**FIRST SPECIAL MEETING OF THE** OEA/Ser.W/XIII.6.1E

**INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION** CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 5/22

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VIRTUAL

FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRST SPECIAL MEETING OF THE

INTER-AMERICAN COMMIttee ON EDUCATION (CIE)

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The First Special Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE) was held virtually on February 16, 2022. The meeting consisted of an inaugural session and three plenary sessions chaired by Minister Jaime Perczyk, Minister of Education of Argentina as Chair of the CIE and Minister María Brown Pérez, Minister of Education of Ecuador and Vice Chair of the CIE. This meeting was attended by delegations from 31 member states. The List of Participants compiled by the Secretariat is contained in document [CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 4/22](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=4&lang=t)

1. Inaugural Session

The Meeting began with an inaugural session in which the Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, Jesus Giacoman Zapata, offered welcome remarks on behalf of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development. Director Giacoman's welcome remarks are included in the document [CIDI/CIE/E-I/INF.1/22](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/INF&classNum=1&lang=t)

Minister Jaime Perczyk in his opening remarks highlighted the importance of these meetings that, despite being done virtuality, they allow the rapprochement between countries and the generation of productive discussions and deliberations, and pointed out, in turn, the possibility of holding the XI Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education in May of the current year under this same modality in order to establish goals, agree on policies, balances, diagnoses, and build an agenda for the entire region.

Likewise, he pointed out that the work to be carried out during the next three years must reflect the opinions, interests, needs and practices of all the members of the organization; so that the Inter-American Education Agenda (IEA) becomes a tool that facilitates access to an inclusive, equitable and quality education that provides lifelong learning opportunities to all students and decent work to all teachers in the region within the framework of democratic societies, that value and respect human rights, freedoms, opinions and that guarantee personal and collective development for all.

The Chair also referred to the actions aimed at favoring the face-to-face return of all the actors that make up the educational community, and in this regard, he mentioned, among them, those linked to the repair of economic, social, and cultural consequences derived from the pandemic, with special attention to the most vulnerable. He also referred to the need for greater public investment and to revalue the role of families and civil society organizations, as well as those initiatives aimed at recovering content, knowledge and learning necessary for children and young people to be inserted in society and in the workplace.

He ended by emphasizing that the achievement of common objectives requires the participation and collaboration of all and urged to take advantage of this space for dialogue that is the IEA so that the officials of the ministries can exchange good practices, share challenges, think together of plans, programs and projects that seek to strengthen public policies aimed at the best education of the countries and peoples of the hemisphere. At the end of his speech, he thanked the support received from the Technical Secretariat of the CIE so that this ministerial cycle is plural, diverse, rich, that it prepares proposals, but especially that it is participatory.

1. First plenary session

Minister Perczyk submitted to the consideration of the delegations the draft agenda for the meeting, document [CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 1/22](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=1&lang=e); and the draft schedule, document [CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 2/22,](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=2&lang=e) which were approved without objection.

1. **Second plenary session: Construction of the second phase of the Inter-American Education Agenda (2022-2027)**

As mentioned in resolution [CIDI/CIE/RES. 1/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.9%20CIDI/CIE/RES&classNum=1&lang=e) "Methodology for constructing the second phase of the Inter-American Education Agenda" adopted in November 2021, this special meeting was convened by the CIE authorities to confirm the priorities of the second phase of the IEA 2022-2027, its elements and emerging needs, as well as defining the necessary actions to guarantee educational continuity in the next five years, all with a special focus on populations in vulnerable conditions and in accordance with the topics discussed in the dialogues held in the last 18 months.

At the IX Regular Meeting held in November, 2021, the CIE Officers established as essential axes that must guide the IEA: post-pandemic educational recovery and repair; student mobility and the recognition of studies among the different countries of the region; the inclusion of concrete actions in education to mitigate climate change; interconnected professional development and teacher training in the region’s countries; use of new technologies in education; the relationship between education, employment, and national development; promoting healthy school environments and, finally, research linked to the contextual problems of educational systems.. As well as their intention of developing a work plan focused on promoting venues for discussion and support on issues such as the reactivation of the post-pandemic education sector, the safe return to face-to-face classes, the recovery of learning, innovation and the digital education agenda, and educational inclusion for children and adolescents in situations of vulnerability, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and those in condition of human mobility.

The thematic lines that the CIE authorities proposed to be discussed at this First Special Meeting, so that they become products and concrete actions for their implementation in the Action Plan and the Work Plan of the CIE 2022-2025, are presented in document [CIDI/CIE/EI/doc. 3/22 rev.1](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=3&lang=e) grouped into two priority areas: Systemic approach towards building resilient education systems and the Intersectoral Agenda.

**A systemic approach towards building resilient education systems**

The Chair of the CIE started the discussion on the document [CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 3/22 rev.1](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=3&lang=s) "Draft proposal for the second phase of the Inter-American Education Agenda 2022-2027" citing the five topics related to the first of the priority areas proposed in the document.

In his capacity as Minister of Education of the Republic of Argentina, he pointed out that one of the main challenges for Argentina is the disengagement or intermittent linkage of millions of students as a result of the pandemic, which is why some of the priority actions in Argentina include: the prioritization of content and recovery of knowledge, a significant investment in school spaces, in the appointment of teachers, in extracurricular spaces, in the provision of books and technological equipment, the incorporation of job training in secondary schools, as well as the climate change agenda.

He mentioned that these issues constitute the great challenges faced by the education sector in the region and that they are also discussed within the framework of specialized international organizations, in regional organizations, in the respective integration spaces at the sub-regional level, in political forums and in other more technical forums; however, he emphasized that the CIE has the particularity that it has become a space for dialogue that seeks to transform reality based on concrete, shared, cooperative, solidary and horizontal actions. He then invited the member states to share their countries' ideas and experiences related to this topic.

The Delegation of Saint Lucia thanked the OAS for its continued accompaniment and the initiatives that arise from the spaces for dialogue. It reaffirmed the words of the Minister of Argentina regarding the objective of retaining students in the educational system.

The Delegation of Mexico agreed with the idea of working from a systemic approach and expressed the importance of maintaining an effective dialogue on the exchange of educational policies that contribute to guaranteeing the right to education through strategic programs promoted by the Ministries of Education of the OAS member countries. Mexico expressed its willingness to share the initiatives being worked on in its Secretariat of Public Education related to the issue of fighting bullying, as well as on the issue of health.

The Mexican Delegation also shared initiatives generated by the Sub-Secretariat of Basic Education related to the launching of a strategy to address academic lag and school dropout; as well as to promote knowledge and the application of innovative methodologies for the recovery of learning, emphasizing, among others, the strategy of the Universal Design for Learning. They mentioned the efforts to structure and activate the early warning system, and to generate protocols and guidelines for teachers and schools in the face of different types of school dropout. They concluded by referring to the importance of involvement from the local and community level to guarantee the right to higher education and to be able to contemplate resilient models to have an accurate and innovative response with hybrid formats and thus establish exchanges among the entire region.

The Brazilian Delegation commented that the Ministry of Education has invested in initiatives to urgently raise the quality of education, as well as in teacher training and training young people for the labor market. They commented that an evaluation and diagnostic platform has been implemented that provides tools and resources to monitor individual progress in learning. He also referred to the “*Tempo de aprender*”(Time to Learn) and “*Brasil na escola”*(Brazil in school) programs related to improving literacy processes and reducing school dropout rates through innovative tools, respectively.

Brazil also referred to the “*Re-saber*” (Professional Competences and Knowledge Certification National System) program, that seeks to reduce informal work and promote social and productive inclusion and involvement in vocational and technological education programs. Finally, he referred to the “*Educa mais forte norte e nordeste*” (Strong Education North and Northeast) program, which seeks to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, strengthen access to education from early childhood and prevent dropout.

The Delegation of Guyana highlighted the actions of the Ministry of Education to guarantee the continuity of education, including the implementation of health protocols for face-to-face classes, as well as the implementation of a rotation system that has resulted in the expansion of ICT infrastructure for the dissemination of information, especially to the most remote or hard-to-reach regions. Finally, the Delegation expressed agreement with the initiatives that emerge from the dialogue spaces generated by the CIE.

Nicaragua referred to the actions implemented by the Ministry of Education, highlighting that during the pandemic there was no closure of educational centers, and that classroom work was complemented with training for teachers and families in the use of technology and the Internet, as well as teleclasses and work guides. Finally, Nicaragua emphasized the importance of the opportunities for dialogue provided by the OAS as they allow the region to address the common challenges faced by the countries of the Hemisphere.

The Bahamas Delegation highlighted the improvement of infrastructure, the implementation of a learning management system and the provision of electronic devices through public-private partnerships as some of the measures implemented to ensure the continuity of education in the different islands of the archipelago. They also highlighted the door-to-door approach to provide the required assistance in the case of students whose parents were afraid to send them to school; in addition to strategies such as a diagnostic assessment and the availability of after-school hours to reduce and eliminate learning gaps among students.

The representative of the Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica, in addition to mentioning the strategies for the continuity of the educational processes of students, referred to the need for the country to position itself on the issue of attention to disability, not only for students, but also for teachers who also need educational and adaptive support that are part of inclusion, of the egalitarian processes in education. In this regard, Costa Rica stated that they consider attention to disability to be one of the most relevant issues.

Ecuador mentioned the vaccination plan and the prioritized curriculum with emphasis on communication skills, digital mathematics and socioemotional skills as measures for the safe return to the classroom and the recovery of learning, respectively. They emphasized that, in addition to the issues of recovery and reactivation of education, there are others on the agenda that are very important in line with the systemic approach towards building resilient education systems such as the use of technologies in education and the digital education agenda; professional development and teacher training, education for climate change mitigation and the research agenda linked to national and regional education systems, which are very important issues that the country would like to see addressed in this second phase of the IEA.

For its part, the Colombian Delegation made a proposal in terms of enriching those lines of action that were described and exposed and has to do with two fundamental axes: socioemotional development and school coexistence to address the effects of confinement and the pandemic, based on the premise that a quality education is one that generates conditions for all children and adolescents, within the framework of inclusion and equity, to have the opportunity to develop integrally, to build their citizenship and to build their life projects, and there, the socioemotional aspect and school coexistence are fundamental.

Colombia added that it would also be very important to consider the topic of socioemotional development and strengthening of socioemotional skills in the line of teacher training, taking into account that the pandemic and the confinement has also left its mark on teachers and managers, so that a line to strengthen the well-being of teachers and their socioemotional skills is essential since they are the mediators of interactions with students; In this way, a socioemotionally strengthened teacher will be able to establish positive, sensitive and respectful interactions, recognizing the level of development and the situations and needs of the students, and of course develop pedagogical practices oriented towards the strengthening and construction of citizenship and socioemotional skills necessary for life in this new century.

The Panamanian Delegation supported the words of Colombia and referred to the "PRISA" (Program for Comprehensive and Socio-emotional Recovery of Learning), which is managed as a cross-cutting axis that should be incorporated into each of the projects to be developed in the country for the attention of the different actors in the education system. They also mentioned actions carried out by the ministry such as the delivery of materials and resources, the training of teachers and managers, the prevention and mitigation of risk situations, the strengthening of the family-school link and the implementation of monitoring and follow-up systems.

**Intersectoral Agenda**

The second part of this session was chaired by the First Vice Chair of CIE, Ms. María Brown Pérez, Minister of Education of Ecuador.

The IEA is guided by the principles of collaboration, intersectorality and interculturalism, which means that the selection and/or implementation of any IEA project and activity will adhere these principles. After making reference to each of the topics under this priority area, Minister Brown turned the floor over to the delegations.

In this regard, the Mexican Delegation stated that it is seeking to collaborate specifically with the working points that have to do with virtual and hybrid exchanges between higher education institutions, considering that this is an appropriate resilient measure to meet the challenges that the pandemic has imposed on institutions and all students in higher education. They also raised the concern that these hybrid systems and possibilities of interconnection and inter-institutionality in the region should occur not only for students but also for continuing teacher training.

Colombia confirmed the relevance of the topics proposed and that they are coherent with the needs that countries have identified and addressed in the different dialogue spaces. Specifically, regarding student mobility and the recognition of studies between countries, Colombia expressed that the issue of recognition of degrees at the higher education level is an issue that has been worked on in many global forums and that it is possibly one of the most difficult issues to reach a consensus on. They left it to the consideration of the other countries to react along these lines but affirmed that it is definitely necessary that these issues be addressed, and progress made precisely because this helps the economic reactivation of the countries and the productivity of the nations.

The Colombian Ministry of Education insisted on the importance of advancing and consolidating a regional qualifications framework and commented that its ministry has taken great strides, not only with the focus on having a regional qualifications framework but also on a national qualifications system that allows the different pieces involved in the qualification of human talent to fit together and that contemplates the whole part of recognition of lifelong learning through the recognition of prior learning and, of course, educational and labor mobility. The message they sent as a country is to continue with the connection between these frameworks of the different countries, which is what will make educational and labor mobility a reality in the region, betting first on a Latin American framework and then moving forward so that this Latin American framework is connected with other global frameworks so as not to limit the possibilities of students and workers.

The representative of the Dominican Republic commented that her country is focused on comprehensive care and that they are about to move forward with the implementation of the "Healthy Schools" project with which 2.8 million students will have dental and biometric follow-up and monitoring of their immunizations. They are also contemplating the idea of addressing the issue of healthy eating from a preventive approach and are working to link this project with all these issues. They expressed their willingness to share this experience and that the region can join them in this process. The Dominican Republic also highlighted the conversion of high schools into specialized polytechnics and the promotion of bilingualism and multilingualism as strategies to promote employability.

Nicaragua´s Delegation said that they consider that the topics proposed for this second phase are closely related to the work in the ministries of education and at the same time highlighted the importance of interministerial work to address issues such as preventive health and the preparation of students for the job.

Finally, the Delegation of Guyana mentioned among its government initiatives the implementation of a pilot project for the dissemination of technical and vocational training that uses technologies to reduce the gaps among the student population. In addition, they are working on an information management system to identify the needs of the students and monitor each one of them once they complete one of the training programs.

Guyana also recognized that the development of national qualification frameworks is a fundamental component and that there should be clear lines and instructions that allow proper understanding, so that people who complete an educational program and graduate from the system are clear about their level. of qualification. In this sense, the Delegation of Guyana requested that the best practices be shared from the countries that have already identified the fundamental parameters of their qualifications framework so that other countries can learn from them and thus advance the agenda in relation to technical education.

As there were no more requests to speak, Minister Brown closed this session highlighting that there is considerable consensus regarding the issues that have been raised as the four thematic lines of the intersectoral agenda.

The Minister reaffirmed that student mobility and the recognition of studies between countries in the region become very relevant, especially since many of our countries are host countries for people in situations of human mobility and migration. On the other hand, she mentioned that the development of teacher training, in particular, rethinking education is also adapting the initial training and continuous training of teachers so that they can respond to this necessary transformation of educational systems, so that they adapt to the current contexts and above all, that respond to a changing world that requires innovation in education, that responds to sustainable development, to the need to address thematic axes that have to do with access to employment, comprehensive development, well-being and health.

She pointed out access to employment as an integral part of the development of countries and highlighted the issue of bilingualism and multilingualism as a tool for access to employment, greater regional exchange, and the promotion of tourism as an important source of work for many of our countries. In addition, she suggested that it would be possible to work in an articulated and joint manner among countries that speak different languages, and that this exchange of training, especially so that students who are in their last years of schooling can access better job opportunities, could be one of the lines of work that arise.

In addition, she reinforced the idea of healthy school environments so that health is addressed from education, not only as a conjunctural issue, but also as a prevention and comprehensive development strategy where issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic are addressed. but also, related to healthy eating and lifestyles, physical activity, sports, the incorporation of the good use of free time within education as fundamental elements for health.

Finally, she noted that there were very interesting contributions regarding how to bring the lines of work discussed to very concrete projects that can allow not only having these spaces for deliberation and sharing national experiences, but also to effectively build joint, regional, articulated products, for the benefit of the citizenship and in particular students. In this regard, she instructed the Technical Secretariat, with the notes that have been taken from the various interventions of the delegations, to feed the work being done for the design of the Second Phase of the IEA can be fed.

1. **Third plenary session: conclusions and agreements**

As instructed by the CIE authorities, the Technical Secretariat took note of all the comments made during this I Special Meeting of the CIE to proceed to review the document "Draft proposal for the second phase of the Inter-American Education Agenda 2022-2027”.

The Technical Secretariat will distribute a new version of the document that includes the contributions made by the ministries of education. The new version will serve as the basis for the final deliberations at the next preparatory meeting for the XI Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education that is planned to be held next March.

The Meeting was brought to a close on February 16, 2022, at 1:45 p.m.

The audio recording of the Meeting can be found at the following [link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1odQG_k8ow9EHkZbFjfrAxkiRjgVSlgh6?usp=sharing).

The list and links to all documents of the Meeting can be found at: [CIDI/CIE/E-I/doc. 6/22](https://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.6.1E/CIDI/CIE/E-I/DOC&classNum=6&lang=t)

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