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**Beatrice Avalos
DRAFT**

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Executive Summary

This study focuses on the analysis of initial teacher training in Latin America and the Caribbean, drawing from documentation from ministry sources, existing documents, analytical articles and available research papers. It offers detailed analysis of initiatives in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru, as well as a panorama of initial teacher training in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The study covers and analyses the overall situation of initial training in these countries, with general descriptions of existing systems, while pointing out the significance of each one in regard to the unsatisfactory learning achievements of the region's students on national standardized tests and international assessments. It also reviews the following critical areas that emerged in the course of the study: differences in the institutional dependency of teacher training (normal schools, institutions of higher learning, universities), training program quality, regulatory conditions, differences in institutional climate between normal schools and universities as well as the tension between "universalist" training and differential training designed for specific social groups.

Subsequently, it describes and analyses what has been termed as "emerging policies" and the future development of teacher training. This section describes innovative initiatives of institutional support for teacher training, actions to boost achievement, and examples of "integral" initial teacher training policies.

Introduction

Capability and quality of teaching practice are vital to enable all students to attain better educational and learning results, especially for those students who have had less access to such opportunities. This is the message laid out by the formulation of the Education for All goals to be reached by 2015 (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005; UNESCO UIS, 2006).

Overall, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with a few exceptions such as Guatemala, are in a good position for meeting these goals by 2015 in regards to school system coverage and permanence in primary school education. Yet, these countries exhibit vast differences in terms of achievement or learning, according to International assessment mechanisms such as UNESCO's SERCE, the OECD's PISA and UNESCO's World Education Indicators (WEI). In some Latin American countries, studies confirm disparities in learning results achieved by boys versus girls, urban dwellers versus rural residents, and schools with a higher socio-economic level. In some countries, the indigenous population is the most disadvantaged group in terms of learning achievement. A source of greater concern is that even with the socio-economic level considered in the evaluation, schools – including teachers – still are unable to have more than a limited impact on the region's learning results.

In light of this evident failure, observers agree that teacher preparation (initial and ongoing) is a key factor for improving school learning processes and generating stimulating learning experiences for students. A series of International policy documents about teachers (OECD, 2005; UNESCO UIS, 2006; Mourshed, Chijoike & Barber, 2010) suggest the pathway that needs to be followed in order to improve teacher training processes and the capability and quality of new teachers who begin teaching in schools. There is greatest consensus regarding the following indicators:

- Teacher qualifications that meet the demands of the teaching levels of each education system (sufficient certified teachers)
- Definition of selection criteria for initial teacher training that takes into account quality as well as the quantitative needs of education systems, including sufficient teachers for isolated, rural and indigenous zones.
- Adequately managed teacher training institutions, subject to accreditation procedures
- Teacher training staff that is well-qualified in terms of knowledge, teaching capability, and significant experience in the schools
- Regulations governing requisites for graduation and certification, or licensing of teachers, in regards to access to the practice of teaching
- Program quality (curriculum, training processes and internship or practical experiences), method of verifying quality, and suitability for the requirements of the educational levels for which he or she has been trained.

- Systems of competency or standards to guide formulation of curriculum contents for teacher training and assessment of learning and teaching skill achievement by the future teachers.
- Role of the state (or states) in designing medium and long-term policy and instruments that support the development, monitoring, and evaluation of training programs.

In the context of these areas of consensus, the analysis presented in this report draws from evidence concerning the conditions of initial teacher training of a specific group of nations of Latin America and the Caribbean. The information examined here reveals that problems exist in every country studied but also policies and practices to address these situations. Although they require consolidation and time in order to yield results, such attempts to improve teacher training represent meaningful progress in what may be called the right direction.

The production of this discussion paper relied upon sources published in Education Ministry web pages, documents located through digital searches, books and articles in academic journals, and information from personal contacts. In general, with some exceptions (Avalos & Matus, 2010; Gatti & Sá Barretto, 2009; Camargo, M. et al., 2007; Avalos, 2002; Davini, 1998), it was difficult to find studies that penetrate what we might call the “black box” of teacher training to study the training and education programs and the characteristics of teacher training processes in the diverse programs within each country.

This document provides comprehensive analysis of the characteristics of teacher training systems of the countries studied (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and the English-speaking Caribbean), the core problems teacher training systems encounter, and, lastly, signs of progress and the need for developing future programs.

1. Characteristics of the teacher training systems examined

Latin America’s institutional foundation for teacher training can be traced to the Normal Schools that were established throughout the 19th Century in every country studied, of which persist concrete and nostalgic memories of an unpleasant past. Parallel to this institutional base, and with the aim of serving a growing population at the secondary school level, institutions were founded in association with universities that eventually became their schools of education. The university foundation does not have the same presence in every country we studied. However, whether a majority or minority presence, it still comprises a significant teacher training sector. At the same time, teacher training in the English-speaking Caribbean began in 1830 with the founding of the first Teachers College, on par with those established in England (Miller, 2002). However, the most institutional teacher training structure in the English-speaking Caribbean was first introduced in the post-war period (Richardson, 2005). Teacher Colleges continue to predominate the zone, frequently in combination with other tertiary level institutions, concentrating on initial level training, CINE 1 and CINE. Universities that have their own teacher training programs cover all

levels, offering a Bachelor in Education and consecutive programs for secondary level education, designed for university graduates. At first, all initial teacher training was directed towards working teachers, a situation that has radically changed today, with the exception of certain systems.

Originally, both in Latin America as well as the English-speaking Caribbean, teacher training for the primary school level took place in secondary education level institutions. This situation gradually began to change in the late 1960s, gathering greater momentum in the late 1980s in what has been called the “tertiarization” of primary education teacher training. This process is not yet complete, as can be seen in the secondary education-level normal teacher training system that prevails in Guatemala, one of the countries studied, as well as Nicaragua and Honduras. The following chart presents the institutional nature of teacher training in the countries studied in this report, in terms of secondary, primarily tertiary (with university presence) or primarily university level institutions.

Table 1: Initial teacher training in Latin America and the Caribbean: Institutional dependence

School level	Level of Initial Teacher Training		
	Secondary education training	Primarily tertiary, not university	Primarily university
Initial	Guatemala	Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile,
CINE 1 (Primary)	Guatemala	Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile
CINE 2 (Lower Secondary)		Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile, Guatemala
CINE 3 (Upper Secondary)		Argentina, Mexico, Peru, English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala

Source: Prepared for this study on the basis of country information

As can be observed, few countries have teacher training systems that are based primarily in universities.

Significant variations exist in regards to **training duration**, ranging from four to five years at every level, as is the case in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and three years or more in the case of Brazil. Preparation for the initial level and CINE 1 in Colombian normal schools lasts 2 years, whereas university degree programs require five years of study. In Guatemala, preparation for the initial level and CINE 1 vary between 3 and 4 years (because not all institutions have modified the existing system to meet current policies), while two types of programs of varying duration exist for

secondary education training: a 3-year teacher certificate program and 5-year degree program. In the English-speaking Caribbean, the situation varies according to whether one studies two years in a Teachers College to earn certification valid for all education system levels, a 4-year Bachelor of Education academic program, or continues with a consecutive post-graduate university program.

In the context of **quantitative demands** posed by education systems as well as the need to provide sufficient numbers of teachers to meet the millennium goals, it is interesting to note that in several countries the supply is believed to be very much higher than the demand. This is evident in the high unemployment rate among graduates from training institutions. The problem has been described as “extreme” in Peru, at least until quite recently, and may also be a problem in Mexico. Other countries, such as Chile, have experienced an enormous rise in the number of training program graduates, in all likelihood, an indication of a significant gap between demand for and the supply of teachers. A similar situation exists in Argentina, a consequence of the high number of teacher training institutions. Surplus supply generally refers primarily to the primary and lower secondary level, as in most countries studied for this report, initial and upper secondary coverage continues to be low, as is the case in Argentina. On the other hand, the supply of teachers in Brazil and Chile is insufficient in scientific specialization at the secondary education level. Guatemala represents the exception in terms of need for training, with coverage low at all levels, except for primary schools, and the number of teachers with corresponding degrees or certification does not reach 50% in third and sixth grades studied by SERCE (2008). However, the student/teacher ratio did improve between 1999 (38) and 2008 (29), although it is still high.

Teacher coverage in rural and indigenous communities is also inadequate in Peru (despite the surplus supply) and in Mexico.

Public teacher training (non university) in the countries studied is **regulated** to a greater or lesser degree by the central governments, and/or provincial/state governments. In instances of greater government regulation, this includes authority for opening and closure of training institutions (Colombia, Guatemala, Peru), approval of teacher training curriculum (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico), entry conditions for teacher training (Peru, Mexico) certification of graduates (Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico), the appointment of staff trainers for state institutions and monitoring teacher training processes (Argentina, Guatemala, Peru). However, the growing private supply in several countries occurs with very little government regulation. At the other end of the scale, there are cases such as Chile with very little or practically no regulation over training, with teacher training programs are provided by what are known as autonomous universities, which receive some state funds but are governed by their own internal regulations.

In some countries of English-speaking Caribbean, the levels of certified teachers vary from one country to the next, ranging from almost 50% at all education levels in Belize and St. Kitts & Nevis,

between 60% and 80% in Barbados, to between 90% and 100% in the Bahamas (UNESCO UIS, 2006).

2. Critical issues that emerged in analysis of the current situation of initial teacher training

Country by country analysis of teacher training situations and issues may provide an understanding regarding why teacher training is not sufficiently successful as to revert data that suggest the minimal effect schools have on learning achievements in Latin America, or the serious disparities in opportunity and achievements of people who live in low-income and rural areas, including indigenous populations in countries where these are minorities.

2.1. Educational level upon entering training institutions

This refers not only to entering Normal Schools upon completion of primary education, as occurs in Guatemala, but also students lacking skills (language, mathematics, and general culture) that should have been acquired in secondary school, necessary for handling the demands of higher education, who enter training institutions. For example, diagnostics conducted in the context of formulating Argentina's National Teacher Training revealed weak handling of basic competencies such as reading and comprehension of academic texts by aspiring teachers. In part, this is due to the increased private sector supply, which tends to augment the numbers that enter training programs rather than raising competency for such studies, but also due to the pressure from social groups for access to higher education. So, in Chile, more than half the future teachers in public and private primary education level training programs in 2008-2009 (Avalos & Matus, 2010) belong to families in which the parents had secondary education or less. The situation in Peru is similar.

The entry level is higher among those who study at universities and prepare for teaching secondary education. At the same time, however, there exists a disparity between the numbers of people who enter teacher training programs and the needs of education systems in some countries such as Argentina, Peru, Guatemala and a number of countries of the English-speaking Caribbean where the state of certification of working teachers or coverage of secondary education is lower.

Debate on the prior level of education (basic skills) of those who enter a training program must also address the profession's status in the various countries. While, as working teachers interviewed for a national teachers study in Chile (Avalos et al., 2010) indicate, they do not enter the profession attracted by motives related to status, it is a source of concern that others who possess the necessary competencies choose not to become teachers precisely because the profession is perceived to have a low status in their countries.

2.2. Quality of training programs

Skepticism is common regarding the quality of opportunities for learning to teach offered by training institutions. The source of this skepticism is, above all, the results of standardized learning assessments of students throughout the entire school system, as well as, although to a lesser degree, the results of International assessments. Several countries studied in this report possess internal testing systems, all participated in the last SERCE (2008) survey, and all, with the exception of Guatemala, participated in the OECD PISA assessment (2009), yielding below the average of participating countries. Despite the alleged impact of initial teacher training on these testing results, little solid evidence is available regarding how the quality of the training process influences quality of the teaching practice and, therefore, students' learning results, beyond data on training curriculum and preparation of instructors.

In regards to **curriculum offer**, studies conducted by Gatti & Sá Barreto (2009) on teacher training in Brazil, by Calvo in Abello et al. (2007) on Colombia and the national IEA TEDS-M study in Chile (Avalos & Matus, 2010) provide concrete data about the shortcomings of course offerings and teacher training program curriculum. Brazil exhibits great diversity in training curriculum of the various programs, and despite the existence of national curriculum directives, these are not always observed. Program content of the different primary education preparatory programs is viewed as fragmentary and disperse with little emphasis on what is required classroom material, especially in areas of discipline content. The study on Colombia, conducted some years ago (Calvo et al., 2004), signals the existence of a great number of normal training courses, which interfere with the acquisition of key elements needed in order to teach school curriculum content and to enable teaching this material through appropriate didactic strategies. The Colombian situation also exemplifies what has happened in other education systems, such as those of Brazil and Chile, concerning an imbalance in secondary school specialties offered, with an emphasis on humanistic rather than scientific areas, and an excessive offering of physical education courses. Teacher preparation for CINE 1 and 2 levels in Chile (8 year comprehensive primary) is largely quite general, with insufficient quantity of content related to comprehension of the school curriculum disciplines and corresponding didactic methodologies, and a greater presence of general pedagogic content. The diagnostic formulated on the basis of Argentina's National Teacher Training Plan also points to a "broad heterogeneity and dispersion in course plans" offered in Higher Teacher Training Institutes.

In regards to preparation for teaching secondary education, most countries differentiate training for the lower secondary level (CINE 2) that includes specialization and may or may not be offered in university programs, from training for the upper secondary level. In Chile, as described earlier, training for CINE 2 is integrated with CINE 1 training, resulting in a generalist training for the 8

years of primary school. This functions to the detriment of the quality of the future Chilean teachers. Thus, the international IEA TEDS-M study on knowledge of future teachers at this level showed that future Chilean teachers had a level of mathematics and math pedagogy quite lower than that of fifteen other countries that participated in the study. (Avalos & Matus, 2010)

Other factors that influence training process quality are related to the preparation of those who teach in these institutions. Again, theories abound but little empirical proof exists regarding the impact of greater or lesser preparation of instructors on learning outcome of the future teachers. At any rate, initial and primary level teacher training programs tend to have instructors with lower academic qualifications (college graduate and post-graduate degrees) although it is possible that these weaknesses may be compensated by prior experience as working teachers in the education system. For example, data from the IEA TEDS-M study on instructors who teach mathematics and math pedagogy courses in 34 institutions indicate that most instructors possessed certification and university education degrees but not Masters or Doctorate degrees. In addition, these same instructors indicate that they had worked no more than five years as teachers in the schools.

Finally, it is important to note the rise in distance teacher training in Brazil, Colombia, and English-speaking Caribbean, among others. It is not clear how effective such programs are. However, Gatti e Sá Barretto (2009) were concerned that in Brazil this is the most precarious form of teaching training. The rise of distance teacher training courses in Chile is such a concern that Education Ministry officials have resorted to a series of mechanisms designed to close these programs, including denying accreditation to institutions that offer these courses.

2.3. Regulation or lack thereof of training programs

The majority of public education systems studied is regulated in some aspects by education ministries, as long as the institutions come under their authority, which is not the case of universities or many private institutions of higher learning. Regulation encompasses the establishment of admission requirements for teacher training candidates such as a test of basic knowledge, in the cases of Mexico and Peru, prior authorization or accreditation for operation of teacher training programs in Colombia, and the development of directives of curriculum framework for all primary education training and, in some cases, secondary as well (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru). Such is not the case in Chile that leaves teacher training curriculum entirely up to the training institutions. Documentation on teacher training in these countries is less clear concerning forms of monitoring training processes, as, for example, analysis of training outcome, or mid-term exams in the training institutions.

Several countries have vested their governments with regulatory authority over degree programs or certification of future teachers who graduate from training institutions. These countries are in the process of defining the conditions for entering the teacher training programs, employing different mechanisms for accreditation of the knowledge and skill level required for teaching that applicants possess. In Argentina the national Education Ministry issues certification in agreement with the provinces, and each province legalizes the validity of the certification. Brazil has its National Student Performance Exam (ENADE) that evaluates knowledge, skills, and competencies of future teachers when they enter a training program. Chile is considering the use of a similar exam, known as the INICIA, that is proposed as mandatory and a prerequisite for training programs subsidized by state funds. Colombia too has regulated admissions to teacher training programs through an evaluation of abilities, competencies, experience and suitability for the teaching profession, in addition to one year's probation in the education system. Mexico has an entrance exam prior to the first teaching job, and Peru instituted a similar system in recent years.

Despite the existence of these regulatory mechanisms, the fact that many systems are currently reviewing their regulatory policies and instruments suggests that they do not function well. Clearly, mechanisms must be found for regulating the supply of teachers from the private sector and in those countries where the supply of new teachers exceeds the demand, mechanisms must be developed to determine entry quotas (as exist in countries such as England, Singapore, or Canada's system of mixed quotas). Likewise, the establishment of an exit or qualification exam for teachers does not automatically correct the problems related to quality detected in training processes.

Regulation of initial teacher training in countries of the English-speaking Caribbean is more complex. In general terms, the University of the West Indies through its campuses in Trinidad, Jamaica and Barbados, in conjunction with the 14 teacher training institutions of the Western Caribbean comprise the Joint Boards of Education that recommend or approve teacher training curriculum, review and evaluate student progress, offer recommendations, and serve as information centers that foster change and excellence of training institutions (Richardson, 2005). More recently, the Caribbean community established a new regulatory institution called the Caribbean Council for Teaching and Teacher Education.

2.4. Normal school "grammar" in teacher training and independence of university training

Somewhat more difficult to assess is the impact of Latin America's normal school training on the organization and institutional culture of teacher training today, known in the English-speaking Caribbean as the "college of education," stemming from its British predecessor. The concept of a "grammar" is borrowed from Tyack and Cuban (1995) and refers to the forms of organization that arise from the school and are incorporated by the normal schools that persist despite a highly

technological and globalized world. A number of analysts who study teacher training in their respective countries signal the persistence of these traditional teacher schools, even though Normal Schools have been replaced by other institutions. In the case of Argentina, for example, Mezzadra & Composto (2008) underscore the presence of the “imprint of the normalistic rationale” that make training institute classrooms resemble primary and secondary schools rather than academic halls. (Alliaud & Davini in Aguerrondo, 2006). This results in mimicry of the Normal School organization and its institutional dynamics at the educational levels for which the future teachers are being trained (Mezzadra & Composto, 2008). Calvo et al (2004) found a similar situation in their study of training programs, in regards to organizational structure of Normal Schools in Colombia to the extent that they are imbued with the characteristics of secondary education. Rios (en Cuenca & Stojnic, 2008) employs practically the same words to criticize the way Higher Pedagogical Institutes relate to their students: “They are treated like primary education children in a school setting, not only in terms of the environment, rules, and uniforms but also in terms of behavior and cognitive demands.”

This institutional culture might suggest that the situation in university Schools of Education is quite different. Indeed, from the perspective of curriculum, that is so. Schools of Education, which confer a university degree, generally emphasize more academic and abstract content, placing greater importance on education research methods, as analysis of Chilean curriculum shows, and discrediting to a greater or lesser extent the presence of the “school” as a reference point in teacher training, as Gatti & Sá Barreto (2009) have pointed out in regards to Brazil. Schools of Education also have close ties to other university departments concerning secondary education specialties. This tends to create conflict by installing a defensive climate in regards to what is perceived as an undervaluing of teacher preparation as to academic preparation or an education degree for teachers, which is practically the opposite of the situation among non-university institutions.

2.5. “Universalist” training or differentiated training for disadvantaged social groups

Learning results in Latin America indicate that the most impoverished groups, those that live in rural areas and indigenous communities, perform below the level of the rest of the population. The distribution of teachers with degrees, with few exceptions, is also inequitable in regards to these groups. Therefore, the problem arises of how to guarantee that a greater number of teachers work with those sectors of their countries. In part, this requires policies that encourage teachers to work in poor, rural and indigenous areas. However, it also has to do with training institution admission policy, which currently offers quality-differentiated programs such as intercultural education or preparation for working in multi-grade or single-teacher schools.

The intercultural perspective is important in every country included in this study, but especially in Peru, Guatemala and Mexico, which have policies that explicitly address intercultural education and institutions that specialize in preparation for working in these settings. However, evidence studied suggests that these training programs are unequal in terms of quality and, in some cases, such as Peru, may even disappear as a result of policies that are reasonable from the perspective of elevating entry conditions for teacher training, while limiting participation of indigenous groups (Chiroque, 2010). In other countries, such as Chile, an intercultural perspective and preparation for teaching in rural zones is practically nonexistent: only two tenuous preparation programs exist for teaching primary education in indigenous zones.

The influence of external support, especially from the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) has had a great impact in the development of bilingual intercultural training instances and these should provide a model for programs or specializations that meet the needs of initial teacher training (See, for example, Chiroque, 2010; Coello y Duarte, 2005; articles in Education Ministry of Peru and GTZ, 2002).

3. Emerging policies and future development

The previous analysis of initial teacher training in Latin America and the Caribbean has focused on problems. However, significant progress has been made both in terms of quantitative achievement as well as institutional changes that begin to foster qualitative improvement of training. For example, Brazil's capacity to provide initial teacher training and certify a higher percentage of working teachers during an extremely short period of time, is admirable. Indeed, enactment of the National Education Directives and Framework Law in 1996 has led to the closure of secondary level Normal Schools and the number of non-certified teachers, quite abundant at the time the law was ratified, has declined significantly (Gatti & Sá Barreto, 2009). Below we shall review examples of recent institutional structures and policies that have the potential to improve initial teacher training on the medium and long term.

3.1. National Teacher Training Institutes and National Teacher Training Plans

The first example arises in Argentina and the governmental decision in the context of its National Education Law of 2006, which created an institution intended to provide direct support to initial teacher training given in Higher Teacher Training Institutes as well as indirect support to university Schools of Education. The new institution, known as the National Teacher Training Institute, was founded in 2007 for the purpose of fostering national policy on teacher training and formulating basic guidelines for initial and continuing training. To carry out its mission, the Institute developed the First National Teacher Training Plan (2007-2010) that poses immediate, medium, and long-term objectives, and that already has its future assured in the Plan for 2011. The Plan proposes 10

objectives or strategies for developing and supporting teacher training, with recommended time periods and indicators to evaluate achievement. The other two interesting activities contemplated for the Institute involve curriculum improvement support for teacher training at the secondary education level and joint support with Higher Teacher Training Institutes (ISFD) for graduates who begin their teaching career.

The Institute's curriculum development activities encompass the formulation of standards for knowledge and teaching strategies for the major disciplines that comprise the secondary level training. They are structured to enable monitoring the progress of student teachers at the halfway point in their training, upon completion, and in the first years on the job as teachers. The initial versions of these standards are in the consultancy process and will provide a foundation for defining ISFD curriculum and for guiding teacher training in universities.

3.2. Regulation and incentives related to teacher training entry conditions

Recognizing the need for better training candidates, some systems have established more stringent entry requirements, as is the case in Peru, which raised the minimum score on the entrance exam required for admission to the Higher Pedagogical Institutes. Mexico plans to offer Normal School special resources in order to regulate and upgrade qualifications for admission to their training programs. Chile has implemented a scholarship program for candidates who earn good results in the university selection exam, while also issuing scholarships only for teacher training candidates who enter institutions that have raised qualification standards.

3.3. Assessment of teacher training quality

Accreditation of teacher training (institutions and programs) has extended throughout nearly all the countries reviewed in this study. Since mid 2000 Chile has had a voluntary teacher training accreditation system, however, in recent years, laws have been enacted to make accreditation mandatory, although it does not yet cover all institutions. In Argentina, institutions of higher learning and universities come under a dual accreditation system administered by two different entities. The same situation exists in Brazil where the National Higher Education Assessment System administers accreditation. Colombia has what is called a "prior accreditation" requisite for operating teacher training institutions.

Despite the existence of accreditation systems, criticism has been voiced concerning the need for greater stringency regarding the consequences of unsatisfactory evaluations. Thus, in the framework of an OECD-Mexican government agreement, the proposal has been made to revamp the current assessment system by establishing a new system based on the specific standards that

govern Normal Schools, and to link accreditation to the acceptance index of graduates in competition for appointing teaching positions.

3.4. Standards and entry assessment

Lastly, a certain pressure can be observed to develop precise standards related to what teacher training graduates should know and be able to do. While nearly all systems define exit requirements and the competencies expected from future teachers, practically none appear to have a precise system to guide training and provide criteria for developing exit exams for future teachers. Earlier, this document referred to the standards being designed in Argentina for monitoring the training process and assessing graduates. Similarly, Chilean academics, upon request from the Ministry of Education, are producing a series of standards related to teaching content of school curriculum disciplines that future teachers must be capable of handling. The English-speaking Caribbean, under mandate from CARICOM (Caribbean Community), has created a supervisory entity, the Caribbean Council for Teaching and Teacher Education, that will oversee teacher training and will develop a set of standards for initial training, currently in consultation among member countries.

Although it is unclear to what extent the development of standards alone can influence training, these initiatives represent useful tools for renewing curriculum and for monitoring student achievement during the training process.

3.5. Integral policy

Finally, it is important to note that some countries have developed or are developing medium and long-term policies that offer guidelines for improving the training processes. In addition to the initiatives underway in Argentina described above, Brazil has a National Teacher Training Policy, formulated in 2009, that aims to provide orientation for articulation between training institutions and their programs and municipal, state, and federal governments. The Plan calls for support for training program development, articulation among institutions of higher learning, and the education system school network, as well as participation by future teachers in teaching-learning activities in the schools. It also addresses the need for revising the academic and curriculum structure of teaching degree programs and for research that can shape the teacher training processes. Recognizing the limitations of its teacher training system for primary education, Guatemala recently designed a teacher development policy known as the Professional Teacher Academic Development Program (PADEP/D) that will enable working teachers to access higher university training to specialize in intercultural and bilingual initial and primary education (the two forms the system recognizes). Moreover, in a recent public statement, the Education Minister announced a policy intended to institutionalize the national teacher training system, prioritizing

intercultural-bilingual training as well as Mayan cosmology, while also aspiring to elevate normal school training to a higher level, create a teaching career with salary incentives, implement actions so that teaching career entry is contingent upon vocational and competency examinations, develop a more aggressive teacher professionalization program, and lastly, develop a certification and accreditation program for teacher training institutions.

Conclusion

From this review of teacher training in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is possible to glean throughout the region a current trend to undertake policies that exercise greater control over teacher training systems. This control takes various forms. One consists of pressuring institutions and their programs to improve training quality by demanding accountability on the basis of exit exams. Another form of pressure aims to produce improved training program entry conditions, demanding higher scores on admission exams or offering scholarships on the condition that the institutions that receive the scholarship beneficiaries raise entrance requirements. The third form of exerting pressure that may offer a promising road in the direction of change is the formulation of standards or competency systems. If standards are only employed as an assessment tool, their effectiveness may be rather limited. However, if used to steer curriculum reform processes in progress or in the works in various countries studied here, standards can be a powerful instrument for change. Even so, the focus of the policies reflected in these pressures is troubling. In the absence of support mechanisms for teacher training programs (financial and pedagogical), these may not produce any effect whatsoever, except for continuing to feed news reports in the media about the poor results of exit exams or ranking programs before giving them the opportunity and sufficient time to improve. The growing deregulation of private sector supply in countries such as Chile and Brazil is also troubling. In this sense, Zeichner's analysis (2010) serves as a warning regarding what has been observed as a world-wide pattern that affects initial teacher training: the marketing of teacher preparation, excessively prescriptive demands for accountability, excessive control over training curriculum by accreditation agencies, reductions in funding for training programs, and attacks against programs that make an effort to prepare teachers to exercise the profession in socially just forms in multicultural or vulnerable contexts.

In light of the above factors, notable efforts have been undertaken to establish institutional forms of supporting improvement of the institutions that provide teacher training, such as Argentina's National Teacher Training Institute or the fledgling Teacher Training Councils in the English-speaking Caribbean. These types of initiatives must be extended throughout the region. Actions that address improvement of the professional status of teachers are also important, whether by fostering discussion or establishing teaching careers and ensuring that teacher formation effectively takes place prior to service rather than initial training for working teachers, as continues to occur in some Caribbean countries. In the eagerness to improve quality of those who enter teacher training, it is important not to neglect the quest for alternative formulas that ensure

participation of indigenous teaching candidates. In striving to improve education achievements for everyone, it is also important to be able to rely on good, specialized training programs that are intercultural and bilingual, and encourage teachers to work in rural areas.

In short, significant strides have been achieved in teacher training processes and development of corresponding policy, but a long road remains ahead. To acquire a better understanding on to how to intervene and support these processes, studies must focus on analysis of the training institutions from within to grasp the dynamics of this training, its strengths, and its weaknesses. Lacking this insight, policies may fail to resolve the underlying problems, and are likely to remain superficial devices that limited are to controls, awards, and punishment.

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