



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**Santiago Office**  
Regional Bureau of Education for  
Latin America and the Caribbean

*Regional Strategic Project On Teachers*  
**OREALC / UNESCO Santiago**

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# Background and Criteria for Teacher-Policy Development in Latin America and the Caribbean







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# Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to draw up a state of the art review and guidelines on teacher policies for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean under the Regional Strategic Project on Teachers for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is part of UNESCO's global "Teachers for Education for All" strategy.

For the purposes of this report, OREALC/UNESCO in Santiago defined a working method based on contributions by Latin American teacher policy experts and on the work of eight national consultation and discussion groups convened in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. The groups consisted of governmental, academic and union stakeholders. Subregional representativeness and accumulated experience of education policy were the criteria used to select the countries.

This report is therefore the outcome of synergy between two sources and types of knowledge and action-oriented criteria – one approach focused on regional teacher issues and the other drew on the experience of national groups.

## *Part I: State of the Art on Teacher Policy in the Region*

In Part I of the report the region's teacher situation and related public policies are reviewed and critical issues facing countries in their efforts to secure the required number of teachers are identified. The overview is regional in scope, but with emphasis on the above-mentioned eight countries, whose characteristics are typical of the region but naturally do not reflect the situation in full. In the analysis of teacher policies, three crucial and closely linked areas are highlighted – initial teacher training, continuing training and professional development, and the teaching career. The regional situation in each of these areas is outlined generally, and details are given on specific features in the eight countries when critical policy issues are identified. Part I ends with an analysis of institutional matters and the characteristics of teacher-policy formulation and implementation in the region, with specific reference to stability, consistency and quality.

1. The first section of the State of the Art contains details on the principal characteristics of the region's teachers: the high proportion of women; their middle or lower-middle class status; higher-education attainment; lower pay than in similar professions; and limited opportunities for professional development and promotion as classroom teachers. Teachers' unions and professional organizations and their links to public policy decision-making through dialogue, negotiations or confrontation with central and local education authorities are outlined as well.

2. The subject of section 2 is initial teacher training. Here, it is noted that the original institutional setting, namely secondary-level teacher training schools, has in recent decades largely given way to higher or tertiary level teacher training institutions. Teaching degree courses vary in length from three to five years. Some countries have a surplus of teachers, while others have a shortage – in particular for posts in rural areas and in the sciences. Significant weaknesses have been identified in regard to basic skills required for admission to teaching degree courses and, worse yet, in regard to the quality of teacher training. This is exemplified by the lack of specialization options for those training in basic education and, more generally, the lack of skills required for classroom teaching. Although there is no or little State regulation of university-level teacher training in most countries, some have in recent years introduced accreditation systems, graduation or qualifying examinations for professional practice, and standards that can be used as guidance in training curricula.

The critical initial teacher-training issues identified are: (a) low level of educational attainment of entrants to teacher studies; (b) poor quality of training programmes; (c) training of teachers as generalists, without specialization for working with disadvantaged social groups; and (d) public institutions that lack capacity to regulate quality in teacher training.

3. Section 3 of the State of the Art deals with continuing training. The analysis notes the existing agreement that classroom teachers require such training and that it should therefore not be viewed as a form of remedial action but as an education policy component that is as important as initial teacher training, both of which must be linked to each other. The review of policies implemented shows that the provision of continuing training, usually the responsibility of the State in this region, is wide-ranging and varied in terms of content, delivery and methodology but is blighted by the lack of a systematic approach, does not cover a large proportion of teachers; nor does it meet the requirements of those in greatest need of opportunities for professional development, comply with quality standards or have sufficient impact.

The conclusion drawn from the analysis of continuing-training curricular and educational models is that there is little specialization and chronic problems of relevance to schools' requirements because of the emphasis on theory and overviews. In several countries of the region the current trend is to promote school-based training policies, in which groups of teachers play a key role and in which reflection, analysis and learning are predicated on practice.

Key critical continuing-training issues identified include: (a) lack of relevance and linkage among its various forms of delivery; (b) low impact of activities; (c) disregard of teacher diversity; (d) lack of regulation of training provision; (e) little regard for actual school conditions and collaborative learning; and (f) difficulties in regulating and providing relevant postgraduate courses.

4. Section 4 of the State of the Art addresses the teaching career. In addition to considering the importance of a professional career that can attract talented young

people and retain good teachers, the analysis encompasses working conditions, teacher pay, incentives and the assessment of teachers' performance.

Regarding the key issue of career advancement, promotion in the region was found to be vertical and horizontal. The former allows teachers to move away from classroom duties into other areas of responsibility, such as management and supervision, while the latter concerns professional-development opportunities that are available to those who continue to teach in the classroom. The horizontal career path is less common. The key criteria for promotion have traditionally been seniority and completion of specialist courses and postgraduate degrees, professional performance weighing much less in the balance.

The following five issues have been identified as potential teacher career problems: (a) difficulties in attracting and retaining good teachers; (b) careers models that take no account of the phases of the teaching career; (c) the lack of integration between career and professional development; (d) tension between standard and differentiated salary schemes; and (e) the challenges of building consensus on performance assessment.

5. The last section on the state of the art identifies recent trends in teacher policy institutions and processes, with particular regard to factors and processes that affect teacher-policy formulation and implementation. Although priority is reputedly given to teacher policies, they were not generally found to be actually among governments' top priorities because they are costly as they are applicable to all teachers, they lack public visibility during implementation, they are politically complex and the desired effects are achieved only in the medium to long term.

Two critical issues covered in this section are the lack of coordination, inconsistency and the instability of these policies. The lack of coordination and harmonization is considered to be linked to the institutional dispersion of the supervisory bodies; in some cases, efforts are made to solve this problem by establishing coordination groups, but their effectiveness is over-dependent on their members' attitudes. The lack of long-term teacher policies – which is evident when programmes announced as great solutions are soon discontinued and replaced by others, with no rigorous evaluations, assessments or studies being conducted on the feasibility of the new initiatives – is particularly damaging to capacity-building in the profession, which by its very nature requires a time frame longer than a term in office.

## ***Part II: Criteria and Guidelines for Teacher-Policy Formulation***

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Part II of the document contains guidelines on teacher-policy formulation in Latin American and Caribbean countries, covering the same areas of interest as those analysed in the State of the Art. General considerations and more specific guidelines are proposed for each field analysed.

In taking up the challenge of formulating teacher policy guidelines, it was understood that some proposals would be more relevant to some countries than to others and that, in general, if interested countries wished to adopt them, they could be implemented over different timescales and/or adjusted as appropriate to each national context. This calls for concerted efforts in each country in order to adapt the proposals to the context, duly taking the country's political system, social and economic characteristics and cultural identity into account. Furthermore, the guidelines should not be viewed in isolation, for they cover various aspects of a situation that policies must address systematically.

1. Four general guidelines have been proposed for **initial teacher training**.
  - A. **Encourage better applicants to take up teaching by raising the admission requirements for teacher training**<sup>1</sup> so that educational policies and teacher-training institutions will target applicants who meet the minimum requirements for becoming good educators. Ways and means must be found to prevent discrimination against students from indigenous or poor socioeconomic groups.
  - B. **Improve the quality of teacher-training programmes, particularly curriculum content, training and learning achievement strategies, and the quality of teacher trainers.** This requires commitment on the part of the State and teacher training institutions. Key determinants of the quality of teacher training include the setting of agreed standards and cooperation between teacher-training centres and schools for the development of practices and reflection on those practices.
  - C. **Deliver quality training relevant to the teaching of disadvantaged social groups.** Particular attention is paid to the need to train future teachers to work in diverse and complex environments, including rural and indigenous areas.
  - D. **Implement appropriate systems to regulate the quality of teacher-training programmes and their graduates.** Assessment and accreditation mechanisms would be established for teacher-training institutions and conditions would be created so that the necessary capacities could be acquired.
2. Six general guidelines have been proposed for **professional development and continuing training**.
  - A. **Guarantee teachers' right to relevant continuing training, with emphasis on holistic training and pupils' learning achievement.** Teachers must be given opportunities for professional training that improve their skills to take up new educational challenges. It is important to make progress in establishing and defining agreed standards as reference points for professional development and performance assessment. Furthermore, incentives and conditions must be in place to encourage teachers to participate in training activities.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Argentine consultation group has called this general guideline into question on the grounds that "the State may not ignore the educational attainment of young people who have the required academic qualifications, for it is under an obligation to find solutions that protect the right to education if those results fail to meet the expectations of the training system". Argentina's state-of-the-art report. Buenos Aires, 20 February, 2011, pp. 10.*

- B. **Ensure that continuing training has a significant impact on teachers' practices and pupils' learning achievements.** This guideline reflects the need to promote the development of learning communities, focus on links between training activities and classroom work practices, achieve adequate levels of coverage and use new technologies in professional development activities.
  - C. **Build professional development paths that distinguish the various teaching career stages.** Emphasis is placed on the need to support and mentor new teachers at the beginning of their career and to appoint teachers who have attained high levels of professional development to advisory roles in support of their peers and, in particular, newly qualified teachers.
  - D. **Implement mechanisms to regulate the provision of continuing training and assure quality and relevance.** This entails public institution-building for training and professional development in order to coordinate the various bodies involved in continuing training while building the capacities of the agencies that provide the various training programmes.
  - E. **Promote collaborative learning in schools.** Consideration of school settings in which teachers' work forms the basis of effective training, motivation and commitment that are crucial to professional learning. The teacher's isolated classroom work must be superseded by collaborative activities. Head teachers must therefore spearhead professional development and organize teachers' workloads effectively.
  - F. **Regulate the relevance of postgraduate courses.** The recent demand for teachers with postgraduate qualifications has created new challenges, in particular, the need to incorporate criteria to boost relevance and the potential impact on teaching practices and the award of grants for study in priority areas, on the basis of teachers' merits and their schools' requirements.
3. Six **teaching-career** guidelines have been proposed.
- A. **Design and implement career structures in such a way that they strengthen the teaching profession and attract good candidates.** Teacher courses must be underpinned by policies for the effective recognition of teaching and its social enhancement, through better pay and working conditions. Under this proposal teacher promotion will not involve taking teachers out of the classroom.
  - B. **Provide recognition in the career structure for different stages of teacher development and skill.** Introduce different categories of classroom teachers to reflect their experience and skills. In particular, consideration must be given to a period of induction or mentoring for new teachers and to creating conditions for teachers who have attained high levels of performance to carry out technical tasks and support teachers performing at lower levels.
  - C. **Structure the teaching career around the goal of enhancing professional performance.** Teachers' performance must be assessed and acknowledged as

the key to career progression. Experience and further training should be prized because they lead to enhanced professional learning. It is very important to encourage the conduct of more training activities and discussion by groups of teachers.

- D. **Design and implement a clear and consistent pay and incentive policies to encourage teachers in their work.** An attractive professional career is one that offers decent pay and opportunities for better earnings and professional development as teachers rise in seniority. Incentives must moreover be offered so that highly skilled teachers can move to and remain in schools attended by pupils from poor homes and remote areas.
- E. **Develop sound, agreed teacher performance assessment systems.** Education systems must have mechanisms in place for performance assessment and improvement, despite the complexity of this task. An objective and transparent performance assessment system, organized in conjunction with teachers and based on standards validated by the profession, must therefore be designed and implemented. Emphasis is laid on the formative nature of assessment. It is vital for teachers to receive recognition for improving their educational practices, and for measures to be taken for those who make no such improvement.
- F. **Establish transparent for teacher recruitment and task assignment.** Clear policies must be established on entry into the teaching profession, which requires the introduction of minimum national requirements based on compliance with standards. Teachers must be appointed on the basis of objective and transparent competition. In each school, all teachers must be assigned to the roles in which they can make the greatest contribution.

4. Four general guidelines have been proposed on **teacher-policy institutions and processes.**

- A. **Prioritize teacher policies from a systemic standpoint.** As teaching has a great impact on the quality of education, such policies are, perforce, of crucial strategic importance. Teacher policies must be formulated holistically and system-wide in the public interest to close the inequality gap in learning opportunities.
- B. **Enhance the effectiveness of teacher policies by reconciling continuity and change.** Policies must have defined purposes, medium- and long-term objectives, reasonable levels of stability, flexibility margins and scope for innovation and improvement.
- C. **Promote stakeholder participation in policy-making.** Educational and societal stakeholders should participate in dialogue and fora organized to build national agreement in order to meet the need to adapt education systems to challenging new external requirements. In particular, bodies must be established for discussion and cooperative relations between governments and teachers' organizations.

- D. Strengthen public institutions in charge of teacher-policy formulation.** State policy-making institutions must be developed by strengthening their powers, capacities, resources and managerial continuity. These institutions should be capable of having an impact on various aspects of teaching policy. Emphasis must be placed on institutions and processes that can initiate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies, and not only on policy content.

# INTRODUCTION

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## ➤ 1.

The quality of an education system is determined by its teachers, irrespective of its institutional structure and resources<sup>2</sup>. The quality, distribution and organization of teachers have a direct impact on equity. From both standpoints, the main challenges facing educational policy in Latin America and the Caribbean today are the ways in which people are selected for teacher training, the characteristics of the training and certification of education professionals, the organization of their career and support for continuing professional development.

An adequate supply of properly qualified teachers is one of the factors that could help to eliminate inequality in education and build basic cultural capacity for economic development and democratic citizenship. Teachers should receive intellectual and moral, theoretical and practical training in order to meet the new requirements that are currently being implemented in education systems by Latin American and Caribbean societies regardless of their level of economic development, history, politics and culture. These requirements all place significantly greater demands on education professionals and stem from a number of macro processes: rise in all population groups' educational expectations and growing sociocultural diversity among pupils; the weakening of the family institution and of the community fabric as promoters of socialization; the wider range of curricular subjects taught in greater depth; and an overall increase in targeted learning outcomes.

These greater demands on the teaching profession, ultimately rooted in the secular changes encapsulated in such phrases as “global society” and “knowledge society” exert pressure directly on key policy stakeholders, namely the government and teachers' unions, to find solutions appropriate to the new conditions – hence the need for fresh policies as new means of interaction between the profession and the State.

Given the very basic capacities required at present in the teaching profession throughout the region and the resultant need for capacity-building policies and institutions, this report, like the project on which it is based, assesses the region's teacher situation and sets out policy guidelines in four key areas – initial teacher training, continuing training, the teaching career and overarching policy requirements.

## ➤ 2.

In recent years there has been growing concern over challenges linked to the need to strengthen the teaching profession, both worldwide and in Latin America and the

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<sup>2</sup> The term “teachers” is used throughout this document to refer to all teachers at all levels of education.

Caribbean. Organizations such as UNESCO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI),<sup>3</sup> the Organization of American States (OAS), MERCOSUR, the World Bank and PREAL have made efforts in this regard through studies, research, meetings and publications. There is consensus on the need to attract students by improving conditions conducive to professional excellence, raise the quality of initial teacher training, strengthen continuing training, promote careers that contribute to professional development and guarantee decent teacher pay, conditions conducive to effective teaching and performance assessment systems based on agreed standards and criteria.

In the last decade, UNESCO has focused on the need for high-quality initial teacher-training geared to professional performance in a variety of contexts and attractive to talented young people by improving working conditions through effective recognition of the teaching profession, given the need for inclusive policies encompassing initial training, employment and continuing training. It has been proposed that a teacher-performance assessment system based on standards agreed with teachers' unions and other organizations be implemented and that incentive and pay policies be formulated to boost the social value of the teaching profession by according it due recognition (UNESCO, 2007a).

### ➤ 3.

UNESCO's global strategy, *Teachers for Education for All*, highlights three gaps – teacher-related policy, capacity and financing – that are jeopardising Education for All goals in the developing world.

Against this global backdrop, in view of the region's public education policy requirements, OREALC/UNESCO launched the Regional Strategic Project on Teachers for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2010 in an endeavour to bridge teacher policy and capacity gaps. Accordingly, the project, whose results constitute the basis of this report, was designed to draw up analytical categories and a forward-looking evidence-based approach for teacher-policy formulation in Latin American and Caribbean countries. Three objectives were set specifically for project activities: (a) review of the state of the art in regard to lessons learnt in the region about teacher-related matters and problematic issues; (b) on the basis of such lessons and future-oriented criteria established in comparative research and by national discussion groups (described below), drafting of guidelines for teacher-policy formulation for the region; and (c) establishment of a regional network of stakeholders to contribute, through their vision, opinions and experience, to renewed teacher-policy debate and formulation in the region.

To implement the project, OREALC/UNESCO defined a working method based on contributions by Latin American teacher-policy experts and on the work of eight

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<sup>3</sup> *The Education Goals 2021, adopted in 2008 by the Ministers of Education of Ibero-American countries, set the General Goal of "strengthening the teaching profession" and a number of specific goals such as "improving initial teacher training for primary and secondary teachers" and "promoting continuing training and professional development".*

national consultation and discussion groups composed of stakeholders representing governments, academia and teachers' unions in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. Subregional representativeness and accumulated education-policy experience were the criteria used to select the States. The groups met twice in 2011 to analyse the documents submitted by the Technical Secretariat established by OREALC/UNESCO for the purposes of the project and proposed improvements.<sup>4</sup> This report is therefore the outcome of interaction between two sources and types of knowledge and action-oriented criteria – one approach focused on regional teacher-issues and the other drew on the experience of national groups.

This report and the preliminary documents submitted for discussion were commissioned by OREALC/UNESCO from the Centre for Research on Educational Policy and Practice (CEPPE) of the Catholic University of Chile,<sup>5</sup> where the Technical Secretariat has been established.

With regard to proposals and suggested working methods, the following inputs were taken into consideration in drafting the report:

- a) a set of five documents, written by Latin American education and teacher policy experts, on the following specific topics: initial training (Beatrice Ávalos, Chile); training and continuing professional development (Sylvia Ortega, Mexico); the teaching career (Denise Vaillant, Uruguay); teachers' organizations (Mariano Palamidessi, Argentina); and institutionalization of teacher policies (Simón Schwartzman, Brazil);<sup>6</sup>
- b) discussion at a regional seminar held in Lima, Peru, on 7 and 8 July 2011, on papers submitted by experts;
- c) replies by a number of countries (Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago) to an by OREALC/UNESCO and Technical Secretariat consultation designed to obtain additional up-to-date information on the actual situation in each country;
- d) summary of discussions on the draft State of the Art by the national groups of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago;
- e) summary of the discussions on the draft Criteria and Guidelines for the Design of Policies by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru;
- f) document compiled by José Luis Guzmán and Marcela Gajardo on behalf of PREAL on the teaching situation in Central America;

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<sup>4</sup> *The Argentina and Brazil consultation groups expressed reservations about the methodology adopted for the strategy, as they felt that prior consideration should have been given to the drafting of national State of the Art reports for each country, rather than to the analysis of secondary sources by experts, as was effectively the case.*

<sup>5</sup> *The Technical Secretariat comprises Cristián Cox, Director of the project, Carlos Eugenio Beca and Marianela Cerri.*

<sup>6</sup> *Large sections of these documents have been reproduced verbatim in this report.*

- g) discussion during virtual teacher-policy meetings organized by PREAL, in which groups of representatives of ministries, academia and trade unions from Central America and the Dominican Republic participated.

#### ➤ 4.

The report, which is both an assessment and a source of guidance for public policy-making, is based on the premise that teacher policy should not be addressed separately from education policy. The significant impact of good teaching on the quality of education has been analysed thoroughly in recent years, but it is clear that the full potential of teaching can be developed only in a favourable school environment. Teacher policy that effectively ensures quality and equity cannot be designed separately from the need for a relevant curriculum, adequate infrastructure and educational resources, and commensurate efforts in respect of educational institutions, financing and organization.

The need for sound policies for the teaching profession forms part of the overarching objective of establishing education systems that deliver quality education for all children, young people and adults. This entails much more than student enrolment and retention and includes the importance and quality of learning opportunities available to all. The right to education is regarded as a prerequisite for the exercise of human rights and as the key to citizenship and economic development.

#### ➤ 5.

The report is divided into two parts, mirroring the objectives. Part I contains the *State of the Art on Teacher Policy in the Region*. Part II sets out the *Criteria and Guidelines on Teacher Policy* to be viewed in the light of the situation in each country. Both parts of the report are organized around four main themes, namely initial training, continuing training, the teaching career and teacher-policy institutions and processes in Latin America and the Caribbean. The three key teacher issues – initial training, continuing training and the teaching career – are therefore considered and discussed in the report together with a new issue that is inherently more difficult to document and address, namely teacher policies and the institutions and processes by which they are formulated, implemented and evaluated.

In considering and applying the teacher-policy formulation guidelines contained in Part II of the report, it is important to bear in mind that the education situation and policy agenda differ from one country to another. Accordingly, some countries in the region face the challenge of procuring a full complement of teachers and lecturers qualified to teach in tertiary education, either because teachers are trained at the secondary level only or because institutions are obliged, owing to the shortage of teachers, to employ staff who hold secondary or tertiary qualifications but are not trained teachers. The challenge facing other countries, by contrast, is not the introduction of institutional

teacher training at the tertiary level but existing teacher-training content and practices at the tertiary level that fall short of the requirements of the education system and of society at large.

Each national situation is evidently marked by particular critical issues, which will determine the country-specific importance of the guidelines contained in Part II of the report. As noted above, the guidelines are the outcome of a systematic scrutiny of regional evidence generally and of eight countries' experience of assessment and prioritization policies and criteria.

Nothing could be more historically and culturally specific than individual countries' response to teacher issues at present; nevertheless, there are discernible commonalities, both internationally and regionally. This dual perspective is prevalent throughout the report. To be effective in improving each country's teacher policy, a demanding effort must be made to place it in context, but such contextualization should relate to regional considerations and to the comparative analysis conducted throughout this cooperative endeavour.



I

PART I:

# State of the Art on Teacher Policy in the Region





## Part I: *State of the Art on Teacher Policy in the Region*

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Although the policies governing the teaching profession must be viewed and analysed as an integral part of education policy, for the purposes of analysis, teacher policy has been divided in this report into three key areas: initial training; the professional development and continuing training of practising teachers; and the teaching career broadly construed to include regulations on professional practice, activities and standards that acknowledge and enhance the standing of the teaching profession in society.

Each of these aspects is generally reviewed of each area, and key issues arising in each situation are described.

The objective of producing highly qualified, committed and responsible teachers capable of serving education systems that deliver quality education for all cannot be achieved by taking a piecemeal approach to each aspect. Inclusive or systemic policy design is vital if initial- and continuing-training efforts are not to be squandered on an unappealing profession characterized by poor pay and conditions. Moreover, initiatives to recognize, evaluate and boost teachers' performance will be of no avail unless solid and rigorous training is ensured.

Before analysing the above-mentioned points, teachers and teachers' unions in Latin America and the Caribbean will be reviewed generally after a general description of the region's socio-economic situation.

Lastly, a generally overlooked but strategically important matter, namely the way in which public policies on the teaching profession are formulated and, in particular, the institutions (if they exist) that are in charge of formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating such policies, will be addressed.

In initiating and implementing teacher policies, it is crucial to analyse the participation and influence of a range of social and political stakeholders. Internationally, these stakeholders acknowledge the importance of teachers' unions and professional organizations.

# I Overview of teachers and teachers' organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean

## 1.1 Regional contextual aspects

In spite of the efforts and progress made in recent decades to achieve economic growth, social development and the democratization of political systems, Latin America still has high levels of poverty and inequality. In 2009, the poverty rate among the regional population was 33.1%, 13.3% of which was extreme poverty. Income distribution in the region's countries is among the most unequal in the world (ECLAC, 2010).

The situation in each country in the region varies, in terms of the level of development attained and in terms of socio-economic characteristics. According to 2009 World Bank data, the GDP per capita of Trinidad and Tobago was \$25,698, Argentina \$14,559, Mexico \$14,337 and Chile \$14,331, in stark contrast to countries such as Nicaragua (\$2,664), Honduras (\$3,849) and Bolivia (\$4,426).<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the poverty rate in Latin American countries varies considerably. In 2008, the poverty rate was 13.7% in Chile, 14.0% in Uruguay and 16.4% in Costa Rica but was 69.9%, 61.9% and 58.2% in Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay respectively. The same holds true for the State's capacity to combat poverty: average per capita public social expenditure was \$1,209 in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Panama and Chile, but only \$181 (on average) in Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic (ECLAC, 2010). Education is one of the most significant factors in eliminating poverty and inequality. "It is the main tool that States can use to dissociate an individual's social background from the wellbeing that he or she can attain throughout life. But the region has not harnessed the education system as a driver of equal opportunity. Advances in coverage, access and progression through education cycles in recent decades have caused stratification in learning and attainment within educational systems" (ECLAC, 2010: 25).

The challenges faced in providing universal educational opportunities vary greatly from one country to another and depend on the level of educational coverage effectively achieved. Some countries are close to achieving universal primary education and have high secondary-education enrolment rates, while others have not yet achieved full primary education coverage and are far from doing so in secondary education.

<sup>7</sup> <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/POP.pdf>  
[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP\\_PPP.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP_PPP.pdf)

Furthermore, it is important to consider the full implications of the region's disparities in terms of education systems' coverage levels and, consequently, the youth and adult literacy and enrolment rates and, more specifically, the systems' differing capacities to provide learning opportunities. Accordingly, although the net primary-education enrolment rate in practically all countries of the region is more than 90%, there are sharp differences in children lagging two or more years behind their year group at school, with rates of 26% and 25% in Guatemala and Nicaragua respectively, in contrast to Costa Rica and Mexico (5% and 3% respectively) (OEI 2010).

However, access to and timely progression through lower secondary education are considerably lower and there are greater disparities between countries, with coverage ranging from 97% and 94% in Brazil and Chile respectively to 41% and 47% in Guatemala and Nicaragua respectively. These differences are even more marked in upper secondary education: in Brazil, Cuba and Chile the net enrolment rate is more than 80%, while in El Salvador and Guatemala it is 33% and 32% respectively, and only 15% in Nicaragua (OEI 2010). A review of the information provided by studies such as the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE) and the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that educational inequalities do not simply mean that access to education is unequal but that the quality of education is not uniform. Such disparities are found in every education system, which increases selectivity and perpetuates the inequalities of the region's educational practices (SITEAL, 2010).

As to the quality of learning opportunities, there are significant differences among countries. According to SERCE assessment results, in 2006 only 7% of grade three primary school pupils in Cuba tested at level 1 or lower in reading (11% in mathematics), while in the Dominican Republic 78% and 90% of grade three pupils tested at the same level in reading and mathematics respectively.

## 1.2 Teacher characteristics

There are approximately 6.4 million primary- and secondary-school teachers in Latin America and the Caribbean. The majority (2.9 million or 45.6%) are employed in primary education, (ISCED 1)<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education defines ISCED 1 programmes as being typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics. ISCED 2, according to the same classification, is the first cycle of secondary education that builds on the learning outcomes from ISCED 1, but with a more subject-oriented curriculum and teachers with training in specific subjects. ISCED 3 is the final phase of secondary education in most countries, with more subject-based teaching. Teachers are generally required to hold more specific and higher qualifications in the subjects or fields in which they teach than at ISCED 2.

**TABLE 1: TEACHING STAFF IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, BY EDUCATION LEVEL (2008 DATA)**

Education level	Teaching Staff		
	Male	Female	Total
Primary (ISCED 1)	643,000 22%	2,276,000 78%	2,919,000 45,6%
Lower Secondary (ISCED 2)	750,000 37%	1,277,000 63%	2,027,000 31,7
Upper Secondary (ISCED 3)	626,000 43%	831,000 57%	1,457,000 22,7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,019,000</b> <b>31,5%</b>	<b>4,384,000</b> <b>68,5%</b>	<b>6,403,000</b> <b>100%</b>

► *SOURCE: Compiled from information in Global Education Digest 2010: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal.*

A predominant feature in Latin America and the Caribbean is feminization of the profession. As shown in Table 1, 68.5% of teachers are women, the percentage being even higher in primary education (78%). In Table 2, which contains data for the eight countries covered specifically by this report, Argentina and Brazil have the highest percentage of women teachers, while the rates are lowest in Guatemala, Peru and Mexico.

**TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN TEACHERS, BY EDUCATION LEVEL, IN EIGHT COUNTRIES AND REGIONAL AVERAGE (2008 DATA)**

Education level	Primary ISCED 1	Lower Secondary ISCED 2	Upper Secondary ISCED 3
Countries	% women teachers	% women teachers	% women teachers
Argentina	87	73	65
Brazil	91	73	62
Chile	78 <sup>(2)</sup>	-	55
Colombia	78	-	50 <sup>(1)</sup>
Guatemala	65	45	43
Mexico	66	50	44
Peru	65	-	44 <sup>(1)</sup>
Trinidad and Tobago	79	N/A	65
<b>REGIONAL TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>57</b>

(1) Includes ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 for Colombia and Peru.

(2) Includes ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 for Chile

► *SOURCE: Compiled from information in Global Education Digest 2010: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal.*

Class size is another factor that affects the work of teachers. Although there have been no comparative studies on the subject, the data on the pupil-teacher ratio are 23 pupils per teacher in ISCED 1, 18 per teacher in ISCED 2, and 15 per teacher in ISCED 3. There is great variability between countries. For example in ISCED 1, the ratio ranges from 8 pupils per teacher in Bermuda to 33 per teacher in Honduras and El Salvador.

It is noteworthy that the ratios in countries such as Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico are higher than the regional average (28 pupils per teacher in ISCED 1), but are below the regional average in Argentina and Trinidad and Tobago, with 17 pupils per teacher in ISCED 1. These ratios do not reflect the disparities within countries in terms of class sizes in urban or rural areas. For example, in Mexico there are urban schools with class sizes of 50, whereas in multigrade rural schools there might be fewer than 10 pupils.

Recent studies on teachers in Latin America and the Caribbean have revealed tremendous heterogeneity in the teaching corps, highlighting regional differences and commonalities that make it easier to identify the types of action that would be best suited to the socio-demographic and employment features, training experiences, working environment and professional background of each subgroup.<sup>9</sup>

In countries such as Argentina and Chile, which are at an “advanced demographic transition” stage, owing to their broad primary and secondary education coverage, ageing population and the resultant decrease in the number of school-age children, there is only a moderate demand for teacher replenishment (CELADE-ECLAC, 2000; Summit of the Americas, 2011). A shortage of qualified teachers is nonetheless expected in eight provinces in Argentina, especially in secondary education. By contrast, the second group of countries, those in “full demographic transition”, including Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago, will need new teachers if they are to achieve universal coverage in secondary education and improve educational services in primary education. Countries at the “moderate demographic transition” stage (Guatemala, for example) or at the “incipient” stage, such as Bolivia and Haiti, need more primary teachers. Lastly, in Trinidad and Tobago, among other countries, teachers are required for early childhood education.

Some countries are expecting a generational shift in the teaching profession in the medium term. In Mexico, for example, nearly two fifths of basic-education teachers took up duties less than 10 years ago and are under 35 years of age, but more than a quarter of them are eligible for retirement. It has been concluded that, within a decade, this generational shift will create new opportunities (Ortega, 2011).

According to UNESCO’s Global Education Digest 2010, the ages of teachers in five countries, as shown in Table 3, show that ageing in the teaching profession is most

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<sup>9</sup> Only some of these aspects are addressed below, specifically those that are of particular interest in terms of the development of policies and programmes.

significant in Chile and Jamaica, where 39.7% and 34.4% respectively of primary-school teachers are aged 50 or over. In Brazil and Argentina, by contrast, that age group accounts for only 13.1% and 15.9% of primary-school teachers respectively.

Furthermore, Table 3 shows that the proportion of older teachers is far higher in Chile, where more than one third are aged over 50 – in stark contrasts with Argentina and, in particular, Brazil, where approximately 15% of teachers are over 50. Furthermore, less than 20% of secondary-school teachers are under the age of 30 except in Trinidad and Tobago (24.2%) and Jamaica (21.6%). Mexico and Peru were not included in Table 3, as that information was not provided in the base table.

**TABLE 3: AGE OF TEACHERS, BY EDUCATION LEVEL (2008)  
(WEI\* AND UOE\*\* COUNTRIES)**

	ISCED 1 Primary level %				
	under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	over 60
Argentina	14.4	41.6	28.0	12.8	3.1
Brazil	19.6	35.4	31.9	11.5	1.6
Chile <sup>(a)</sup>	13.4	21.6	25.3	29.1	10.6
Jamaica	16.7	30.9	18.0	28.7	5.7
Trinidad and Tobago <sup>(b)</sup>	8.4	36.9	25.6	26.9	2.3

	ISCED 2 Lower secondary level %				
	under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	over 60
Argentina	16.2	35.0	30.0	14.7	4.0
Brazil	19.4	36.6	31.4	13.5	2.1
Chile <sup>(a)</sup>					
Jamaica	s/i	s/i	s/i	s/i	s/i
Trinidad and Tobago <sup>(b)</sup>	24.2	28.7	22.4	21.4	3.3

	ISCED 3 Upper secondary level %				
	under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	over 60
Argentina	13	31.3	32.4	17.9	5.3
Brazil	17.9	33.3	31.7	14.7	2.4
Chile <sup>(a)</sup>	13.7	26.4	28.8	23.7	7.4
Jamaica	21.6	32.4	20.7	21.4	3.9
Trinidad and Tobago <sup>(b)</sup>					

\* World Education Indicators Programme

\*\* The UOE survey compiles data from high- and middle-income countries that are members of affiliates of OECD or Eurostat

(a) ISCED 1 data include teachers at the ISCED 2 level

(b) Information provided by the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago

► **Source:** Compiled from data in Table 22 of the *Global Education Digest 2010: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal*.

The distribution of teachers by age throughout the territory can vary within each country. Older, more experienced teachers generally work in urban areas, while younger, less experienced teachers work in remote or rural areas (UNESCO UIS, 2006).

As teachers' experience, which is correlated with age distribution, is known to have a significant bearing on their performance, this variable is crucial to planning courses of action for professional development.

With regard to initial training, there are disparities in terms of the proportion of teachers holding a tertiary qualification. The trend suggests that in the majority of the region's countries every member of the teaching corps will meet this requirement in the medium term.

The average percentage of teachers who met national requirements for certification as primary-school teachers was 74.6% in 2008, while the average percentage of teachers who met the requirements for secondary education in that year was 64.4% (UNESCO UIS, 2009). However, given the heterogeneity of initial teacher training in the various countries (analysed below), teacher certification should not necessarily be taken as a guarantee of adequate training.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, teacher-certification levels vary among countries, ranging from approximately 50% for all educational levels in Belize and St. Kitts/Nevis, to 60% to 80% in Barbados, 80% to 90% in Trinidad and Tobago and 90% to 100% in the Bahamas (UNESCO UIS, 2006).

According to interesting data on teachers' working day, 28% of teachers who teach the sixth grade of primary education in the region have another job in addition to teaching, which makes it difficult for them to participate in school or further-training activities (SITEAL 2010). Furthermore, in Trinidad and Tobago the distance between a teacher's home and place of work affects teachers' availability of extracurricular activities.

It is important to bear in mind that the teaching profession encompasses a diverse range of education levels and specialties, leading to differences in status, pay and self-perception. In some countries, these differences are reflected in the job title, for example preschool "educators", primary school "masters and mistresses" and secondary school "teachers" (Tenti, 2009).<sup>10</sup>

With regard to perceptions of the profession, a study by Vaillant and Rossel (2006) of seven national case studies (Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay) shows that these countries' teachers consider that they fall between vocational practitioners and "missionaries" and that their professional role is to facilitate learning rather than to transmit culture and knowledge. Moreover, Tenti (2009) draws attention to the historical distinction between the vocational and professional conception of the teacher's role, adding that the increasing complexity of teaching and the growing scientific and technological knowledge required by teachers for success in their work have strongly increased demands for professionalization while weakening any sense of vocation.

Teachers throughout the region consider that they are expected to perform multiple tasks relating to care, health, food, restraint, guidance and prevention of drug use and alcoholism, in addition to society's growing demands on schools, which makes it more difficult for teachers to concentrate on actual teaching, for which they must deliver better results (Falus and Goldberg, 2011). Some outstanding teacher characteristics include teachers' interpersonal relations, teamwork and solution of emerging problems (Tenti, 2009).

The teacher's role in society today is changing, as schools are no longer the only setting for cultural transmission now that knowledge is increasingly available owing to the prevalence of new information technologies in daily life. This phenomenon, sometimes perceived as a threat to the teacher's role, actually affords an opportunity for professionalization and constitutes a challenge for students to develop the cognitive skills in order to understand and assimilate new technology-mediated knowledge (Falus and Goldberg, 2011).

The region's teachers describe themselves as middle or lower-middle class, have somewhat unstable patterns of cultural consumption and are dissatisfied with their working conditions despite being reasonably satisfied with the profession (Tenti, 2007a; Ortega, et al., 2011). By contrast, Mexican teachers, regardless of the number of years of

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<sup>10</sup> This report uses the terms "teachers", "masters" and "educators" interchangeably.

service, reported greater professional satisfaction than at the beginning of their careers and expressed appreciation for their wages and contractual conditions.

One study on Chile, while probably reflecting a more predominant situation, showed that teachers perceived their profession to be low-paid, with exhausting tasks and insufficient time for planning, preparation of materials, assessment, professional development, teamwork, pastoral care of students and their families and other non-classroom activities (Bellei and Valenzuela 2010).

### **1.3 Characteristics of teachers' organizations in the region**

Teachers' organizations and unions were first formed in Latin America in the 1920s and spread in the following three decades as national education systems developed. The emergence of such organizations was preceded by the establishment, in the late nineteenth century, of mutual organizations and educational counselling bodies in a number of countries in the region.

Other trade unions were established in the 1960s and 1970s during a period of confrontation with and/or resistance to State repression. Trade unions formed at that time were often linked to radical political movements. A typical example of a trade union that had strong links in its infancy to such action was the Union of Education Workers of Peru (SUTEP), founded in 1972 (Degregori, 1990). In Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay, existing teachers' unions partly reconstituted their identity in the struggle against the military dictatorships of the 1970s and 1980s.

During the 1980s, teachers' unions were vocal during wide-ranging action in several countries, involving pay disputes that arose in a climate of fiscal crisis and financial recession (Gindin, 2009). From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, new confederations of municipal or subnational unions were formed but were not members of existing national organizations. The Confederation of Argentine Education Workers (CEA) and the National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE) of Brazil, both founded in 1990, are cases in point.

In contrast to the prevailing trend in Latin America, teachers' organizations in the Caribbean were formed as professional associations (Palamidessi and Legarralde, 2006), for example the Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA) in 1964, the Dominican Association of Teachers (ADP) in 1970 and the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA) in 1979. Organizations in Central America were established as trade unions (Honduras and Guatemala). Costa Rica's two professional associations – the National Association of Educators (ANDE) and the Association of Secondary School Teachers (APSE), founded in 1943 and 1955 respectively – were modelled on teachers' unions.

Owing to the scale and complexity of Latin American and Caribbean countries and their State administrations, teachers' organizations range from small bodies with very little lobbying and mobilization capacity to large unions that are influential social and political stakeholders. Among the national bodies reviewed, Mexico's National Union of Education Workers (SNTE) is the largest in Latin America, with 1,500,000 members. The union with the fewest members (10,700) is TTUTA.

In the case of trade unions, the number of members must be seen as a proportion of the total number of teachers. As shown in Table 4, membership rates vary substantially from one country to another and are particularly high in Mexico.

The degree of unionization has changed over time, as in the case of SUTEP (Peru), as the number of unionized teachers has declined in the last 30 years (Zegarra and Ravina, 2003).

### ***Unions and professional colleges and associations***

In Latin America and the Caribbean, teachers' organizations take the form of unions or professional associations or colleges.

Teachers' unions are not-for-profit organizations established to organize and represent teachers (both members and non-members) in order to defend their individual and collective interests, particularly with regard to pay and working conditions, but also the implementation of educational policy (Vieira Ferreira, 2010).

Professional associations are organizations that represent the interests of their members as professionals. Thus professional associations tend to consider that their members have specialized knowledge, exercise independent control over their work and share ethical standards specific to their profession.

Professional colleges are officially authorized organizations whose members are professionals who wish to regulate the practice of a profession while simultaneously defending members' interests. In this category, the College of Teachers of Chile is of particular note. It was founded in 1974 by decree during the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship to replace the Union of Education Workers (SUTE), which had been dissolved after the military coup in 1973 (Pérez and Sandoval, 2008). However, owing to subsequent developments, it represents the teaching profession independently – as a trade union – while remaining a professional association (Weinstein, 2006).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Pro-democracy teachers' bodies opposed to the dictatorship were the first to establish their own organizations (AGECH) and they subsequently exploited gaps in the democratization of the College of Secondary Teachers to be elected to its management through open elections.

**TABLE 4: TYPES OF TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND UNIONIZATION/AFFILIATION RATES**

Country	National unions <sup>(a)</sup>	Professional associations	Professional colleges	Approx. members	Unionization rates <sup>(b)</sup>
Argentina	Argentine Union of Private Teachers (SADOP)			n/a	
		Association of Technical Teachers (AMET)		n/a	n/a
	Union of Argentine Teachers (UDA)			n/a	
	Confederation of Argentine Educators (CEA)			n/a	n/a
	Confederation of Education Workers of the Republic of Argentina (CTERA)			286,365 <sup>(c)</sup>	48.6
Brazil	National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE)			949,629 <sup>(c)</sup>	44.2
Bolivia	National Confederation of Rural Education Workers of Bolivia (CONMERB)			n/a	
	Confederation of Urban Education Workers of Bolivia (CTEUB)				
Chile			College of Teachers of Chile	71,982 <sup>(d)</sup>	53.3
Colombia	Colombian Federation of Educators (FECODE)			270,000 <sup>(e)</sup>	73.8

Costa Rica	Union of Costa Rican Education Workers (SEC)			21,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	
		Association of Secondary School Teachers (APSE)		21,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	
		National Association of Educators (ANDE)		45,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	
			College of Graduates and Professors in Literature, Philosophy, Science and the Arts (COLYPRO)	25,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	
Dominican Republic		Dominican Association of Secondary Teachers (ADP)		n/a	
Ecuador	National Union of Educators (UNE)			n/a	
El Salvador	Union of Teachers in Community-based Education (SIMEDUCO)	National Association of Salvadoran Educators (ANDES)		n/a	
Guatemala	Union of Education Workers of Guatemala (STEG)			n/a	
	National Assembly of Teachers (ANM)				
	Union of Teachers of Guatemala (SMG)				
Honduras	Federation of Teachers' Organizations of Honduras (FOMH)		College of Secondary Teachers of Honduras (COPEMH)	n/a	
			Honduran Professional College of Teacher Development (COLPROSUMAH)		

Jamaica		Jamaica Teachers' Association (JTA)		n/a	
Mexico	National Union of Education Workers (SNTE)			1,500,000	129.2
Panama		Teachers' Association of the Republic of Panama (APRP)		n/a	
Paraguay	Federation of Educators of Paraguay (FEP)			n/a	
	Organization of Education Workers of Paraguay (OTEP)				
	National Union of Educators – National Union (UNE-SN)				
Peru	Union of Workers (SUTEP)			145,000 <sup>(g)</sup>	41.9
			College of Secondary Teachers of Peru (CPPE)	n/a	n/a
Trinidad and Tobago		Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA)		10,700 <sup>(h)</sup>	73.3
Uruguay	Uruguayan Federation of Teachers (FUM)			n/a	
	National Federation of Secondary Teachers (FENAPES)				
Venezuela	Venezuelan Federation of Teachers (FVM)			n/a	

- (a) In some countries, union organizations are officially recognized by the local authority/State, but they are not national organizations.
- (b) Figures for the numbers of teachers used to calculate the percentages in this column were taken from Tables 3 and 6 of the Global Education Digest 2010, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal. However, the unionization rates might be somewhat distorted because non-teachers and/or retired teachers are members of some unions. This accounts for rates of more than 100%, as in the case of Mexico.
- (c) Gindin (2009)
- (d) Active secondary teachers at the national level who are affiliated to the College (Campaña 2009-2010).
- (e) “Quienes somos [Who we are]”, [www.fecode.edu.co](http://www.fecode.edu.co) Accessed: 23/05/11.
- (f) Vargas Salazar (2008)
- (g) Zegarra and Ravina (2003)
- (h) TTUTA website: [www.ttuta.org](http://www.ttuta.org) Accessed: 23/05/2011

► **Source: Compilation based on Palamidessi and Legarralde, 2011.**

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One of the outstanding features of the region’s teachers’ unions is their international outreach, both within Latin America and globally. The history of regional associations therefore began in 1928 when the First Congress of Teachers of the Americas was held in Buenos Aires. Many teachers’ organizations in the region are today affiliated to two major international teachers’ associations: 16 national unions or teachers’ organizations belong to Education International (EI); 13 organizations belong to the Confederation of American Educators (CEA), and many of the latter also belong to Education International.

The unions’ organization and action must be seen in the context of regulation and representation of the interests of teachers as employees. Professional associations, on the other hand, place emphasis on the professional status of primary- and secondary-school teachers (Fernández, 2001). The range of dialogue and/or confrontation activities to be expected from both types of organization should, in principle, differ, as should the functions that they fulfil.

The difference between unions and professional associations or colleges therefore entails different forms of representation and membership and, consequently, different ways of asserting teachers’ identity (Vieira Ferreira, 2007). The values, knowledge and sentiments that come into play when teachers act as “workers” boost integration based on recognition of the unity and homogeneity of the teaching corps, while the term “professionals” highlights issues relating to autonomy, responsibility for professional performance and results, and specialist knowledge. At any rate, international and Latin American education policies are consistent with statements by teachers’ organizations in support of the “professionalization” of teachers, although the term can be interpreted in a variety of ways, ranging from the most technical to the most critical and reflexive.

In the early days, the distinction between teachers' unions and professional associations lay in the resources at these organizations' disposal as education policy stakeholders. Teachers' unions frequently relied on their capacity to rally teachers round confrontational methods such as strike action. Professional associations, by contrast, relied on knowledge and negotiation skills consistent with their professional identity (Palamidessi and Legarralde, 2006). In recent decades, however, teachers' unions and professional associations have increasingly been taking similar action. Some unions have established research institutes so that they can be better informed for the conduct of negotiations – examples include Argentina's CTERA Marina Vilte Research Institute, Peru's Derrama Magisterial Institute of Teacher Training and Development (INFODEM), which is linked to SUTEP, and Mexico's research teams such as SNTE. Professional associations in some countries have merged with national trade unions and confederations; for example Chile's College of Secondary Teachers is a member of the Central Union of Workers and it takes strike and other forms of collective action.

As a result of the trend towards convergence between trade unions and professional bodies originally identified as associations or colleges, the action of teachers' organizations in the region is structured, to varying extents, around three components: (a) negotiation and campaigns for improvements in pay, labour rights and working conditions; (b) discussions on educational policy and lobbying for greater recognition and social legitimacy for the teaching profession; (c) disputes over participation in decision-making, both in the education system and in political life.

Teachers' organizations coexist to varying extents in each country. The formation of multi-tiered organizations generally reflects the structure of the State and national or subnational levels of educational governance. Supervision of teachers' employment relations has, at particular times in the history of education systems, been linked to the establishment of unions of varying levels and scales. National unions, with emphasis on negotiating better pay or working conditions, were formed in unitary States or those in which employment relations with teachers are monitored nationally, such as Mexico.

Teachers' organizations in the region are structured and coordinated according to two alternative models: (a) teachers' unions integrated into confederations (CTERA and CEA in Argentina and CNTE in Brazil); and (b) national organizations with subsidiary branches in the provinces, as in Argentina and Chile.

A distinction may be drawn between national or majority organizations, such as those in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago, on the one hand, and individual organizations that act independently or in a loosely coordinated manner or form temporary alliances, as in the case of Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Paraguay, on the other hand.

**TABLE 5: MODELS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OR COORDINATION OF TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS IN SOME LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES**

Nationwide or majority trade unions or professional colleges	Individual organizations that act independently or in a loosely coordinated manner or form temporary alliances
<b>Argentina</b> (CTERA)	<b>Guatemala</b> (STEG) (AMG) (SMG)
<b>Brazil</b> (CNTE)	<b>Nicaragua</b> (ANDEN) (CTE) (FTEM)
<b>Chile</b> College of Secondary Teachers	<b>El Salvador</b> (ANDES) (SIMEDUCO) (SGEEPES)
<b>Colombia</b> (FECODE)	<b>Paraguay</b> (FEP) (OTEP) (UNE – SN)
<b>Mexico</b> (SNTE)	
<b>Peru</b> (SUTEP)	
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b> (TTUTA)	

► *Source: Compilation based on Palamidessi and Legarralde, 2011*

Moreover, the level of democratization of teachers' unions in Latin America varies. A key indicator of the extent of democratization is the tenure or rotation of the same directors in leadership positions. In some cases, the leader's tenure is a long-term arrangement that provides stability, which makes it easier to consolidate responsibilities and power. Such situations are commonplace in countries where corporate relations are maintained between the State and the union.<sup>12</sup> In other instances, the contrarian founding mandate – or one that was associated with resistance to coercive or repressive State policies – tended rather to produce horizontal organizations, in which decisions were made by consensus. In Brazil and Argentina, the unions regularly appoint new leaders, and this is a distinctive and prized characteristic (Gindin, 2008). Internal disagreements are usually resolved locally and have little effect on the union's national activities.

Furthermore, as societies become more complex, heterogeneous and pluralistic, a diversity of interests is emerging in teachers' organizations that merely perform the representational functions of traditional unions. In addition to traditional unions and professional associations, there are now associations, networks and groups of teachers belonging to specific sectors of the teaching corps formed as a result of social and cultural pluralism and comprising: (a) subject-specific teachers' organizations such as Mexico's National Association of Secondary Mathematics Teachers (ANPM) and Uruguay's National Association of Secondary Geography Teachers (ANPG); (b) organizations that

<sup>12</sup> In Mexico, the SNTE has a National Executive Committee that sets the date for sectional meetings at which new sectional representatives are elected. This power enables the National Executive Committee to regulate the renewal of local authorities and therefore to retain control over its basis of legitimacy. As a result of this situation, dissident forces within the union, such as the National Teachers' Union, are obliged to act as separate organizations (Gindin, 2008).

research and reflect on teaching, such as Argentina's Network of Participatory Research Applied to Curriculum Renewal (REDIPARC) and Colombia's Pedagogical Expedition.

Some teachers' organizations, such as FECODE in Colombia and the College of Secondary Teachers of Chile, have promoted key initiatives and educational movements in order to contribute to teachers' reflection and professional development and propose educational and curricular changes.

In summary, the predominant organizational models are unions and professional associations. These organizations adopt forms of governance that range from assemblies, with leaders who are replaced regularly, to extremely powerful leaderships that take little account of internal dissidence. The size, degree of unionization and consolidation of teachers' organizations also vary substantially. Teachers' unions make three kinds of demands and claims: economic and corporate, for example better pay and conditions, and statutes and other regulations on the teaching profession; political and corporate, for example participation in decision-making on educational and school policy; and political and ideological, for example questioning of the general ideological principles that underpin educational policy or a government's general policy thrust (Palamidessi and Legarralde, 2006).

## II Initial teacher training

### 2.1 Characteristics of initial training systems in the region

Teacher training in Latin America is based institutionally on the normal schools that were established in the nineteenth century in all countries under review, some of which exist to this day. Teacher-training sections and, in due course, faculties of education, were established in universities to provide teachers, concomitantly with that institutional basis, for the growing numbers of pupils entering secondary education. University-based teacher training is not available to the same extent in all of the countries under review, but it accounts for a major proportion of trained teachers, especially for secondary education, for which it is the main source of teachers.

Initially, in Latin America and in the English-speaking Caribbean, teacher training for primary schools was provided in secondary-level institutions. This changed gradually as from the late 1970s and more markedly from the late 1980s, in a process known as the “tertiarization” of the training of primary-school teachers that is yet incomplete because Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Surinam still train secondary-school graduates to be primary-school teachers. Nevertheless, these same countries have begun the transition to tertiary-level teacher training and have introduced schemes for the qualification of “empirical” teachers, namely those who have not undergone tertiary training.

#### *Training institutions*

There are currently four types of institution:

1. universities, in which Faculties of Education or other academic units train teachers for the entire school system (in some countries) or exclusively for secondary education; these institutions also engage in research and education outreach;
2. pedagogical universities: during the transition to tertiary teacher-training institutions, some countries established pedagogical universities as a strategy to improve initial and continuing teacher training, strengthen academic research as a means of solving educational problems and establish a cultural point of reference in society; the major pedagogical universities are the National Pedagogical University of Mexico (1978), the National Pedagogical University of Colombia (1955), the Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University of Honduras (1989), the Libertador Pedagogical Experimental University in Venezuela (1983) and the Metropolitan University of Educational Sciences of Chile (1986);
3. higher teacher-training institutes (*Higher Normal Schools or Higher Education Institutes*) are non-university tertiary institutions that may have been normal schools originally and tend to be attached administratively and/or academically to national ministries or to subnational or provincial governments; in some countries, they train teachers for the entire school system and, in others, they provide

training only in early-childhood and primary education; some of these institutions undertake academic activities that are strictly speaking university activities;

4. teacher-training colleges (normal schools) are secondary-level institutions that train teachers for primary schools and, in some cases, for preschools and are usually attached academically and administratively to education ministries or secretariats.

Teacher training began in the English-speaking Caribbean in the 1930s when the first Teachers College, using methods equivalent to those used in most Latin American teacher-training colleges, was founded in Jamaica. Teacher training in the English-speaking Caribbean only became more institutionalized in the post-war period (Richardson, 2005). Colleges today mainly provide tertiary-level training for early childhood education, ISCED 1 (primary) and ISCED 2 (lower secondary), while university colleges cover all levels of the school system by offering concurrent courses of study for the award of a bachelor's degree in education, and consecutive courses for upper secondary education attended by university graduates and leading to a diploma in education.

Table 6 sets out the institutional aspect of teacher training in the countries under review in terms of whether training is provided by secondary, non-university tertiary or university institutions.

**TABLE 6: INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: INSTITUTIONAL UNITS**

<i>Level of initial teacher training</i>				
Education level	Secondary	Mainly tertiary, non-university	Colleges and universities	Mainly university
Initial	Guatemala	Argentina, Mexico, Peru	Colombia English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile
ISCED 1 (Primary)	Guatemala	Argentina, Mexico, Peru	Colombia English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile
ISCED 2 (Lower secondary)		Mexico	Argentina, Peru English-speaking Caribbean	Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Colombia
ISCED 3 (Upper secondary)			Argentina, Peru	Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico* English-speaking Caribbean

\* Upper secondary-school teachers (CINE<sub>3</sub>) are not trained teachers and tend to be university graduates in a range of subjects.

► *Source: Compilation based on country information.*

Quite noteworthy is the growth of distance education in Brazil, Columbia and the English-speaking Caribbean. However, it is not clear how effective distance learning programmes are. In the case of Brazil, Gatti and Sá Barretto (2009) have expressed concern about the way in which distance education is provided by the Open University of Brazil. Issues include lower academic requirements, the lack of cultural socialization and poor training in personal interaction that is crucial in early childhood and basic education (Gatti et al. 2011). The same issues arose in Chile in the late 1990s and early 2000s when distance courses boomed, which prompted the authorities to take remedial steps, leading to the discontinuation of those programmes.

Several Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia Mexico and Peru) are rolling out the *Teach for America* model, an initiative originating in the United States of America and designed to recruit good university graduates to teach in schools in poor areas. Under this model, basic teacher training in classroom teaching (mostly in the form of summer courses) is provided to interested graduates and classroom supervision is ensured. In the United States and the United Kingdom, the initiative has been opposed by teacher-training institutions and academics, who argue that it deprofessionalizes teaching (Zeichner, 2010). No opposition has been observed in Latin America and the Caribbean because coverage is very low at present, but it could cause conflict in the future.

### ***Duration of studies***

The duration of studies varies considerably from four to five years for all levels of education in Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Peru to three or more years in Brazil. Training in preschool education and ISCED 1 in Columbian teacher-training institutes lasts for two years, while university degrees require five years. In Guatemala, the duration of training for preschool level and ISCED 1 varies from three to four years (as not all institutions have brought their system into line with current policy requirements), while there are two types of programme of differing duration for secondary education – three years for the teacher's diploma and five years for a bachelor's degree. As Table 7 shows, the training path for secondary-school teachers tends to be longer.

With regard to the English-speaking Caribbean, the length of study depends on the type of qualification. The shortest courses are those leading to certificates in teaching or education, which generally take two years, although this is changing. Teaching diplomas take three years and associates degrees take two, and can count towards the four-year bachelor's degree offered by universities. The diploma in education consists of consecutive professional training modules for university graduates.

**TABLE 7: DURATION OF STUDIES IN INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING IN SEVEN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES**

<i>COUNTRIES</i>	<i>EARLY CHILDHOOD</i>	<i>ISCED 1</i>	<i>ISCED 2</i>	<i>ISCED 3</i>
Argentina	4 – 5	4 – 5	4 – 5	4 – 5
Brazil	3 ó +	3 ó +	3 ó +	3 ó +
Chile	4 – 5	4 – 5	4 – 5	4 – 5
Colombia	2 – 5	2 – 5	5	5
Guatemala	3 – 4	3 – 4	3 – 5	3 – 5
Mexico <sup>(a)</sup>	4 – 5	4 – 5	4 – 5	–
Peru <sup>(b)</sup>	5 – 6	5 – 6	5 – 6	5 – 6
Trinidad and Tobago	1 – 2	1 – 2	1 – 2	1 – 2

(a) Upper secondary teachers (CINE3) are not trained teachers and tend to be university graduates in a range of subjects.

(b) Some students attending tertiary pedagogic institutes pursue university studies for one or two more years in order to obtain an undergraduate degree.

► *Source: Compilation based on country information*

## **Quantitative demands on the system**

In regard to the quantitative demands of education systems and the availability of sufficient numbers of teachers to permit achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,<sup>13</sup> it is interesting to note that supply exceeds demand in some countries, leading to unemployment among teaching graduates at the primary and lower secondary levels in particular. The situation is said to be acute in Peru, at least until recently, except in intercultural bilingual education, mathematics and science, and potentially problematical in Mexico, except in rural and indigenous areas. Although training programmes have expanded significantly in recent years in some countries of the region, research into teacher supply and demand has been inconclusive, in view of the rise in school enrolment and education-policy changes that might affect the number of teaching hours required (the pupil-teacher ratio, the number of contracted teaching hours, extension of the school day, etc.). By contrast many newly qualified teachers in Brazil do not take up teaching, and so demand cannot be met (Gatti et. al. 2011).

The situation in terms of training needs differs somewhat in Guatemala, where barely 50% of the third and sixth grade teachers surveyed by SERCE (2008) hold a teaching qualification or certificate. This situation could be exacerbated when the challenge of expanding early-childhood and secondary education coverage is taken up.

<sup>13</sup> *The Millennium Development Goals, which were signed by Heads of State and Government of 189 countries in 2000, include a commitment to achieve universal primary education by 2015.*

Moreover, there is a shortage of secondary-school teachers in specialist science subjects in most countries. In Trinidad and Tobago there is an oversupply of teachers in academic subjects but a shortage in the visual and performing arts, physical education and technical and vocational education.

## *Curriculum guidelines*

There have been no comparative studies to date on curriculum guidelines and the content of training programmes, but studies on some countries show that they face similar shortcomings. For example, in Brazil there is a wide variety of training curricula under the various schemes, as the national curriculum guidelines are not always observed and 68% of undergraduates studying for teaching degrees are enrolled in private institutions. Moreover, the content of primary-level training programmes is considered to be fragmented and dispersed, with little emphasis on the requisite classroom skills, and on discipline in particular. Most noteworthy are the difficulty of linking theory to practice and the relative lack of emphasis on methodological aspects of teaching (Gatti and Sá Barreto, 2009; Gatti et al. 2011).

A Colombian study (Calvo et al., 2004) has shown that the numerous courses delivered as part of teacher training interfere with students' learning of the key skills required to teach school-curriculum content and to use appropriate teaching strategies for that purpose.

Studies on teacher training in Peru have highlighted the lack of an intercultural approach and of training in exercising critical skills, and the limits of teaching capacities in general. Moreover, some teacher-training institutions deliver as many as three different curricula, thus reflecting lack of continuity in educational policy and the great emphasis on the curriculum as the focus of change in improving the quality of training (Oliart 1996, Montero et al. 2005 and Ames and Uccelli 2008).

The TEDS-M international study on future Chilean secondary-school teachers, conducted by International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), showed that their knowledge and teaching skills in mathematics was significantly lower than in the other 15 countries that participated in the study (Ávalos and Matus, 2010). Moreover, the "Inicia" national test taken by teacher-training graduates in basic education in Chile in 2010 showed that on average they gave correct answers to only 51% of questions that tested subject knowledge taught at primary level (ISCED 1).

It is important to distinguish between the training of primary- and secondary-school teachers. Primary-level teachers undergo teacher training together with general elementary training without any subject specialization, although there have recently been cases of specialized subjects being included. Secondary-level teachers undergo training in specialist subjects that are taught in parallel to the main curriculum (or consecutively, in rare cases). Some weaknesses in teacher training have, however, been noted.

The shortcomings in teacher training reported during specialist meetings in the region include: the development of skills and attitudes relevant to professional practice; training in areas such as civic values; knowledge of foreign languages; training in skills required for the globalized world; assimilation and use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching; and, more generally, the relative lack of links to curricular reforms.<sup>14</sup> With regard to the latter point, Chile has drawn up standards for the use of technology in initial training (MINEDUC, UNESCO, ENLACES, 2008), but it is not clear how that will affect institutional training (Claro, M. et al., 2011).

### ***Regulation of training programmes***

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Although teacher training in the region has historically been provided mainly by the State, the increase in the provision of such courses by private institutions has resulted in a broad range of heterogeneous and relatively unregulated teacher-training programmes. Even in State institutions there are gaps between initial training, curriculum reforms and school settings. For that reason, in line with international trends, several countries have begun to draw up benchmarks and standards on the content and conduct of initial teacher training and to apply them to new final examinations.

Most of the countries under review operate a variety of institutional accreditation systems that have differing effects. Peru's Council for Evaluation, Accreditation and Certification of the Quality of Non-University Higher Education (CONEACES) has set standards and evaluation criteria for the accreditation of higher teacher-training institutions, but the implementation of these regulations has been delayed (Cuenca 2011). Chile has a mandatory accreditation system for teacher-training courses but, under the legislation, such courses may still be conducted if they fail to obtain accreditation — they simply may not be granted public funding, which is of little moment to private institutions. In Brazil, accreditation is administered by the National System of Evaluation of Higher Education (SINAES), whose three main functions are to evaluate institutions, courses and student performance. SINAES evaluates all aspects of those three functions, namely teaching, research, outreach, social responsibility, student performance, institutional management, the teaching profession, facilities and other aspects.<sup>15</sup> Colombia's "prior accreditation" requirement, mandatory for training institutions, entails a higher-education quality assurance mechanism and, in respect of training programmes offered by higher teacher-training colleges, a quality verification procedure as a prerequisite for the award of accreditation by the Ministry of Education. In the English-speaking Caribbean, agencies such as the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago are responsible for validating teacher-training programmes.

Regulatory mechanisms cover at least five areas:

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<sup>14</sup> *Conclusions of the Working Group at the Regional Strategic Project meeting, Lima, July 2011.*

<sup>15</sup> <http://portal.inep.gov.br/superior-sinaes>

- a.** teacher-training admission requirements: in Mexico, applicants must sit a basic knowledge test, while Peru's national standard admission examination is compulsory only for non-university training courses;<sup>16</sup>
- b.** for private courses, authorization or prior accreditation of initial teacher-training courses, for example by accreditation councils in Colombia and Trinidad and Tobago;
- c.** a national curriculum (Mexico) and basic curriculum guidelines or frameworks for all primary-level and, in some countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala and Peru), secondary-level training;
- d.** educational and subject standards; as from 2012, the Ministry of Education of Chile has introduced national standards on the content of primary- and secondary-level teacher training in language, mathematics, social science and natural science,<sup>17</sup> and that of preschool education; in the English-speaking Caribbean, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has mandated the establishment of a teacher-training council (the Caribbean Council for Teaching and Teacher Education), which has drawn up standards on initial training that are currently being considered by the Member States;
- e.** regulation of the qualification or certification of future secondary-school teachers graduating from teacher-training institutions: several countries have already vested such powers and are establishing criteria for admission to the teaching profession, including various means of ascertaining applicants' knowledge and teaching skills: Colombia has regulated admission to the profession by introducing means of testing aptitude, competencies, experience and suitability, and one year's probation in the education system; Mexico's admission examination is designed and administered nationally by an independent specialist body, the National Centre for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CENEVAL); Chile is introducing a currently voluntary standards-based test to measure subject and teaching knowledge (the "initial test") which will become compulsory for teachers wishing to practise in State schools if a bill to that effect is passed by parliament; Brazil's National Student Performance Examination (ENADE) applies to higher education in its entirety and, in the case of teacher training, it measures the knowledge, skills and competencies of future secondary-school teachers upon graduation, but use of the examination by institutions is optional; and in El Salvador, graduation is conditional on success in the Evaluation of Academic and Teaching Competencies (ECAP) test.

It is less clear from these countries' teacher-training documentation whether means have been introduced to monitor teacher training, for example by analysing training outcomes or mid-term examination results in training institutions; the English-speaking Caribbean, where the Joint Boards of Education perform this function, is an exception. The purpose

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<sup>16</sup> Peru's consultation group reported that this measure has been widely challenged and was being reviewed, as there had been a decline in the courses offered by the tertiary teacher institutes rather than an improvement in the quality of teacher training in the country.

<sup>17</sup> These standards were compiled at the request of the Ministry of Education by the Centre for Advanced Research in Education (CIAE) of the University of Chile and the Centre for Research on Educational Policy and Practice (CEPPE) of the Catholic University of Chile.

of these bodies is to recommend or approve the teacher-training curriculum, examine and evaluate students' progress, make recommendations and act as information centres to promote change and excellence in training institutions (Richardson, 2005). The Caribbean Community has recently established a new regulatory body – the Caribbean Council for Teaching and Teacher Education.

**TABLE 8: REGULATION OF INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING IN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES**

COUNTRY	Opening and closing of institutions and programmes	Curriculum validation	Special admission examination	Graduate certification	Appointment of trainers	Accreditation and monitoring
Argentina		X		X <sup>(a)</sup>	X	
Brazil	X	X		X <sup>(b)</sup>		X
Chile				X <sup>(c)</sup>		X <sup>(d)</sup>
Colombia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Guatemala	X	X		X	X	X
Mexico		X	X	X		
Peru <sup>(e)</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X
Trinidad and Tobago	X	X		X		X

- (a) The certification of nationally valid teaching degrees is the responsibility of the Teacher-training Institutes (ISFD).
- (b) The national ENADE examination is optional for institutions and is not enabling qualification.
- (c) In Chile, discussions are under way as to whether the current voluntary final examination should be a qualification.
- (d) This system is optional for institutions and mandatory for education programmes, although the sole consequence of failure to obtain accreditation is the lack of access to public funds.
- (e) Most regulations apply only to tertiary teacher training institutes (ISP) and not universities.

► *Source: Compilation based on country information.*

State bodies' powers to regulate initial training, as shown in Table 8, are relatively broad but most of them apply only to State-run institutions and not to private providers, which are numerous in many countries. The situation is different in Peru, where regulatory policies apply only to tertiary teacher-training institutes, both State-run and private, but not to universities, which come under the University Autonomy Act.

With regard to the training of trainers, little research has been done regionally but, according to the IEA TEDS-M study on trainers providing courses in mathematics and

mathematics in 34 Chilean institutions, most trainers are qualified teachers holding bachelor's degrees, but not master's degrees or doctorates. Ortega and Castañeda state that in Mexico's teacher-training colleges, key topics such as criteria for the admission, promotion and tenure of academic staff and an explicit definition of the desirable traits of trainers have not been addressed. By contrast, universities show greater regard for the professional development and assessment of their academic staff (Ortega and Castañeda, 2009).

In CARICOM countries, the minimum requirement for teacher trainers in non-university institutions (colleges) is a bachelor's degree, and most institutions also require experience of school teaching. The minimum university requirement is a master's degree.

### ***Standard or specific training***

One demand that education systems in many of the region's countries must meet concerns adequate provision for indigenous peoples during the first phase of primary education, as most indigenous children and teenagers do not speak the official language. Intercultural bilingual education has been promoted for decades in a number of countries, redefining the nature of education on the basis of national educational policies focused on interculturality and bilingualism. One of the distinctive features of intercultural bilingual education is that it promotes the establishment of educational institutions and forms of delivery that encourage the coexistence of indigenous and non-indigenous students as interculturality and bilingualism are crucial to curricular and educational expressions and to evaluation and participatory management (SITEAL 2010).

The intercultural approach is especially important in Peru, Guatemala and Mexico, which have specific policies on intercultural education and institutions that specialize in training for employment in such settings. Mexico offers a bachelor's degree in intercultural bilingual preschool and primary education. Guatemala has 21 official intercultural bilingual teacher-training colleges. Moreover, since 2006 a basic national curriculum for intercultural bilingual teacher training, in the indigenous language and Spanish, has been delivered in the bilingual intercultural teacher-training colleges attached to the Ministry of Education. Brazil's Ministry of Education coordinates a training programme for indigenous and rural teachers.

Evidence suggests, however, that training programmes vary in quality and that in some cases, such as Peru, they could be discontinued owing to reasonable policies that raise criteria for admission to the teacher training but limit the involvement of indigenous groups in such training (Chiroque, 2010). In fact, the 14 tertiary teacher-training institutes that were offering the intercultural bilingual education specialism are closing on account of the new regulations on admissions (Trapnell y Zavala, 2009: 99). Yet the new administration's target is to ensure that 50% of indigenous children are educated in their mother tongue by 2016, which would boost initial teacher training in intercultural bilingual education and the production, distribution and use of materials in the mother tongue.

In other countries, the intercultural approach has hardly developed, even though there are indigenous peoples.

### ***Criteria for admission to teacher training***

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While successful candidates in former secondary teacher-training colleges were often the best pupils from primary schools in underprivileged areas, in the university setting there is a trend towards open access, with little regard for academic or vocational requirements, this being a response to the declining social standing of the teaching profession. The language, mathematics and general knowledge skills of students admitted to teacher training are not sufficiently developed to meet higher-education requirements. For example, assessments of aspects of initial teacher training in Argentina show that students in tertiary teacher-training institutes experience problems in key skills such as reading and understanding academic texts (Mezzadra, F. and Composto, C., 2008).

As the status of the teaching profession is lower than that of other academic careers, families and society exert pressure on young people interested in teaching to consider alternatives that are more rewarding financially and prestigious. Acknowledging the need to attract the best applicants for training, some systems are raising admission requirements, as in Peru where the minimum examination score for admission to tertiary teacher-training institutes has been raised (see footnote 14). In Mexico entrants must sit a national examination at the beginning of the teacher-training course that is designed and implemented by CENEVAL, and additional funding is to be provided to teacher-training colleges that regulate and improve admission requirements. In Chile, scholarships have been introduced for applicants who score good marks in the university selection test, and scholarships are available only to institutions that raise their admission requirements.

Interesting experiential data are beginning to emerge from some countries on foundation courses for students who have academic weaknesses that are attributable their previous education and to their cultural heritage. Some Chilean universities, for example, run such courses even in the last few years of secondary school, and such a foundation programme has been established in Peru as a route for courses of study in intercultural bilingual education.

Significant progress in quantitative achievements and institutional changes is beginning to foster qualitative improvements in teacher training, an example being Brazil's capacity for providing initial teacher training and qualifications for a high percentage of serving teachers in an extremely short period of time. Since the promulgation of the Law on National Education Guidelines and Fundamentals in 1996, secondary-level teacher-training colleges have closed and there has been a sharp decrease in the number of unqualified teachers, which was high when the Law was promulgated (Gatti and Sá Barreto, 2009). In 2007, the Ministry of Education established a national programme of tertiary education for basic-education teachers and a network of institutions delivering on-site and distance training to ensure that 330,000 secondary-school teachers would obtain qualifications in five years. According to the 2009 school census, however, 32%

of teachers, particularly those working in early childhood education and the first few years of primary school, had not yet completed the tertiary training, although this varied from one region to the other (Gatti et al. 2011).

Under a policy designed to meet the sudden rise in demand for educational services and qualified teachers, qualifications can now be obtained on the basis of work experience, introduced in Mexico, for example, when the decision was taken to make preschool education compulsory as from 2002. This entry route raises questions about the assurance of quality education standards.

### *Emerging inclusive policies*

Below are some examples of institutions and recent policies that have the potential to improve initial teacher training in the medium and long terms.

Some countries have formulated or are formulating medium- and long-term policies to provide guidelines for the improvement of initial teacher training. For example, under the National Education Act of 2006, Argentina established an institution to provide direct support for initial training delivered by tertiary teacher-training institutes and indirect support for university education departments. The new institution, the National Teacher Training Institute, was established in 2007 to promote national teacher-training policies and draw up basic guidelines for initial and continuing training. In accordance with its mandate, the Institute has drawn up the first national teacher-training plan (2007-2010), which set medium- and long-term goals and has been extended as the 2011 plan.

The Institute's curriculum development activities include the formulation of policies and basic curricular guidelines on initial and continuing training, which together constitute a regulatory framework. The guidelines contain a consensus-based set of knowledge for acquisition that training institutions must undertake to include in draft curricula that can be further developed into training plans.

Another notable example is Brazil, whose 2009 national teacher-training policy is designed to provide guidelines on coordination between training institutions and their programmes and between municipalities, states and the federal district. It proposes support for the conduct of training programmes, linkages between tertiary education institutions and the network of schools in the education system and future teachers' participation in learning-how-to-teach activities in schools. The policy also covers the need to revise the academic structure and curriculum of undergraduate degrees and to conduct research that will have an effect on teacher-training processes.

Guatemala, having acknowledged the shortcomings of its system for training primary-school teachers, recently formulated a teacher development policy known as the Academic Programme for Teachers' Professional Development (PADEP/D) in order to give serving teachers access to tertiary university education and specialization in early-childhood and primary intercultural bilingual education (both forms recognized by the system). Moreover, the Minister of Education has recently announced a new

policy designed to: institutionalize the national teacher-training system, with emphasis on intercultural bilingual education and the Mayan worldview, in raising the provision of teacher training to the tertiary level; link teachers' career to salary incentives; take appropriate action to ensure that vocational attitudes and skills are examined as a prerequisite for admission to the profession; develop a more dynamic programme for the professionalization of teaching; and lastly, develop a programme for the licensing and accreditation of teacher-training institutions.

In recent years, Chile has launched the "Inicia" programme, which has three basic components: (a) conduct of the above-mentioned test, to be taken by all students graduating from education courses of study (currently taken only by those destined for preschool and primary education); (b) the formulation of standards and curriculum guidelines for initial training; and (c) the opening of a special-resources line in support of innovation in university-based teacher training.

Mexico, for its part, provides federal subsidies to teacher-training colleges that are taking steps to improve their academic programmes and results, under the State Plan for the Improvement of Teacher Training (PEFEN).

A criticism often levelled at university-based initial training is that it focuses on theoretical and general training at the expense of the subject-specific classroom teaching skills required under the school curriculum. The introduction of practical work at all stages of training is one means of bridging the gap in professional training. Chile must be mentioned in this context, as its Programme for the Improvement of Initial Teacher Training (2005) recommended that practical experience be increased by creating "opportunities to link training centres to schools in which academics are directly involved".<sup>18</sup> Under Brazil's existing laws, specific time slots are set for teacher-training undergraduates to engage in teaching practice, but training institutions do not generally make use of these opportunities (Gatti et al. 2011). Peru has established national guidelines for the development of pre-professional teacher-training practice.

In summary, the countries under review have made great progress in improving the quality and relevance of initial training in view of the challenges faced in providing quality education opportunities. Serious problems nonetheless exist in initial teacher training and they are analysed in the following section.

## 2.2 Critical initial teacher-training issues today

The analysis of teacher training in the region has brought to light critical issues that partly explain why teacher training has not been sufficiently successful in reversing poor learning achievement in the region and the serious disparities in the educational opportunities and outcomes of residents in poor and rural areas, including minority indigenous groups (LLECE, 1997; SERCE, 2008; PISA, 2009).

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<sup>18</sup> Report by the Commission on Initial Teacher Training, Ministry of Education of Chile, 2005, p 73. The Commission was chaired by the Rector of the Metropolitan University of Educational Sciences and comprised representatives from universities, the Ministry of Education and the College of Secondary Teachers.

### **a. Low educational attainment of tertiary teacher-training applicants**

One of the biggest challenges in teacher training is the admission to teacher-training colleges and universities of students who do not seem to possess the skills that they should have acquired in secondary education (language, mathematics and general knowledge) and that are of crucial importance in taking up the challenges of higher education.

This is due in part to the expansion of secondary education and related quality issues, which exert pressure on new social groups to gain access to higher education. The situation is exacerbated in some countries as a consequence of the growth of privately provided education, in which greater emphasis tends to be laid on the number of entrants rather than their academic ability.

Discussion of the educational level and basic skills of teacher-training entrants must take account, on the one hand, of the poor quality of school systems caused by serious teacher-training policy constraints, and on the other, of the status of the teaching profession in the various countries. Serving teachers interviewed for a national teacher survey in Chile (Ávalos et al., 2010) said that although they did not join the profession for reasons of status, it was worrisome that people with the requisite attitudes and skills to be good teachers were choosing other degree courses because the status of the teaching profession was considered to be low. This situation has prompted action in several countries, including awareness campaigns, incentives to attract students with the best school results and more demanding academic admission criteria.

Such measures have proved controversial, as some people argue that there should be no student selection and that the State must ensure the right to education and, if necessary, compensate for the underachievement of many secondary-school pupils. Yet another issue is the difficulty encountered during the selection procedure in assessing vocational qualities and attitudes relevant to the teaching profession. Criticism has been levelled at the provision of incentives in the form of scholarships for the best applicants, as it might distort the selection by attracting applicants who have the requisite academic ability but are not committed to teaching while excluding students who have educational potential but experience difficulties in their academic performance as a result of their socio-economic background and the quality of education received at school. Moreover, the low social standing of the teaching profession and the negative public image of teacher training hamper the success of awareness campaigns and incentives designed to attract the best applicants.

Efforts made by some teacher-training institutions to remedy the weaknesses of incoming students, either before or at the beginning of the training courses, do not appear to be sufficiently widespread or effective.

### **b. Low-quality training courses and processes**

There are widespread misgivings about the quality of the teacher-learning opportunities offered by training institutions. The drive to expand teacher-training provision in order to meet the education system's demand for teachers may have pushed concerns about the

quality of teacher-training curricula into the background (Gatti et al. 2011). Doubts about quality are sustained primarily by the findings of standardized learning assessments at all levels of the school system and by the results of international assessments.

Although initial teacher training is supposed to have an effect on such results, there is no sound evidence that the quality of training affects the quality of teaching and, consequently, the pupils' learning achievement.

The quality of training processes can be viewed as a key factor of curricular design and practices that set out the concepts and guiding principles of teaching, as well as educational content, methodology and practices.

The literature reviewed above highlights a critical issue in the training of primary-school teachers, namely that teacher training is predominantly generalist, with insufficient content on understanding of curriculum subjects and related teaching skills and too much general educational content. The dispersion of courses and the emphasis on general content have to some extent eclipsed subject-based content and the teaching strategies that are crucial to learning achievement in the school setting.

Training for secondary-school teachers includes subject specialization which, in most cases, is delivered separately from teaching skills, and so the concept of "educational knowledge of content" (Shulman, 1987) is neglected. The gap between this type of training and the challenges that teachers face in interacting with teenagers is apparent daily in the classroom.

A recurrent problem with the training provided by many of the region's universities and training institutes stems from their great autonomy, for they can devise courses of study that are not linked or geared preferentially to the school system and educational policies, and many even train teachers "in opposition" to them. In any case, the institutions' level of autonomy varies depending on whether it is a university or higher teacher-training institute, as the latter are generally less autonomous.

As teacher training is provided by a host of institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, there is great diversity of views about the desired profile of graduates. In keeping with contemporary trends, it is generally agreed that the aim is to train a professional with broad knowledge of subject material and teaching methods, who is autonomous, responsible, reflexive, critical, innovative, effective and socially committed. However, the degree of emphasis on these qualities varies from one institution to another, which can spark dire criticisms to the effect that graduates lack the tools to secure basic learning achievement by their pupils or the capacity to reflect and make appropriate pedagogical decisions.

Moreover, information and communication technologies are of crucial importance in modern society, yet there is evidence that teacher-training programmes do not make adequate provision for training in technology as a resource for classroom learning (Sunkel, et al., 2011). As it is usually assumed that new generations of students can use technology, less importance is ascribed to learning strategies in order to use it appropriately in education and to build capacity to reflect and make informed decisions

on the use of technology. Future teachers are not trained sufficiently to ensure that pupils make the most of the opportunities opened up by new technologies and develop skills for information searching, critical thinking and communication.

Another significant factor that affects the quality of teacher training is the relative lack of practical work throughout their training programme, enabling future teachers to study and enquire into the solution of the real problems that they must tackle in the school setting. Many countries have achieved progress by incorporating practical work at all phases of the training process, rather than in the final phase only. However, the lack of close links between training centres and the schools in which practical work is done has been noted as a critical issue, as has the low level of supervision by the academic institution and the school. Schools often regard placements of future teaching graduates as a burden or a favour to the training institution than as a contribution to professional learning by future teachers, owing to the lack of policies addressing time constraints and recognition of teacher-tutors in educational institutions. In summary, bridging the gap between theoretical and practical training is another critical issue that must be resolved.

### **c. Training of teacher trainers**

The training attainment of trainers of primary- and secondary-level teachers is a key determinant of the quality of training and it requires research in greater depth in the region. Teachers holding low academic qualifications (below bachelor's and postgraduate degrees) are known to be employed to train teachers for early-childhood and primary education, although that constraint can be offset by prior experience of teaching in schools in the educational system, the crucial question being whether such experience is current or recent. By contrast, secondary-school teachers are often trained by senior teachers with better academic training, but they are often unfamiliar with curriculum requirements and have a poor grasp of teacher-related knowledge.

Other critical teacher-trainer aspects include selection procedures, which are not always objective and transparent and may lack clarity with regard to employment profiles and opportunities for academic development, which vary substantially among and within countries.

Teacher trainer's capacities to produce relevant research papers and use existing research to enrich teacher training are additional key factors.

The low training attainment of many teacher trainers in universities is closely linked to the decline in the role of faculties or departments of education, as a result of society's declining esteem for the teaching profession.

### **d. Universal or specific training for disadvantaged social groups**

In a region where poverty rates are still very high, a key teacher-training issue is the acquisition of skills and attitudes that will help trainees to understand poverty and stimulate learning among pupils who live in such conditions. Learning outcomes in Latin America show that the poorest people of the population, who live in rural and indigenous areas, score lower marks than the rest of the population. This fact is not

being addressed in teacher training, however, nor is the growing inclusion in the education system of historically excluded social groups. Training institutions seem to operate as if primary education and, to an even greater extent, secondary education are still the preserve of the middle classes that meet the minimum economic, sociocultural and family requirements to secure good academic results. Owing to the lack of specific training to work in poverty-stricken areas, teachers become discouraged, expectations of pupils' academic potential are low and so results are expected to be poor.

With a few exceptions, qualified teachers are unevenly distributed among these population groups. The problem is therefore one of ensuring that more teachers work in poor areas in their country. The solution lies partly in policies that give incentives to teachers to work in poor, marginalized, rural and indigenous areas.

The situation is even more critical in rural areas, where poverty rates are the highest and multigrade schools, many of which have only one teacher, predominate. Although it is considered that teachers must be trained to work in both urban and rural schools, there are few instances of training that is specially adapted for rural areas, let alone the cultural characteristics of rural population groups and the complexity of teaching in multigrade schools.

As mentioned above, despite efforts in many countries, there is still much to be done in order to increase training in intercultural bilingual education and integrate this approach into educational work generally.

The admission policies of training institutions are another important issue, particularly with regard to the availability of primary- and secondary-level teachers who are qualified for intercultural education, speak the indigenous language and are familiar with the indigenous culture.

#### **e. Tension between school-oriented and academic rationales in teacher training**

Several analysts, in reviewing teacher training in their own countries, observed that the conventions of the teacher-training colleges persisted even though they had been superseded by other institutions. In relation to Argentina, for example, Mezzadra and Composto (2008) identified the "overarching rationale of the teacher-training college", which meant that the teaching rooms of training institutes resembled primary and secondary school classrooms rather than lecture halls (Alliaud and Davini in Aguerrondo, 2006). The organization and its institutional dynamics mimicked the educational settings for which its students were destined (Mezzadra and Composto, 2008). In a study of training programmes, Calvo et al. (2004) found a similar phenomenon in respect of the organizational structure of Colombian teacher-training colleges, which emulate the rationale of secondary education. Ríos (in Cuenca and Stojnic, 2008) uses practically the same words to critique the relations between Peru's Tertiary Pedagogic Institutes and their students: "they are treated like primary school children in a school environment, not only in terms of the ambiance, rules and uniforms, but also in terms of behaviour and cognitive demands". Oliart (1996), Ames and Uccelli (2008) report that Peruvian teacher-training institutions continue to use summary booklets, rather than the actual texts written by authors themselves, and disproportionate attention is paid to

the layout of work (order, cleanliness and decoration) to the detriment of content and comprehension of ideas.

In the light of this institutional culture, it would be reasonable to think that the situation is very different in the teaching rooms of university faculties of education. Indeed, in terms of the curriculum, this is true. As faculties of education award bachelor's degrees, they tend to place greater emphasis on academic and abstract content, giving pride of place to educational research methods and somewhat disregarding the "school" as a training reference point, as observed by Gatti and Sá Barreto (2009) in respect of Brazil. Furthermore, faculties of education must establish relations with other university faculties on areas of secondary-education specializations; relations tend to be conflictual owing to of the defensive attitude adopted because teacher training is considered to be less valuable than academic subjects and bachelor's degrees, which is almost the opposite of what happens in non-university institutions.

#### **f. Inadequate regulation of training programmes**

There are some regulations, but regulatory policies and instruments are being reviewed in many systems, which suggests that those regulations are not satisfactory. Private institutions are obviously not regulated, and those countries in which teacher supply exceeds demand must find ways and means of setting admission quotas (as in the United Kingdom and Singapore, or Canada, which has mixed quotas).

Of particular concern is the relative lack regulations on the quality of teacher training, despite the existence of accreditation systems, which seem to be insufficient. Uniform quality cannot be assured by many countries on account of the heterogeneity of the training provided by so many institutions.

As noted above, admission and qualifying examinations have been introduced in some countries, but they are unlikely to rectify automatically the quality issues identified in training programmes.

There is some pressure to comply with specific standards that dictate what teaching graduates should know and be able to do. Although graduate profiles and expected teacher competencies are established in practically all systems, virtually none has a procedure for planning training processes and for setting criteria and regulations of consequences relating to final examinations.

While it is too early to know how much of an impact regulatory standards would have on the quality of training, they are useful for the purpose of renewing the curriculum and monitoring students' achievements during their training. Informed by this understanding, and as stated above (section 2.1), the majority of the countries under review are taking action to draw up standards that will enable them to determine the thrust of initial training and set final examinations that will ensure that teachers meet minimum requirements for entry into teaching. This regional trend is consistent with comparative evidence from English-speaking Europe and Nordic countries. On this and other subjects covered

in this report, the diversity of opinion highlights the risks of establishing a degree of uniformity in training curricula that might restrict the freedom of academic institutions to develop their own projects.

Although accreditation of teacher-training institutions and programmes is being rolled out in practically all the countries under review, there are those who argue that it should be a more rigorous process, particularly in regard to the consequences of unsatisfactory assessments. Therefore, under an agreement between the OECD and the Mexican Government, the current assessment system is to be superseded by a system based on specific standards for teacher-training colleges and accreditation is to be linked to the success rate of teaching graduates competing for teaching appointments (OECD, 2010).

### ***Summary of critical initial teacher-training issues***

- a.** *Low educational attainment of tertiary teacher-training applicants*
- b.** *Low-quality training courses and processes*
- c.** *Training of teacher trainers*
- d.** *Universal or specific training for disadvantaged social groups*
- e.** *Tension between school-oriented and academic rationales in teacher training*
- f.** *Inadequate regulation of training programmes*

## III Continuing training

### 3.1 Characteristics of training systems in the region

In the majority of the world's education systems, there is an increasing focus on the professional development of teachers to reflect policies in this area. The interest in professional development arises from evidence linking pupils' academic achievement to the quality of teacher training, which is, then, reflected in their teaching practice.

The available evidence shows that teachers are a key determinant of the performance of pupils, schools and systems (PISA, 2009; OECD, 2009a; Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber, 2010) and suggests that career-long professional development programmes are the best way for teachers to acquire the competencies required for good teaching practices that are continually evolving and adapting to different contexts. In order to transform teaching practices, a number of changes must be made to continuing training.

Educational research has shown that teacher training is a continuous process that spans the whole of a teacher's career, from initial training to retirement. This perspective, which is relatively new in the teaching profession, implies a paradigm shift in the definition of teacher training.

Emphasis is placed on learning to teach by reflecting on teaching practices, a process that requires schemes and models that foster shared learning about everyday situations that arise in specific teaching contexts with pupils from diverse backgrounds.

It has become clear that there are serious limitations in the region in the area of professional development caused by factors such as discontinuity between programmes and action, the scale of the undertaking, models, designs and processes that are dislocated from the interests, environment and needs of learners, difficulties of access, the scarcity of teacher trainers, a lack of resources, and a lack of guidelines about how much time individuals and groups can dedicate to professional development during the working day without compromising their attention to pupils (Miller and Lieberman, 2001; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Aguerrondo, 2004; Flores, 2005; Sandoval, 2005; Ávalos, 2007; Tenti, 2007a; Vaillant, 2009b; Terigi, 2010).

Some countries continue to take the view that more training will automatically produce a better learning experience, and overlook the fact that schools, educational administration and policy decisions also have a considerable impact on learning outcomes (Guerrero, 2009).

Despite the intensive efforts undertaken in the last 30 years in Latin America and the Caribbean in teacher education and training, analyses reveal that the impact on classroom teaching has been minimal, and that many principals and sometimes even teachers hold negative views about courses, workshops, compensatory programmes and the vast array of efforts that, beyond expressions of intent, have failed to achieve the desired aim of improving educational practices and consequently learning outcomes in

a sustainable manner (Mordochowicz, 2002; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Vaillant, 2004b; Ávalos, 2007; Terigi, 2009).

From the 1970s onwards, teachers' unions in Latin America began to demand the right to professional development (SNTE, 1994). Government agencies responded with a plethora of courses, activities and workshops. The primary objective was to update teachers' specific skills, but this approach produced inconsistent results in terms of the quality of education and had a negligible impact on learning outcomes.

Numerous shortcomings in the format of such courses have been demonstrated, for example their limited duration, the discrepancy between content and school requirements, and the lack of monitoring of their application in practice (Flores, 2005; Ávalos, 2007; Terigi, 2010).

Moreover, continuing training linked to remuneration and promotion at different pay scales has created "perverse effects" such as credentialism and exclusion of the weakest teachers, who generally serve school populations with less social capital (Sandoval, 2000; Terigi, 2010).

### ***The reforms of the 1990s and the impact on continuing training***

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In the 1990s, reform policies aimed at improving the quality of learning emphasized the importance of communicating to the teaching profession changes to the curriculum, teaching materials, teaching methods and school organization. Rather than proposing ways of improving teaching practices, courses, workshops, meetings and other forms of continuing training were utilitarian in content (Ávalos, 2007, Vaillant, 2009b; Terigi, 2010).

One of the consequences of the educational reforms of the 1990s was the institutionalization of the right to professional development and, consequently, greater resolve on the part of government agencies responsible for coordinating and regulating continuing training.

Most of the region's countries formalized legal instruments, laws and national regulations that established the right of professionals to continuing training and the duty of the State to coordinate programmes to that end (Aguerrondo, 2004; Terigi, 2009). Despite the partial overhaul of the regulatory and institutional framework, there is still a tendency towards "spasmodic initiatives that are inconsistent and lacking in resources" (Terigi, 2010:41).

### ***Responsible institutions***

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A number of countries in the region are currently in the process of reviewing normative and regulatory instruments in an effort to promote policies relating to initial training, induction and continuing training that are more coherent and effective. Many of the efforts undertaken are based on the assumption that continuing training is a way of improving the quality of classroom teaching, thus shifting the perspective away from a remedial approach to one that prioritizes the promotion of "...conscious, planned efforts intended to benefit individuals, groups or schools..." (Day C, cited by Bolam and

McMahon, 2004:34). Examples of countries undertaking such review processes are Peru, which is currently designing a decentralized system of in-service teacher-training, and Trinidad and Tobago, which has developed a strategic plan for the period 2011-2015 to review the regulatory framework governing all aspects of education.

With regard to the establishment of official entities (see Table 9), Argentina promotes the professional development of teachers through the National Institute of Teacher Training (INFD), the national body responsible for public policy on teacher training. Its mandate includes the design, approval and promotion of initiatives that improve the practices, innovation and research of teachers at all stages of their careers. The Institute has overall responsibility for initial and continuing training, educational support for schools and educational research. In addition to initial and continuing training, the Argentine training system makes provision for research on teaching, training and teaching practices appropriate to the specificity of the profession.

Since 2007, the Coordination for Academic Personnel Improvement (CAPES) in Brazil has been responsible for designing and coordinating a national system for training professionals in basic education, in collaboration with public higher education institutions and State and municipal educational authorities, which provides free, decentralized, public courses in continuing training and specialization, as well as at master's and doctorate level. In 2009, CAPES designed a national policy for continuing training that set out long-term guidelines for the training of in-service teachers and was implemented jointly with the State Forums for the Training of Education Professionals and the National Network of Continuing Training for Professionals in Basic Education. Moreover, CAPES is responsible for implementing the PARFOR National Plan, which aims to ensure that in-service teachers in public education have access to the training required by the Law on National Education Guidelines and Bases through the provision of special courses exclusively for in-service teachers (Gatti et al. 2011).<sup>19</sup>

The Centre for Improvement, Experimentation and Research in Education (CPEIP) is the Chilean ministerial body responsible for the formulation and implementation of strategies aimed at strengthening initial training as well as continuing training and professional practice. The 2000s saw the introduction of a range of courses and workshops for teachers working at all levels of the school system, and for the development of peer learning and of specializations for professionals in basic education in cooperation with accredited universities. The use of information and communication technologies was encouraged, and internships and postgraduate opportunities became available, both nationally and internationally. In addition, the teacher evaluation system made it possible to design specific programmes for underperforming teachers. In the last two years, the coverage rate of some of these programmes has decreased, or they have been discontinued. A new training programme for high-level principals aimed at current or prospective headteachers was launched in 2011.

Colombia made the professional development of teachers and principals one of the strategic projects of the Ten-Year Education Plan (2006-2016). Through the National Educator Training Programme, in accordance with the regional training plans of the education secretariats and regional training committees, policies and guidelines are

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.capes.gov.br/educacao-basica/parfor> The education secretariats of the States, the Federal District, the municipalities and higher education institutions work together to implement PARFOR.

being developed with the aim of updating the teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills. The emphasis of professional development programmes is on the acquisition of teacher competencies that will help pupils develop skills in communication, mathematics, the sciences, civic awareness and the job market as part of the curriculum.

Guatemala has developed an Academic Programme for the Professional Development of Teachers. It is a university programme for in-service teachers that focuses on "training teachers in the development of the curriculum for indigenous peoples...to educate children who understand, experience and practise their culture and communicate in their mother tongue as well as in a second language" (Luis Enrique López and Ingrid Jung, cited in López, 2010:27). Specifically, the programme aims to strengthen the professional enhancement and sociocultural development of teachers, guarantee professional development at university level, and establish programmes for the induction and updating of teachers. The Sub-Directorate for the Training of Human Resources, which is under the authority of the Directorate for the Management of Education Quality, has powers to develop policies and strategies pertaining to initial training, induction, updating and professional enhancement of in-service teachers, technical staff, principals and supervisors.

In the framework of the Basic Education Comprehensive Reform (RIEB), Mexico's Directorate-General for Continuing Training has gradually modified the features of the National Teacher Updating Programme. There are two types of provision: the first is aimed at all teachers and exists to communicate curriculum changes, while the second, which is part of the National Catalogue of Continuing Training, offers a wide range of options in special teaching subjects, student development, issues of diversity and other areas of interest offered by public and private higher education institutions in response to a public consultation. Peer groups evaluate the programmes and decide whether they should be accepted. The Catalogue covers everything from diploma courses to doctorates that are, in principle, selected by teachers using organizational and logistical schemas developed in consultation with the States of the Federation.

The Directorate for Higher Pedagogical Education of Peru is responsible for developing, managing and evaluating the National Continuous Training and Skills Programme (PRONAFCAP) for teachers and principals in the framework of the National System for Continuing Training. Selected universities run educational programmes that cover communication skills, logical and mathematical skills, mastery of the curriculum, and academic specialization at the appropriate educational level (<http://ciberdocencia.gob.pe>). PRONAFCAP comprises a basic programme, a specialization programme and a refresher programme, and it is aimed at teachers across the country and in the public education institutions of the Basic Regular Education system, whether Spanish-speaking or bilingual, that participated in the 2007 census-based assessment.

Trinidad and Tobago has developed a policy that focuses on the quality of teachers and teaching practices. The intention is to establish standards of teaching performance that would form the basis of a quality assurance system. In this context, professional development is viewed as a process of lifelong learning about the educational aspects of curricular content. The programmes will be intensive and sustainable, be focused on facilitating student development, be aligned with the mission and plan for school improvement, and strengthen cooperation between teachers (CARICOM, 2011).

**TABLE NO. 9: PUBLIC PROVISION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EIGHT COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

COUNTRY	RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY	TYPE OF PROVISION
Argentina (a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Teacher Training Institute</li> </ul>	Courses, workshops, training sessions, seminars, tutorials
Brazil (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Education: Secretariat of Basic Education</li> <li>Coordination for Academic Personnel Improvement (CAPES)</li> </ul>	<p>On-site, partially on-site and distance-learning courses (Paulo Freire Platform)</p> <p>Bachelor's degree courses</p> <p>Postgraduate courses</p>
Chile (c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Education / Centre for Improvement, Experimentation and Research in Education</li> </ul>	On-site, partially on-site and distance-learning courses, workshops, further qualifications, internships, postgraduate courses (d)
Colombia (e)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of National Education</li> <li>Education Secretariats</li> </ul>	On-site, virtual or mixed training programmes
Guatemala (f)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-Directorate for the Training of Human Resources</li> </ul>	Partially on-site courses, seminars
Mexico (g)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National System for Continuing Training and Professional Development of In-Service Teachers</li> <li>Secretariat of Public Education (SEP)</li> <li>Subsecretariat of Basic Education (SEB)</li> <li>Directorate-General for Continuing Training of In-Service Teachers (DGFCMS)</li> </ul>	<p><b>National Catalogue:</b> Courses, diplomas, specializations, postgraduate courses</p> <p>Diploma courses</p> <p>Training sessions</p> <p>Specializations</p> <p>Production of materials and manuals</p>
Peru (h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Education</li> <li>Directorate for Higher Pedagogical Education</li> <li>National Continuous Training and Skills Programme (PRONAFCAP)</li> <li>Ministry of the Economy and Finance</li> <li>Strategic Programme for Learning Outcomes for the Third Cycle of Basic Regular Education (PELA)</li> </ul>	<p>Mobile educational assessment</p> <p>On-site and distance-learning courses</p> <p>Independent learning modules</p>
Trinidad and Tobago (i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Education</li> </ul>	<p>Professional development workshops</p> <p>Bachelor's degree courses</p> <p>Master's degrees</p> <p>Doctorates</p>

- (a) Ministry of Education of Argentina (<http://portal.educacion.gov.ar>)
- (b) Ministry of Education of Brazil (<http://www.mec.gov.br>, <http://freire.mec.gov.br/index/principal>) (<http://www.capes.gov.br>)
- (c) Adapted from Terigi, (2010) and the Ministry of Education of Chile (<http://www.mineduc.cl>)
- (d) The programme of postgraduate courses for teachers is administered by the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT).
- (e) Adapted from Terigi, (2010) and the Ministry of Education of Colombia (<http://www.mineducacion.gov.co>)
- (f) Adapted from the Ministry of Education of Guatemala (<http://www.mineduc.gob.gt>)
- (g) Adapted from “La Formación Continua de Maestros como estrategia de la RIEB, México” presented at the international seminar entitled “Efectividad del desempeño Docente”, Guatemala, 22 October 2010. (Available at [http://www.preal.org/BibliotecaN.asp?Id\\_Carpeta=393&Camino=319|Programas/81|Seminarios%20y%20Talleres/393|Seminario%20Internacional%20Efectividad%20del%20Desempe%F10%20Docente](http://www.preal.org/BibliotecaN.asp?Id_Carpeta=393&Camino=319|Programas/81|Seminarios%20y%20Talleres/393|Seminario%20Internacional%20Efectividad%20del%20Desempe%F10%20Docente))
- (h) Adapted from the Ministry of Education of Peru (<http://www.minedu.gob.pe>); <http://www.ciberdocencia.gob.pe/index.php?cat=267>
- (i) Adapted from the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago ([www.moe.gov.tt](http://www.moe.gov.tt)), the University of the West Indies (UWI) ([www.uwi.edu](http://www.uwi.edu)) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago ([www.utt.edu.tt](http://www.utt.edu.tt))

► *Source: Compilation based on the work of the expert S. Ortega, 2011.*

In many countries, governing bodies have considerable decision-making authority regarding the range and modalities of such provision, in terms of planning and coordinating, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The aim is to overcome dispersion and incoherence, although this has clearly not been entirely successful as in many countries an array of private organizations offer alternative professional development courses, many of which are linked to the programmes or specific interventions of particular schools. The difficulty of regulating and coordinating the operations of multiple organizations supports the conclusion drawn by Terigi (2010): that teachers’ professional development needs further institutional consolidation.

Public organizations implement the programmes in cooperation with higher education institutions. These alliances with universities are not without their problems, and many academic institutions find it difficult to adapt their work to the context of schools and teaching. Nevertheless, such alliances offer considerable advantages, because higher education institutions result learning outcomes that feed back into initial teacher training.

## *Types of programme*

Most of the continuing training programmes in the region emphasise pedagogical practice with reference to the curriculum and offer a variety of learning modalities, both academic and those designed for peer learning (see Table 10).

There is also a tendency to make use of technology in the learning process, either with purely virtual or hybrid models; together with other strategies, such resources allow for increased coverage while maintaining quality (Ortega, 2009).

**TABLE N° 10: EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMMES OFFERED IN RECENT YEARS**

COUNTRY	PROGRAMMES
Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development for principals</li> <li>• Professional development for teachers in basic literacy</li> <li>• Study visits abroad for trainers of trainers</li> <li>• Information and communication technologies (ICT) in teacher training</li> <li>• Jurisdictional professional development projects</li> <li>• Continuing education programmes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Specialization in education in prison conditions</li> <li>(b) Specialization in rural education at primary level</li> </ul> </li> <li>• First seminar of the Training Programme for Secondary School Principals (April 2011)</li> </ul>
Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro-Literacy: booklets for continuing training for teachers of basic education in reading, writing and basic mathematics.</li> <li>• Pro-Child: A two-year distance-learning programme for teachers working at the preschool level without the minimum qualification.</li> <li>• Pro-Degree: A distance-learning postgraduate course offering training for teachers who do not have the minimum qualification; the duration is equal to or shorter than that of on-site courses.</li> <li>• The School Learning Management Programme (GESTAR II): aimed at teachers working at the second level of basic education.</li> <li>• Continuing training: on-site, partially on-site and distance-learning courses</li> <li>• Specializations: on-site and distance-learning courses</li> </ul>
Chile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of Teachers of Teachers</li> <li>• Communal workshops</li> <li>• Advanced teacher training through the blended-learning system with accredited universities</li> <li>• Postgraduate specialization courses for the first and second levels of basic education, delivered by accredited universities</li> <li>• Curricular familiarization courses delivered by accredited universities</li> <li>• Teacher-training programme for secondary technical and vocational education</li> <li>• International internships in mathematics and the sciences</li> </ul>
Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing teacher-training programme (PFPD)</li> <li>• Portfolio of professional development programmes for teachers</li> <li>• Territorial plans for teacher training</li> </ul>
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Programme of Teacher Professional Development –PADEP/D Education, Equity and Cultural Diversity in Social Development</li> </ul>

Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Catalogue:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. training programmes 2009-2010</li> <li>b. programmes that form part of the National Programme for Quality in Postgraduate Education (PNPC)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Development of classroom teaching skills (educational approach and planning strategies), basic course (2009)</li> <li>• Diploma course in Basic Education Comprehensive Reform (RIEB): 1st and 6th grade in the first phase, 2nd and 5th in the second phase.</li> <li>• Diploma course entitled “Reading skills. An approach for life and the classroom”</li> <li>• Training courses for Technical Pedagogic Advisers</li> <li>• Handbooks for teachers and students</li> <li>• High-level specialization for professional enhancement in secondary-level mathematics</li> <li>• Maestr@sTV26</li> <li>• Training programmes: preschool, primary and secondary</li> <li>• Teacher materials</li> <li>• Series of modular courses: primary and secondary</li> <li>• Teacher professional enhancement in the educational use of ICT</li> </ul>
Peru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialization in Communication and Mathematics – early and primary education.</li> <li>• Specialization in Bilingual Intercultural Education (Quechua and Aymara) - early and primary education.</li> <li>• Specialization in science and the environment - primary education.</li> <li>• Subject specializations for secondary education (science, technology and the environment, citizenship and civic awareness, history, geography and economics, and English).</li> <li>• Specialization in Teaching and Learning for Comprehension – primary and secondary education.</li> </ul>
Trinidad and Tobago	<p>Degree in Education with four specializations at the University of Trinidad and Tobago:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Early childhood care and education.</li> <li>b. Primary education.</li> <li>c. Secondary education: language and literature, mathematics, integrated science, agricultural science, social sciences.</li> <li>d. Special educational needs.</li> </ol> <p>University of the West Indies programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undergraduate (bachelor’s): on-site and distance learning.</li> <li>• technical and vocational postgraduate: on-site and distance learning.</li> </ul>

► Source: Compilation based on the work of the expert S. Ortega, 2011 and official information from various countries.

The broad range of activities in the field of continuing training in the region can be divided into the following categories:

- a) **Refresher** courses, workshops or seminars, the main aim of which is to bring teachers up to date with new academic knowledge in the subjects of the curriculum and in education in accordance with changes to the curriculum. Academic institutions play a key role in such activities. This vital connection reduces the likelihood of them becoming too far removed from the school context where education is delivered.
- b) **Peer learning processes** that take place within an educational unit or territorial group (microcentres) with the purpose of reflecting on educational practice and generating educational knowledge. This strategy, which is highly praised in current specialist literature, has undeniable advantages by providing a connection with the realities and challenges that face teachers in their practice. However, these strategies are highly complex as they go beyond the mere exchange of experience that might be of incidental interest and incapable of generating profound lessons.
- c) **Specialization**, generally by means of postgraduate programmes, that allow generalist teachers to perform adequately in a particular subject and to acquire specific skills at a particular educational level or sociocultural setting. This dimension is highly necessary but poses at least two major challenges: to ensure the quality of the courses and reconcile teachers' individual requests with the actual requirements of the system at the local level and in individual educational centres.
- d) **Undergraduate and postgraduate degrees** of an academic nature that provide access to higher levels of knowledge in line with the latest research. As with the preceding case, it is difficult to reconcile quality courses with an increasing level of demand that might deviate from the requirements of the education system.

It is important to distinguish between on-site courses, distance learning and hybrid (partially on-site) courses. The latter have recently become much more widespread, not only because technology has a great deal to offer in terms of communication and rapid access to information, but because it also creates spaces for direct personal interaction that are greatly valued by teachers.

## ***Programme content***

A number of studies have highlighted the positive attitude of teachers towards continuing training (Aguerrondo and Vezub, 2003; Mancebo, 2006; OECD, 2009a). Although the training options considered relevant by teachers are quite wide-ranging, in the case of Mexico it is clear that there is less enthusiasm for content such as teaching strategies and classroom skills, learning evaluation, curriculum knowledge and, to a greater extent, information and communication technologies, discipline and behavioural problems, and

teaching in multicultural environments.<sup>20</sup> In Chile, the results of teacher evaluations have consistently identified the difficulties teachers experience with learning outcome assessments and in utilizing the information they produce. As a consequence, demand for skills enhancement in this area has increased dramatically in recent years. At the same time, it is interesting to compare the trend in the teachers' demands mentioned previously with those set out in the Teaching and Learning International Survey, TALIS (OECD 2009) relating to teachers from various OECD countries, which revealed an increasing interest in skills enhancement in the fields of special educational needs, the educational use of ICTs, and classroom behaviour.

One important finding is that the order of priority assigned to different training options varies considerably depending on the years of service. Thus teachers with less than 10 years' experience say that they prefer topics that are directly linked to classroom teaching and its evaluation, while teachers with more experience tend to prefer discipline and behavioural issues, the use of ICTs, and the educational care of children with special educational needs.

These perceptions have an impact on teachers' attitudes to their own development and determine whether the learning opportunities made available to them by the educational authority are viewed as an imposition or as an effort by the State to fulfil its obligation to encourage professional growth and raise the standard of education from a perspective of equity.

The positive attitude of teachers towards continuing training means they are likely to enrol in courses and workshops despite the fact that they continue to express dissatisfaction with the relevance of learning content. Either it seems far removed from practical requirements or cannot be applied in rigid school contexts, not only because of their prescriptive curricula but also because of working conditions and bureaucratic control that are a barrier to innovation.

The analysis of curricular and educational models shows that continuing training curricula, despite their multiplicity and apparent diversity, contain little specialist content, and focus instead on theoretical and general approaches (Ibarrola et al., 2010).

Finally, the challenge of making provision for all teachers that takes account of their individual and institutional circumstances, their needs, preferences and stage of career development, is more achievable in countries that have made progress towards the establishment of a performance-based evaluation system supported by a quality assurance system. An evaluation system with a formative dimension sets precise parameters for provision in professional development that meets the needs of groups of teachers and takes account of their particular circumstances.

### ***Innovative practices***

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In the last five years, educational research has produced a comprehensive set of reviews of practices<sup>21</sup> in the field of professional development in Latin America and

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<sup>20</sup> This list is an extract from the Survey of Mexican Teachers and is different to the one presented by Mancebo regarding Uruguayan teachers.

<sup>21</sup> See [www.preal.org](http://www.preal.org)

the Caribbean. Studies have revealed the outcomes of a number of pilot schemes with significant potential, such as Colombia's Pedagogical Expedition and microcentres, teachers' centres in Mexico, support for school teachers in the English-speaking Caribbean (Ávalos, 2007), communal workshops and national internships in Chile, "jurisdictional" professional development workshops in Argentina that encourage a more school-oriented approach, and networks of teachers with an interest in reading, mathematics, sciences, the use of technology in the classroom or in the school community, that continue to run in a number of countries (Fierro, 2010), in spite of inconsistent institutional support.

In all of these instances, efforts have been undertaken to promote school-oriented training processes in which groups of teachers take the leading role and in which the primary focus is teaching practice as a source of reflection, analysis and learning.

The characteristics of professional development programmes that provide teachers with learning opportunities have been identified in the literature (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Aguerrondo, 2004; Flores, 2005; Ávalos, 2007; Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Vaillant and Marcelo, 2009; Vélaz de Medrano and Vaillant, 2009; Imbernón 2009; Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber, 2010). There is broad consensus that programmes and action in the field of professional development must be coherent, coordinated with other aspects of teacher policy, sustainable and subject to continuous evaluation.

Some countries are beginning to establish mentoring schemes for novice teachers. For example, in Argentina the National Teacher Training Institute, in cooperation with the higher education directorates of the provinces and institutional teams from teacher-training institutes, are developing a programme of tutorials, mentoring and support for novice teachers. In Chile, the Network of Teachers of Teachers and of Universities have trained mentors for novice teachers and organized experimental activities in some of the country's regions and towns. In addition, the states of Ceará and Espírito Santo in Brazil have schemes for the training and evaluation of novice teachers as part of the competitive selection process for teachers' posts (Gatti et al. 2011).

### ***Postgraduate courses***

The emphasis on partnerships with accredited universities and postgraduate qualifications aimed at increasing capacity for research and innovation in a population that has little contact with those fields is a new phenomenon that may well necessitate adjustments in a university culture that has traditionally been distant from the school environment (Ibarrola et al. 2006). Trinidad and Tobago is one example of a country where such processes have been occurring.

It is interesting to note that, according to the information available regarding Mexico, a significant proportion of the teaching profession favours the continuation of studies to postgraduate level. At the time of collecting information for this report, just over one third of in-service teachers reported having a qualification higher than a bachelor's degree. In Peru, a similar trend is observed in the demand for, provision and uptake of postgraduate studies, and there is no direct relationship between the teacher's specialist subject and specialization at postgraduate level.

Current policies provide incentives for postgraduate studies, which, it would seem, form part of the aspirations of teachers (Aguerrondo and Vezub, 2003; Mancebo, 2006).

It is possible that the preference for formal studies as a vehicle for professional development is being driven by credentialism, but in any case, the result is that there is now an opportunity to develop longer training processes with greater impact, and the quality of professional development programmes based in school settings is likely to be increased if teachers with higher academic qualifications and experience are encouraged to take an active role in designing and running such programmes. Professionals are a key resource in developing high-quality collaborative learning programmes based around learning communities that these professionals could lead.

Studies of higher education have pointed to the commercialization of postgraduate courses, which are developed in response to demand and are associated with the growing intervention of the private sector (Didriksson, 2008). For example, with regard to provision for teachers of basic education, it has been argued that in Mexico the pressure on teachers to have postgraduate degrees has led to a significant increase in “instant” master’s and doctoral degrees which, although they are not accredited by the National Council for Science and Technology, are widely accepted among teachers. Thus from 2002 to 2006, the number of such courses tripled, while over half of specialization courses and almost three quarters of master’s and doctorates are offered by private institutions without the relevant accreditation (Rama, 2009).

Postgraduate departments tend to be separate entities within universities, and therefore become completely dissociated from the continuing training programmes run by the same institutions. This has an impact on the virtuous relationships between different types of advanced teacher training, but it also restricts opportunities for switching between courses and diplomas, continuing education courses and postgraduate studies.

Finally, there is a general tendency towards more informed and coherent policies and plans of action in the field of continuing training. The technical definitions are sound, but the success of their implementation and results will be determined by context, constant negotiation with stakeholders (including the unions), funding, the consistency of professional development providers, and the attitudes of teachers.

### **3.2 Critical themes relating to the current status of continuing training**

The preceding description of continuing training and professional development activities highlights a number of critical issues that merit careful consideration.

#### **a) The lack of relevance and coordination of continuing training**

UOne of the main criticisms of educational policies of Latin America in the 1990s was that relatively little attention was paid to the element most relevant to their success, namely the professional development of teachers (Torres 2003; Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber, 2010; Terigi, 2010).

Factors such as the vast number of teachers to be trained, the high costs involved, and the challenge of finding time for teachers to participate in professional development have tended to shift the emphasis onto policies relating to initial training, performance evaluation and incentives, which fails to take account of the fact that none of these areas will produce widespread or immediate results.

Moreover, the game of supply and demand in advanced teacher training jeopardizes efforts to ensure its quality and relevance, because institutions tend to favour types of provision that are not costly or demanding – a situation that suits the many teachers who want to obtain qualifications that do not require excessive effort or time, which is a scarce quantity in a teacher's working day.

A further problem is that professional development programmes are underrepresented in long-term teacher policy. In the absence of a coherent, well-coordinated programme, professional development activities are lumped together with multiple initiatives promoted by a range of administrative and management bodies, with the result that objectives relating to professional enhancement become fragmented and meaningless.<sup>22</sup>

Many strong, well-constructed initiatives led by teachers, experts and academics have not received sufficient support or funding. In addition, many promising initiatives were replaced with other programmes or abandoned prematurely by the educational authority or by the people who developed them, before any results could be measured using impact evaluations that might have demonstrated their effectiveness. Various initiatives were evaluated externally, but the results were not used to make adjustments to content and processes because, despite being documented and properly described, they did not result in improvement schemes (Ávalos, 2007; Vaillant, 2009b; Terigi, 2010).

In summary, critical reports of continuing training programmes in the region's countries concur that it is imperative to make radical changes to the concepts, models and processes that have been piloted so as to modify teaching practices.

## **b) The low impact of the action that has been taken**

Despite the multiple activities undertaken in the last 20 years in Latin America and the Caribbean in relation to teacher training, several analyses have shown them to have a low level of impact in the classroom. (Mordochowicz, 2002; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Vaillant, 2004b; Ávalos, 2007; Martínez, 2009; Sotomayor and Walker, 2009; Terigi, 2009; Voelmer, 2010).

The quality of the advanced training currently available is variable and in many cases quite poor, because training is delivered mainly by institutions that deliver weak initial training (Guerrero, 2009). Although innovative practices are being offered by academic institutions, most of the training provision is traditional and out of touch with the priorities of teachers and schools. In part, this problem is related to the scant regard of training

<sup>22</sup> For example, in Mexico, in addition to the compulsory courses for those who choose to sit national examinations for admission to or progression through the 'Carrera Magisterial' incentive programme, schools and teachers must participate in a large number of special and short-term training projects (up to 40 depending on level, area and federal State) that are time-consuming and increase the burden of school administrative tasks with reporting obligations and expenses claims (SEB, 2011).

institutions for work involving in-service teachers, which is often undervalued and treated as an add-on.

Another important factor is that the traditional teaching methodologies often used do not encourage teachers to reflect and engage in the critical appropriation of knowledge, and generate models that contradict recent trends in collaborative learning.

Training activities that do not reflect the reality of school communities have little impact. When teachers and principals say that continuous training activities are ineffective, they are referring to the disparity between training activities and the classroom setting, and the conditions in which teachers work. When advanced training activities depart from teaching practice, they become less effective and teachers become demotivated. The tension between theory and practice is at the root of this disparity between training and classroom teaching.

Moreover, the incentives for teachers is participation in courses and workshops rather than learning achievements, still less their transference to classroom teaching and their impact on pupils' learning.

Comparisons of the coverage generally achieved by continuing training programmes among teachers show that coverage rates are low, particularly if it is assumed that teachers should participate in training programmes every few years.

A common problem is the difficulty that education systems experience in ensuring that teachers are able to participate in continuing training. This is explained in part by the voluntary nature of participation and the fact that activities are timetabled during vacations and/or at weekends.

### **c) Failure to take account of diversity among teachers**

It is only recently that continuing training policies have taken account of the different levels of development of education professionals. Some programmes still fail to recognize the diversity that exists among teachers in terms of their age, experience, career stage, type of initial training and the context in which they work, among other factors.

Research in this area has lacks a comparative perspective that would afford a better understanding of the motives, expectations and level of commitment of different groups of teachers according to their career stage, working conditions, the level of education in which they work, and their inclination to improve their teaching practices and understanding of the profession.

A growing awareness of the levels of development of education professionals is beginning to make policies and interventions more relevant and of higher quality.

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<sup>23</sup> Por ejemplo, en México, además de los cursos obligatorios para quienes voluntariamente se someten a los exámenes nacionales con fines de ingresar o ascender en el programa de estímulos denominado Carrera Magisterial, escuelas y docentes están obligados a participar en un amplio número de proyectos especiales y coyunturales (hasta 40 según el nivel, la zona y el Estado de la Federación) que demandan tiempo para la capacitación y añaden a la ya de por sí pesada rutina administrativa escolar, la obligación de reportes y comprobaciones de gasto (SEB, 2011).

Particular attention should be paid to the support needed by novice teachers at the start of their careers and in the specific school contexts in which they work. At the international level, a number of different strategies are in place for the induction of novice teachers, both to reinforce training and prevent early drop-out (Marcelo, 2009; MacBeath, 2012). In the region, initiatives providing support for professional insertion are scarce but are gradually emerging. Novice teachers participate in the same professional development activities and have similar classroom duties.

The broad range of settings in which teachers work is of key importance. Clearly, some teachers work in complex school environments that require them to develop special educational skills relating to the school ethos and diversity.

#### **d) Lack of regulation of professional development provision**

With regard to training providers, it is important to recognize that one of the undesirable consequences of opening up the provision of continuing training to a range of entities has been the emergence of a market that is difficult to regulate, particularly in countries where private institutions deliver the majority of training, whether for profit or not.

In most of the region's countries, a range of continuing training initiatives offer distinctive projects in response to educational proposals, the financial interests of certain entities, or demand from private educational institutions. The latter type of provision may be of most relevance as it corresponds to the specific requirements of schools and teachers. However, such provision may be weakened by the inconsistent quality of learning and difficulties of regulation.

The heterogeneity of this sector is matched by the diversity and inequality of the teachers associated with it. This is partly as a result of training providers' determination to enter the market as quickly and cheaply as possible, which means that they simply hire teachers who are available, irrespective of their professional credentials.

The problem is exacerbated by the limited powers of public institutions to regulate and evaluate the provision of continuing training by academic institutions and private training organizations in order to ensure its quality and relevance, together with the absence of or low regard for professional standards that should serve as benchmarks for continuing training and the evaluation of professional performance. Institutional capacity for effective regulation is of key importance, as regulation can also be inappropriate, stifle innovative initiatives and bureaucratize processes, resulting in a loss of flexibility and timely responses. The progress made in several countries in establishing standards or criteria for teacher evaluation opens up new avenues for determining the orientation of continuing training.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *The Good Teaching Framework in Chile, which is equivalent to standards of teacher performance, is one example of the use of guiding criteria for the evaluation of teacher performance and continuing training.*

### **e) Lack of consideration for the realities of schools and for collaborative learning**

Although important experiences of collaborative learning among peers have been described – and it is one of the modalities most valued by teachers for its impact on everyday activity – traditional modalities of courses that are far removed from the school context have predominated in academic courses and training provision. This can be partly explained by the distance between the academic and technical world, which delivers most teacher training, and the realities of school life. Another possible explanation is that provision tends to be generalized to diverse groups of teachers beyond individual school units, sometimes for reasons of economic efficiency. It is generally easier to reach a large number of teachers with a ‘cascade’ strategy while disregarding the limitations of such an approach.

Despite their inclusion in public programmes, methods of learning such as observing others, exchanging experiences and reflecting as a group have not gained momentum, either because they are innovative in nature or because the specific tools and methodologies required to implement them are lacking. The isolation of teachers in the classroom makes it difficult for them to understand the school as a whole and interact and collaborate with others (Torres, 2003).

With regard to professional development policy, the main challenge is to design interventions that are consistent with the realities of school communities. The professional development of teachers cannot be considered in isolation from the specific needs of each school; this is summed up by the concept of ‘situated learning’, according to which professional development, in the physical environment of the school or outside it, is always focused on finding solutions to the problems that teachers face in their everyday work to ensure that all pupils achieve the intended learning outcomes.

### **f) Difficulties relating to the regulation and relevance of postgraduate education provision**

A large number of studies on higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Didriksson, 2008) have referred to the explosion of postgraduate education provision (diploma and specialization courses, master’s and doctorates) and demonstrated that this upsurge, which is particularly noticeable in higher education systems with a high proportion of private institutions that are subject to lax validation checks, is a reactive process that has developed without reference to regulations relating to quality and relevance.

Even in the case of programmes that are evaluated as part of quality assurance mechanisms, the assessment is made based on the criteria and indicators of the research itself, which restricts the development of other options such as programmes for professional enhancement.

Among researchers who are part of international regional networks and study teacher training in master’s and doctorate programmes, the impact of different models, curricula and methodological approaches is the subject of a lively debate. One aspect of the

discussion has focused on the clarification of desirable characteristics in programmes that are explicitly oriented towards reflective practitioners with an interest in broadening knowledge of teaching strategies that help pupils from diverse backgrounds to assimilate highly demanding curricular content.<sup>24</sup>

National systems of accreditation and certification should, in principle, ensure the quality of postgraduate programmes offered by higher education systems, in accordance with internationally accepted standards. It is important to recognize that in most cases this concerns preparation for basic research, which has a positive impact on the institutional integrity of the provider. However, the intention to promote relevant postgraduate models that emphasize the components of practical training, which are of central importance in modifying teaching practices, must be supported by criteria and indicators that allow for more effective screening processes based on relevance and potential impact (Darling-Hammond, 2006, Crowe, 2010).

The regulation of postgraduate education programmes on the basis of standards of quality and relevance, which are as yet not fully developed or shared by the community, is one of the urgent tasks facing the region.

### ***Summary of critical themes relating to continuing training***

- a.** *The lack of relevance and coordination of continuing training*
- b.** *The low impact of the action that has been taken*
- c.** *Failure to take account of diversity among teachers*
- d.** *Lack of regulation of professional development provision*
- e.** *Lack of consideration for the realities of schools and for collaborative learning*
- f.** *Difficulties relating to the regulation and relevance of postgraduate education provision*

<sup>24</sup> An example of discussions in the region on this issue can be found in some of the work presented at the meeting of the Teacher Network in Latin America and the Caribbean (KIPUS) (December 2010), which was attended by teachers, specialists and educational researchers. Some of the training institutions represented at the meeting put forward postgraduate models intended to ensure better articulation between theoretical and methodological approaches and the problems of situated practices.

## IV The teaching career

### 4.1 Characteristics of the teaching career in Latin America and the Caribbean

Broadly speaking, the term “teaching career” refers to the legal system that underpins the exercise of the profession within certain limits and regulates, inter alia, teachers’ entry into and exercise of the profession, as well as their mobility, development, progression and retirement (Terigi, 2009). The main employers of teachers in Latin American and Caribbean countries are the ministries of education, so the decisions they make regarding teaching carry much weight.

The statutes and career paths reviewed take account of the various functions that teachers may be called on to fulfil within the school system: classroom teaching, managerial functions, technical and educational functions, and supervision. The training, selection and professional development of school principals is recognized as being of key importance in terms of educational quality; however, in view of the fact that the majority of teachers’ workload is based in the classroom and that there is an urgent need for strategies to improve classroom teaching, this state of the art report will focus on the career paths of classroom teachers.

According to UNESCO-UIS (2009), approximately 750,000 novice teachers need to be recruited in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2015 in order to maintain the current workforce and fill new vacancies that have been created in order to meet the objective of universal primary education. In addition to the significant challenge of teacher recruitment, it is of fundamental importance to attract highly qualified candidates with the skills to teach in schools with critical needs and in specialist subjects such as science and mathematics (UNESCO, 2008).

It is therefore essential to have an attractive career that creates expectations of great personal and professional achievement and fair remuneration.

In most countries, the teaching career is regulated in accordance with the statutes of the profession, namely an instrument that lends legitimacy to teaching and establishes the rights and obligations of teachers (Vaillant and Rossel, 2006). Most teachers in the region work in State schools and are civil servants, thus enjoying the stability that is associated with this sector.

In recent years, amendments to the statutes and regulatory frameworks that govern the teaching profession have led to conflict and negotiation in various countries of the

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<sup>25</sup> *Un ejemplo de la discusión sobre este tema en la Región, se encuentra en algunos trabajos presentados en el encuentro (diciembre de 2010) de la Red Kipus integrada por docentes, especialistas e investigadores de la educación. Varias de las Instituciones Formadoras representadas expusieron modelos de postgrado que buscan una mejor articulación entre las aproximaciones teóricas y metodológicas y los problemas de las prácticas situadas.*

region. In countries with relatively high levels of development, statutes arose at a time when education systems were expanding, between the 1940's and 1960's. The statutes were modelled on the State regulation of labour relations and led to the establishment of bureaucratic pathways of progression, promotion and remuneration. In general, this resulted in a career path that rewarded seniority and professional experience with promotion to posts with better remuneration and more responsibility, or with better terms and salary increases.

During the reform and modernization of education systems in the 1990s, many analysts and reformers saw regulatory frameworks as a key structural impediment to the reformulation of school organization and the improvement of teaching. Teachers' unions tended to defend existing regulations as a barrier against flexible and/or insecure labour relations. In almost all countries, the processes of negotiation and confrontation between unions and governments led educational managers to postpone the issue of statute amendment and prioritize other aspects of the education agenda (Navarro, 2006).

In the 2000s, many countries made amendments to their statutes – whether they were based on consensus or not – by introducing regulatory features typical of the mid-twentieth century. Some amendments emphasized the professional aspect of teaching and, in addition to rewarding professional enhancement in teaching careers, introduced State guarantees that teachers would benefit from certain conditions (in particular, continuing training, evaluation, and educational assessment). In other instances, statutory amendments were conceived by educational managers as tools for improving the quality of education by introducing evaluation systems that would have direct consequences in terms of salary and promotion, thus putting pressure on teachers to achieve better results.

### *Types of teaching career*

In general, promotion in teaching is either vertical or horizontal (UNESCO, 2006). Vertical promotion means teachers leave the classroom to take on other responsibilities, while horizontal promotion means that teachers can undertake professional development without having to give up classroom teaching.

In the region, vertical promotion predominates, and the salient features of the teaching career are its hierarchical structure, emphasis on seniority, and retirement from classroom teaching as the main form of promotion (Morduchowicz, 2002; Vaillant and Rossel, 2006). Teachers can only obtain a substantial salary increase if they become principals and, subsequently, inspectors.

Existing regulations tend to undervalue the everyday work of teachers as a source of professional growth. It is therefore a challenge to establish mechanisms that would allow teachers to achieve recognition and promotion for professional development without giving up teaching, so there is a risk that good teachers are being lost where they are most needed.

In many of the region's countries, the teaching career is organized on the basis of a pyramidal structure divided into different levels. Entry to the profession is via the lower hierarchy of the appropriate institution, and there is general consensus that a teaching qualification is a necessary prerequisite. In general, with the exception of temporary appointments, teacher selection takes the form of competitions organized by the relevant administrative bodies, at the national, provincial or local level. Competitions are based on merit (academic record) or examinations.

Entry by competitive examination refers to the process of selecting teachers by ranking them on the basis of qualifications obtained in an examination or evaluation of knowledge and aptitude in a particular subject or specialty. One example of a country that uses this modality is Guatemala (UNESCO, 2006).

In other countries, entry by competitive examination is used in addition to or instead of a merit-based competition. Although there is a great deal of variability, "merit" usually refers to qualifications obtained through initial training, refresher courses and previous teaching experience. The combination of merit and the results of a test, where there is one, forms the basis for the selection and ranking of teachers. Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Peru, among others, have opted for this system (UNESCO, 2006).

Entry to teaching in Argentina is via lower hierarchies and is based on ranking by merit. In most areas, entry to teaching is by public competition based on academic record (initial training, seniority and further training). Access to non-university higher training is based on the evaluation of academic record and/or competitive examination by assessment panels or commissions.

In Trinidad and Tobago, merit-based competitions are the sole route of entry. Teachers entering the system for the first time must have a degree in education. They must register as teachers, which requires them to submit evidence of the required academic qualifications (which vary according to level), and are interviewed by a Teaching Service Commission (Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago, 2008).

In Mexico, the federal States (or the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) in the case of the Federal District) are responsible for recruitment through the recently established National Teacher Entry Examination, which was derived from the Alliance for Quality Education agreed by the National Education Workers' Union (SNTE) and the Federal Government in 2008. The declared aim of the examination is to "improve the quality of education in Mexico by strengthening the teaching profession through the recruitment of the best-qualified professionals". Thus the intention is to "eradicate discretionary practices in teaching appointments within the public education system" (Agreement for the the General Guidelines of the National Teaching Career Reform 2011).

A key dilemma facing the centralized management of teaching careers is the interaction with school management, a situation that becomes even more complex in decentralized administration systems, which are common in the region. The competition system for teaching posts must be objective and transparent, and posts must be filled in accordance with the specific features of each school.

In most Central American countries, teaching graduates must be registered on a promotion roster before they can apply for teaching posts through a centralized system.

Lastly, in some countries there is no higher-level regulation establishing common criteria for the selection of teachers. In such cases, educational centres or local authorities are responsible for filling vacancies, and use their own guidelines to classify candidates.

According to some authors (De Shano, 2010 and Terigi, 2010), in the majority of cases novice teachers enter teaching on the basis of interim or probationary periods, after which - having passed examinations, tests and evaluations – they acquire the rights of members of the profession, such as job stability.

Novice teachers tend to start out in the most deprived schools (Terigi, 2010). Moreover, teachers move between remote areas and those that are closer to home. This phenomenon of rotation interferes with the formation of stable groups of teachers in schools (Vaillant and Rossel, 2006) and adversely affects schools with vulnerable pupils by depriving them of more experienced teachers.

In recent years, many countries in the region have made progress in developing policies to restructure the teaching career, and in some cases this has led to significant social movements. The new model career paths are distinguished by the introduction of the so-called mechanisms of horizontal promotion, in contrast to the vertical promotion that has traditionally held sway in the region. Horizontal promotion refers to alternative hierarchies in which teachers can take up other posts within a school without giving up classroom teaching. Mexico, Colombia and Peru, amongst others, have experience of this.

The broad contours of the teaching career in Mexico were reformed in May 2011 in order ultimately to improve the quality of education. Teaching in Mexico has a horizontal system in which teachers participate on a voluntary and individual basis; they can join the system and progress if they meet the appropriate requirements. The broad contours of the teaching career were established in 1993, and current reform is the result of cooperation between the Secretariat of Public Education and the National Education Workers' Union (Morduchowicz, 2002; Agreement on Reform of the Broad Contours of the National Programme for the Teaching Career, 2011).

Another country mentioned in the literature is Colombia, which makes provision for a system for the classification of teachers and principals working in the public sector in accordance with a salary scale, based on academic training, experience, responsibility, performance and skills (Morduchowicz, 2011).<sup>25</sup> Entry to teaching is strictly by competitive examination and is open to all teachers who are graduates of teacher-training or vocational institutes, bachelor of education degree programmes, or other university courses in educational sciences. A qualification from a teacher-training institute is only valid for teaching at the preschool and basic levels, while a university qualification is valid for secondary and intermediate levels. Thus entry to the teaching profession is open to professionals who do not have a teaching qualification (CEPP, 2010).

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<sup>25</sup> As authorized by the Congress of the Republic, in Colombia senior teachers are currently governed by Decree 2277 of 1979, which establishes rules for the teaching profession, while novice teachers are governed by Decree-Law 1278 of 2002, enacting the new statute on the professional development of teachers.

Another interesting case is Peru, which saw the promulgation of its new Law on the Public Teaching Career in 2007. The Law sets out five levels at which teachers can enter the profession, depending on the results of evaluations and voluntary tests, and a minimum period of tenure at each level. Teachers must remain at the first level for three years, the second level for five years, the third year for six years, the fourth level for six years, and the fifth level until retirement. Teachers in the State sector who were previously governed by the Law on the Teaching Profession can now enter the Public Teaching Career, in which the salary at level five is double that of level one. Both laws remain in force owing to the voluntary nature of the Public Teaching Career. Despite the financial incentives on offer, it is estimated that 80% of teachers remain under the governance of the old Law on the Teaching Profession (Cuenca, 2011). One explanation for this might lie in the fact that, despite efforts to encourage dialogue with social partners, the new Law was promulgated in an attempt to crush the profession at a time when teachers were on strike.<sup>26</sup>

In Argentina, the regulations governing teachers establish the criteria for career promotion. As a rule, in the field of common primary education, the hierarchical pyramid extends from grade teacher to vice-principal, principal and inspector. Promotion to each post is determined by teachers' academic experience and competitive examination.

Brazil stands out because of the diversity of its teaching careers. Education professionals are divided into six types: teachers, administrators, planners, supervisors, inspectors and school managers. Career plans for teachers are developed at the level of municipalities, States and the federal administration. The process respects the relative autonomy of each administrative sphere and precludes the existence of a single career path for the whole country, although some common criteria are defined by law, such as entry to the profession by a public selection process based on examinations and qualifications; continuing training undertaken during periods of paid leave; a base salary; progression based on qualifications or skills and on performance evaluation; the need for protected study time; planning and evaluation of student performance and of the educational centre; and the learning experience (OEI, 2008a).

In 2005, Costa Rica established a new Professional Teaching Career designed to offer incentives for good performance in order to attract and retain the best-qualified teachers.

In Guatemala, a proposal for the teaching career was developed by the Institute for the Training of Secondary Teachers at the University of San Carlos (USAC) and the Assembly of Teachers, with the support of USAID.<sup>27</sup> The proposal has already been agreed with the teaching profession, and a version has been made available so that it can be discussed and debated. The proposal defines the teaching career in terms of stages: entry, tenure, promotion, incentives and retirement. One aspect that has been discussed is performance evaluation, and on this issue the profession agreed that promotion should be linked to performance. The proposed career path is being considered alongside the promotion roster that already operates in Guatemala.

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<sup>26</sup> Report by the consultation group of Peru.

<sup>27</sup> United States Agency for International Development.

Comparison of three countries that have adopted new career paths for teachers – Colombia, Mexico and Peru – shows that they have the following characteristics in common: voluntarism for in-service teachers (except in Colombia, which has one career path that is universal and another that is voluntary and based on incentives); mechanisms for teacher evaluation; consideration of factors such as seniority, training and knowledge; and different levels (except in Colombia). Pupils' learning outcomes are only considered as part of the teaching career in Mexico.

Analysis of the various proposals for the teaching career highlights a complex web of intervening factors, including labour relations, remuneration and incentives, and systems for evaluating teacher performance.

## ***Working Conditions***

A review of the literature on teacher supply and demand in OECD countries (2002) has revealed that some aspects of working conditions are closely linked to the various teaching careers. These aspects include the student-teacher ratio, school discipline problems, time spent in the classroom, multiple tasks and teacher rotation issues.

Teachers' working conditions are, first of all, an aspect of labour rights lawfully upheld by teachers' unions. They also have a direct effect on the quality of teachers' professional performance and, consequently, on pupils' learning achievement.

Although research on the influence of class size on academic performance is inconclusive (Vegas and Petrow, 2008), the average class in the region is not particularly large. As seen in Chapter I, the pupil-teacher ratio in the region was 23-1 at the primary level in 2008, which is similar to or slightly higher than in most European countries and lower than in Asian countries such as Japan, China and South Korea (UNESCO IBE 2010). Nonetheless, this average certainly hides situations of overcrowded classes faced by some teachers in urban areas in various countries.

In many countries, conditions in respect of school infrastructure, equipment and teaching materials are so precarious that they make the job of teaching really difficult. Teachers often make a personal financial effort or call on parents to make up for such shortcomings; such a situation creates negative feelings among teachers because of the lack of support from the authorities for their professional tasks. The availability of adequate and well-equipped rooms for individual and group work outside the classroom constitutes another important factor and, here too, situations vary considerably.

Some reports, such as the OECD's 2002 report, suggest that school coexistence problems and classroom discipline may also influence working conditions and, in particular, teachers' career choices and retention. Recent studies (Marcelo and Vaillant, 2009) show that classroom discipline problems constitute a major reason for which teachers leave the profession. It would seem that when teachers feel that they have greater control over their schools' approach to discipline, they are more likely to remain in the profession.

The organization of teachers' work, including the assignment of duties within the education community, is therefore an important factor. Clear standards and procedures for assigning duties and opportunities for teamwork are factors indicative of significant differences of approach to professional work. Similarly, bureaucratic or authoritarian internal relations, characteristic of many academic institutions in the region, create a climate detrimental to the professionalization of teaching. This factor is important since it could underpin passive or negative attitudes that make competent teachers leave. Despite the importance of this aspect, no research is available on the forms that it actually takes, and it is particularly complicated to analyse because internal relations are built differently in each education community.

The region has great ethnic, racial and socio-economic diversity in its schools and among its pupils. Such diversity gives rise in part to radically different work environments and may influence individual decisions about teaching and where to teach (De Shano, 2010).

In most countries in the region, there is a high level of labour stability. Nonetheless, an important factor to consider in examining teachers' working conditions is the time devoted to classroom teaching. Actual workloads are always difficult to determine, but it is known that teachers' work time in Latin American countries is dedicated almost entirely to classroom teaching (Vaillant and Rossel, 2006). In general, the working day does not cover the planning, coordination or assessment tasks that teachers usually perform in their free time. This situation considerably hinders teachers' professional development. None of the countries reviewed in the region has resolved this situation favourably, unlike the OECD countries, where the allocation of time for training is one of the main forms of support enjoyed by serving teachers (OECD, 2009a).

Another important aspect of teachers' working conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean is teacher multi-employment. A high percentage of teachers have a double working day. Furthermore, such double working days are spent in different educational institutions, thus contributing to stress and physical fatigue. This is borne out by a staff stability index that measures staff continuity of at least five years in a school (UNESCO-UIS, 2008). For example, if 18 out of 20 teachers have been at one school for at least five years, the stability index would be 90%. In many OECD countries, the staff stability index is quite appropriate. In Latin America and the Caribbean, however, the situation is different and the index is usually less than 70% (UNESCO-UIS, 2008).

In Central America, it has been observed that stress caused by unfavourable working conditions, such as adverse or unsafe school environments, transfers to schools in rural areas, administrative-work overloads and overcrowded classrooms, has a negative effect on teaching.

Various studies have analysed teachers' occupational health issues, which result in lengthy sick leaves that seriously affect the smooth running of schools, especially public schools (UNESCO, 2005b). An interesting example for analysis is the effort made by Trinidad and Tobago to make working conditions safer under the Occupational Safety and Health Act.<sup>28</sup> That initiative was consistent with objectives set by the Ministry of

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<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago. Reply to consultation, UNESCO, August, 2011.

Education in respect of teaching staff, such as participation in decision-making, time for planning work, clear opportunities for promotion, recognition of excellent performance, fair remuneration, teachers' retirement benefits and safe and healthy work environments.<sup>29</sup>

The problems encountered by teachers in regard to their working conditions not only have a bearing on the likelihood of qualified teachers leaving the service, but also create a sense of malaise that is highly detrimental to their effective performance as teachers.

## ***Pay and incentives***

Teaching careers are closely linked to pay and incentives insofar as advancement and promotions are associated with better pay.

The subject of teachers' pay has been thoroughly discussed and studied and has sparked lengthy conflicts between governments and unions in most countries in the region. Teachers' salaries in Latin America are lower than in other professions. This is a critical point because if the best students are to take up a teaching career, they would want to know that they would be well paid.

The literature (Morduchowicz, 2009) shows that teachers' pay consists of a base salary that may rise for various specific reasons, in particular seniority. In some cases, the base salary can rise significantly when incentives are awarded, although they are often very selective.

One of the most widespread characteristics of teachers' salaries in the region is that the scales are set centrally (Morduchowicz, 2009). In some federal countries, the trend in recent years has been to establish a minimum salary for all teachers. For example, in Argentina, a law guaranteeing teachers' salaries was passed and promulgated between 2003 and 2004, introducing one school year as a standard minimum throughout the country and guaranteeing receipt of earnings by all teachers.

An emblematic case in this connection is Brazil, which established, in 1996, the Fund for Primary Education Development and for Enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEF), superseded in 2006 by the Fund for Basic Education Development and for Enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEB). The main purpose of the fund is to redistribute resources earmarked for education to states and municipalities in which investment per pupil is less than the annually set rate. As at least 60% of Fund resources are used for the remuneration and professional development of education professionals, the results have been encouraging, for teachers' salaries have risen significantly and the increases have been greater in areas where the lowest wages were being paid (Souza, 2001; Gatti et al., 2011).

A few years ago, the Ministry of Education in the state of Sao Paulo decided to implement policies to improve the quality of education by allocating resources on the basis of education quality assessment results. In that connection, two complementary programmes have been set up – one consists of a prize awarded to schools that achieve

<sup>29</sup> *Strategic Planning Initiative, Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago, 2010.*

set targets and the other, a merit-based promotion programme, enables teachers who perform well to increase their base salaries by up to 240% during their career (CEPP, 2010).

In Mexico, under the recent General Education Act, as amended (2011), education authorities are required to establish mechanisms to encourage evaluation-based teaching. The purpose of the recent agreement on changes to the general guidelines of the National Teacher Career Programme<sup>30</sup> was to shift the focus to pupils in the granting of incentives. Pupil performance in national tests, worth 20% under the previous scheme, now accounts for 50% of the overall score under the new programme. The other factors taken into account are continuing training (20%), professional training (5%), seniority (5%) and extracurricular activities (20%).<sup>31</sup> Pupils' learning achievement is now weighted more heavily to meet expressed requests of various segments of Mexican society.<sup>32</sup>

Various countries in the region have made significant efforts to improve teachers' pay, but there is still a wide gap between their salaries and those of other professionals, and so it is difficult to attract and retain good teachers in the classroom since they can find better paid jobs elsewhere.

Morduchowicz (2011) posits that there are gaps in the teaching profession in respect of training and recruitment and that salary incentives are an attempt to promote and reward able teachers who are drawn to the sector regardless of alternative income or the various opportunities for personal and professional development in other sectors (2010: 3). The issue of incentives has sparked debate and opposition by analysts, policy-makers and union representatives.

The literature identifies diverse types of incentives based on knowledge and skills, pupils' results, teacher training, teaching in difficult environments and teaching specific subjects (Vegas, 2006). In Latin America and the Caribbean, pride of place has been given to the first two categories.

Louzano (2011) examines Chile's experience in depth, as an example of incentives based on teachers' knowledge and skills and those based on pupils' results. As to the first type of incentive, the Pedagogic Excellence Allowance (AEP) has been awarded since 2002 under a voluntary programme designed to reward teachers' professional merit. To obtain certification, teachers must prove their knowledge and skills by means of a written examination, a portfolio of planning and production samples (including the filming of a class) and class evaluations. They may then receive a financial award roughly equivalent to a thirteenth month's pay for ten years (Morduchowicz, 2009).<sup>33</sup> To date, this allowance has been granted to approximately 2% of classroom teachers in publicly funded institutions.

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<sup>30</sup> See reference document SEP-SNTE.

<sup>31</sup> The activities are additional to teachers' working day and promote the involvement and participation of all education stakeholders in each school in order to create an environment that encourages pupil learning.

<sup>32</sup> Some experts argue that the instrument currently used, namely the ENLACE examination, contains weaknesses that can turn it into an unfair method for determining the value that each teacher earns owing to pupils' academic performance.

<sup>33</sup> A law was passed recently establishing three tiers of accreditation with differing amounts and lowering the incentive award period to four years.

As to incentives linked to academic results, Chile also has a collective incentive, namely a national performance assessment system for government-funded schools (SNED). The performance of education institutions is assessed every two years on the basis of pupils' results, under the Education Quality Measurement System (SIMCE). Schools found to have made the best progress under this measurement system and other management indicators receive additional resources (for two years) to provide a bonus to all school heads and teachers on the premise that a good teacher succeeds in making pupils learn what they are supposed to learn (Peirano, Falck and Dominguez, 2007).

In Colombia, the National Incentive Programme rewards schools' good performance and teachers' excellence by awarding funds for the implementation of educational projects. In the last six years, the Government of Colombia has introduced a series of education measures and programmes designed to improve the quality of this public service (Peirano, Falck and Dominguez, 2007).

According to Andrews (2006), there is sufficient evidence to suggest that, although pay and incentives are important considerations in people's decision to join or remain in the teaching profession, teachers also place a premium on other matters, such as recognition of good performance. Some promising symbolic civil-society incentives in Latin America and the Caribbean are designed to reward good teachers and enhance social appreciation of the profession (Vaillant and Rossel, 2010); the most noteworthy incentives are the 10 Mark Educator Award in Brazil, the Sharing the Teacher Award in Colombia, the 100 Points Teacher Award in Guatemala, the ABC Award in Mexico and the Teacher who Leaves a Mark Award in Peru.

The prizes may include a financial award for teachers or centres, teaching materials, computers, internships in other countries, scholarships in teachers' own countries and other material goods. The media impact of the various awards to teachers is most noteworthy, for it can help to improve the public image of the teaching profession.

### ***Teachers' performance assessment***

In many Latin American and Caribbean countries, priority has not been given to teachers' performance assessment, which does not mean that there are no practices or rules in that regard. Supervisors, school heads, pupils and their families assess teachers' behaviour, often informally (Vaillant and Rossel, 2004; Román, 2010). Traditional teacher assessment mechanisms are still being used even though they may not have any regulatory effect or capacity to assure quality.

Teacher assessment is a subject that generates discussion between education authorities and unions, entailing negotiations that do not always meet the technical criteria of good performance. Initiatives have been driven by the authorities and are not necessarily accepted by teachers. Discussions focus on the purpose of assessment, the assessors, assessment criteria, instruments, procedures and links between results and incentives. Assessment of the quality of teachers' performance is certainly an extremely complicated challenge, hence the wide variety of strategies used throughout the world.

A study of performance assessments and teachers' careers in 50 countries in the Americas and Europe (UNESCO, 2006) shows that the education systems in these regions of the world face a genuine challenge in establishing teachers' career and performance assessment systems that contribute to teachers' professional development and thus to improvements in education quality. It has nonetheless been acknowledged that teachers' performance assessment is a highly difficult undertaking that pits the interests and opinions of politicians, administrators, teachers, teachers' unions and related studies against each other.

The study highlights the case of Finland, which has come to symbolize quality education in recent years. Not only is there no external assessment of teachers and centres in that country – it is not even being considered. The Finnish education system is based on trust in teachers, in their professionalism and in schools “doing a good job” (UNESCO, 2006).

In Latin America, there are still very few examples of teacher assessment. As is the case regarding incentives, there are many references to Chile and Colombia – and, more recently, Peru – in literature on the subject (Vaillant, 2010a) (see Table 11). This stands to reason, as incentives are usually an essential component of performance assessment systems.

Chile introduced a teacher assessment system for municipal schools in 2003. It is conducted every four years on the basis of criteria set in the Good Teaching Framework (MBE) and by means of four instruments: self-assessment, report by the school head and the educational technical supervisor, peer assessment of the teacher by another educational centre and a portfolio of written and filmed samples (Manzi, González and Sun, 2011).

Teachers who achieve the best results – “outstanding” or “competent” – may receive a financial incentive (Variable Incentive for Individual Performance (AVDI)) for four years, after passing a knowledge test.

Teachers obtaining the lowest ratings – “basic” or “unsatisfactory” – receive support under Professional Development Plans that target the weaknesses identified in the assessment. In addition, teachers with unsatisfactory results must be assessed again in the following year. If their results do not improve, they must leave the system.<sup>34</sup>

Another case mentioned in the substantive literature is Colombia, where, since 2002, the Teacher Professionalization Statute provides for three types of assessment, each of which assesses teachers at different points in their careers and against different objectives (Vaillant, 2010 a):

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<sup>34</sup> *The consequences for teachers with “unsatisfactory” or “basic” results were amended in a recent law on education quality and equity (2011). The original system agreed by the teachers' union provided for teachers to leave the system only if they were assessed as “unsatisfactory” in three consecutive annual assessments. Under the new law, teachers who have received “basic” and/or “unsatisfactory” results in two out of three consecutive evaluations must also leave the system. Moreover, the law provides for school heads to conduct additional assessments and recommend the dismissal of up to 5% of the teachers in the school under his or her responsibility if they have received “basic” or “unsatisfactory” results in the national assessment.*

- an examination to assess the aspiring teacher's aptitudes, skills, experience and suitability to enter the profession, after which the successful applicant may be appointed for one year;
- yearly performance assessment – teachers with unsatisfactory results for two years in a row leave the service;
- an optional competency test after at least three years' service, leading to a promotion or salary increase for those with outstanding results.

Teachers who wish to move to a higher grade must take a skills test (Peirano, Falck and Domínguez, 2007) on achievement and action skills, assistance and service skills, influencing skills, leadership and management skills, cognitive skills and personal efficiency skills.<sup>35</sup>

Under Peru's 2007 law on public teaching careers, teachers must sit a rigorous examination consisting of a test, a review of their career path and a personal interview. The regulations giving effect to the law provide for two types of assessment:

- a compulsory assessment for entry into the profession, followed by performance assessment every three years; in the event of failure, the teacher may be assessed again within the year, after re-training and monitoring, within a period no longer than three quarters from the poor assessment;
- optional assessment for teachers' promotion, capacity audit and performance when teachers apply for educational management, institutional management or research posts; to sit such examinations, they must have passed the performance assessment for the level of the post and, depending on the number of vacancies and their order of merit, they may secure a post only if they score a mark equal to or greater than 70%.

Teachers in Peru are assessed by the Ministry of Education in coordination with the operating body of the National System for the Evaluation, Accreditation and Certification of Education Quality (SINEACE), established in 2003.

In 2007, Peru promulgated a law on public teaching careers that provides for a new horizontal promotion scale and salary incentives based on teacher assessment. The law also provides for families to participate in the appointment of teachers and school heads. The promulgation of the law was opposed by SUTEP, the teachers' union, triggering a series of lengthy national strikes in 2007. Gradually, however, the union lost its ability to mobilize teachers against these measures (Chiroque, 2010).

Performance assessment, introduced in Peru in 2006 as one of the educational management measures launched by APRA, resulted in a period of confrontation and conflict. Performance assessment is enshrined in the law on public teaching careers, and the assessment results are periodically taken into consideration together with

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/proyectos/1737/article-210839.html>

other factors for teachers' progress through the horizontal career advancement and for promotion as teachers. The educational management option, promoted together with the policy on teachers' performance assessment and teaching career reforms, seems to have exceeded expectations in overcoming union resistance, which crumbled over time (Chiroque, 2010).

Under the compulsory yearly teacher assessment system in Trinidad and Tobago, teachers may be promoted and may move on to other educational posts.

**TABLE 11: TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT IN CHILE, COLOMBIA, PERU AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

	<b>Chile 2002-2003</b>	<b>Colombia 2002</b>			<b>Peru 2007</b>	<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>
<b>Method</b>	Teacher performance assessment system	Assessment on entering the profession	Performance assessment	Skills assessment	On entering the profession and subsequent performance	Promotion and access to other posts
<b>Strategy</b>	Compulsory assessment of teachers in the municipal sector every four years.	Assessment at the end of the school year	Yearly performance assessment	Optional assessment after at least three years' service	Teacher assessment every three years	Optional yearly teacher assessments
<b>Consequences</b>	Competent and outstanding teachers may obtain financial benefits subject to passing a knowledge test. Teachers assessed as "unsatisfactory" or "basic" participate in a professional improvement plan and must be re-assessed in one or two years. If they receive "unsatisfactory" for two years or "basic" or "unsatisfactory" for three years, they must leave the profession.	If aspiring teachers pass the examination, they enter the public sector.	If teachers do not obtain satisfactory results for two years, they are removed from service.	If teachers receive outstanding results, they are granted an additional step or receive a pay rise.	If teachers do not pass, they must be re-assessed within the year, re-trained and monitored.	If teachers pass the tests, they are granted a step rise or obtain a new post.

► *Source: Compiled by the author*

Cuba's teacher assessment system is managed by a commission composed of the school head, very experienced teachers and union members. Teachers must validate the assessment conducted and, if they contest the results, they may appeal to a higher authority for a review. Teachers with good results may take training courses or complete bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees, both nationally and internationally. The Cuban assessment system offers incentives such as bonuses and/or pay rises (UNESCO, 2006). Teachers who do not score the expected marks in final assessments may undergo retraining through intensive pedagogical university courses without being dismissed by the State.

In Mexico, the assessment system agreed in May 2011 between the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) and the SNTE teachers' union is designed to assess all classroom teachers, school heads and teachers holding basic education technical support posts. It reviews their professional skills in full and then focuses on continuing education to remedy weaknesses detected and thus provide appropriate professional support to improve the quality of education in the country. Accordingly, the assessment covers (i) learning achievement (results of national academic assessments in schools, standardized instruments and/or applicable strategies) and (ii) professional skills, with emphasis on (a) vocational training (standardized examinations every three years), (b) professional performance, checked against standards issued by the Ministry of Public Education, and (c) continuing education (SEP-SNTE 2011).

## 4.2 Critical teaching-career issues

In most countries in the region, teachers' professional career does not reflect social recognition nor is it perceived by young people joining the profession and by practising teachers as affording opportunities for professional development or holding out the prospect of promotion based on merit, effort and professional responsibility.

### a) Difficulty in attracting and retaining good teachers

The necessity of attracting and retaining good teachers is a key recurring issue in most Latin American and Caribbean countries. It is difficult not only to attract good applicants, but also to retain them because teaching also opens the door to other studies and occupations. It is therefore hard to achieve that goal unless the professional environment is one that builds the capacity of the education system and enhances the teaching profession, making it a top career option for young graduates with good academic results (Vaillant, 2006).

Similarly, the lack of prospects for promotion and advancement that reward and encourage effective practices in the teaching profession tends to alienate good serving teachers.

A review of the literature, both in Latin America and internationally, shows that education authorities today face the enduring challenge of having an adequate number of competent

teachers who remain motivated and who have good working conditions throughout their professional careers (Vaillant, 2006; OECD, 2005; Vegas and Petrow, 2008).

Without a doubt, achievement of this goal is linked directly to salaries, working conditions and the esteem in which society holds the profession. Society's lack of appreciation for the teaching profession, in contrast to its high expectations of teachers' performance, is a major difficulty. For their part, teachers deplore their lack of prestige, especially, but not exclusively, in regard to the financial compensation within their reach, which perpetuates a measure of resentment (Ortega et al., 2011).

Interest in teaching can be heightened by considerations other than financial compensation, such as the quality of relations with pupils and colleagues, teamwork, support from school leaders, material working conditions, time for professional activities outside the classroom and opportunities for professional development (OECD, 2005).

### **b) Stageless teaching careers**

A teacher's professional lifespan covers some 30 to 40 years and is strongly marked by the first three to five years which are pivotal for they constitute the period in which teachers develop their work culture. The teacher induction period is not covered as a specific topic in proposals on teaching careers in Latin America and the Caribbean. Few countries have policies focused on novice teachers (Marcelo, 2010; Vaillant, 2009b).

To improve teaching careers, all phases of teachers' entire professional lives must be analysed. Research shows that teaching practices change significantly throughout the stages of a teacher's professional life. The first three years of work are a period of strong commitment during which support from school heads and supervisors is vital. During that stage, teachers already know what effective professional performance means. Between the fourth and the seventh year of service, teachers enter a phase during which they build their professional identity and develop a measure of classroom effectiveness. Later, between the eighth and the fifteenth year, they embark on a stage of growing tensions and transitions, since some teachers hold posts of responsibility and must make a series of decisions about the future of their careers. After 16 to 23 years of service, teachers enter a phase in which problems of motivation and commitment arise, and, when they have 24 to 30 years of seniority, major problems arise in maintaining motivation. Lastly, after 31 or more years of activity, it is known that motivation is lost as retirement draws near (Day et al., 2007).

The phases in a teacher's professional life should be the subject of debate when career proposals are being drawn up, since everything seems to indicate that these stages mark teachers differentially.

The region faces a challenge in taking these stages into account because such distinctions are made in the teaching profession for salary purposes only, while they are not covered in continuing-education programmes. Exceptions include some emerging experiments on providing support through the induction of novice teachers.

### **c) Dissociation between career structure and professional development**

The literature indicates that better links between teaching careers and professional development must be found (Terigi, 2010). In this connection, it is interesting to weigh the empirical evidence on the aspects of the profession that teachers find most satisfying (Vaillant and Rossel, 2006). These include pupils' learning achievement, commitment to the profession, continuing training, the satisfaction of successfully imparting knowledge and bonding with pupils.

Examples of accomplishments that are important to teachers and, if incorporated into career prospects, could make teaching attractive and stimulating as a professional career, include: attending and passing a challenging course; designing, implementing and evaluating a school project; the satisfaction of passing a qualifying examination and the redounding prestige; identifying problematic areas in the educational institution and devising problem-solving methods; applying for scholarships; and advising a novice (Terigi, 2010). There is little evidence that these factors are taken sufficiently into consideration in current teaching career planning.

The teaching profession in the region generally focuses on ensuring that specific training, experience, merit and performance requirements are met rather than on creating real opportunities for career-related learning. As a result, there is the risk of action being confined to the granting of certificates that do not permit qualitative improvements in teachers' professional skills.

### **d) Tension between common salary structures and diversified pay**

The degree of centralization of a country's salary structure is an issue that has sparked continuous controversy. The arguments in favour of setting minimum salary thresholds and pre-established scales include the following: they are objective and therefore not subject to discretionary changes by any authority; the salary is predictable since teachers know what they will earn on joining the profession and in the future; they are simple to administer and teachers understand them; and they reduce, or even eliminate, competition among teachers (Morduchowicz, 2009). In addition, it is fair to provide equal pay to teachers with similar characteristics (e.g. experience, qualifications and performance).

There are, however, disadvantages to pre-established scales (Morduchowicz, 2009). The most important shortcomings include: underperforming teachers receive the same pay as better performing and better trained teachers who are committed to the service; teachers holding advanced teaching degrees receive the same pay as those who do not pursue further higher education; more experienced teachers are not used to the full, or paid well, for more challenging tasks that are hard to carry out; the teacher-pay system is not linked to actual school activities; and, under the current scales, there is no differential pay for different efforts and aptitudes.

Even when labour stability and pay rises for years of service are effective incentives in retaining teachers in the region, they do not contribute in and of themselves to improving

the quality and fairness of education. The reasons that give rise to incentives can be grouped under three categories, namely performance, teaching in rural and/or poor areas and continuing teacher training.

Nonetheless, if incentives are to be effective, their objectives must, first of all, be properly established and the rules of the game must be clearly formulated. The literature stressed that the criteria for teacher incentives must be well designed, that good indicators must be set and that the amounts granted must be fairly balanced (OECD 2009; Louzano, 2011; Vegas and Petrow, 2008). Incentives are often not attractive or effective enough on account of their amounts or limited coverage.

The wide range of options shows that there is no single ideal institutional means of rewarding teachers' efforts, dedication and constant improvement through salaries. Moreover, preference is usually given in teacher policies to easily measurable factors such as the certification of training courses rather than professional performance.

The introduction of incentives into the teacher pay system has been hindered because unions traditionally focus their demands on the defence and improvement of pre-established pay scales.

In regard to this issue, teachers' organizations either accept the education authorities' proposals, oppose them in defence of gains already obtained or seek agreements that provide for the unions' involvement in policy implementation.

In these complex processes, unions are confronted with uncertainty over the consequences of the policy and with the history of mistrust in their relations with governments. In addition, the great complexity of the differing incentive and reward mechanisms can build up tension among teachers competing for the award of the various incentives.

Furthermore, in the countries that have implemented education decentralization policies in the last two decades, wage negotiations have been affected by a new type of contractual dependence that has changed labour relations between teachers and regulatory bodies. In these cases, the unions' demands have been aimed at recentralizing decisions on base salaries.

### **e) Difficulty in building consensus on teachers' performance assessment**

The reports examined (OECD, 2009b; UNESCO, 2006) show that effective performance assessment systems are generally those that have been agreed by stakeholder representatives and have been supported by most teachers to be assessed. The successful approach to teacher assessment seems to have consisted in reconciling an interest in improving the quality of education with demands for effective management of teaching and the legitimate rights of teachers.

The established performance assessment systems show that system design is important and that so, too, is the procedure required to achieve such success (Vaillant, 2010b), which

is the outcome of substantial technical efforts including literature reviews, international seminars, advice from national and international experts and the implementation of pilot projects.

In some countries, agreements have been reached to implement teacher assessment systems, as in Chile and Mexico, but, in others, legal standards imposed under government policies have increased conflicts with teachers' unions, as in Peru and Colombia.

The likelihood that teachers' performance assessment might improve the quality of teaching and learning is linked to the capacity to integrate data gleaned from such assessments into training courses that are part of their professional career. There is no evidence that this challenge has been taken up satisfactorily in the countries of the region.

### ***Summary of critical teacher-career issues***

- a.** *Difficulty in attracting and retaining good teachers*
- b.** *Stageless teaching careers*
- c.** *Dissociation between career structure and professional development*
- d.** *Tension between common salary structures and diversified pay*
- e.** *Difficulty in building consensus on teachers' performance assessment*

## **V** Teacher-policy institutions and processes in Latin America and the Caribbean: trends and questions

An analysis of the region's teacher policies must include consideration of a basic paradox: while there is unanimity about their importance and centrality, as declared in practically all policy statements on the topic, in reality, effective courses of action in respect of teachers do not feature strategically in policy design. This is due to many reasons that must be discussed discerningly in an attempt to find solutions for the new agenda.

Teacher policies are not high on the list of priorities basically because they are costly as they are applicable to all teachers, lack public visibility during implementation, they are politically complex and the desired effects are achieved only in the medium to long term. In short, they have been described (Corrales 1999; Navarro 2006) as the epitome of "difficult policies". Many education policy issues are relatively easier to tackle and more glamorous than actual enhancement of teaching. Wider school coverage, improvements in infrastructure and facilities, and acquisition of educational materials are but some of the measures that require great financial investment and political will but can achieve observable results in the short term and win widespread approval. By contrast, improvements to initial and continuing training and to the salaries and working conditions of tens of thousands of teachers – or even millions, depending on the country – are very costly objectives that governments in power for four to six years cannot really countenance. Moreover, teacher policies tend to favour high-profile issues that help to avoid conflicts with teachers, such as pay rises and incentives. Selective incentives are favoured because they cost less than across-the-board salary increases. As a result, the drastic teacher-policy changes required are generally postponed or addressed through piecemeal measures with little impact on the sheer scale of the challenges.

The paradox is therefore that, if it is true that the quality of an education system and the learning that it imparts to society cannot exceed the quality of its teachers (Barber and Mourshed, 2007), then public education efforts should really focus on these professionals, their training and their working conditions. This is, however, the hardest area to change in any education reform because it entails the above-mentioned difficulties.

This section seeks to put forward analytical categories and to identify some trends in teacher-policy institutions and processes, with the underlying question being their quality. Just as society's expectations of education are clearly more complex and demanding, so, too, are education policy requirements much higher. How have their determining factors changed? What criteria can be used to evaluate whether the configuration of these determining factors has improved or worsened? Has there been discernible improvement in the quality of policy formulation and implementation? If not, what factors and processes should be acted upon first and foremost in order to initiate and develop

improvement? Some analytical categories will be suggested below in order to address these questions, and the impact and quality of some trends in institutions and in the formulation, negotiation and implementation of teacher policies will be identified and interpreted.

This is an unusual approach to the description and analysis of education policies, which are usually addressed by examining their content rather by scrutinising their institutions and processes, from design to implementation and evaluation. There are few, and rather unsystematic, empirical references in the sections below, which restricts comparisons and generalizations. It was considered, however, that these constraints should not preclude appraisal of such a crucially important aspect of the processes of change in this area.

## **5.1 Analytical categories of education policy formulation and implementation**

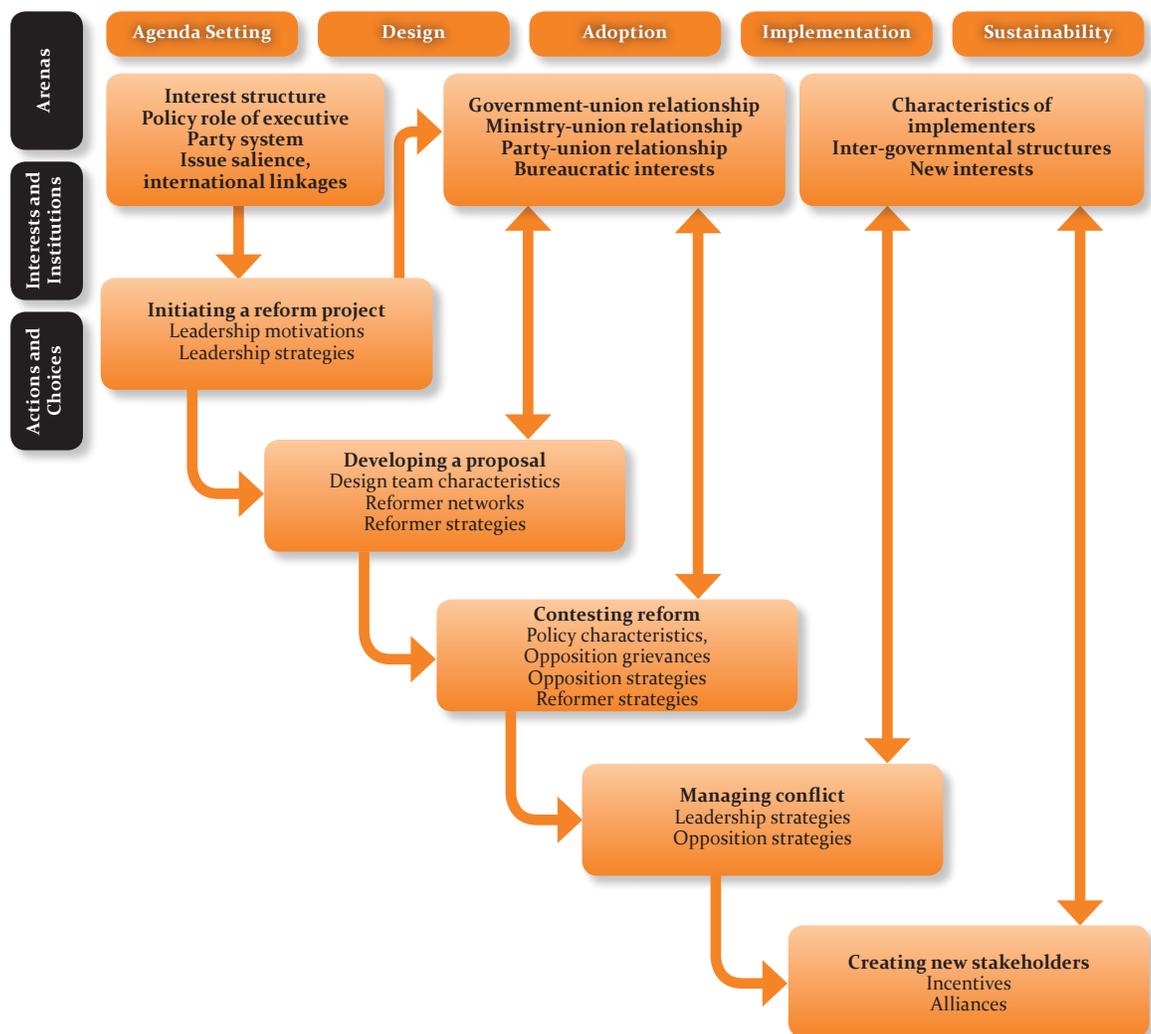
The introduction and maintenance of education policy reforms are blighted by contradiction between their importance, clearly understood by the vast majority of stakeholders and observers of the state of education in the region, and the strong resistance to and lack of motivation for their practical implementation. That said, decisions are often made in the heat of the moment, and so there is no assurance that they will be maintained or implemented over time, or decisions may be taken in response to the interests or negotiations in the interests of some stakeholders, without sufficient public input or concern for the national system as a whole. In some cases, conflict between the government and the teachers' union leads to rigidity or paralysis in the requisite ability of policies to adapt the education system to new and demanding external requirements.

All of these features of policy formulation and implementation under the State's responsibility must be analysed and evaluated when designing teacher policies, and attention must be paid not only to the content of the policies but also the characteristics of their design and development. In most of the region, the State fulfils the dual concurrent function of employer and education-policy maker and manager.

According to Robert R. Kaufman and Joan M. Nelson (2004), much research work on education (and health) policies has focused on the design and impact of reforms rather than on the political processes through which such reforms are produced, diluted or blocked. Along similar lines, a comparative study of public policy formulation in Latin American countries, commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank and edited by Ernesto Stein and Mariano Tommasi, namely *Policymaking in Latin America: How Politics Shapes Policies* (2008), has developed an interpretive lens that highlights and evaluates aspects of these key processes. These aspects consist in identifying the stakeholders, their powers and roles, their preferences, incentives and aspirations, the time horizons under which they operate, the arenas in which they are active and, lastly, the type of exchanges and transactions that they establish (Stein and Tommasi, op.cit., p.14-15).

Merilee Grindle (2004) addresses these questions in her comparison of education reforms in the 1990s in Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua and the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil, using an analytical model of the reform process. This model distinguishes, first of all, the various “arenas” or spheres of action, beginning with the setting of the agenda, policy design, adoption, implementation and consolidation as a sustainable policy over time (first column in the figure below); second, the “interests and institutions”, which range from the “interest structure” to the various stakeholders who seek to implement the policy, including the executive, party system, bureaucracy, government-union relations, intergovernmental bodies, and characteristics of the implementers (second column in the figure); and, lastly, the various stakeholders’ “activities and choices” in the different phases of developing and implementing policy reforms, and their strategies, motivations and resources (third column in the figure).

**FIGURE 1: ANALYTICAL MODEL OF THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION POLICY REFORM (GRINDLE, 2004)**



► **Source:** M. Grindle (2004), *Despite the Odds: The Contentious Politics of Education Reform*. Princeton and Oxford University Press, Table 1.1.

Grindle's research focuses on how reforms can be launched despite the low short-term incentives and the opposition of vested interests. As she observes, both a count of the winning and losing political forces for specific reforms and a conventional analysis of the institutions' conservatism would lead to the conclusion that major reforms would be impossible. Her research, however, has actually identified nearly 40 significant education reforms in 17 countries since 1977; some have not been fully implemented and many have been discontinued, but they nonetheless paint quite a clear picture of movement and change. Such reforms can be initiated because the stakeholders involved are not fixed, but rather variable, and because the interests at stake are not always contradictory, but rather pervious to negotiation, and because reformers can often win support for their projects from society at large by showing that the projects serve the greater interests of society. In most cases, reforms are effected through minor legal and administrative measures and changes in practices that go unnoticed, unlike major national policy issues. On other occasions, reforms are effected through the introduction of broader policies that are usually deeper and more powerful, but are more likely to be contested politically and discontinued when there is a change of government.

Close scrutiny of the "institutions" involved (second row in the figure above), shows that the stakeholders and agencies concerned with education policies in any country of the region together constitute bodies and agencies that, in addition to the direct education-system stakeholders (authorities, teachers, students and parents), must be included in this type of analysis. They may be broken down as follows:

- executive agencies, including education ministries and departments at various levels, not only in the education sector but also in economics, finance and labour;
- legislative agencies, including the existence and the powers of parliamentary commissions on education and the role of political forces within them;
- public institutions responsible for producing and disseminating education statistics;
- public and private institutions that produce educational materials, including books, curricula and technical and educational support systems for schools.
- organizations and people from the business world who play a role in technical and vocational education and who seek to influence broader education policy decisions;
- religious institutions that advocate policies guaranteeing educational freedom and instruction in their religions;
- non-governmental organizations that are philanthropic or dedicated to specific causes such as human rights or the promotion of multicultural education;

- multilateral cooperation agencies such as the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), UNESCO, OAS, OECD, OEI and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), whose role and impact require further analysis.

International organizations play a major role in education policy formulation and stabilization in the region, either through research on education conditions in various countries or by providing technical assistance or funding for specific programmes. The actual impact of the World Bank, the IDB and UNESCO on education in the region has not yet been analysed. In view of their dissemination of ideas, operational criteria and resources directly invested in projects, the nature and scope of their influence is uncertain. Nonetheless, UNESCO indisputably plays a great role through education for all (EFA), the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the establishment of international comparisons and the setting of targets to be achieved by each country. Furthermore, international surveys such as the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), UNESCO's Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE) and the IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) are obviously very influential not only because of their findings and their likely effect on curricula, but also because they boost the development of national education assessment in the various countries. Lastly, the OECD has played a significant role in disseminating good education policy practices assessing education systems at the countries' request.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Categories for the evaluation of policy formulation and implementation***

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Stein and Tommasi (2008) have proposed five criteria for the evaluation of policy formulation in Latin America generally, which can be applied to the various countries' teacher policies.

- *Stability of the policies*: capacity to maintain a specific course of action over time. In countries with stable policies, change tends to be incremental, building on previous administrations' achievements.
- *Adaptability of the policies*: change is adapted to evolving economic conditions or policies. This criterion must be distinguished from the "volatility" of policies that swing back and forth depending on which group is in government.
- *Coordination and consistency*: the outcome of the predominance of effective cooperation and communication among agencies and stakeholders.

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<sup>36</sup> Chile, Mexico and the Dominican Republic received assessment reports from the OECD in the 2000s.

- *Quality of implementation:* good design, even if approved and enshrined in laws or action plans, is not enough if there is no capacity for effective implementation. Relative lack of capacity to implement many types of policies is a “regional” hallmark.
- *Public orientation:* policies that promote general well-being and clearly produce public goods instead of funnelling private assets to corporate groups or interests.

(Stein, Tommasi, p. 11 and 12)

These criteria are important to teacher-policy formulation and implementation in the region. In many cases, policies have been impaired by failure to meet these criteria owing, in particular, to the lack of continuity and coordination among agencies and stakeholders.

Another four important categories, namely contribution to equity, relevance to issues that must be addressed, local and national contexts and involvement of social stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation, may be added to those mentioned above.

## 5.2 Teacher-policy institutions and institutionalization

There are formal teacher policies in all countries in the region because governments must make decisions that affect teachers’ professional activity in one way or another, ranging from training systems to recruitment rules, salary scales and career plans. Such policies are usually set through legal instruments – acts of executive power, legislation adopted by national assemblies, administrative rules and regulations – generally after negotiations between government education agencies and educational institutions, budget authorities, teachers’ organizations and political parties. In administratively decentralized countries, such legislation may be passed by regional, state or municipal governments. In all countries, teachers’ organizations act in their members’ interests, participate in education policy formulation in various ways, exert pressure and use their veto to promote or restrict specific policies, depending on their interpretation of the latter.

### *The institutional perspective*

As these policies and decisions are made through legal instruments, it is quite easy to ascertain their content and characteristics from the relevant texts. It is more difficult to determine the extent to which these policies are *institutionalized*, in other words, the degree to which they consist of sustainable practices and permit the gradual accumulation of knowledge, skills and sound modes of action. The concept of “institution” is widely used in social science to refer to the cognitive, standard-setting

and regulatory structures that together impart stability and meaning to society. There is great variety in the use made of the concept, which can describe the “institution of the family”, an aspect of society, a specific organization such as a school system, legislation or the constitution of a country. In all cases, however, the concept of “institution” does not refer to the formal aspects of an organization, law or public regulation, but rather to specifically cultural and subjective aspects associated with organizations and legal statutes (Scott, 2008). Cognitive aspects refer to explicit and tacit knowledge that the institution’s members share and consider valid. Standard-setting aspects are values, behaviour and attitudes deemed appropriate or inappropriate in daily life and to interpersonal relations. Regulatory aspects refer to the practices that are usually adopted by the institution’s members. A “member” of or participant in an institution does not necessarily belong to it formally, but rather receives or shares knowledge, values and practices with other people in the same situation.

Modern societies depend on well-established institutions to account for their own complexity. In education, teachers must have good knowledge of the information that they must impart, they must be committed to the values inherent in the intellectual and moral education provided to pupils and they must know the practices through which such knowledge and values are transmitted.

The institutional approach to teacher policy raises the question of internal institutionalization within the teaching community, professional associations, unions and schools, and the institutionalization of teacher-training agencies such as universities and research institutes and of government agencies in charge of public teacher policy formulation and management at the State level. Some of these issues will be addressed below.

### ***Government agencies involved in teacher policies***

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As intimated above, the institutions established by the various countries to design and implement teacher policies and programmes are not always strong enough in terms of their powers, resources and continuity of management. In particular, it is problematic that the various teacher-policy aspects are controlled by different bodies. For example, in many countries, initial-training policies are issued by higher-education regulatory bodies, continuing education policies by teacher-training bodies and matters relating to teachers’ salaries, incentives and work regulations are within the purview of entities responsible for the administration and funding of the education system.

Table 12 shows the main institutions that are involved to some extent in teacher policies in different countries. It must be borne in mind that these institutions’ influence is limited by the degree of autonomy enjoyed by higher education institutions that are responsible for initial training and involved in continuing education and by the laws and regulations on teaching careers. Furthermore, decision-making has been decentralized in some countries.

**TABLE 12: PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN TEACHER POLICIES IN COUNTRIES IN THE REGION**

COUNTRY	INSTITUTION	INITIAL TRAINING	CONTINUING EDUCATION	TEACHING CAREER
ARGENTINA	National Teacher Training Institute	Provides curriculum guidance to training institutions.	Plans, develops and promotes policies, and various stakeholders participate through decentralized means.	Does not have any authority (careers are regulated by provincial statutes that are changed through negotiations).
BRAZIL	Ministry of Education: Basic Education Secretariat	Curriculum guidelines set by the National Education Board		The National Education Board sets guidelines.
	Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES)	Encourages quality	CAPES formulates the national policy that contains long-term guidelines on in-service teacher training.	
CHILE	Educational Training, Experimentation and Research Centre (CPEIP)	Administers national examinations and sets standards.	Organizes training programmes for school heads and classroom teachers in some subjects.	Coordinates teacher assessment and recognizes excellent teaching.
	Ministry of Education, Higher Education Division	Competitive grants in support of teachers' career improvement projects.		
COLOMBIA	Ministry of Education	Knowledge examinations for students close to graduation	Continuing teacher training programmes	Coordinates the system

GUATEMALA	Training Division, Education Human Resources)	n/a	Offers courses and seminars	n/a
MEXICO	General Directorate of Higher Education for Education Professionals)	Coordinates the teacher-training colleges and promotes policies on the development and assessment of training institutions.		
	National System of Continuing Education and Professional Training, National Department of Continuing Education for Teachers		National list of courses, seminars and postgraduate degrees	
	National Coordination of Teaching Careers (Ministry of Public Education). SEP/SNTE National Commission			Monitors and coordinates operational activities for teaching careers
PERU	Department of Higher Education	Designs admission programmes, curricula, teacher re-training and institutional evaluations.	Educational counselling, courses	
	Human Resources Department, the Ministry of Education			Regulates induction into the teaching profession.
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Ministry of Education	n/a	Workshops, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees	n/a

► *Source: Compiled by the author*

## ***Lack of comprehensive, interlinked and sustainable teacher policies***

Policies sometimes tend to focus on isolated aspects and are not necessarily systemic as they should be. For example, people sometimes think that improved initial teacher training would suffice, but do not realise that an unappealing teaching career and schools that do not introduce new teaching methods minimize the effect sought by acting to improve initial training. At other times, the emphasis is on teacher pay increases and incentives that will ultimately be of very little effect if an effort is not concurrently made to improve the quality of initial training and opportunities for professional development.

In addition, in some countries in the region, parallel initiatives geared to similar objectives are taken in different public entities or even within the same ministry, which makes it difficult to have of a holistic view of teacher policies and the actual use made of public resources.

Lack of coordination and harmony among policies is directly linked to the institutional dispersion described above. In some cases, attempts are made to solve this problem by establishing coordination groups, but their effectiveness is over-dependent on their members' attitudes.

Lastly, another difficulty is the lack of long-term teacher-policy planning. As a result, programmes announced as great solutions are soon discontinued and replaced by others, with no rigorous evaluations, assessments or studies being conducted on the feasibility of the new initiatives.

## ***Investment levels***

The low priority given to teacher policies is reflected in the fact that, besides the necessarily high public expenditure on the remuneration of teaching staff, investment in programmes to improve initial training and continuous professional development is generally low in most countries and varies according to the economic situation and the various administrations' priorities.<sup>37</sup> This problem arises partly because, unlike salaries, expenditure on teacher training and professional development is not regulated under specific permanent laws, but under annually approved budgets.

### **5.3. Governments and teachers' unions: a politically important relationship**

Just as a wide range of features in the landscape of teachers' organizations can be identified from the overview of the regional situation, so, too, can differing relations

<sup>37</sup> For example, an analysis of the Chilean Ministry of Education's 2011 budget shows that 0.2% of the total education budget was earmarked for expenditure on continuing teacher training. This figure reflects average annual expenditure of US \$157 per teacher, which would cover only a minimum of training hours. Comparable data is not currently available for other countries.

among these organizations and education authorities. In principle, such relations, characterized by teachers' unions' opposition to or support for official policies, may contribute to the advancement, modification or blockage of policies. At the same time, teachers' organizations in many countries usually influence the broader system of political support enjoyed by governments, especially those formed by political parties that have historically been backed by sectors of workers. In some circumstances, this influence can turn teachers' unions into stakeholders with considerable clout to veto and/or make proposals on State policies.

In practice, interaction between teachers' unions and governments reflects a combination of positions, with one position tending to be predominant for a given period of time. Relational patterns in which dialogue dominates, without being confrontation-free, are thus common, as are predominantly confrontational relational patterns, albeit with opportunities for dialogue.

Forums for sustained dialogue create conditions in which teachers' unions can participate in education policies.<sup>38</sup> Dialogue practices involve containment of members' demands and preferences in the positions held by teachers' organizations during negotiations. These organizations' suspend their usual practices, such as mobilizing their members and blocking policies, are to foster an exchange of support and concessions between unions and governments that would meet some of both parties' interests.<sup>39</sup>

It should be noted that effective dialogue involves negotiations between State representatives and unions in contexts of exchange that are always marked by varying degrees of transparency and uncertainty. Resources and incentives (e.g. perks, promises, jobs, State support for union organizations, support or political favours) are sometimes at stake in negotiations, but are not on the stakeholders' public agenda, and can make it easy or difficult to reach agreement.

In recent years, in various countries, the establishment of advisory boards and other types of round tables for dialogue and agreement on education policies has been promoted, resulting in a rise in the number and recognition of stakeholders, other than teachers' unions. Such wider-ranging involvement in education policies is usually encouraged by governments but is often the outcome of conflict situations, in which other stakeholders press for progress on new claims placed on the agenda.

In many countries confronted with these alternatives, traditional negotiating bodies continue to be the primary or only forums for dialogue, focusing on economic and corporate issues governed by legal bases inherited from the second half of the twentieth century. These negotiating bodies limit the scope for dialogue in the education sector to the model of collective bargaining on pay and working conditions, as in other areas of economic activity.

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<sup>38</sup> Internationally, Ben Levin, from the University of Toronto, has identified a direct link between strong teachers' organizations and successful education systems, cases in point being those in Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan and South Korea (MacBeath, 2012).

<sup>39</sup> In Guatemala, dialogue between the unions and the government began under the 1997 peace accords, which laid the groundwork for national reconciliation involving different social sectors and the national agenda for peace, reconciliation and social equity. Seventeen private- and public-sector institutions, the National Assembly of Primary Teachers (ANM) and Mayan and indigenous organizations participated in the Consultative Commission for Educational Reform (CCRE) in October 1997 (Palamidessi, 2003).

In summary, dialogue predominates in the regional panorama of patterns of negotiation and exchange, takes a variety of institutional forms and covers issues of varying complexity and scope. In some countries, these relational patterns have attained a high level of institutionalization and continuity and address a wide range of negotiation and dialogue issues. These relational patterns are in turn subject to tension because the various education-policy stakeholders' interests and preferences are becoming more complex and pluralistic. These configurations are not immutable but are rather subject to many other factors including changes in broader political alliances, the thrust of education policies, the tax situation and the education budget.

Teachers' organizations prefer predominantly confrontational relations when strategically harnessing their capacity for mobilization and blockage as means of resistance and/or negotiation.

Furthermore, governments do not always avoid confrontation. On the contrary, in some cases, they choose to impose their stance forcefully in conflict through measures that affect the union's power.

Governments' decision to confront teachers' organizations can somewhat weaken an opponent in the short term, but there are consequences. Opting for this method exposes the education system to potential situations of poor governability, affects the State's management capacity and teachers' commitment to and motivation for achieving educational quality improvement policies. Teachers who are demoralized or affected by job alienation cannot really be described as education system "activists" who promote reforms.

Despite these predominantly dialogue or confrontation relational patterns, there are national cases in which special relations are established between teachers' unions and education authorities,<sup>40</sup> such as those situations in which union members hold posts in State bodies, after being recruited into or joining such decision-making bodies on account of long-standing affinity or political alliance between the union and the government. This situation carries the risk that the government's independence in representing general societal interests may be lost by being subordinated to corporate interests.

From the teachers' organizations' standpoint, it is noteworthy that situations of union representatives' ongoing involvement in the governance of the education system are additional opportunities for teachers' unions to participate in negotiations. Such unions are strategically placed for decision-making, for they have access to negotiation-crucial information, early knowledge of the education authorities' projects and proposals and enhanced capacity to block them in the event of confrontation. On the other hand, this situation has internal consequences in that the unions are usually jointly responsible for policies on which they have taken decisions.

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<sup>40</sup> *In the case of the SNTE in Mexico, a series of negotiations were conducted in the past decade on participation in the Ministry of Public Education by political and technical civil servants who reported to the union (Loyo 2008).*

## 5.4 Institutionalization: externalities and internalities in the teaching profession

All education systems run the risk of not being effective in the public interest and of serving particularistic rather than systemic rationales. According to Navarro (2006), education systems are constantly at risk of being captive to providers on matters such as teaching and administrative posts, the monitoring of decisions and key steps in educational organizations, appointments, discipline, the granting of incentives and rewards, training, administration and personnel management systems. Several forces come into play in education systems to avoid or reduce the likelihood of being held captive. Two such forces are crucial. The first is a strong State whose public administration is effective and governed by proven accountability mechanisms. The second is a firmly entrenched professional culture under which teachers and other major stakeholders are bound to behavioural values, high teaching standards and action in the public interest.

Current trends in these two forces will be examined. The first is external to the teaching profession, on which it exerts pressure for accountability. The second operates internally within the profession. Key aspects of the current situation are evident in both cases.

### *Accountability, “external controls” and their ambivalence*

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The unsatisfactory results and, very often, decreasing quality of public education, highlighted in international comparative assessment results, have led to the establishment in many countries of external systems that seek to influence and direct teaching activities from the outside. These systems may include assessment and monitoring, through external assessment systems, of teachers’ activities and the educational results achieved; the systematization of the material that pupils must learn; and changes to teaching careers that limit teachers’ classroom autonomy and set up systems of positive or negative stimulus depending on teachers’ performance, in accordance with targets set externally.

The effectiveness of such external involvement depends largely on the establishment of a variety of new institutions, for example public administrations capable of managing appropriate incentive schemes for teaching careers, specialists in learning achievement systems, instructors for specialized courses and continuing teacher education, support systems for the use of new information and communication technologies, and specialists providing educational support to schools, for curriculum design and specific science education materials, for example.<sup>41</sup>

The establishment of these institutions in the public sector depends on two central factors, namely the administration’s capacity to establish and maintain agencies with technical staff (in education and other areas) and resources in order to build knowledge and draw up long-term policies, and such agencies’ resistance to being taken over by interest groups whom their action should, in principle, target.

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<sup>41</sup> *Many of these activities may be carried out by people trained in education, but are they often conducted by professionals from other areas, including economists, statisticians, psychologists, sociologists, specialists in information technologies, administrators and scientists, who produce materials and curricula in their specific areas of knowledge for schools.*

Moreover, as society at large is interested in the quality of education, families, social movements, private organizations and companies are participating more and more in school life. They often make a great contribution but they oblige schools and teachers to work with stakeholders who are very different from traditional players.

Such external involvement has been strongly questioned by many teachers' organizations and specialists who regard it as a deterioration of the professionalization of teaching and subordinating educational communities to technical or bureaucratic bodies, for it sometimes entails outsourcing to various private contractors, whose proposals may fall outside the context of schools' requirements or may be determined by specific economic interests.

### *Internal forces and dynamics within the profession*

In regard to the development of a professional culture, which is crucial to the soundness of education systems, efforts made to that end under public policies and by teachers, must be reviewed. Initiatives taken in initial training and continuing education and the founding of professional development bodies for the very educators who deserve remedial action have been described above, as have the limits of such initiatives, in scope and depth. Teachers' professional identities are conditioned by their often unsound training, by their diminished social status and by pressure for results that very often lead them to simplistic solutions or external justifications rather than enable them genuinely to take professional responsibility.

Surveys, such as PISA, confirm that teacher quality, which is measured against the three components of their institutionalization – knowledge, values and practices – continues to be one of the main correlates for good educational results (Korthagen 2004). The current portrayal of teaching as a decisive factor of quality and equitable education is a tremendous challenge for the profession and for those involved in strengthening it. The option of inclusive education designed to guarantee all pupils' right to education has raised society's expectations of teachers substantially.

Through curriculum reforms, attempts have been made and must be continued in order to incorporate advances in scientific and technological knowledge, but they must above all seek to develop critical thinking skills and lifelong learning. Such proposals pose new challenges for the teaching profession that are particularly complicated for most teachers in Latin America, who must teach pupils from family backgrounds with a low cultural capital. This situation therefore requires rigorous pedagogical knowledge of teaching content (Shulman, 1987) and mastery of educational methods to work in socio-culturally diverse situations.

As noted above, the efforts made in some countries to compile standards are of great importance, not only because they are benchmarks for professional development and performance assessment, but also because they define a professional identity based on what teachers must know and be able to do in general and, in particular, their respective areas of specialization. Such standards acquire full validity when they are drawn up and agreed by the profession itself, and then endorsed by the education system's governing

bodies. When set within the teaching profession – a key element for any profession – the standard becomes a tool for dialogue and interdisciplinary work required with other professions. Ingvarson (2009) argues that professional standards play an important role in the public's definition of its idea of the teaching profession and that a good standard for teachers is one that helps to change the perception of the general public regarding the teaching profession, by providing convincing evidence of the complexity of what a good teacher knows and is able to do at different levels of teaching and in different areas of the curriculum (Ingvarson, 2009).

The transition from a teaching profession with a purely vocational or technical vision to a professional dimension is necessarily long and complex. In addition to the qualitative advances required in initial and continuous training, public policies must strike a balance between trust in teachers' work and accountability for their performance, and between an increase in independence and monitoring and support so that such autonomy is used in the most appropriate manner for pupil learning, which is ultimately the decisive factor (MacBeath, 2012).

Various authors (Perrenoud, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Lessard, 2010; Danielson, 2011; MacBeath, 2012) agree that teacher professionalism, built and upheld by teachers, must be strengthened. It should cover skills and the conditions required to put them into practice in crucial areas such as ability to design, execute and evaluate good teaching practices through mastery of content and content teaching methods; autonomy and professional responsibility; capacity to innovate methodologically, take relevant initiatives and sound pedagogical decisions; skills for designing, selecting and adapting suitable educational materials; capacity for teamwork; acceptance of internal and external assessment results as vital information for the improvement of teaching and learning; ongoing professional development efforts; ability to reflect on and assess one's own practices and to accept performance assessments in order to improve; and capacity to have fruitful dialogue with other stakeholders including colleagues, school heads, supervisors, other professionals and workers, parents, pupils and the community in general.

Adopting a forward-looking approach, the teaching profession must take on board new forms of learning by children and young people in non-school settings. Rather than diminishing teachers' responsibility, these new scenarios would enable teachers to play a more challenging role as guides to in-depth learning (MacBeath, 2012).

Lastly, a key aspect of the process of strengthening the profession is teachers' organizations' capacity to set standards on ethics and professional performance to guide and regulate their work; that standard-setting capacity, of which there has been little evidence in the region, should be the focus of future work and development. The most important development in that regard has been the decisive participation of teachers' unions in setting standards for the profession in some OECD countries (Ingvarson, 2009).

# II

PART II:

## Criteria and guidelines for teacher-policy formulation



## Part II: *Criteria and guidelines for teacher-policy formulation*

The criteria and guidelines below are based on the state of the art of teacher policies contained in the first part of this report, some proposals made by experts<sup>42</sup> convened under the OREALC/UNESCO Regional Strategic Project on Teachers for Latin America and the Caribbean and the results of discussions within the national groups of countries that make up the regional network for the project.

The document is structured around the four areas analysed in state of the art: initial teacher training, continuing training, teaching careers and teacher-policy institutions and processes. For each of the four areas mentioned, a set of general statements is made which, in turn, are developed into more specific guidelines.

It must be repeated that none of the proposals will yield effective results if implemented in isolation. For example, in regard to initial teacher training, it is proposed that the academic quality of training programmes be improved to attract good applicants, but this will not be sustainable if students and teaching-career applicants see no prospect in their future profession of gaining recognition for their work and of opportunities for genuine professional development.

Similarly, the goal of transforming and improving teachers' practices with emphasis on pupils' learning through continuing education must be closely linked to sound initial training and to working conditions in school settings that facilitate the teacher's tasks.

Furthermore, structural improvement to teaching careers to make them more attractive requires quality initial training, appropriate continuing education opportunities and political agreements with teachers' unions and other social stakeholders if it is to be effective and stable.

Moreover, all teacher-policy activities must be properly designed and implemented by strong, competent institutions.

The challenge of suggesting specific teacher policy guidelines has been taken up on the understanding that some proposals will be more relevant to some countries than to others and that those wishing to adopt them, may generally do so over differing timescales and/or make adjustments appropriate to each national context. In all countries, this requires great efforts to analyse and adapt the proposals, duly taking the characteristics of the country's political, social and economic system and cultural identities into account.

The foregoing is of crucial importance, since application of the same policies to dissimilar contexts is a recipe for mistakes and frustration over national public policies.

<sup>42</sup> Beatrice Ávalos, Silvia Ortega, Mariano Palamidessi, Simón Schwartzman and Denise Vaillant.

## I Initial-training guidelines

The State of the Art shows that, with some exceptions, initial teacher training in the region has moved towards higher and tertiary education in recent decades. Teaching degree courses vary in length from three to five years. Some countries have a surplus of teachers, while others have a shortage – in particular for posts in rural areas, work with indigenous groups and in science. Significant weaknesses have been identified in regard to basic skills required for admission to teaching degree courses and, worse yet, in regard to the quality of teacher training. This is exemplified by the lack of specialization options for those training in basic education, and the lack of practical training in the skills required to work effectively under the demanding conditions created by the education-for-all challenge, which affects all levels of education. Although there is a general lack of public teacher-training regulations, some countries have recently introduced accreditation systems, course completion examinations and requirements for admission to the teaching profession, and have set standards and guidelines that serve the same purposes as previously and can be used by training institutions as guidance for curricula and assessments.

The critical initial teacher-training issues identified in the state of the art are therefore: (a) low level of educational attainment of entrants to teacher studies; (b) poor quality of training programmes, including the situation of trainers and the prevalence of school-based approaches; (c) generalist training without specialization for working with disadvantaged social groups; and (d) insufficient regulation of the quality of training courses owing to a lack of standards and course-completion assessments.

Criteria and guidelines below address these critical initial teaching-training policy issues and practices in the countries of the region.

### ➤ 1. Promote the entry of better applicants into teaching by raising teacher-training admission requirements<sup>43</sup>.

*A crucial problem that must be addressed is that education policies and teacher training institutions target applicants who meet the minimum acceptable requirements for becoming good educators. In that connection, it must be borne in mind that such minima must apply nationally and so must be set and applied by the State. Success in finding good applicants certainly requires attractive teaching careers and salaries similar to those in other professions, which are discussed in section III of Part II. The following guidelines are proposed to achieve progress to that end.*

<sup>43</sup> The Argentine consultation group has called this general guideline into question on the grounds that “the State may not ignore the educational attainment of young people who have the required academic qualifications, for it is under an obligation to find solutions that protect the right to education if those results fail to meet the expectations of the training system”. Argentina’s state of the art report. Buenos Aires, 20 February, 2011, p.10.

- a) Raise the selection requirements for admission to initial teacher training, taking into account criteria such as basic reading and writing skills, mathematical reasoning, problem-solving, interpersonal communication skills and motivation for learning and teaching.
- b) Consider academic performance at secondary school, the scores obtained in national higher-education admission examinations, in applicable countries, and vocational aspects in addition to introducing admission procedures designed to select applicants who have the required characteristics to perform well as teachers. These procedures may include admission examinations and relevant instruments for the assessment of personal skills, such as candidate interviews.
- c) In the drive to improve the quality of teacher-training entrants, it is important not to disregard means of drawing applications from indigenous students, whose cultures form part of each country's cultural heritage.
- d) It is also important to avoid bias that could make teacher training elitist or result in any form of discrimination against students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Consideration should therefore be given to the experience of universities that select students who obtain the best secondary school results, regardless of their average performance (which may be low), since the evidence shows that students who perform best in their group tend to achieve good academic results during initial teacher-training.
- e) To ensure that students from indigenous groups and from low socio-economic backgrounds do not drop out, it is recommended that higher education institutions introduce special support programmes providing basic skills, foundation courses, workshops and tutoring.

In Latin America, some systems are introducing more demanding initial-teacher-training admission requirements. Peru has raised the minimum examination score for admission to tertiary teacher training institutes. Mexico will provide additional funding to teacher-training colleges that regulate and improve teacher-training admission requirements. Chile has introduced scholarships for applicants who score good marks in the university selection test and, at the same time, has linked such scholarships to a rise in teacher-training admission requirements.

Interesting experiments have emerged in countries involving the upgrading of the basic skills of students who have weaknesses attributable to their previous education and to their cultural heritage. Of special note is a foundation programme established in Peru for courses of study in intercultural bilingual education.

## ➤ 2. Improve the quality of teacher training programmes, particularly curriculum content, training strategies, the assessment of learning outcomes and teacher quality

*Progress towards quality teacher training requires full commitment on the part of two key players, namely the institution in charge of education policies and the training institutions, whether public or private, and applying the various levels of regulation that exist in different countries. The quality of training processes plays an important role in the performance of future teachers. The following guidelines are suggested to that end.*

- a) Develop standards on what a teacher must know and be able to do, agreed by the main stakeholders (education ministries, training institutions and representative bodies of the teaching profession). These standards should guide the development of training curricular content (knowledge, skills and aptitudes) and the evaluation of what all future teachers must successfully learn before being certified to teach. These standards must cover knowledge of school subjects in line with teaching procedures and interactive teaching and must integrate the social function of education.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, consideration should be given to specializations consistent with each level and mode of delivery of the education system. Since these standards are directive, training institutions may develop distinct academic paths so that they can be attained by future teachers.
- b) Promote policies designed to improve the quality of teaching instructors by taking into account selection criteria and academic development activities to secure staff highly qualified in terms of knowledge and skills, with recent and relevant teaching experience in educational institutions. It is therefore recommended that academics be encouraged to complete quality postgraduate degrees, whether at home or abroad.
- c) Maintain active and permanent links between training institutions and schools, which are crucial to practical training, by incorporating high-quality, well-designed, clearly focused, progressive and intense career-long practical stints into initial teaching training. Such practicums should be supervised by tutoring or mentoring teachers from both the training institution and the school so that future teachers can integrate practical knowledge into the theory learnt as part of their academic training. Knowledge acquired through practice will thus be input for academic situations, which should, in turn, guide new practical work situations. This link between theory and practice contains the building blocks for good initial training in skills required for teaching. An issue that must be resolved is the time dedicated by teachers and the recognition given to classroom teachers who guide the practicums as tutors.

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<sup>44</sup> In this context, a "standard" is understood as to be an unequivocal definition of what a teacher must know and know how to do in order to generate learning for all of the pupils; an unequivocal definition of how achievement of knowing and knowing how will be measured or sampled; and an unequivocal definition of what will be the minimum standard (level) of performance below which a person will not be considered fit to work as a teacher (CEPPE, 2009).

- d)* Initial training programmes must aim to build pedagogical knowledge by building teachers' capacities to describe, conduct self-evaluation, reflect on their own practices, the use of diverse methodologies (including the use of ICTs in education) that bring together theory and practice, and their ability to share with and learn from colleagues, which is the basis for their growth as well as that of the professional teams working under the concept of learning communities.
- e)* Develop future teachers' skills to foster classroom and school environments conducive to pupils' socio-affective development and learning, incorporate ethics, gender perspectives, civic education and emotional development.
- f)* Include the cultural changes that affect working with children and young people in the twenty-first century, namely globalization, digital networks for social interaction, new skills required for the labour market and so forth.
- g)* Train teacher for integration into socially diverse contexts in order to address and help to eliminate inequality in the classroom, by developing skills to manage pupil diversity and by offering significant learning opportunities to all pupils, according to their own learning characteristics and social and physical conditions. It is particularly important to provide tools for working with children and young people who have special learning needs and for interacting with specialized staff who assist in the classroom, in accordance with current advances in inclusive education. Future teachers must thus acquire skills to work with families and other stakeholders on cross-cutting issues relating to children's and young people's education.
- h)* Integrate research into initial teacher-training institutions in order to produce knowledge on key aspects of teacher training, teaching processes and educational work with pupils based on practical experience. Similarly, encourage joint studies with various training institutions.
- i)* Develop basic skills-building programmes in the areas of oral and written communication, mathematical reasoning and foreign languages, especially for students in greatest need of such attention because of weaknesses in their previous education.
- j)* Training institutions involved in both initial and continuous training, must link both facets of their work so that initial training can gain from links with practising teachers, while continuing education can enhance the institution's academic capacity. This effort must rest on recognition of the difficulty entailed in breaking the strong institutional inertia that separates the two spheres and clearly wastes training potential.

Some countries in the region have formulated or are formulating policies containing guidelines to improve initial teacher training.

Under a project designed to improve initial teacher training, Argentina's National Teacher Training Institute, in collaboration with the University Policy Secretariat and specialized teachers from universities and training institutes, has drawn up initial-training guidelines for the main subjects taught in secondary schools. The guidelines are structured to cover students' progress in completing their training and the first few years of work as teachers. Training institutions must undertake to ensure that their curriculum is designed to incorporate all consensus-based knowledge set out in the guidelines.

In 2012, the Chilean Ministry of Education introduced pedagogical and subject-specific standards for the training of primary- and secondary-school teachers in such subjects as languages, mathematics, natural science and social science, and standards for teacher training in early-childhood (preschool) education.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, the Caribbean Council for Teaching and Teacher Education has drawn up general standards for initial training, on which Member States are being consulted.

In Brazil, the 2009 national teacher-training policy provides for support for the conduct of training programmes, linkages between higher education institutions and the school network and participation by future teachers in learning-how-to-teach activities in schools.

### ➤ 3. Provide relevant quality teacher training to enhance classroom work with disadvantaged social groups

*Initial teacher training tends to be pitched at a homogeneous middle-class population instead of acknowledging socio-cultural heterogeneity and school attendance by social groups traditionally marginalized from education. The following guidelines address this situation.*

- a) Train all future teachers to work in diverse and complex contexts with pupils who have different cultural backgrounds and life paths. Professional values and open attitudes to the challenges that will arise must be developed and teachers must

be trained in the skills required for successful learning in contexts of poverty and vulnerability.

- b)** Train teachers for work in rural and indigenous areas and build their ability to recognize and appreciate the sociocultural characteristics of specific pupil populations and to achieve learning at levels set by the appropriate curriculum. It is desirable to draw on intercultural bilingual education experiments validated in the region in developing relevant curricula and teaching activities to meet these groups' learning requirements. In line with the context of each geographical area, it is recommended that future teachers be trained to work in multigrade rural schools.
- c)** Organize an objective and transparent system of scholarships and incentives to open up access to specific training programmes in "gap" areas such as intercultural bilingual education and teaching in rural areas, depending on the various national and regional situations.
- d)** Ensure, through the admission and/or training of indigenous teachers, a high level of knowledge of the local indigenous language.

In Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru, there are explicit policies on intercultural education and specialized institutions train teachers to work in this area. In Peru, for example, the intercultural bilingual education option is offered in 20 tertiary-level teacher training institutions, many of which are in a precarious situation, however, owing to recent standards that restrict admissions.

Guatemala has 21 official intercultural bilingual normal schools. A national curriculum database on intercultural bilingual teacher training in indigenous languages and Spanish has been operational in the Ministry of Education's intercultural bilingual normal schools since 2006.

#### ➤ 4. Provide appropriate regulatory systems on the quality of teacher training programmes and their graduates

*If initial teacher training is not regulated appropriately, there is no guarantee that teachers will be properly trained for the education system and its schools. The following guidelines can help to strengthen the State's role in rising to this challenge.*

- a)** Establish an accreditation system for public and private teacher-training institutions to assess the institutions and their programmes in accordance with agreed public standards on the quality of the curriculum offered and its alignment

with schools' curricular requirements, teachers' academic level and strengths, the implementation of practices and their integration into the entire training process, the rigour of student assessment at the beginning, during and at the end of teacher training, the results obtained by graduating students, training institutions' capacities for research on teaching and learning, and the quality of infrastructure, libraries, information and communication technological resources and other factors.

- b)** Ensure that every public or private initial teacher-training institution is periodically assessed under a transparent accreditation mechanism. Institutions must make commitments to remedy the detected weaknesses, and to do so within a specific time frame.
- c)** Support institutions that fall short of the minimum standards required to obtain accreditation. If, despite such support, they do not improve, they must close down or merge with other institutions that are accredited. Otherwise, public trust in the institution and in its role to train professionals on whom the education of many generations of schoolchildren depends would be breached.
- d)** Set up mechanisms to regulate the opening of new teaching programmes on the basis of their academic quality and the requirements of the school system (number of teachers required per educational level, specializations, etc.).
- e)** Establish comprehensive systems to assess future teachers, both throughout and at the end of teacher training, by using procedures that yield evidence of knowledge and practices, such as portfolios. Countries should analyse the option of establishing graduation examinations centred on knowledge and skills that are set in nationally or regionally (state, province, etc.) and on agreed standards, as applicable. Such assessments can provide training institutions with valuable information for reviewing their curricula and practices in the light of results obtained by their own graduates and take responsibility for students who do not attain the required levels.
- f)** Create conditions for institutions and their staff to acquire the requisite capacities to design and introduce teacher training opportunities at the new required level. It is of crucial importance to strike a balance between, on the one hand, pressure for accountability through examinations, accreditation and new standards and, on the other hand, support through institution-building policies, capacity building and investments to create institutional conditions conducive to change and to allow adequate time for the necessary changes. It is also vital to support training institutions to play their appropriate role in the context of each zone or region.
- g)** Authorize people who have not undergone the required pedagogical training to teach in countries facing a shortage of qualified teachers in specific geographical

and/or subject areas (science, arts, technical and vocational subjects, foreign languages, etc.). Qualification programmes for such people must be regulated to ensure that their capacity to provide quality education is certified. Such teacher training must be entrusted to accredited institutions, which must take these people's academic backgrounds and their teaching experience into account and ensure that the teachers trained attain sufficient command of the skills enshrined in initial teacher training standards.

In Mexico, examinations at the beginning and end of initial teacher training are designed and administered nationally by a specialized external body (CENEVAL). Prior authorization or accreditation to run teacher training programmes is required in Colombia. Guidelines or curricular frameworks for the training of all primary- and some secondary-school teachers are in force in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru.

In terms of regulations on the certification of future teachers who have graduated from teacher training institutions, several countries have already vested such powers and are, moreover, setting requirements for the entry into teaching careers, such as various means of ascertaining applicants' knowledge and teaching skills. Colombia's regulations on entry into teaching careers provide for an assessment of aptitudes, skills, experience and fitness to teach, and one year's probation in the education system. Mexico holds an entry examination for aspiring teachers. In Chile, teacher training institutions may require an examination on knowledge of subjects and teaching methodology. In Central America, the case of El Salvador is noteworthy in that it requires future teachers to pass an Evaluation of Academic and Pedagogical Skills (ECAP) test.

## ***Summary of guidelines on initial teacher training***

- 1. Promote the entry of better candidates into teaching by raising teacher-training admission requirements.*
- 2. Improve the quality of teacher training programmes, particularly curriculum content, training strategies, the assessment of learning outcomes and teacher quality.*
- 3. Provide relevant quality teacher training to enhance classroom work with disadvantaged social groups.*
- 4. Provide appropriate regulatory systems on the quality of teacher training programmes and their graduates.*

## II Guidelines on continuing training

As to continuing training, the state of the art review of policies implemented shows that the provision of public programmes is wide ranging and varied in terms of content, format and methodology. However, training is blighted by the lack of a systematic approach and fails to meet the requirements of all teachers, including those in greatest need of professional development. Additionally, adequate quality and impact standards are not observed. Similarly, the conclusion drawn from the analysis of curriculum and pedagogical models is that, despite their number and apparent diversity, there is little specialization in continuing training programmes and theory and overviews predominate. In several countries of the region there is currently a trend towards the promotion of school-based training policies, in which groups of teachers play a key role and in which reflection, analysis and learning are predicated on practice.

The State of the Art highlights the following critical issues: (a) lack of relevance and linkage in continuing education; (b) low impact of activities undertaken; (c) disregard of teacher diversity; (d) unregulated increase in training provision; (e) little regard for actual school conditions and collaborative learning; (f) difficulties in regulating and providing relevant postgraduate courses.

Guidelines and criteria are provided below to address these critical continuing teacher-training issues in the countries of the region.

### ➤ 1. Guarantee teachers' right to relevant and meaningful life-long training with emphasis on holistic education and pupils' learning achievement

*Education systems require all teachers to have access to professional learning opportunities in order to update their skills and meet the new challenges of education geared to learning achievement by all students. Teachers' continuing education should not be contingent on potential availability or an individual choice. It behoves the State to provide favourable conditions for professional development, which is a decisive factor in improving education quality. The following guidelines are designed to address these challenges.*

- a) Achieve progress in drawing up, setting, agreeing and validating frameworks for good teaching and professional performance standards geared to pupils' education and learning outcomes. Such frameworks should serve as benchmarks

for teachers' professional development and performance assessments. The existence of standards will contribute decisively to an improved definition of the provision of continuing education based not only on the vision and capacities of its providers, but also on the integration of better practices, agreed and enshrined in standards, to meet the actual needs of schools and teachers in their specific contexts.

- b)** Take into account the results of teacher performance assessments, whether national and standardized or conducted at the school level, in order to identify the priority needs of educators in specific school contexts.
- c)** Focus teacher professional development on the needs of schools' projects, by promoting as a permanent practice the analysis of teachers' training requirements through the conduct of reflexive exercises. This requires knowledge of needs and a diversification of the training available to include both the development of general professional skills such as autonomy, self-training, self-regulation, commitment, capacity for teamwork and professional responsibility, and mastery of specific teaching methods. To this end, harmonious efforts by the school head, supervisors and educational technical support managers are of the essence.<sup>45</sup>
- d)** Provide specialized support for intercultural bilingual education teachers to boost knowledge of indigenous languages and cultures and to ensure proper sociolinguistic teacher training from an intercultural standpoint.
- e)** Provide teachers with tools and strategies to improve classroom discipline through coordination with school heads and families in order to foster an environment of school and classroom coexistence.
- f)** Establish incentives and create conditions conducive to teachers' participation in training activities. Such incentives, which may take the form of postgraduate scholarships and internships or resources for school activities, must target important and relevant programmes. According to international experience and the views of school heads and teachers, time allocation within the working day is one of the most crucial conditions that must be addressed. Time must be organized to have no adverse effect on pupil learning achievement while allowing teachers to reflect on their practices, work in teams, conduct research, peruse the professional literature and participate in refresher and training activities. Well-managed time allocation is a decisive factor, in particular in linking training to school settings.

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<sup>45</sup> Special support is required for basic education subjects such as mathematics, natural science and foreign languages.

Studies attest to the achievement of some very promising continuing education experiments including the pedagogical expedition and micro-centres in Colombia, the teaching centres in Mexico, support for schoolteachers in the English-speaking Caribbean, the National Teacher Training Plan (PLANCAD) in Peru, community workshops and national internships in Chile, local-authority professional development projects that offer school-oriented modules in Argentina, the “Letter and Life” programme in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and the Educators’ Professional Development Programme in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. In many countries, despite the discontinuity of institutional support, teacher networks are active in topics such as the teaching of reading, mathematics and science, use of technology in the classroom and school coexistence.

## ➤ 2. Guarantee that continued training has a significant impact on teachers’ practices and pupils’ learning achievement

*It is generally perceived, both in the teaching world and among experts, that the continuing education and training activities traditionally conducted through courses and workshops, which have no bearing on schools’ needs and in which teachers play the role of passive learners, do not have a sufficient impact on teachers’ practices and therefore do not help to improve pupils’ learning achievement. This situation requires efforts as set out in the following guidelines.*

- a) Focus on connecting training activities with classroom work. The challenge of ensuring that all pupils learn and that their diversity is duly taken into account, is increasingly complex. As a result, teachers request strong support to carry out their task successfully. All continuing education classroom work must be connected with the gathering of practice-generated experiential data and knowledge, which are fundamental methodological components.
- b) The tendency to consider attendance as the only requirement for certification must be superseded by assessments of actual learning achievements and the ability to turn new knowledge into improved teaching practices geared to pupils’ learning achievement. Certification must attest to sound professional learning and not merely to participation in training activities. Monitoring and observation of classroom teaching are important tools to gauge the effectiveness of training activities.
- c) Foster the development of learning communities through workshops at one school or among schools, thus creating networks of teachers, by similar subjects

or by educational level, who can reflect together on their experience of teaching while seeking new strategies, and can thus boost discussion on teaching practices. It is vital to move towards a “clinical discussion” model that encourages professional growth through teamwork in a cycle consisting of observation, assessment, reflection and actual teaching. Teachers’ group learning contributes to the production of teacher-related knowledge that includes practical teacher-generated know-how that should be disseminated among teaching communities to enrich their practices.<sup>46</sup>

- d)** Support teaching teams by building capacities for interdisciplinary and intersectoral work that addresses pupils’ complex personal and social situations that do not fall strictly within the sphere of education. This in turn requires the development of pastoral care in schools to handle these situations in an intersectoral manner.
- e)** Priority must be given to the coverage of continuing education programmes so that they reach a considerable proportion of the teaching staff at differing times. If the goal is genuinely to improve teachers’ capacities, sufficient resources must be invested in continuing education. The State must decide what type of continuing education is crucial to education policy formulation and provide it free of charge. Political authorities should therefore set priorities based on the lines of emphasis in the national curriculum, curriculum reforms and/or learners’ or teachers’ performance assessment results. The combination of these factors will make it possible to identify more clearly those teachers who have major weaknesses and thematic areas that require more support. Geographical sectors or areas where teachers are less well trained and have greater weaknesses must be identified and be given priority.
- f)** Improve substantially the conditions required for teachers to participate properly in continuing education activities, both within and outside the school, and provide time slots for such activities during the working day or for sabbatical periods for those attending postgraduate courses.
- g)** Link continuing education to incentives for teacher advancement based on the quality of work as measured in performance assessments.
- h)** Consider pupils’ learning achievement results in order to identify needs and determine the specific lines of emphasis of continuing education, while avoiding a narrowing of training objectives.
- i)** Promote the use of new technologies in professional development activities in order to reach a larger number of teachers and isolated places, facilitate the formation of professional networks, encourage classroom use of ICTs and lower costs.
- j)** Foster the conduct of experimentation, monitoring and experience-sharing activities in the countries of the region in order to build knowledge about matters that effectively help to strengthen the teaching profession and improve learning outcomes.

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<sup>46</sup> Interesting examples, including “lesson study” methodology, demonstration classes in Japan and the Boston experiment on shared planning time, have been described in Barber and Mourshed, 2007.

The guiding principles on teacher-training policies adopted by the MERCOSUR Working Group on Teacher Training includes “recognition of teachers as knowledge producers and prime movers in their professional development and training processes”. This outlook is at the heart of teacher situated learning and peer learning strategies.

### ➤ 3. Develop career paths that distinguish the various teaching-career stages

*The needs of novice teachers differ from those of teachers who are at the professional consolidation stage, whose needs differ from those of highly experienced teachers. The following guidelines are made in response to this observation.*

Professional development paths that distinguish distinct stages in working life, from novice teachers to more experienced teachers who have demonstrated outstanding performance, must be designed. To this end, an in-depth analysis of the configuration patterns of groups of teachers is required in order to plan professional development paths more accurately. Continuing education must not be understood in a merely remedial sense, but rather as an essential building block of a career that spans distinct development timescales and places.

- a) Support new teachers on entry into the profession. At the initial stage, teachers require strong support to facilitate their professional induction into specific school contexts (recognition of school dynamics, projects and programmes, etc.). In such contexts, they take up responsibilities for which they frequently do not feel prepared and they often face a school culture that is resistant to innovative practices. It is therefore desirable to provide intensive tutoring or mentorships involving, among other activities, classroom observation and individual and group discussion of practices. Experience of teacher induction in developed countries and some recent examples in the region merit analysis and, where possible, emulation. New teachers need special support because they are more likely to leave the profession. While this approach is new in the region and requires high institutional capacities and efforts from practising teachers, it must be initiated so that teacher-induction programmes will be operational in the medium term, providing all possible feedback to training institutions.
- b) In situations in which novice teachers cannot be mentored, alternative counselling and early professional development programmes may be arranged under the responsibility of the educational institution’s managers and technical team, possibly supported by specialized academic institutions.

- c) Professionally more experienced teachers require supervision for refresher training, innovation and the use of technologies, and support in the event of professional burnout.
- d) Assign teachers who have attained high levels of professional development as mentors or advisers to support their peers, particularly novice teachers, on entry into teaching. To perform this task more effectively, support from specialized academic institutions would be desirable in order to develop mentoring and peer learning skills.
- e) Consider, within continuing education, the needs of teachers performing various functions, as well as those of school heads, coordinators and educational supervisors.

In Argentina, a tutoring programme for new teachers is being conducted through the National Teacher Training Institute. In Chile, mentors have been trained through the Teachers of Teachers Network and several universities, to support novice teachers. In the state of Paraná, Brazil, expert teachers are trained under the Education Development Programme to oversee the work of teachers' networks for periods of two years.

#### ➤ 4. Implement mechanisms to regulate the provision of continued training and assure quality and relevance

*Owing to the poor quality and relevance of continuing education, effective regulation mechanisms must be enforced by public entities. The following guidelines aim to meet this need.*

- a) Make progress in the consolidation of public training and professional development institutions capable of coordinating bodies involved in continuing education at the various levels of the education system. Education systems administered through the various tiers of government require solid institutions that can both provide indispensable education-policy implementation programmes and regulate the training provided by the wide range of public and private training organizations.
- b) Draw up national, regional, state or provincial teachers professional development plans that are consistent with the priorities of education policies and are based on accurate appraisal of teachers' requirements in the light of their pupils' learning needs.

- c) Introduce effective quality assurance mechanisms in the form of accreditation or certification systems that have a guaranteed capacity to contribute genuinely to professional development. Evaluation criteria and indicators must therefore be set for the various programmes to ensure close monitoring within reasonable time frames.
- d) Build the capacities of agencies that provide continuing education. Providers must be familiar with the school system and with teachers' realities and working conditions and must show respect for the profession. If the institutions that provide training programmes do not comply adequately with requirements and continue to reproduce traditional teaching methodologies that do not contribute to reflection or critical knowledge acquisition, they will not meet teachers' or the school system's requirements.

Teacher professional development is promoted in Argentina through the National Teacher Training Institute, a decentralized body in charge of public teacher-training policies throughout the country. Its tasks include designing programmes, reaching agreements and promoting systems that cover teachers from their entry into the profession and throughout their careers, in order to improve teaching practice, innovation and enquiry. The various stakeholders are required to participate in its regulatory framework.

In Brazil, the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), in collaboration with public higher education institutions and with State and municipal education authorities, provides public continuous education, specialization, master's and doctorate programmes free of charge and in decentralized units.

## ➤ 5. Promote collaborative learning in schools

*Owing to the failure to take the school contexts in which teachers work into consideration, the effectiveness of training activities is limited and teachers lose motivation, which leads to passivity that is detrimental to professional learning. The following guidelines are designed to address this situation.*

- a) Help the school to become a learning community that is committed to its stakeholders. In order to have a positive effect on learning outcomes, emphasis must be placed on the educational unit and the entire teaching team. In this regard, the main challenge is to turn schools into learning communities in which not only pupils, but all members, including teachers, learn. After identifying their

needs, these communities develop relevant refresher and training activities to remove barriers to pupils' learning.

- b)** Promote the active role of school heads and technical teams so that they drive and spearhead professional development and provide suitable organization of teachers' work in accordance with institutional objectives and goals. It is similarly important for technical supervisors in each school district to support managerial leadership of teachers' professional development.
- c)** Create conditions in the educational institution for teachers to engage in collaborative activities, thus transcending isolated classroom work. Teacher professional development cannot be approached in isolation from each school's specific needs. Individual teacher training does not suffice if continuous learning opportunities are not available in educational centres. The foregoing is subsumed under the concept of "situated learning", in which professional development, whether physically within or outside the school, is regarded as being constantly directed at solving the problems teachers face daily in working with all pupils to achieve the expected learning outcomes.
- d)** Integrate, into the continuing education system, school-based professional development with a strong emphasis on classroom monitoring and pedagogical support as part of the options available at accredited academic institutions, thus meeting education systems', schools' and teachers' needs.

## ➤ 6. Regulate postgraduate courses to be relevant

The recent trend in teaching demand towards postgraduate programmes in various countries in the region raises new policy challenges. The following guidelines can contribute to the response to these challenges.

- a)** Complement the criteria for quality assurance in postgraduate courses in education, in particular master's degrees, by adding new criteria to boost the relevance and potential impact on teaching practices.
- b)** Grant scholarships to teachers so that they may study specific subjects deemed underrepresented by the State. Such incentives must be granted transparently and based on teachers' merits and on the needs of their educational centres, especially when the latter serve very disadvantaged pupil populations.

## ***Summary of guidelines on continuing education***

- 1.** *Guarantee teachers' right to relevant and meaningful life-long training, with emphasis on holistic education and pupils' learning achievements.*
- 2.** *Guarantee that continued training has a significant impact on teachers' practices and pupils' learning achievements.*
- 3.** *Develop career paths that distinguish the various teaching-career stages.*
- 4.** *Implement mechanisms to regulate the provision of continued training and assure quality and relevance.*
- 5.** *Promote collaborative learning in schools.*
- 6.** *Regulate postgraduate courses to be relevant.*

### III Teaching career guidelines

In regard to teaching careers, a vertical and a horizontal form of promotion has been identified in the state of the art. With the former, classroom teaching has to be relinquished in favour of other responsibilities (managerial, specialist or supervisory roles) as a prerequisite for promotion. With the latter, less common, form, there are opportunities for promotion and professional development without the need to cease practising in the classroom. The criteria on which career progression decisions have traditionally been based in the region are the individual's length of service and completion of advanced training or postgraduate courses, with professional performance being much less of a factor. In addition to analysing the importance of an attractive career structure, the state of the art addresses issues such as working conditions, pay and incentives and teacher performance assessment.

The following critical teacher career issues have been highlighted in the state of the art: (a) the difficulty of attracting and retaining good teachers; (b) career structures that ignore phases of teaching; (c) dissociation between the career structure and professional development; (d) tension between common salary structures and diversified pay; (e) difficulty in building consensus on teachers' performance appraisals.

Guidelines or criteria for addressing these critical issues associated with teaching career structures and working conditions in the region's countries are outlined below.

#### ➤ 1. Design and implement careers in such a way that they strengthen the teaching profession and attract good candidates

*Teaching careers ought to be designed around a policy of genuine recognition for teaching work, manifested in adequate pay that improves teachers' living and working conditions, stimulates the profession and encourages young people with the right attitudes to enter it and good teachers to remain. If the aim is to enhance the teaching profession, it is important for the career structure to encompass all teachers in both the public and private sectors, notwithstanding that, in accordance with each country's legal framework, some aspects of the career structure might be stipulated as applying exclusively to the public sector.*

*The teaching career structure should give particular encouragement to those who opt to stay in the classroom, with provision for bonuses, professional recognition and incentives as required to encourage this. Of course, there must be opportunities to move into managerial or specialist roles, given their strategic importance to education quality and the legitimate aspirations of some teachers, always with the option of returning to the classroom. However, it is not advisable for this to be the only pathway to promotion in the profession. The following guidelines must therefore be taken into consideration.*

- a) Improve teachers' career prospects (pay, working conditions and professional status) and construct a narrative around the profession that is consistent with its strategic role in today's society, in order to change the way in which it is perceived in the collective imaginary. The role of the social communication media is crucial here. It is important for policies to convey trust in teachers on the part of society and the political system. This will help to attract better candidates to the teaching profession, and it will also be possible to heighten the professional expectations of educators and their responsibility for learning outcomes.
- b) Design promotion pathways within the profession that encourage teachers to remain in the classroom. A teaching career should become an attractive option for young people with good educational results who have a vocation for direct classroom teaching.
- c) Generate an appropriate pay and incentive structure. The aspiration must be to have highly competent professionals, and average pay should thus rise gradually towards levels commensurate with this. The trend in the profession should be towards parity between teachers' salaries and those of other similarly educated professionals. If the aim is to attract secondary school students with good prospects into teaching, it is indispensable for them to perceive that starting salaries are decent and that there is real scope for improvement after five to ten years in the profession.
- d) Foster and provide recognition for significant professional achievements by teachers such as pupils' learning achievements, management of innovative projects for their schools, acceptance of coaching or mentoring roles in support of inexperienced teachers, leadership of or participation in professional development activities with peers, the running of extracurricular programmes with students or projects with parents and access to grants to attend postgraduate or continuing education courses. Other crucial factors include the climate of interpersonal relationships, the existence of recognition, support and encouragement for professional development and support and guidance from the school authorities. A lack of such opportunities is one of the main factors causing considerable numbers of talented young teachers to leave the profession early.
- e) Improve teachers' working environment and welfare by providing decent, safe working conditions that are conducive to good performance: an appropriate number of pupils per teacher; specialized pedagogical support; opportunities to participate in collegiate decision-making bodies and institutional projects; provision of teaching materials, textbooks and ICTs; and appropriate infrastructure and equipment for teaching work.
- f) Ensure an adequate number of hours of professional work outside the classroom in the working day, involving activities such as planning, appraisal, dealing with pupils and parents, study, pedagogic reflection and teamwork. It is also important for progress to be made towards centring teachers' working day on a single school.

- g)** Promote dialogue and collaboration between ministries and teachers' unions in discussions on the design of teaching careers.

The experiences of Mexico, Colombia and Peru are consistent with the trend towards new career models characterized by the introduction of so-called horizontal promotion mechanisms as opposed to traditional vertical promotion. The teaching career structure in Mexico was reformed in May 2011. It involves a system of horizontal promotion that teachers participate in on a voluntary, individual basis; they have the option to participate and obtain promotion if they meet the requirements set. The current reform was the outcome of joint efforts by the Department of Public Education and the National Union of Education Workers (Agreement on Reform of the General Framework of the National Teaching Career Programme, 2011).

An experience that repays analysis is the effort being made in Trinidad and Tobago to make working conditions safer under its Occupational Health and Safety Act. This is one of a range of goals that the country's Ministry of Education has set itself for the teaching profession: participation in decision-making; time for planning work; a career structure with clear opportunities for promotion; recognition for outstanding performance; fair pay; benefits for retiring teachers; and safe and healthy working environments.

## ➤ 2. Provide recognition in the career structure for different stages of teacher development and skill

*In Latin America, few career structures distinguish between novice, competent and expert classroom teachers; this is undoubtedly a serious deficiency and is at the root of a "flight from the classroom" by good teachers as they progress in their careers. The key innovation needed to deal with this long-standing situation is to differentiate between categories of classroom teachers by their progress in acquiring capabilities, inevitably as a result of greater experience and training. The following guidelines have been proposed to help to deal with this challenge.*

- a)** Provide for a period of supervision or induction for new teachers as part of the career structure, as mentioned in section II(3)(a) and (b) (Continuing Training).
- b)** Consider a reduction in classroom hours with no loss of pay during teachers' first year of employment so that they can take part in training activities with coaching or mentoring support and engage in reflection on their working practices to follow on from their initial training, with this set of activities constituting the induction period.

- c) Although induction is essentially formative, it is important to consider the possibility of instituting it as a period of probation character too, so that it is used to assess performance before a permanent post is offered. This could be particularly advisable for education systems in which initial teacher training is less highly regulated. In such cases, new teachers will need to demonstrate their teaching abilities, as specified and observable in a set of standards. For those who do not meet the standards by the end of the probation period but have the potential to attain them over a longer period, the probation and induction stage should be extended; if they are not capable of attaining the required standards at the end of this period, they should cease to work in the classroom. New teachers should be approved for a permanent post only when they meet the standards.
- d) Create conditions for teachers who have greater experience and attain high levels of performance to assist in specialized tasks and support less highly experienced teachers, albeit without altogether discontinuing classroom teaching. Those professionals who achieve expert status within the career structure must be sufficiently free to work with new teachers. They must also attend professional development courses so that they can be trained for this function and be remunerated accordingly.
- e) At the intermediate career stages, it is advisable for teachers to take up progressively greater responsibilities such as course leadership or project coordination, and these greater responsibilities should bring recognition and higher salaries.

### ➤ 3. Structure the teaching career around the goal of enhancing professional performance

*Teaching career structures that only recognize experience and advanced training courses tend to result in the profession losing sight of its core purpose. The following guidelines can help to deal with this situation.*

- a) Explore career structure designs that focus on the quality of teaching performance. Experience and relevant, high-quality further training should be valued insofar as they yield professional learning outcomes. It is thus important to appraise and then reward effective professional performance, both in the classroom and in the education institution, as the crux of career advancement. Organizing the career structure around performance means paying attention to the appraisal mechanisms used to assess this, a matter that is certainly challenging but that must be addressed.
- b) Link continuing training to teacher pay policy. Human resource policies and management and performance appraisal tools must therefore be introduced in order to gauge the efforts of individuals and teams to improve their teaching capabilities, with the clear aim of driving up standards.

- c) Encourage greater development of opportunities for training and debate within teaching communities and promote empirical research and the spread of knowledge in cooperation with universities and research centres to enhance this process.
- d) Ensure that the career structure gives recognition to the individual pathways constructed by some teachers in terms of training and/or specialization undertaken to engage with specific curricular disciplines (teaching of sciences, art, language, etc.) or particular fields of work, such as teaching in poor or rural areas, use of ICTs in education, education to enhance civic values and greater school coexistence, and support for student initiatives, by evaluating the quality of their performance in these fields.

#### ➤ 4. Design and implement a clear and consistent pay and incentive policy to encourage teachers in their work

*For a professional career to be attractive, beginners' pay must be adequate and teachers must have prospects of income increases and of new professional development opportunities if their performance, properly assessed, so warrants. The following guidelines are therefore proposed for consideration.*

- a) It is of the utmost importance for governments to increase their financial efforts to ensure decent levels of pay for all teachers and a sustainable programme of improvement in working conditions.
- b) Envisage and evaluate different scales and systems for differentiating pay increases, recognizing that teachers with seven or ten years' experience tend to be acquiring greater personal and family commitments, so that the system ought to be able to offer them substantial pay increases at that stage of their career, subject however to the general principle of good performance.
- c) Integrate financial incentives, which are increasingly being given in the region, into the whole career structure, so that they are perceived as attainable by all teachers who meet high standards of professional performance, without prior allocation of quotas, with a view to encouraging continuous efforts at improvement. Financial incentives lose effectiveness if offered in isolation; there is actually no adequate evidence to show that incentive programmes by themselves have any impact on pupils' learning achievement or even that they lead to better teaching. They should be used in conjunction with other measures.
- d) Generate incentives to enable schools attended by pupils from poorer households and areas that are remote from urban centres to employ highly trained educators with genuine expectations of good learning results. It is important for these teachers to be not only attracted to schools working in highly challenging conditions but encouraged to persist with an unquestionably difficult task calling for commensurate support and rewards.

- e) Deploy symbolic incentives that lead to improved public recognition of the profession by boosting social appreciation for those working in it, while encouraging better candidates to opt for teacher training.
- f) Develop initiatives in support of advanced in-service training that recognize the teachers' effort in that regard, while refraining from encouraging credentialism or proliferation of the supply of and demand for undemanding training of little relevance.
- g) Ensure that teachers adequately understand and endorse the pay structure, including the prospects for gradual improvement over reasonable timescales.
- h) Ensure that educators receive a pension that enables them to live in dignity once their careers are over. This not only acknowledges the work that they have done but is conducive to renewal of the teaching corps.

In 1996, Brazil set up the Fund for Primary Education Development and for Enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEF), replaced in 2006 by the Fund for Basic Education Development and for Enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEB). The main purpose of the fund is to redistribute resources earmarked for education to states and municipalities in which the investment per pupil is less than the annually set rate. As at least 60% of Fund resources are used for the remuneration and professional development of education professionals, the results have been encouraging, for teachers' salaries have risen significantly and the increases have been greater in areas where the lowest wages were being paid.

In Mexico, under the recent General Education Act as amended (2011), education authorities are required to establish mechanisms to encourage evaluation-based teaching.

In Chile, there is an individual incentive based on teachers' knowledge and skills, the Pedagogic Excellence Allowance (AEP), and a collective incentive for teachers at the schools whose performance is rated most highly by the National System for the Evaluation of Teaching Performance (SNED).

In Colombia, the National Programme of Incentives rewards school that perform well by providing them with resources to implement educational projects and also rewards teachers at those schools for excellence in their work.

## ➤ 5. Develop sound, agreed teacher performance assessment systems

*While teacher assessment is a subject of debate and the options adopted in different countries have varied, education systems must come to terms with the complexity of this challenge and introduce mechanisms to assess performance and promote improvement. The goal of assessment should be to enhance the profession and its standing in society. The following guidelines are designed to address this challenge.*

- a)** Develop and implement an objective and transparent performance assessment system based on standards that have been validated and are considered sound by the profession in order to identify comparable levels of performance quality for each teacher, taking account of the strong influence of the school environment on education work. It is important for these systems to be put into practice by competent assessors using various instruments to observe and analyse the effects of actual practices on pupils' learning achievement and to ascertain the views of relevant stakeholders.
- b)** Consider involving the professionals themselves in the construction of the assessment process. There must be general agreement on the standards used to set the criteria that guide assessments if they are to have a real impact on teachers' skills and knowledge. It is therefore essential to design participation mechanisms so that the main stakeholders, and teachers in particular, can contribute to the initial setting and periodic review of the standards. Teachers must also have opportunities to be trained in all standards in order to know how they are put into teaching practices in the classroom.
- c)** Orient teacher assessment towards formative goals, which means providing teachers and school authorities with useful feedback on areas for improvement. To complement this process, the training mechanisms required to support teachers in their endeavours to improve their professional performance on the basis of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the performance assessment must be identified. Special attention must be given to those teachers who have not obtained the minimum satisfactory results in their performance assessments.
- d)** Teacher assessment may also be summative, in that they have consequences for the teacher's career. It is important that both teaching teams and individual teachers whose practices have demonstrably improved be rewarded in the form of performance incentives, both monetary and non-monetary. It is also important that education systems have sound instruments for identifying teachers who, despite the support and training received in their formative appraisal, are unwilling or unable to improve their educational practices, and that the necessary steps be taken to remove them from teaching work so that pupils' learning achievement is not affected.

- e) Use assessment methods and instruments that cover the different facets of teaching, especially classroom teaching, and responsibilities in the school community involving team work and interaction with families and pupils.

Chile has a National Teacher Assessment System under which teachers in municipal schools are assessed every four years on the basis of criteria set in the Good Teaching Framework (MBE). The four instruments used are self-assessment, a report by the school head and the head of pedagogical affairs, peer assessment by a colleague from another school and a portfolio of written and filmed samples of classroom performance. Teachers obtaining the best results (outstanding or competent) are entitled to a financial incentive, the Variable Incentive for Individual Performance (AVDI), after passing a knowledge test. Teachers obtaining the lowest ratings (basic or unsatisfactory) must be retrained in accordance with professional development plans that target the weaknesses identified in the assessment in order to improve their performance. Anyone obtaining an “unsatisfactory” rating must discontinue classroom responsibilities and be reassessed one year later, after training. Any professional who obtains the same result again must leave the system.

In Colombia, the 2002 Teaching Professionalization Statute provides for three types of assessments:

- an examination to assess the aspiring teacher’s aptitudes, skills, experience and suitability to enter the profession, after which successful applicants may be appointed for one year;
- yearly performance assessment – teachers with unsatisfactory results for two years in a row leave the service;
- an optional competency test after at least three years’ service, leading to a promotion or salary increase for those with outstanding results.

## ➤ 6. Establish transparent mechanisms for teacher recruitment and task assignment

*The rules governing recruitment to the teaching profession generally and to specific functions within it largely determine the level of the people’s future educational*

*opportunities, especially those most in need of a high-quality education owing to their socioeconomic situation. The following guidelines have thus been proposed.*

- a)** Have clear policies on recruitment to the profession, which means that, in addition to the qualifications and certification issued by academic institutions, the State must set specific national requirements consistent with minimum standards to be attained by aspiring schools teachers. The instruments that may be used for this purpose may include examinations of knowledge and capabilities and/or practical assessments. Alternatively, teacher training institutions' accreditation standards could be raised by ensuring that systems for admission and the awarding of qualifications on initial training programmes are demanding, thus ensuring that graduates holding these qualifications have the knowledge and skills required by the education system. This option may be ineffective, however, in countries where there are few regulations on education provision by public and private academic bodies.
- b)** Establish objective and transparent competitive selection processes with clear rules on appointments to teaching posts, by setting strict selection criteria. These selection processes should take account of teaching performance standards.
- c)** Create incentives to achieve a degree of stability in teaching bodies, particularly at schools in which it is more difficult to recruit and retain highly skilled personnel because educational work there is challenging on account of the attending pupil population.
- d)** Encourage involvement by the school head and collegiate school authorities in the formation of each school's teaching team, ensuring it has the requisite staff to deliver its curriculum and fulfil institutional goals, which are all important conditions for establishing and developing effective schools.
- e)** Ensure that all teachers in a school are assigned to the functions where they can make the greatest contribution and develop their potential to the utmost, using objective mechanisms to preclude arbitrary considerations from task assignment. One applicable criterion would require the most capable and best-performing teachers to take charge of initial basic education courses or groups of pupils experiencing particular difficulties.

## **Summary of teaching career guidelines**

- 1. Design and implement careers in such a way that they strengthen the teaching profession and attract good candidates.*
- 2. Provide recognition in the career structure for different stages of teacher development and skill.*
- 3. Structure the teaching career around the goal of enhancing professional performance.*
- 4. Design and implement a clear and consistent pay and incentive policy to encourage teachers in their work.*
- 5. Develop sound, agreed teacher performance assessment systems.*
- 6. Establish transparent mechanisms for teacher recruitment and task assignment.*

## IV Guidelines on teacher policy institutions and processes

The State of the Art provides some analytical categories and seeks to identify some trends in teacher-policy institutions and processes, the core issue being the factors and processes that affect policy formulation and implementation. Just as society's demands on education have clearly become more complex and stringent, so, too, are education policy requirements, in particular those relating to the teaching, much "higher". "Policies" depend on their guiding goals and on the quality of the "policies", namely the ability of stakeholders and of the institutions (legality principle) in which they work to process conflicts and cooperate in pursuit of education goals that are admittedly harder to achieve than goals such as wider coverage and are typically achieved over periods longer than a single term of government – hence the need for a new level of cooperation capacities among stakeholders and robustness in policy institutions.

The teacher policy guidelines or criteria detailed below cover the following aspects: policy prioritization and effectiveness; stakeholder involvement in policy formulation; and the necessary policy-formulation institutions.

### ➤ 1. Prioritize teacher policies from a systemic standpoint

*As teaching has a powerful effect on education quality, policies to improve the teaching corps must take the traditionally denied centre stage. The guidelines below aim to take up this challenge.*

- a)** Place teacher policies at the strategic centre of educational policy designs, despite the difficulties posed by their high costs and potential for conflict and the low visibility of their results and benefits in the short term. This entails higher and more continuous investment in programmes to improve initial training and continuing professional development, and action to address the challenges of the teaching career structure.
- b)** Take an inclusive, systemic approach to the design of teacher policies, avoiding over-emphasising isolated aspects such as, for example, improvements to initial training – given that an unattractive teaching career structure or schools' failure that to modernize teaching methods are factors that largely nullify the effect of this effort – or salary rises and/or incentives that are ineffective if no effort

is made to improve the quality of initial training and professional development opportunities. System-wide action in which training is approached as one of many components that support teachers' pedagogical work in school must be promoted.

- c) Endeavour to establish appropriate links among regulations on the teacher training system and on in the exercise of the profession and thus ensure that adequate and effective quality control mechanisms are in place, while avoiding over-regulation that could discourage entry into the profession.
- d) Set education and teacher policies in the public interest so that they contribute to the elimination of inequality of learning opportunities and are not subordinated to particular economic, corporate or political interests.

## ➤ 2. Enhance the effectiveness of teacher policies by reconciling criteria of continuity and change

*Lack of continuity in teacher policies and the proliferation of unconnected programmes are obstacles to progress towards the desired results and create confusion and discouragement among teachers. Reconciling stability, flexibility and political change is a complex challenge. The following guidelines are proposed to address it.*

- a) Define the goals of teacher policies clearly – within wider educational, social and cultural policies – by setting long- and medium-term goals, avoiding the temptation to resort to short-termist projects or high-visibility programmes that have little real impact.
- b) Coordinate teacher policy activities in the light of the goals set, avoiding both dispersion and overlapping or duplication of programmes run in parallel by different parts of the State apparatus.
- c) Ensure that public policies are reasonably stable, avoiding changes driven more by the rotation of higher or intermediate-level political authorities than by assessments of programme effectiveness. A primary goal of the current agenda for many of the region's education systems is capacity-building, which requires a reasonable time horizon and thus agreements that permit policy continuity.
- d) To secure the medium- and long-term prospects of policy initiatives, it is important, once the necessary consensus has been reached, to endeavour to put in place laws and multi-year budgets to sustain them, even though national

political changes will tend to result in legitimate modifications to education policies. A hallmark of an educationally capable political system is its ability to strike the right balance between continuity and change in regulatory teacher-policy frameworks.

- e) While safeguarding the continuity of teacher policies, rigidities must be avoided by creating leeway for flexibility and scope for innovation in order to improve design aspects in the light of assessment results; teacher policies must be adapted to political, social and cultural changes that are challenging to the school system and account must be taken of scientific and technological progress.
- f) Achieve adequate coordination and consistency between teacher policies and education policies generally to ensure that they all aim to improve education quality and equity. The potential for improving the teaching profession is closely linked to the conditions in which it is exercised, as curriculum design, learning assessment systems, educational resources and school organization are some of the decisively crucial factors.

### ➤ 3. Promote social stakeholder participation in policy-making

*Attempts at imposing educational reform and teacher policies without involving social stakeholders, in particular teachers themselves, have repeatedly proven unsuccessful. It is therefore suggested that the following guidelines be taken into account.*

- a) Establish forums for dialogue and participation in order to draw up nationwide political and educational agreements in which the various educational, political, social and cultural stakeholders participate in meeting the need to adapt education systems to new and challenging external requirements.
- b) Establish and maintain bodies for dialogue and cooperative relations between governments and teachers' organizations (unions, guilds and professional associations) so that teachers may be involved in education policies. This entails acknowledgement of such organizations as competent and entitled to formulate proposals, not only on pay issues, but also on educational and teacher policies generally. No educational reform can succeed if teachers are not involved.
- c) Initiate informed, inclusive debates by a wide variety of participants on the meaning, implications and scope of the concepts of teacher professionalization and quality. Policies cannot be promoted or sound agreements drawn up without a shared social construct of the meaning of these key concepts or ideas.

In Mexico, the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE) and the Federal Government signed the Alliance for Quality in Education in 2008, which was followed in 2011 by the Agreement on Reform of the General Framework of the National Teaching Career Programme.

In Chile, an agreement was signed in 2003 between the Ministry of Education, the teachers' union and the Chilean Association of Municipalities to implement the teacher performance assessment system.

In Guatemala, dialogue between the unions and the government began under the 1997 peace accords, which laid the groundwork for national reconciliation involving different social sectors and the national agenda for peace, reconciliation and social equity. Educational reform became one of the main planks of the agreements. Seventeen private- and public-sector institutions, the National Assembly of Primary Teachers (ANM) and Mayan and indigenous organizations participated in the Consultative Commission for Educational Reform (1997).

The various social stakeholders engage in dialogue in Brazil's Teaching Policy Forums convened in various states.

#### ➤ 4. Strengthen public institutions in charge of teacher-policy formulation

*However outstanding the teacher policies formulated, they will not change the profession substantially unless institutions are robust and capable of driving and monitoring their implementation. The following guidelines may assist in meeting this requirement.*

- a) Develop State teacher-policy institutions that are robust in terms of their powers, resources and continuity of work. As far as possible, these institutions should have the capacity to influence the various aspects of teaching policy, namely initial and continuing training, pay, working conditions and the career structure. It is important to focus on policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation institutions and processes, and not only on policy content. Specialist education and teacher-policy bodies as well as national planning and public finance authorities must participate in evaluation.

- b)** Assess the quality of public teacher-policy formulation and implementation by applying criteria such as policy stability, adaptability, coordination and consistency, implementation quality, and emphasis on public goods.<sup>47</sup> In the light of these assessments, decide whether programmes should be continued or replaced in a medium- and long-term perspective. Discontinuity is wasteful of effort and diminishes policy effectiveness and credibility.
- c)** Develop appropriate linkages between national and local bodies responsible for education administration, which is a particularly important and complex challenge in decentralized or federal countries.
- d)** Develop a sustained capacity-building policy so that education systems can be staffed by highly trained professionals specializing in teacher policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation in the context of current and future challenges in the education world. To this end, it is important to activate existing international cooperation networks and promote new ones, both within and outside the region.
- e)** Promote advanced interdisciplinary research into educational issues, specifically initial and continuing training and the various aspects of the teaching profession so that informed decisions can be taken on their development.
- f)** Make the most of the international agencies' contributions, in particular the learning assessment surveys promoted by some agencies to support the formulation of sustainable policies.
- g)** Establish and develop databases and update statistical information on the teaching profession and education policies implemented in the countries.

Teachers' professional development in Argentina is promoted by the National Teacher Training Institute (INFD), which is responsible for public teacher-training policies throughout the country. INFD is responsible for initial training, continuing training, educational support for schools and educational research.

In Argentina and Brazil, both federal countries, increasingly inter-linked teacher-related educational policy systems are being established so that national or federal governments can join forces with provincial or state authorities and with municipalities, which are key players in primary education.

<sup>47</sup> See Scartascini, C., Spiller, P.T., Stein, E. and Tomassi, M. (2010) for a more details.

## ***Summary of guidelines for teaching policy institutions and processes***

- 1.** *Prioritize teacher policies from a systemic standpoint.*
- 2.** *Enhance the effectiveness of teacher policies by reconciling criteria of continuity and change.*
- 3.** *Promote social stakeholder participation in policy-making.*
- 4.** *Strengthen public institutions in charge of teacher-policy formulation.*

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No matter what institutional support and resources an educational system uses, its quality will never be better than that of its teachers. Therefore, it is a fundamental challenge in Latin America and the Caribbean to develop educational policies regarding teacher training and certification, including the professional development and continuing training they receive.

The greatest demands made today to the teaching profession, in terms of its effectiveness in establishing the core competencies in society to allow economic development and democratic citizenship, puts direct pressure on the key players in the policy arena - the government and teacher unions - to generate appropriate responses to the times we live and the renewed relationship between teachers and the state.

In order to assist this process, this paper draws up a state of the art review of educational policies in Latin America and the Caribbean and develops a proposal for criteria and guidelines to be considered both in their development and implementation, and in their future evaluation. Both the diagnosis and the proposals focus on four thematic issues: initial training, continuous training and teacher training institutions, and educational policy processes in the region.

The need for good policies for the teaching profession is part of a larger purpose: to have educational systems capable of guaranteeing the right to a quality education for all children, youth and adults.

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