Global Conclusions

Table 3



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OVERALL CONCLUSIONS — TABLE 3
Prospects for education on the margins of the system

This document integrates the responses of the Learning Communities of Uruguay, Dominican Republic, IRFA Network, Peru, Paraguay, Panama, Nicaragua, Madagascar, Italy, Honduras, Haiti, Spain, El Salvador, Ecuador, Colombia, Chad, Brazil and Bolivia, corresponding to Table 3.

Table 3 proposed to guide the debate in the learning communities around what Fe y Alegría can expect and project, regarding the issue of care for populations on the margins of the system, from its perspective of popular education and what it has learned in its experiences.

To achieve this objective, five important issues were identified for prospective planning, perceived from their practices: challenges that must be faced, internal and external opportunities that can be taken advantage of, successful strategies that contribute to the sustainability of programs and projects, experiences that have become elements of influence or impact on educational policies in the local or national environment, and concrete proposals that are proposed for the future of Fe y Alegría.

Challenges or obstacles that must be faced

In all contexts, the following challenges are emphasized.

Regarding structural conditions of direct responsibility of the states, significant shortcomings are noted that not only present difficulties in providing care to vulnerable populations, but are often obstacles to implementing some initiatives:

- Lack of public policies focused on educational investment.
- Existence of rigid legal and institutional frameworks and regulatory gaps due to part of the Ministry of Education.
- Physical gaps in infrastructure; precarious quality of infrastructure, furniture and school materials.
- Digital access gaps.
- Lack of a comprehensive state care system and multidisciplinary teams specialized in the area of disability.
- Precariousness of accessibility and resources in rural areas and indigenous populations.

- Little attention is paid to the difficulties of accessing, remaining in and completing the school routes.

Regarding the implementation of care programs and projects, the most frequent challenges are noted:

- Guarantee educational continuity in the face of vulnerable conditions, mainly school dropout and absenteeism.
- Shortage of qualified personnel. Need to train teachers in the care of vulnerable populations, in active methodologies and emotional support.
- Critical limitations of specialized resources to address disability and student lag, as well as methodologies in contexts of conflict or absence of peace.
- Low family participation due to socioeconomic priorities.
- Lack of coordinated work with families (in migration contexts), which generates difficulties in family-school communication.
- Linguistic and cultural barriers for migrants/refugees, high family mobility that affects permanence.
- Prevention of school violence and protection of the rights of individuals in vulnerability.

Internal and external opportunities that can be taken advantage of

Regarding opportunities, all countries believe that they have taken advantage of internal and external opportunities in their experiences.

Internal Opportunities:

A first line highlights as an internal opportunity having a clear identity that promotes the commitment of work teams and achieves the adherence of other people.

- Institutional commitment, dedication to service, collaborative work, from the identity of teaching, management and technical teams.
- Identity of Popular Education. Identity and commitment to the populations vulnerable.
- Committed human teams, professionals who carry out internships, VOLPA volunteers, interns in educational areas.
- In-depth knowledge of local realities stemming from a vocation for education popular.
- Presence and recognition of Fe y Alegría, especially in rural areas.
- Collaborative work with teachers and administrators on an ongoing basis from the beginning collaborative work and teamwork methodology.

In another vein, the challenge to innovation that the Fe y Alegría mission must implement to serve the most vulnerable populations is highlighted as a well-utilized opportunity. Faced with deficiencies due to the lack of state presence and other challenges, innovation processes are fostered to develop more relevant programs and projects, offering educational opportunities for those excluded and providing a real chance of achieving the objectives. Among the innovations generated by transforming obstacles into opportunities are the following:

- Adapting educational proposals to the different needs of vulnerable populations. Contextualized pedagogical proposals.
- Implementation of flexible, playful and community-based methodologies.
- Maturity and experience in the implementation of entrepreneurship programs and flexible education models focused on young people and adults.
- Production of educational resources associated with the needs and characteristics of each population.
- Linking regular educational processes for young people and adults with technical-productive workshops and entrepreneurship projects, in relation to their prior knowledge and potential possibilities of the territory.
- Vocational training programs for young people and adults and alternatives transition between basic education and higher education.
- Creation of projects based on the participation of local actors in congresses and other educational spaces.

Among the internal opportunities highlighted is Fe y Alegría's commitment to training the staff involved in its programs. All countries emphasize the attention given to strengthening the capacities of teachers, trainers, and mentors. This training is seen as a strategy to enhance and establish local capacities beyond the projects themselves; as a sustainability strategy for the programs by fostering their autonomy; and as a way to strengthen the commitment of educational stakeholders, while also ensuring the appropriate approach for each case and raising the quality of the services provided.

The training dynamic that characterizes all Fe y Alegría interventions is seen as an internal opportunity to achieve the goal of adequately serving the most vulnerable populations. The following points are noted:

- Ongoing training for teachers, managers and technical teams.
- Ongoing pedagogical support for educational centers and teams trainers.
- Strengthening the use of technological tools, resources and platforms virtual.

Likewise, the characteristics promoted by the Fe y Alegría Federation are valued as opportunities, such as:

- Initiatives and work teams.
- Support for the care of populations with disabilities, gender equality, rurality, technical training.
- Strengthening protection policies.

External Opportunities:

Reflecting on external opportunities provides a broader and more comprehensive view of Fe y Alegría's mission. It highlights the important consideration that commitment to the most vulnerable populations involves a large group of actors who are not simply collaborators, but rather co-responsible for responding to their needs.

They are seen as opportunities:

The networks that enable coordinated work are mentioned:

- Networks of educational centers, which allow exchange and joint work.
- Interinstitutional networks to generate proposals in areas of educational inclusion, entrepreneurship, employability, and protection.

Links and alliances with other actors and organizations present in the territory, aligned with the purposes of Fe y Alegría, with whom responsibilities can be shared in the design and execution of programs and projects, such as:

- Partnerships with NGOs, cooperation agencies, the private sector, institutions, universities and others.
- Civil society and community organizations, protection entities.

The relationship with the state appears in several experiences as a key aspect of opportunities that enable or facilitate the proposed initiatives. The following stand out:

- Interinstitutional alliances and agreements of Fe y Alegría with the State.
- Taking advantage of programs and public policies of the Ministries of Education and other entities.
- Knowledge and use of public services from various sectors to provide support in projects and interventions (health, justice, work).

Successful strategies that contribute to the sustainability of programs and projects

Regarding the strategies undertaken to care for populations outside the system, countries report great diversity, with some emphases collected here.

1. Participatory processes

The participation and decision-making capacity of all actors was highlighted as a fundamental element throughout the process.

The following is mentioned for the formulation of programs and projects:

● The importance of starting from a diagnosis of reality, where the potentials participants in the program or project specify the objectives and content according to their interests to make them truly relevant and sustainable

During execution:

- In programs with children and/or school children, the formation of networks between actors is highlighted: “structuring of families and the community as school support networks”, rural school (institutional) networks and technical networks.
- In the case of young people and adults, emphasis is placed on an “effective intergenerational articulation”, where adults provide technical support, while young people lead their own educational processes; as well as the “institutionalization of youth representation in the decision-making of community projects”

2. Flexible career paths

Another strategy mentioned by all countries is the construction of alternative pathways to those officially existing for those who need them.

The reflection highlights the importance of this issue from an inclusive societal perspective, where states are capable of recognizing diversity and committing to fulfilling everyone's right to education. It questions the fact that the few existing programs for marginalized populations are merely "remedial," adapted from other approaches, and fail to truly address the needs of the population they serve. The educational system's offerings do not provide genuine opportunities for inclusion, retention, or certification for these populations.

The flexible pathways implemented by countries allow for educational continuity, such as:

- Access to pathways that link literacy, educational continuity, and training for work and human development.
- To articulate and transition more naturally between regular basic education or alternative and vocational technical training.
- Educational inclusion of people with disabilities, from psycho-pedagogical curricular adaptation for disability to the transition of students with SEN to the subsystems of regular, alternative and higher education.
- Articulation between formal and non-formal education programs “to break down ghettos”.
- Education in prison settings with social reintegration and restorative coexistence processes.
- Intercultural bilingual education in regional territories to strengthen cultural identity, community curriculum adaptation with ancestral knowledge in Garifuna educational communities.

Based on these experiences, alternative methodological strategies generated by the work teams are presented, such as:

- Hybrid and flexible educational pathways, models adaptable to the needs of people (especially young people and adults) and territories.
- Design of situated, specific, modular and flexible curricula.
- Production of educational resources for specific groups.
- Implementation of Saturday modality, diverse schedules.
- Tutoring service for the continued education of young people and adults.
- Attention to working adolescents on the street, creation and implementation of 'transit classrooms' for "mobile" students.

3. Support and human development

A highly valued and effective strategy that was pointed out for the sustainability of the programs is to address the human development dimension and provide support to the participants.

It is taken into account that these populations frequently experience devaluation, marginalization, and discrimination; therefore, the programs adopt a holistic approach to education, aiming not only to protect and restore their right to educational opportunities but also to support them in processes of socio-emotional empowerment. In this regard, working on "life planning" is a recurring theme in the experiences of various countries.

The demand for and success of many implemented programs are attributed to processes of:

- Educational guidance and life planning follow-up. Vocational training.
- Preventive monitoring in the face of risk of school dropout.
- Comprehensive support through student counseling services.
- Implementation of playful and expressive pedagogies to reframe displacement.
- Implementation of pedagogical models for protection and constructive use of leisure time, among others.

4. Link to the world of work

One strategy that has been gaining strength and is considered very powerful for the sustainability of programs is linking educational processes with job training. It is seen as an opportunity for educational continuity and for providing better employability conditions to achieve decent work when young people have to enter the workforce early.

The experiences highlighted include:

- Transition projects between basic and higher education.
- Workshops focused on employability, art, culture, technical development and transversal skills.
- Radio Schools for adult education.
- Vocational training (North and South Caribbean region), provided with seed capital for local businesses.
- Accenture's vocational training programs at basic/intermediate levels for vulnerable environments
- Technical training for job placement: intensive skills development soft skills, labor intermediation and promotion of micro-enterprises.
- Proposals for linking inclusive education and vocational training.
- Implementation of Productive Units in Educational Centers Alternative and Higher Technical Institutes.

5. Teacher training and technical assistance

In all the experiences, the importance of training and supporting the teachers or facilitators participating in the training processes is mentioned. In all cases, this is valued as a strategy for sustainability and success. This is not only as technical preparation for the work to be done, but primarily to instill in the trainers the spirit and commitment to the purpose. Specifically, the following are mentioned:

- Ongoing training and technical assistance from the National Office to managers and teachers in the classroom.
- Awareness and training programs for teachers.

- Development of educational materials to support teaching; guidance documents and pedagogical materials.
- Specialized training programs for: rural teachers, caregivers of people with disabilities, teachers of intercultural bilingual education.

6. Distance education and the use of new technologies

Distance education is also highlighted as a strategy that has fostered the sustainability of programs, both because it expands access to those in more remote locations, and because the use of asynchronous resources allows for flexible schedules, and also because training processes through virtual means are more attractive to young people.

From a management perspective, it also offers important elements to consider, such as the possibility of reusing sessions and materials with different cohorts of participants, which reduces costs; as well as the expansion of specialized resources, available online and often free of charge.

Among the most commonly used strategies are:

- Distance education with or without tutorial support, for teachers and students.
- School reinforcement programs.
- Independent learning programs.
- Virtual consultations.
- Bank or libraries of virtual resources.

7. Social articulation, public action and advocacy

Involving others in the task of serving marginalized populations is considered a fundamental strategic action. It encompasses different types of collaboration, each with its own importance. On the one hand, the benefit of communication and outreach to the community is highlighted; on the other, the strengthening of collaborative efforts; and, more ambitiously, the ability to influence or impact public policy and agendas.

The strategies employed that are indicated are:

- Awareness campaigns.
- Government literacy campaigns and educational missions
- Community initiatives (violence prevention, child protection, environmental care).
- Form or integrate into networks.
- To gain support for the awarding of scholarships to low-income families.
- Coordination with Municipal Education Secretariats and other local authorities.

- Collaboration with other community organizations.
- Developing and publishing pedagogical systematizations.
- Establish partnerships with the public and private sectors.

Experiences have become elements of influence or impact on educational policies in the local or national environment

The countries report having made efforts to promote their successful experiences and influence educational policies and practices. Some of these proposals have transcended institutional experience and have been recognized, incorporated, adapted, or used as a reference by educational stakeholders and policies.

Among the educational proposals that have generated influence or impact are models, approaches, methodologies, programs, and educational experiences developed to respond to the needs and challenges of populations and territories. These include:

- Flexible educational models and modalities.
- Technical education programs, job training and entrepreneurship.
- Programs in Intercultural Education, Inclusive Education, Citizenship, culture of peace and coexistence.
- Socio-emotional support and comprehensive care.

Strategies for positioning proposals and influencing educational policies include the methods and processes used to generate knowledge, establish relationships and alliances, promote dialogue, and participate in decision-making and public debate, influencing or impacting educational policies, programs, and practices. The strategies identified by Fe y Alegría that have contributed in specific contexts are:

- Systematization, research and evidence generation.
- Training and capacity transfer.
- Dialogue and relationship with authorities.
- Alliances, networks and inter-institutional coordination.
- Public communication, mobilization and positioning on the agenda.
- Participation in governance and social control spaces (monitoring, oversight and contribute to public policies and actions).

Specific proposals put forward for the future of Fe y Alegría

The contributions from learning communities regarding proposals for the future, related to the educational models, approaches and responses that are intended to be strengthened, developed or expanded, indicate interest in:

- New educational responses to emerging vulnerabilities.
- Models of education, care, protection and comprehensive well-being.
- Recognition of prior learning and diverse educational trajectories.
- Intercultural education for contexts of human mobility and diversity.
- Digital transformation and critical incorporation of artificial intelligence.
- Linking educational pathways with technical training, work and entrepreneurship.
- Education for coexistence, mental health, peace and prevention of violence.
- Strengthening the role of students, young people and families in the educational processes.
- Education linked to the territory, local knowledge and community economies.

They also provide expectations regarding the forms of articulation, influence, knowledge generation, capacity building and resource mobilization necessary to contribute to their sustainability, for which the following is suggested:

- Construction and positioning of public agendas on the right to education of vulnerable populations.
- Strengthening advocacy to promote greater accountability of State in guaranteeing and ensuring the sustainability of educational services.
- Consolidation of territorial and intersectoral alliances and networks with public, private, social, and community actors.
- Systematization, research and evaluation of experiences to generate evidence, demonstrate results and promote their replicability.
- Diversification of sources and financing mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the initiatives.
- Strengthening teaching and institutional capacities to respond to the social, technological, and educational changes.
- Communication, dissemination and positioning of experiences and lessons learned for Strengthen networks, make results visible, and promote their ownership.
- Participation and mobilization of social actors, especially young people, families and communities, in the construction of educational responses.

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50
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