libraries programme was reinforced and became "Iberbibliotecas" with the Centre acting as Technical Secretariat. In 2018, CERLALC presented in the Ibero-american Summit an initiative for book distribution within the region that was approved and started its implementation in 2019.

point for the various research, training and communication efforts in the field of book circulation.<sup>15</sup>

During the period under review, the publishing sector as a whole benefited from several other projects carried out by the Centre, including activities aimed at promoting book fairs in medium and small countries, as well as legislative changes in copyright and statistical systems on book trade. Another relevant medium and long-term project in this area is the *Map of Books and Reading*, which is aimed at integrating and updating different databases that CERLALC has developed particularly since 1990. This map will contain information for each Member State about legislation, publishers, libraries, National Reading Plans, statistics on book production, trade and reading, among other data of interest for researchers, experts and policy makers.

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### 3. COPYRIGHT AND RELATED RIGHTS

CERLALC's third sector of activity is related to copyright. This area of activity is in line with the Culture sector's 39 C/5 MLA 2, cited above, as well as with the 2005 Convention's fourth priority: "Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms," since it focuses on developing policies and measures to promote the social and economic rights of artists.

One of the main initiatives of CERLALC in this area of activity is DAR (*Derecho de Autor Regional*), an online legal information system specialising in the field of copyright and related rights. It contains laws and regulations of all Ibero-American countries, international treaties and a database of judicial, administrative and arbitral doctrine on this subject. In conjunction with this online information system, CERLALC also provides advice for writers on its website and produces a significant number of publications.

CERLALC also shares its expertise in copyright and metadata management by providing technical assistance. For instance, in 2018, CERLALC partnered with WIPO to sponsor the "Launch of the National Network of Authorized Entities for the Implementation of the Treaty of Marrakech" in Quito, in support of the National Service for Intellectual Rights. In 2017, it has also provided technical assistance to Colombia in the revision of its law 23 on copyright. Moreover, it currently provides technical assistance to the National Libraries of Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Peru for the regulation of legal deposit in electronic format and orphan works.

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<sup>15</sup> The first versions of the project of a catalogue listing all the Latin American or, more broadly, Ibero-american books date back to at least the year 2000, when CERLALC decided to foster the RILVI – Integrated Repertory of Latin American Books. This initiative, presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Ibero-American Summit, had the Centre as the coordinating body and aimed to collect the bibliographic data of the ISBN agencies in a single platform. Although there were advances in the integration of the catalogue, the project could not be successfully developed, among other reasons due to the lack of support from the publishers, who were reluctant to enter or correct the details – reviews, prices, covers, etc. – in the national ISBN databases. It should be noted that the current Catalogue project is no longer conceived of as a federation of national ISBN agencies, as was the case in previous versions of the project. This option was discarded, given that the records available from the agencies contained metadata that was partly incorrect or incomplete. The solution proposed at present makes use of Metabooks, a platform that is owned by Marketing und Verlagsservice des Buchhandels GmbH (MVB) and the Frankfurt Book Fair – both daughter companies of the Börsenverein, the German Booksellers and Publishers Association – and to which publishers and other industry players must pay an annual amount for each title incorporated. Once a critical mass of book metadata is reached, the provider will be able to share useful information with CERLALC and other entities. The platform already operates in Brazil, where the National Book Chamber owns 25% of the venture and MVB – which made the initial investment – owns 75%.

CERLALC has had a lasting and demonstrable impact in its three main areas of activity. Its new website provides an open-access repository of its databases and publications, which are useful for legislators, authors and researchers alike. Between October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 and January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019, the website attracted 111.303 users, indicating that it has a significant reach.



### III. A LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR BOOKS AND READING IN IBERO-AMERICAN COUNTRIES

#### 1. STRUCTURAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As the elements outlined so far show, CERLALC has played a prominent role in shaping the Ibero-American space of books and reading. Several of the initiatives proposed by the Centre have had a positive and lasting impact. However, it is important to note that in certain areas, the programmes did not achieve the expected success. In the first place, trade imbalances between countries – and especially between Spain and the other Spanish-speaking countries – persisted.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the high shipping costs and in some cases the customs barriers continued to affect the circulation of books in the region. Furthermore, although literacy rates have increased in recent decades, the problem of functional illiteracy remains present, in a context of social and economic challenges. Also, the different attempts that since 2000 have sought to unify the bibliographic information of the region in a single database have not proved successful. Last but not least, in an era in which the publishing industry and the cultural sector in general are undergoing considerable transformations – arising from the emergence of new media, formats and actors – training and research initiatives related to digital trends in the field of books and reading failed to translate into long-term national policies or firm statistical methodologies.

In an age characterized by major demographic, economic and technological transformations, it becomes essential to develop orientations that will make it possible to consolidate the long-term relevance of CERLALC, both for the region and for UNESCO. To achieve this, it would be necessary to take into account several structural factors that have characterized CERLALC since its foundation and that define both its strengths and its limitations.

In the first place, the Centre's activities are not only linked to the cultural sector, but also to the educational sector. This variety results in a great diversity of topics and proposals – workshops, research, events, technical assistance, etc. – but at the same time it can lead to a certain thematic dispersion.

Furthermore, the areas in which CERLALC works are of concern to the public sector as well as to the private sector and civil society. This opens the door to a vast spectrum of possible initiatives. However, working with so many different interlocutors can be a challenge, particularly in the case of the public sector, whose authorities change periodically. Likewise, in a context in which the different stakeholders from the book ecosystem may have conflicting views – for example, when publishers stress the need to protect copyright, while libraries request a larger number of free educational resources – the controversy can produce a paralysis in the implementation of projects.

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<sup>16</sup> In Latin America, Spain represented almost two thirds (63%) of book exports in 2016. Meanwhile, if we focus exclusively on Latin America, exports were concentrated in four countries that accounted for more than 85% of the total, among which Mexico stood out with 56%, followed by Colombia, Argentina and Peru. If we consider the number of titles that were published – estimated through the ISBN registry – in 2016 Spain accounted for just over one third (36%) of what was published in Latin America, while the production of copies in Latin America was concentrated in four countries that represented more than 80% of the total, among which Brazil stood out with 43%, followed by Mexico, Argentina and Colombia.

Now, within the government, the thematic diversity of CERLALC implies that the institution must relate not only to the Ministry of Culture – which is usually its national point of contact – but also to the Ministries of Education (on issues of literacy and reading in early childhood), Foreign Affairs (international projects, support in book fairs and other events abroad), Economy/Industry (creative industries, business and export issues) and even Justice/Interior/Commerce or any other ministry that administers the Copyright Office. And it is not only different ministries, but also different units within them, that often prefer to work directly with CERLALC, instead of going through the hierarchical chain. Although these characteristics can help the Centre to maintain vast contact networks and to establish a fresh dialogue between the ministries, they can also make the monitoring of projects with countries complicated, due to the proliferation of interlocutors.

This challenge is also observed with regard to CERLALC's relationship with UNESCO. Indeed, the activities of the Centre concern not only the Culture Sector, but also the Education and Communication and Information sectors according to Decision 62 of the 182nd session of UNESCO's Executive Board. The number of interlocutors is also increased by the fact that CERLALC works with UNESCO Headquarters and – due to thematic as well as linguistic affinities – with the offices in Havana, Quito and Santiago de Chile.

Finally, it should be noted that Latin America and the Caribbean constitute a sort of archipelago made up of countries whose social, economic and political reality is extremely varied, which results in a very rich field of experimentation. However, this same heterogeneity can present challenges when it comes to working effectively at the local level. In addition, from a commercial point of view, a country such as Spain – which is an Associate Member of CERLALC – is a net exporter to Latin America, while the smaller countries of the region usually import a large part of their books. Thus, it is not always easy to develop a unified programme.

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## **2. THE NEED FOR A LONG-TERM AGENDA: MAJOR GOALS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH UNESCO**

In light of the challenges identified above, the authors have made a series of recommendations for CERLALC summarized in the table below. The recommendations are not prescriptive; rather, they offer an open frame of reference from which the Centre will be able to draw in order to shape its strategic planning and improve its capacity to fulfil its functions in line with UNESCO's global, sectoral and intersectoral priorities and objectives. In other words, the aim of the recommendations is to offer a variety of avenues to strengthen the Centre's capacity to deliver programmes and activities within the framework of the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under des auspices of UNESCO. A fuller description of the recommendations can be found in Annex 1.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>Coordination with UNESCO</b>	1. Build a long-term Agenda for books and reading in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, that is fully synchronized the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the UN Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030.
	2. Take part in the main activities at UNESCO Headquarters in the fields of books, reading and the creative industries in general.
	3. Become a hub for the dissemination of UNESCO's objectives in the book sector.
	4. Adapt the Operational Guidelines in the digital environment for the book sector.
	5. Establish a permanent and fluid contact with UNESCO through a main Spanish-speaking interlocutors, from Havana Office and the Culture sector HQ, who should participate –physically or virtually– in the meetings of the Board and the Executive Committee.
<b>Governance</b>	6. Review the composition and operation of the governing bodies of CERLALC and introduce systematic mechanisms that strengthen their capacity for evaluating the impact of the Centre's technical programmes, as well as their alignment with the objectives and priorities of UNESCO, including in their analysis indicators not only of products and activities, but also of results and impact.
	7. Consolidate the financial situation of the Centre, in order to achieve a sustainable balance, mainly through the optimization of the general expenses and the improvement in the collection of the Members fees.
	8. Support the activities of the CERLALC Foundation, which would help to overcome the limitation of budgetary resources. This Foundation should be included in the Centre's statute, to define its role and scope, and to establish mechanisms for the governing bodies of CERLALC to validate and evaluate its operations.
<b>Operation</b>	9. Create a network of associated experts coming from different countries in the region who could offer useful perspectives for the identification of trends and potential allies.
	10. Continue the modernization of the administration of the Centre and the reorientation of its programme of activities, in order to adapt it to its capacity for action, its priorities and the demands of the Member States, adopting a methodology that reconnects CERLALC with the active forces of the book ecosystem at large, not only the governments, but also the private sector and civil society.

	<p>11. Continue with the systematic analysis of regional book trade, considering tariff and non-tariff barriers, the lack of bookstores in many countries, as well as other challenges, in order to build a list of specific commitments that governments could make to foster the free circulation of books across the region.</p>
	<p>12. In the field of new technologies, provide visibility to the pioneering projects in the region that could serve as a reference for the whole publishing sector, and assess the possibility of drawing up a map of the local initiatives that propose a novel approach in the field of books and reading.</p>
	<p>13. Assess the specific recommendations contained in the evaluation document regarding areas of activity such as training, publishing and communication, and strategic projects like the Catalogue of Latin American Books, the Map of Books and Reading, and the Reading Development Index.</p>
<p><b>Possible amendments to CERLALC's agreement</b></p>	<p>14. Incorporate the Ministry of Culture in the renewed agreement as the main interlocutor at the national level in the host country.</p>
	<p>15. Include a provision for the periodic evaluation of the Center according to the guidelines of the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for the Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO</p>
	<p>16. Have two UNESCO representatives attend the meetings of the Governing Bodies of the CERLALC: one (1) from UNESCO Headquarters and one (1) from the Havana Field Office in order to increase synergies between the Center and the Organisation.</p>

## CONCLUSIONS

As indicated throughout this report, CERLALC's system of governance and activities comply with the guidelines of the *Integrated comprehensive strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO*. Moreover, it is clear that the Centre has had a fundamental relevance for the development of policies and measures in its three main areas of activities: reading and libraries, book production, commercialization, and circulation, and copyright and related rights. Although some of its projects have not achieved the expected success, the Centre's actions have contributed to UNESCO's global objectives and priorities, as well as some of the sectoral and intersectoral priorities of the Education and the Culture sectors.

At present, the Centre has a forward-looking leadership and a very dynamic team, and its work is now more crucial than ever. Indeed, what is at stake is nothing less than the revitalization of the publishing sector and reading practices in Ibero-American countries, in a context characterized by major social, economic and technological changes.

For these reasons, it is highly recommended to renew the CERLALC designation as a category 2 centre. However, it would be essential to take into account the challenges identified in section III.1 and the recommendations set forth in section III.2, particularly with regard to the construction of a long-term Agenda for books and reading in Ibero-American countries that is fully synchronized with UNESCO's objectives, priorities and activities. By taking into account some of the recommendations presented in this report, the Centre may be able to fulfil its goals and functions more effectively, with a clear assessment of the viability of its initiatives. It may also be able to better articulate its actions with the rest of the UNESCO bodies, both at the level of the Headquarters and at the level of regional and national offices. Finally, it may also be able to respond in a more structured and organic manner to the demands and needs of its Member States.

Good coordination between CERLALC and UNESCO could enable the Centre to have a more lasting impact in Ibero-American countries, while at the same time helping to amplify UNESCO's work.

### 1. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

It is essential to design a long-term strategy based on which the CERLALC programmes could be developed in the future. It is not a question here of forcing a monolithic plan, since this would go against the networked structure of the Centre and the diversity of its activities. The proposal is rather to develop an approach that allows it to maintain a degree of flexibility and that at the same time ensures the necessary coherence in the long run.

This dual purpose could be achieved through the preparation of a long-term Agenda or Vision for books and reading in Latin America and the Caribbean, inspired in some way by the success of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such an Agenda or Vision could function as the unity behind the diversity, the stability behind the changes.

Within the framework of this Agenda for books and reading, between five and ten major goals, with their respective icons and targets, could be considered. The selection of the major goals and other aspects should be undertaken in the most collegial manner possible, integrating different representatives of government, the private sector and civil society, and taking into account all the attempts that the Centre has made in the past to create a strategy with these characteristics.<sup>17</sup> In any case, the major goals should closely follow the objectives and principles of the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions – since this legal instrument deals with Culture and its implementation is mentioned in 39 C/5 as the Expected Result 7 for the Culture Sector – and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – many of which deal with the other fields of action of CERLALC. To comply with these requirements, it would perhaps be necessary to review the composition and operation of the governing bodies of CERLALC and introduce systematic mechanisms for evaluating the impact of the Centre's programmes, as well as its alignment with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres.

Considering that the current Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Colombia establishes that the objective of the Centre is “the promotion of the production and distribution of books and in particular the promotion of reading, especially through education plans and the indispensable complement of adequate national systems of school and public libraries in each country”, the 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is particularly relevant. Indeed, the 2005 Convention explicitly emphasizes the importance of cultural industries and the need to support them through capacity-building, training, education and technology transfer programs, among other measures.<sup>18</sup> As long as the book sector constitutes a vital cultural industry, it seems clear that the 2005 Convention may play a key role in the design and implementation of future activities by CERLALC.

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<sup>17</sup> For example, the Centre could consider the text of the *New Agenda for the Book and Reading* of 2013, which, although it was not organized according to the guidelines of UNESCO, contained extremely valuable elements. Cf. CERLALC (2013b).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. articles 2.4, 6.2.c, 10.c, 14.a, 14.c.

Therefore, in the task of bringing the CERLALC programmes closer to the UNESCO guidelines, the objectives and principles of the Convention<sup>19</sup> should be incorporated more explicitly in the CERLALC long-term Agenda as well as in the technical programmes. For example, it will be crucial to include in the categories used by the Centre the entire issue of the value chain, which is part of the first major goal of the Convention. In this sense, the previous lines of action of CERLALC – circulation of books and promotion of reading – could be integrated in a more unified way, thanks to the value chain scheme proposed by the Convention: the promotion of reading and libraries would be equivalent to the link of access, while circulation at the national level would correspond to that of distribution –distributors and bookstores. The other links in which the Centre has already worked in the past would correspond to creation – activities with writers, the issue of copyright, etc. – and production – initiatives with publishers. The need to achieve a balanced flow of books and increase the mobility of writers and book professionals in the countries of the region –that is, the second major goal of the 2005 Convention – could also be examined. Moreover, it would be necessary to incorporate the relationship between culture – books and reading, in this case – and sustainable development – employment, social inclusion, etc. – which refers to the third major goal. In addition, the Agenda should incorporate issues such as gender equality and freedom of expression, which are part of the fourth major goal and have not occupied a prominent place in the previous technical programmes of CERLALC.

In addition to including the objectives and principles of the 2005 Convention as well as the SDGs, the long-term Agenda would require a permanent dialogue with UNESCO. So far, the Regional Office for Culture in Havana has been operating informally as the main interlocutor from UNESCO with the Centre. During the current administration it has always been present both at the Board and the Executive Committee meetings, either represented by the director or the culture specialist. This participation has contributed directly to the improvement of the indicators of the technical programmes and to the classification and analysis of expenditures in the financial reports. As established at the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres,<sup>20</sup> it would be important to maintain this relation and also to include other interlocutors from UNESCO Headquarters and other field offices.

It is important that this contact be carried out with a main Spanish-speaking interlocutor, preferably from the Culture sector in the UNESCO Headquarters. This interlocutor should also participate – physically or virtually – in the meetings of the Board and the Executive Committee.

In order to promote a closer relationship between CERLALC and UNESCO, in accordance with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres, it would also be advisable for the Centre to participate in the main activities at the UNESCO Headquarters in the fields of books, reading and the creative industries in general.<sup>21</sup> The Centre should evaluate the possibility of allocating resources for team training on issues

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<sup>19</sup> The 2015 Global Report on the Monitoring of the 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions establishes four implementation goals derived from the Convention's guiding principles: 1) support sustainable systems of governance for culture; 2) achieve a balanced flow of cultural goods and services and increase the mobility of artists and cultural professionals; 3) integrate culture in sustainable development frameworks; and 4) promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

<sup>20</sup> B.3.3.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. paragraph D.2.1.

related to the 2005 Convention and joint staff exchange initiatives with UNESCO.<sup>22</sup> CERLALC could thus become a hub for the dissemination of UNESCO's objectives in the book sector. Among other initiatives, the Centre could encourage countries in the region that are Parties to the 2005 Convention to include information about the book sector in their national periodic reports.

In the field of new technologies applied to the book sector, collaboration between CERLALC and UNESCO is crucial. The Centre's strategy and projects related to books and reading in the digital era should be directly informed by the progress made by the 2005 Convention Governing Bodies on this topic – particularly, the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment and the analysis on the relationship between the diversity of cultural expressions and new technologies found in the two editions of the Global Report Re/Shaping cultural policies.<sup>23</sup> This could contribute toward a greater conceptual synchronization between the Centre and UNESCO, while it would amplify UNESCO's work on new technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as allow the region to incorporate good practices already validated in other parts of the world.<sup>24</sup> And, if we take into account that CERLALC is at present the only category 2 centre anywhere in the world devoted to books and reading, its efforts in the field of new technologies may be extremely valuable for other regions: in particular, the Centre could make headway in a framework of analysis on the impact of digital tools on the book ecosystem as a creative industry and, for example, adapt the Operational Guidelines in the digital environment to the book sector.

Finally, it would be interesting to renew the agreement between UNESCO and the government of Colombia in a way that incorporates these changes, as well as possible mentions of recent phenomena that show the need for an update – for example, the fact that the Ministry of Culture could be the main interlocutor at the national level in the host country.

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## **2. AN AGILE, HORIZONTAL AND NETWORKED APPROACH**

In the design and implementation of concrete projects derived from the major goals of the long-term Agenda, it would be advisable to adopt – in line with the conclusion formulated in the 2016-2017 Technical Programme – an agile and dynamic methodology. For this, it will be essential to develop the activities under a co-construction modality together with the active forces of the book ecosystem at large, that is, side by side with the actors who are already working in the field –government, private sector and civil society.<sup>25</sup> In addition to giving greater legitimacy to the initiatives, this approach would ensure its sustainability, while reducing operating costs.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. paragraph D.4.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. UNESCO (2015) and UNESCO (2018).

<sup>24</sup> For example, on the importance of conceiving technology not as an end in itself, but as a means, a tool that must be co-created together with local actors.

<sup>25</sup> A good example in this regard is the two-day meeting that the Centre held in late November 2018 to promote regional legislation for Digital and Physical Legal Deposit. Representatives of the book sector will participate, together with representatives of National Libraries from six Ibero-American countries.

<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the recommendations that follow take into account the current context of regional economic crisis and aim to optimize the impact of the measures without increasing the cost structure proposed in section II.



In order to complement the practice of detection of local needs and co-construction, CERLALC could form a network of experts from different countries in the region, who could suggest new ideas within each major goal and target of the Agenda. The role of such a panel would not be to propose unilateral measures to the Centre, but rather to offer useful perspectives for the identification of trends and potential allies. The panel could be extended for periods of two years and, after that, members could be renewed.

In the field of training, “CERLALC workshops” could be promoted.<sup>27</sup> The Centre could also carry out face-to-face and virtual courses together with domestic institutions that can publicize them and manage their follow-up.

In the field of publications, co-publishing could be encouraged, so that the other entity or publishing house contributes to a greater dissemination of the texts.<sup>28</sup> As far as research activities are concerned, universities could become key allies.

In terms of communication, it would be important for CERLALC to find ways to ensure that book chambers and ministries collaborate in the dissemination of its research, publications, events and other initiatives. As for the web page, the Centre has recently revamped its design: the new template presents the activities more clearly than the previous one and offers a greater variety of news and articles. These achievements represent good progress and it would be important to continue in this vein. It would be also necessary to include in the website a section with information in English – at least with basic information – to facilitate the exchange with representatives of the book and reading sector of other regions. At the same time, all digital communication initiatives – such as the website and social networks – should be considered in a way that goes beyond the unidirectional dissemination of information, in order to encourage the participation of civil society. In the specific case of social networks, it would also be interesting to devise a differentiated strategy for each of the networks, so as to take advantage of their specific potential – LinkedIn, for example, could be used for exchanges with industry professionals, while Facebook would be more effective for communicating about events.

When working on projects with the industry, it is recommended to pay attention not only to large groups – which make up the bulk of sales in most countries of the region – but also, and especially, to independent publishers, who are key players in terms of the diversity of cultural expressions. To this end, it would be crucial to build a closer relationship with local and international federations, such as the International Alliance of Independent Publishers, who have been working for years on the examination of issues such as the imbalance in the circulation of books, public procurement policies, challenges and opportunities of the digital era, among others. Several representatives of small and medium publishers pointed out in the interviews that it is not always easy to express their demands to the government, and at this point, CERLALC could be of great help.<sup>29</sup> It also becomes essential to continue with the systematic analysis of regional book trade, considering tariff and non-tariff barriers, the lack of bookstores in many countries, as well as other challenges, in order to build a list of specific

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<sup>27</sup> An interesting precedent is the Chair of Reading, Writing and Libraries of Peru. This is a programme carried out in coordination between specialists of the Ministry of Culture, the National Library of Peru and the House of Peruvian Literature, with the support of CERLALC.

<sup>28</sup> In this line, by 2019, CERLALC plans to launch a co-publishing hub.

<sup>29</sup> It is worth noting that the Centre is proposing Alianza Pacifico to grant a fund for the movement of small publishers throughout the regional book fairs.

commitments that governments could make in order to foster the free circulation of books across the region.

In the field of new technologies, there are pioneering projects in Latin America and the Caribbean that could serve as a reference for the whole publishing sector, but which often do not achieve the necessary visibility. CERLALC could therefore assess the possibility of drawing up a map of the local initiatives that propose a novel approach in the field of books and reading – new media, new formats and new business models. This type of studies would contribute to establishing a dialogue with those new actors and to detecting unmet needs, as well as offering examples that encourage traditional players to experiment more. At the same time, it is urgent to carry out measurements on the weight of the large Internet platforms – in particular Amazon and MercadoLibre – in the physical and digital book trade of the region. In addition, countries need guidance when introducing changes in some their processes, for example in order to incorporate digital content in public procurement or to modernize the legal deposit of electronic books, which is a pending issue in many countries.

CERLALC could also carry out more initiatives related to gender equality, which is a global priority for UNESCO. Several interviewees agreed that, in the book sector, women tend to occupy the middle positions – design, proofreading, purchase and sale of rights, selection of titles – but rarely reach the highest jobs. It is clear that there is still much to be done to achieve a more balanced scenario. A first step would be to give more visibility – through prizes, fellowships, training, and so on – to the work carried out by women in publishing.

Moreover, there are a number of measures that CERLALC could take to adapt its activities to its current possibilities and thus gain efficiency. For example, while the 2016-2017 Technical Programme proposed to operate three regional observatories – the Observatory of Books, Reading and Libraries, the Observatory of Creation and Copyright and the Observatory of Culture and Education in Early Childhood – the 2018-2019 Programme recognizes that it is more convenient to concentrate on a single Observatory –Reading and Education in Early Childhood – and redefine the projects and activities in the areas of Books, Reading and Libraries, and Creation and Copyright. The Reading Development Index project could also be revised to identify which indicators are most necessary and pertinent when analysing the phenomenon of reading. The methodology adopted for measuring reading behaviour could be designed in a way that serves as a reference for the preparation of national reading surveys with at least a series of basic questions and lines of procedures that allow the national exercises to be truly comparable. Incidentally, in the compilation of results of surveys that CERLALC is currently carrying out, the impression given is that the results are comparable, when in fact they are not – in this sense, it is not a product that has great utility for the Member States.

In relation to the Map of Books and Reading, which – as mentioned above – is a medium and long-term initiative, it would be convenient to have a scheduled and precise roadmap as to what the contents would be and for which countries they would be incorporated, taking due account of the availability of information and the capacity of CERLALC to establish alliances to generate it. It would also be very useful to include in this project information about successful practices in the region related to the value chain of books and reading.

Regarding the Catalogue of Latin American Books, it must be recognized that, if successful, the platform could be very useful for the industry, academia, governments and the public in general. However, the initiative is not without significant challenges that should be addressed. When working with a supplier that comes from outside the region, it would be

important to ensure that publishers and other industry players always have the possibility to pay in local currency and that the amounts are not subject to exchange rate fluctuations. At the same time, preferential fees should be guaranteed for smaller players. In addition, at a time when some countries such as Argentina and Mexico are betting on developing their own platforms, it would be useful to open up the game to generate a dynamic and competitive metadata market in which several initiatives could coexist, including the national ISBN agencies, which would thus have an incentive to update both their standards as well as their information exchange gateways. In any case, it would be crucial to consolidate the regional ecosystem of metadata, so that the bibliographic information speaks, so to say, the same language and that the ISBN agencies work with the ONIX standard, the Thema classification system, etc.

From the point of view of resources, it is crucial for CERLALC to maintain and consolidate the measures undertaken during the last years both for maximizing and diversifying incomes and for controlling and optimizing expenditures. These measures have allowed the Centre to gradually strengthen its technical programmes. At a time of regional economic crisis, it seems clear that CERLALC should outline a contingency plan in case countries fall behind in the payment of Members fees. On the other hand, care must be taken to ensure that the administration of extra-budgetary funds and the commitments deriving from this type of resources are authorized, supervised and evaluated in a collegial manner by the same governing bodies, in order to avoid potential incompatibilities or alterations in the Centre's long-term Agenda. Finally, it is clear that the creation of the CERLALC Foundation can serve to overcome the obstacles arising from the change in the 2011 legislation. At any rate, it would be crucial to incorporate a reference to the Foundation and its activities in the Centre's statute, so as to define its role and scope, and establish mechanisms for the governing bodies of CERLALC to validate and evaluate its operations.

Likewise, with the aim of better assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the actions carried out and providing feedback, it is recommended that the technical programmes have indicators not only of products and activities, but also of results and impact.

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## ANNEX 3: MEETINGS WITH THE CERLALC TEAM (9-12 JULY, 2018)

### Monday 9

Subject	Participants	Schedule
1. General objectives and programme of the meetings.	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Alberto Suárez	9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General and specific objectives of CERLALC, priorities and main activities 2015 – 2019 facing regional challenges for books and reading.</li> <li>- Technical programmes 2016-2017, 2017 and 2018-2019.</li> <li>- Budgetary and extra-budgetary financial resources</li> <li>- Coordination with UNESCO HQ and regional offices</li> </ul>	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Alberto Suárez	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 m
3. Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Map of Books and Reading</li> <li>- Ecosystem of books</li> <li>- Libraries</li> <li>- Copyright</li> </ul>	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez José Diego González Fredy Forero Jeimy Hernández	2:30 p.m. -5:30 p.m.

**Tuesday 10**

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
1. Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ISBN</li> <li>- Iberbibliotecas</li> <li>- Regional Network of Officials in Charge of National Reading Plans and Policies project (REDPLANES),</li> <li>- Latin-American Catalogue of Books</li> </ul>	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Fredy Forero Jeimy Hernández María Isabel Deaza José Diego González	8:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m
2. Projects	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez	10:30 a.m. – 12 a. m.
3. Technical assistance	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Jeimy Hernandez Sofía Parra Lorena Panche Fredy Forero	2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Wednesday 11**

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
1. Observatories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observatory of reading and early childhood</li> <li>- Observatory of Copyright</li> <li>- Books, reading and libraries</li> </ul>	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Jeimy Hernandez Fredy Forero Lorena Panche Sofía Parra	9:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

2. Training: objectives, activities, projects, results and vision for the future.	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Edwin Muñoz Lorena Panche (Ineli) Fredy Forero (Idartes)	10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
3. Communication and publications: objectives, activities, projects, results and vision for the future.  - Website redesign - Publishing strategy. - Social media.	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez Alexander Zambrano Carolina Medellín José Diego González Juan Camilo Orjuela	2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### Thursday 12

Subjects	Participants	Schedule
1. Participation in seminars and other events	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez	9:00 - 10:30 a.m.
2. Agreements and steps to follow	Marianne Ponsford Francisco Thaine Bibiana Rodríguez	10:30 - 12:00 a. m.



## ANNEX 4: INTERVIEWS

### **People interviewed in Argentina**

Pablo Avelluto, Minister of Culture.

Mariano Roca, National Coordinator for the Promotion and Dissemination of Literature.

Leandro De Sagastizábal, President of CONABIP (National Commission of Popular Libraries).

Diana Segovia, Managing Director of the Argentine Book Chamber.

Sebastián Noejovich, Director of the Centre for Children's Literature at the National Library.

Ezequiel Martínez, Advisor to the Directorate of Libraries (City of Buenos Aires).

Leandro Donozo, Independent Publisher, Director of the Publishing House "Gourmet Musical".

Trini Vergara, Independent Publisher at V&R, former President of the Argentine Chamber of Publications.

Fernando Pérez Morales, Independent Bookseller and Publisher at Notanpuan.

Oche Califa, Institutional and Cultural Director of El Libro Foundation.

### **People interviewed in Colombia (Host State)**

Mariana Garcés Córdoba, Minister of Culture.

Santiago Jara, Director of Cultural Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Giomar Acevedo, Director of Arts at the Ministry of Culture.

Carolina Romero Romero, General Director of Copyright.

Fanuel Hanán Díaz, Writer and Chief of Strategic Relations at Norma Publishing House.

María Osorio, Director of Babel Publishing House.

Juan Felipe Córdoba Restrepo, Publishing Director at University of Rosario.

### **People interviewed in Mexico**

Marina Núñez, General Director of Publishing at the Ministry of Culture.

Mario Gastón García, Writer and coordinator of the International Fair of Books for Children at the Ministry of Culture.

Carlos Anaya, President of the Mexican Chamber of Publishers (CANIEM).

Daniel Goldin, Director of the Vasconcelos Library.

Jorge Von Ziegler, General Director of Libraries at the Ministry of Culture.

José Ignacio Echeverría, President of Ibero-american Publishers Group (GIE) and former President of the Mexican Chamber of Publishers (CANIEM).

Roberto Banchik Rothschild, General Director of Penguin Random House.

Hugo Setzer Letshe, Vicepresident and future President of the International Publishers Association (IPA).

Nubia Macías, Former director of the Guadalajara International Book Fair.

Elisa Bonilla Rius, General Director of Curricular Development at the Ministry of Education.

Angélica Vázquez del Mercado, Director of Cultural Program “Tierra Adentro” and coordinator of the National Plan for Reading.

### **People interviewed in Spain**

Javier Pascual, Deputy Director for Books, Reading and Spanish Literature at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.

Luis González, Director General of the Germán Sánchez Ruipérez Foundation.

Natalia Armijos, Advisor to the General Secretary, Organization of Ibero-American States.

Inés Miret, Co-founder of Neturity and international expert in digital projects in culture, education and reading.

Elea Giménez, researcher and expert in the evaluation of scientific books in social sciences and humanities.

José Manuel Anta, Managing Director of the Spanish Federation of Book, Print Media and Digital Contents Distributors (FANDE) and the International Publishing Distribution Association (IPDA).

#### **People interviewed at UNESCO**

Ernesto Ottone, Assistant Director-General for Culture.

Katherine Muller, Director of the UNESCO Regional Office for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana).

Danielle Cliche, Secretary of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Fernando Brugman, Former Programme Specialist at UNESCO Office in Havana (currently in Beirut).

Melika Medici Caucino, Programme Specialist, Section of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, UNESCO.

## ANNEX 5: ONLINE SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, which aims to better understand the needs of the books and reading sector in Ibero-America and provide elements for the evaluation of the Regional Centre for Book Promotion in America and the Caribbean (CERLALC), carried out by UNESCO.

**Email address \***

*\* Required*

**First and last name \***

**You are a \***

- **researcher**
- **public official**
- **publisher**
- **writer**
- **librarian**
- **promoter**
- **bookseller**
- **teacher**
- **other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider to be the 5 main functions of CERLALC regarding the promotion of books and reading? \***

- Promote the strengthening of the publishing sector in the region
- Promote the circulation of printed and digital books in Ibero-America
- Develop professional training programmes for publishers and booksellers
- Support the visibility of Ibero-American publishing production
- Promote the development of regional strategies to strengthen the publishing industry
- Provide technical assistance to governments for the development of legislation and policies on the book ecosystem
- Disseminate up-to-date information on the Ibero-American and world publishing industry
- Conduct research on the ecosystem of the book
- Produce statistical analyses on the development of the regional publishing industry
- Advise and accompany the work of the ISBN agencies of the region
- Advise and accompany the work of the book chambers of the region
- Promote the development of information standards in the publishing sector
- Promote the emergence of a single book market in Ibero-America
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider to be the 3 main functions of CERLALC in the field of copyright? \***

- Accompany legislative processes on copyright and related rights
- Design awareness campaigns for the strengthening of copyright
- Disseminate specialized information on copyright

- Design strategies to strengthen copyright systems in the region
- Produce specialized knowledge in the area of copyright and related rights
- Develop training programmes to broaden the knowledge of various actors on copyright
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider to be the 5 main functions of CERLALC in the field of reading and libraries? \***

- Raise awareness among governments and civil society on the importance of reading
- Promote and advise on the development of national reading plans and policies
- Produce specialized research on reading promotion, reader behaviour and libraries
- Produce statistical analysis on reading behaviour in Latin America
- Provide technical assistance to governments for the development of legislation and policies on reading and libraries
- Promote the strengthening of public and school library systems in the region
- Create methodological tools for the work of reading promoters and librarians
- Disseminate specialized information on the subject of reading and libraries
- Develop professional training programmes for reading promoters, teachers, librarians and caregivers
- Promote the transfer of good practices among the countries of the region
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you consider that in recent years the CERLALC has adequately fulfilled these functions? \***

- Yes, fully
- Partially
- No, not at all

**Why? \***

**[Researchers]**

**What has been your interaction / collaboration experience with CERLALC? In what projects or activities have you been involved? \***

**What are the research and information gathering issues that CERLALC should consider as priorities? \***

**In your direct experience, what have been the most successful projects of CERLALC? \***

**Which issues, if any, are insufficiently addressed? \***

**In the future, what new programmes would you suggest that CERLALC should undertake? \***

**What do you consider to be the main obstacles to the free circulation of books in the Ibero-American region? \***

**How representative are the ISBN statistics in relation to your country's publishing production? \***

- ISBN statistics adequately reflect the reality of national editorial production
- ISBN statistics do not adequately measure national editorial production
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

[End of the form]

**[Public sector]**

**On which of the following topics has your country recently received support from CERLALC? \***

- legislation on books and reading
- legislation on copyright
- formulation of national reading programmes
- evaluation of national reading programmes
- measurement of reading behaviour
- training of librarians and support for libraries
- ISBN registration
- book fairs
- support for publishers
- support for booksellers
- support for distributors
- support for writers

**Please expand your answers, presenting some examples of each selected case \***

**In the future, what new programmes would you suggest that CERLALC should undertake and what current programmes should be strengthened? \***

**Do you think that the fees that CERLALC charges the Member States are high enough or should they be increased? \***

- They are sufficient
- They should be increased
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Should CERLALC resort to other sources of financing and, if so, what could these be? \***

**What do you consider to be the main obstacles to the free circulation of books in the Ibero-American region? \***

[End of the form]

**[Publishers]**

**CERLALC carries out different training programmes (virtual and face-to-face). Have you already participated in any of these trainings? \***

- Yes
- No

**What training programmes do the publishers of the region need? \***

**Among the other activities carried out by CERLALC, which ones do you consider to be the most important? \***

**Do you believe there are topics that are insufficiently addressed? \***

**What do you consider to be the main needs / challenges of the publishing sector in the Ibero-American region? \***

**How representative do you think the ISBN registration statistics are in relation to your country's publishing production? \***

- ISBN statistics faithfully reflect the reality of national editorial production
- ISBN statistics do not adequately measure national editorial production
- Other:

[End of the form]

**[Writers]**

**What are the main needs / challenges for writers in the region? \***

**Among the activities carried out by CERLALC, which ones do you consider to be the most important? \***

**Do you believe there are topics that are insufficiently addressed? \***

**What do you consider to be the main obstacles to the free circulation of books in the Ibero-American region? \***

[End of the form]

**[Librarians]**

**CERLALC carries out different training programmes (virtual and face-to-face). Have you already participated in any of these trainings? \***

- Yes
- No

**What training programmes do librarians in the region need? \***

**Among the other activities carried out by CERLALC, which ones do you consider to be the most important? \***

**Do you believe there are topics that are insufficiently addressed? \***

**What do you consider to be the main obstacles to the free circulation of books in the Ibero-American region? \***

[End of the form]



**[Other]**

**CERLALC carries out different programmes (virtual and face-to-face training, research, awareness-raising seminars, among many others). Have you already participated in any of these activities? \***

**Among the activities carried out by CERLALC, which ones do you consider to be the most important? \***

**Do you believe there are topics that are insufficiently addressed? \***

**What do you consider to be the main obstacles to the free circulation of books in the Ibero-American region? \***

**[End of the form]**