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**INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION** CIDI/CIE/doc.16/21

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VIRTUAL

Report of the Technical Secretariat of the

Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)

(January 2019 to October 2021)

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Progress report on the implementation of the mandates of the

Tenth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education

Activities of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)

**Background**

Resolution [CIDI/RME/RES. 1/15 rev. 1](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=V.11.1%20CIDI/RME/RES.&classNum=1&lang=e), adopted at the Eighth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education, entrusted the CIE with the construction of an Inter-American Education Agenda (IEA). The IEA was adopted in 2017 at the Ninth Meeting of Ministers of Education, held in the Bahamas. It addresses three priority areas: quality, inclusive, and equitable education; strengthening the teaching profession; and comprehensive early childhood care.

In July 2019, the Tenth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education adopted the [Plan of Action of Antigua and Barbuda](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=V.13.1%20CIDI/RME/doc&classNum=6&lang=e) (PAAB) was adopted, which aims to promote the IEA by “building sustainable partnerships through cooperation, with renewed focus on education and skills development for better citizenry.”

Based on the IEA’s priority areas and in the context of the emergency declared because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [CIE 2019-2022 Work Plan](https://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dhdee/cie/PLAN%20TRABAJO%20CIE%202019-2022-APROBADO-CIDED00212-ING.docx) was adopted in July 2020. In it, the authorities of the CIE called for work on a Hemispheric Action Plan for the Continuity of Education under the Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic (known by the Spanish-language acronym PHACE). This made it possible to adjust, in different stages, the activities agreed on and to incorporate additional specific actions in addition to those defined in the Work Plan, in order to ensure the continuity of learning at the different levels of the education system and to focus attention on those most disadvantaged by the current circumstances.

This report sets out the actions undertaken between January 2019 and October 2021. They are divided into four categories: public policy dialogues within the education sector process, PHACE, intersectoral dialogues, and programmatic areas.

1. **Public policy dialogues within the education sector process**

During the IEA implementation process, the Ministers of Education have strengthened their exchanges of experiences and discussions on public policies at venues for dialogue at which they have been able to identify priority areas for action to guide inter-American cooperation on education.

* **Meetings of CIE authorities and IEA working groups in the framework of the ministerial process**

At the start of the new ministerial cycle following the July 2019 Meeting of Ministers of Education, different face-to-face and virtual meetings were organized. For 2020, 24 projects with hemispheric potential for the implementation of the CIE Work Plan were identified.

Once approved, three presentations on the Work Plan were made to the member states (“road shows”). These presentations provided the countries with the opportunity to openly express their interests, needs, and commitments in connection with the Work Plan.

* **Presentations of the CIE 2019–2022 Work Plan**

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| **Presentation No. 1**  September 9, 2020 | **Presentation No. 2**  September 16, 2020 | **Presentation No. 3**  September 23, 2020 |
| **Participating countries:**  Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama. | **Participating countries:**  Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Haiti, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago. | **Participating countries:**  Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, México, Peru, United States. |
| **Countries expressed interest in:** issues relating to school dropout rates and initiatives to ensure the completion of school cycles; implementation of early childhood and mental health policies in the context of the pandemic. | **Countries expressed interest in:** early childhood education; obesity and healthy habits; mental health; access to equipment and connectivity for distance education; education for the development of work skills; and strengthening STREAM teaching methods. | **Countries expressed interest in:** topics such as adolescent dropout rates and emotional education. |

In keeping with the interest in the Work Plan’s different projects expressed by the countries, venues for dialogue and working groups were set up in the form of virtual seminars, which enabled the CIE to develop a methodology for conducting various public policy dialogues over the 2019–2022 period, as described in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.9/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=9&lang=e). A chronological overview of those activities is presented below.

* **Virtual forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences on inclusion and equity in education (July 22 and 29, 2021)**

This undertaking corresponded to project No. 13 in the CIE Work Plan. Two sessions were organized under the leadership of Colombia, to enable the region’s countries to share education policies, regulations, tools, and experiences with promoting quality education framed by inclusion and equity in a context of change.

Detailed information on the contributions made by the participating countries, as well as the main conclusions reached and a compilation of fact sheets in which the participating officials summarize significant experiences from their countries, may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.4/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=4&lang=e).

* **Virtual working session “Roadmap toward bilingualism in Costa Rica: an educational experience with a national approach”** **(July 23, 2021).**

This undertaking corresponded to project No. 17 in the Work Plan. It was organized under the leadership of Costa Rica with the aim of promoting new visions about the development of students’ communicative skills through foreign, indigenous, and visio-gestural languages and, in the process, to contribute to the generation of public policies, research, capacity-building, practices, and the infrastructure necessary to make those visions a reality in the region. The working session was attended by high-level officials appointed by the ministries of education of 12 participating countries. Detailed information on the contributions made by the participating countries, as well as the main conclusions generated, may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.7/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=7&lang=s).

1. **Hemispheric Action Plan for the Continuity of Education under the Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic (PHACE)**

As early as the final talks and discussions for the approval of the CIE Work Plan, the ministries had already anticipated that there would be structural changes in education. This vision led the CIE authorities to work on the PHACE, which makes it possible to adapt, in different stages, the activities and projects set out in the Work Plan, in order to ensure the continuity of learning at the different levels of the education system and to focus attention on those most disadvantaged by the current circumstances. This strategy was based on an analysis and the reality of the current actions being pursued by the region’s governments — and other international experiences that could be adapted — to highlight the elements that have worked, improve those that have posed challenges, and propose possible solutions for the road ahead.

To support the member states in addressing the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 15,000 educational resources, free training courses, and videos were made available virtually to share approaches and solutions on the priority issues identified by the member states; for example, the [#EducationInTimesOfChange](https://portal.educoas.org/es/redes/educaci-n/experiencias-video-spots?lang=en) series of video spots combined different points of view, experiences, and recommendations from education ministries, educational institutions, and online education experts to guide and inspire alternative solutions to the contingencies imposed by COVID-19. Another initiative that arose was for the ministries to use the [Ministry Space](https://portal.educoas.org/es/redes/educaci-n/espacio-ministerios-ministry-space?lang=en) to share platforms, guidelines, reports, and government strategies for mitigating the pandemic’s impact.

The ministries of education made specific requests to receive support under PHACE. This adjustment was essential, and virtual public policy dialogues were organized on issues of student assessment, digital accessibility in education for people with disabilities, and the return to face-to-face education.

The outcomes of these events include an ongoing dialogue and exchanges of documents within the Virtual Portal community, which offers a digital venue for policy dialogue among member states. The activities and initiatives pursued within the PHACE framework are presented below, in chronological order.

* **Global Forum on Education Futures: Re-imagining the building of resilient and change-responsive education systems (August 12, 2020)**

This event brought together educational leaders and decision-makers at a symposium to develop new visions for education in the post-pandemic world.

The forum contributed to the development of short-, medium-, and long-term action plans to support educational transformation by addressing a range of challenges, including: developing a set of principles for equity, inclusion, and ethics in transforming education; devising a research agenda in support of the transformation of education; reviewing relevant education policies to support digital and blended modes of instruction; developing resilient systems for education to manage the ongoing disruption from COVID-19 and future disruptions; incorporating the education and transformation of the workforce into economic recovery programs; re-imagining educational assessment in a blended context and using skill-based approaches; and developing a robust digital infrastructure to enable workforce learning and training.

One request made at the forum was for more global initiatives in conjunction with organizations such as MIT, together with the creation of an agreement or **hemispheric compact for education** involving society, communities, the private sector, and states.

* **Dialogue and exchange of experiences on evaluation in the context of COVID-19 (October 8, 2020)**

Organized under the leadership of Colombia, this event arose from the need to adapt curricular structures in order to ensure the continued provision of home-based education services. This generated concerns among the Hemisphere’s education ministries regarding the implications that these changes would have on learning assessment, grade advancement, and decision-making in schools.

In that context, it was decided that it would be useful to establish a venue for reflection on the opportunities that this experience offers for rethinking the why, how, and to what end of educational and pedagogical processes in the development and learning of the student population and in the exercise of their rights. It was created as a venue for learning about the region’s experiences with the evaluation of education processes in the COVID-19 context with a view to drawing up a documented proposal in relation to students’ completion of the school year and grade advancement. Through this meeting, the countries gained an overview of the actions taken by their counterparts in the other countries of the region, and, in addition, [a community on the CIE virtual portal](https://portal.educoas.org/es/redes/educaci-n/inicio-home?lang=en) was set up to continue the exchange of experiences and documentation.

* **Dialogue session: Exchange and reflection on the return to face-to-face education (December 4, 2020)**

Led by Ecuador, this event was aimed at high-level risk management officials, technical authorities coordinating strategies for the return to face-to-face education in the COVID-19 context, pedagogical policy coordinators, and coordinators of educational research teams. It was intended to provide a virtual forum for an open, constructive, and secure exchange of proven experiences and persistent challenges with strategies for the return to face-to-face education in the region’s educational institutions.

This exchange obeyed the need to face important challenges, including the following: stable and constant access to internet connections in rural areas; access to technological equipment; high percentages of students without access to connectivity; ensuring the quality of education in its different modes (face-to-face, hybrid, and distance); developing protocols; and ensuring the continuity of education services.

As a result of this dialogue, a venue was created on the [Educational Portal of the Americas](https://portal.educoas.org/es/redes/educaci-n/inicio-home) where experts and authorities can share experiences, policies, regulations, documents, and resources relating to the return to face-to-face education during the COVID-19 crisis. The main conclusions may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.6/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=6&lang=e).

* **Towards a culture of digital accessibility: educational experiences and challenges for people with disabilities during times of pandemic (December 9, 2020)**

This event was led by Costa Rica with assistance from Argentina and Colombia. It was aimed at high-level education ministry officials responsible for inclusive education and accessibility and was intended to facilitate the sharing of the educational experiences of students with disabilities and their families, as well as of professionals in the area, with a focus on the care of students and teachers with disabilities.

As a result of the meeting, [a virtual forum on the CIE portal](https://portal.educoas.org/es/redes/educaci-n/inicio-home?lang=en) was established to continue the conversation and exchanges of documents. Another suggestion made was for the creation of a regional repository with a broader approach; this would be open and free of charge for teachers, families, and students, and it would capitalize on the educational resources generated by countries before, during, and after the pandemic that mainstream accessibility for all members of the education community, taking into consideration rural areas, the needs and characteristics of peoples and nationalities, the needs of persons with disabilities, and so on. The conclusions may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.5/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=5&lang=e).

* **Regular meeting of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) (May 25, 2021)**

The theme of this meeting was “Deepening synergies among global, hemispheric, and subregional education initiatives.” A panel was held with speakers from international organizations involved with CIE Work Plan projects; authorities from the ministries of education of Costa Rica and Colombia, who shared their national experiences within the PHACE framework, also participated.

The meeting’s outcomes included the generation of synergies and the identification of opportunities for collaboration and cooperation among the member states and with regional institutions for the implementation of initiatives in the areas of education and human development, in keeping with OAS General Assembly resolution [AG/RES. 2955 (L-O/20)](https://www.oas.org/en/sla/docs/AG08273E10.pdf).

Concept paper: document CIDI/INF.426/21: [Español](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=CIDI/INF.&classNum=426&lang=s) | [English](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=CIDI/INF.&classNum=426&lang=e) | [Français](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=CIDI/INF.&classNum=426&lang=f) | [Português](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=CIDI/INF.&classNum=426&lang=p)

1. **Intersectoral dialogues**

Intersectoral collaboration among the education, labor, and health sectors has been ongoing since 2019. The activities carried out are presented below, in chronological order:

* **Intersectoral workshop “The skills of the future”** **(May 16 and 17, 2019)**

This event was organized under the aegis of the Government of Chile and with support from the International Labour Organization. The workshop’s aims were to achieve a better understanding on the challenges that rapid technological change and the transformation of the world of work are posing within education and training systems; to discuss trends and methodologies for the development of the skills of the future, taking into account specific experiences within the education and job training systems; to analyze experiences with teamwork and/or coordination between labor and education ministries, as well as with other public and private actors, for identifying and developing the skills of the future; and to identify lessons learned and policy recommendations for improving coordination between the education and labor sectors.

As a result of this workshop, several regional-level actions were suggested, including working towards equivalence in National Qualifications Frameworks and designing a pilot program for regionwide student mobility. The conclusions may be found in document [CIDI/RME/INF.2/19](http://scm.oas.org/doc_public/ENGLISH/HIST_19/CIDED00180E02.doc).

* **Online workshop-course:** **“Moving towards a regional qualifications framework” (July 12 to August 23, 2021)**

This event was held within the framework of project No. 21 of the CIE Work Plan, which proposes developing, with ILO-CINTERFOR, OREALC/UNESCO Santiago, and UNICEF, a matrix of descriptors and levels of a Regional Qualifications Framework and principles for their usability and comparability. It was aimed at professionals and technicians from vocational training institutions, ministries of labor, and ministries of education in charge of the design of policies for quality improvements, innovations in education and vocational training, regional interconnections, and skill homologation and recognition. The workshop-course continued the work of the course on the implementation of National Qualification Frameworks held in 2020.

* **Cooperation agreement between the Organization of American States and the Internet Society (October 2021)**

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Internet Society (ISOC) signed a cooperation agreement to promote capacity-building within and among OAS member states through training, research, and analysis on matters related to the internet industry. As part of this agreement, in December 2021 the Internet Society offered virtual courses, tools, and resources to support more than 200 officials responsible for designing and enacting policy in OAS member states through an increased understanding of basic internet principles, including its essential properties, how it is governed, and issues of online privacy and security.

* **Intersectoral dialogue: “Promoting school environments for healthy nutrition and physical activity” (November 30, 2020)**

In November 2020, a series of intersectoral dialogues on school environments, healthy eating, and physical activity began, under the aegis of the CIE Work Plan’s project No. 4: Coordinate with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and its Department of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDS) on the implementation of actions in the countries of the region for the promotion, monitoring, and evaluation of school environments conducive to the prevention of noncommunicable diseases in Latin America and the Caribbean. Detailed information on the contributions made by the participating countries, as well as the main conclusions reached, may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.8/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=8&lang=e).

* **Intersectoral dialogue: “Promoting healthy life skills through physical and nutrition education in schools” (June 30, 2021)**

This was the second intersectoral dialogue held in conjunction with PAHO/NCDS. The participants shared ideas and initiatives on how to promote new visions of healthy life skills through physical and nutrition education in schools. Detailed information on the contributions made by the participating countries, as well as the main conclusions reached, may be found in document [CIDI/CIE/doc.8/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/doc&classNum=8&lang=e).

* **Intersectoral dialogue: “Policies and programs for the enforcement of school food regulations and standards” (September 29, 2021)**

This was the third intersectoral dialogue held jointly with PAHO/NCDS. It was intended to enable an exchange of experiences, public policies, programs, and initiatives on the promotion, regulation, and control of standards and actions governing the availability, sale, and marketing of food in the school environment. At this event for dialogue and programmatic exchanges of experiences, the possibilities for the design of future public policies for improving food supplies in school environments were identified and explored.

1. **Programmatic areas of the Department of Human Development, Education, and Employment**

As the CIE Technical Secretariat, the Department of Human Development, Education, and Employment carries out activities in line with the IEA’s commitments in four programmatic areas. The main actions and outcomes obtained in each of these are described below.

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| **Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN)**  Work was undertaken with 57 regional teacher education institutions to provide STEM teacher training through multilateral collaborations supported by nearly US$500,000 in financial benefits for 26 member states.  More than 234,000 STEM teachers from 34 member states received training, including 3,288 who received face-to-face training.  Virtual poster session, webinar, and publications on effective STEM teacher training practices. | **Leo S. Rowe Pan American Fund**  Access to quality tertiary education was facilitated and cultural exchanges and lifelong learning were promoted for citizens of 32 OAS member countries, through interest-free financial aid grants of up to $15,000 for university studies in the United States.  Nonreimbursable scholarships in the amount of US$2,000 were awarded to citizens of 19 OAS member states who were facing financial difficulties in completing their studies in the United States because of the COVID-19 pandemic. |
| **OAS Scholarships and Training Program**  With the participation of key partners and the Governments of Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Spain, and the United States, the number of quality, inclusive, and equitable educational opportunities offered to CARICOM citizens increased with 2,400 new offerings for undergraduate and postgraduate online studies in the 2020-2021 cycle.  With the support of the Government of Chile, more than 1,800 CARICOM citizens received training in disaster risk management, climate resilience, and tourism over the 2018-2021 period.  Following negotiations with STRUCTURALIA, more than 6,000 scholarships were offered to citizens of the Americas, creating one of the largest ever OAS scholarship programs with a partner that offers STEM-related online master’s and postgraduate degree programs and courses.  The partnership with the UWI Open Campus, in collaboration with the Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN), supported the training of 400 teachers in the area of early childhood education and care.  More than 170 citizens of the Americas accepted scholarship offers to pursue a Master of Science in educational leadership, management, and emerging technologies at Marconi International University, thereby strengthening teaching and ICTs among the region’s teaching profession.  More than 85 citizens of the Americas received scholarships to complete an online diploma course in STEM-STEAM education at the Pontifical Bolivarian University of Colombia during the 2020-2021 scholarship cycle.  More than 1,300 scholarships were awarded to citizens of the Americas to pursue various STEM- and STREAM-related online programs at the *Formato Educativo* business school over 2019 to 2021. | **Educational Portal of the Americas**  Public-private alliances are key to advancing the objectives set by the Committee in the IEA, and SEDI has consolidated important alliances with partners that enable the optimal use of resources and the pursuit of those goals.  Through the OAS-ProFuturo education program, more than US$540,000 worth of technological equipment has been provided to 92 primary schools in the Caribbean, and more than 5,000 teachers from across the Americas have been trained in ICT innovation and integration in teaching.  The Educational Portal of the Americas has continued to offer courses and diplomas for professional development in topics relevant to the region, including education, gender awareness, and territorial development.  In recent years, more than 2,000 people have accessed these programs.  Thanks to partnerships with other OAS agencies and secretariats, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), over the past year new training programs on human rights, public security, cybersecurity, and violence prevention in different areas were developed. Most of these courses were offered on a cost-free basis. |

A detailed country-by-country report of each of the programmatic activities for the 2019 to 2021 period can be found [here](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdrive.google.com%2Fdrive%2Ffolders%2F1RQKpWbi2i_c92Rwn7QTomfQZOCSKhwxm%3Fusp%3Dsharing&data=04%7C01%7CJGiacoman%40oas.org%7C07cb02f898744daf0d8108d9bbefce32%7C4fdc3f2315064175958c37999cee0941%7C0%7C0%7C637747460905598496%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=nLu3VsN3rZjdKtZJAodLyQRhbNQyLCpFu6R8WWIuE5U%3D&reserved=0).

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