

## The Regional Monitoring Framework for Students on the Move in Latin America and the Caribbean

Focusing on : Data use, Data sharing and the Enabling environment



### PRACTICE PROFILE

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The [Regional Framework for Monitoring People on the Move in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (RMF) is a UNESCO initiative developed in collaboration with 18 ministries of education in the region. It supports the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of national education policies to ensure the right to education for people on the move in the region, in response to the challenges posed by the significant increase in intra-regional displacement flows. The framework aims to strengthen educational policy processes for full educational inclusion of students on the move.<sup>1</sup> It includes complementary quantitative (common indicators) and qualitative (normative map on policies and good practices) elements to understand how the right to education is guaranteed. The [Educación y Movilidad en América Latina y el Caribe](#) platform provides access to these elements and data generated and collected in this framework.

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<sup>1</sup> The RMF adopts the approach of the right to education proposed by K. Tomasevski in *Indicadores del derecho a la educación* and operationalized by in [General Comment No. 13: The right to education of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#). It distinguishes four dimensions of the right to education: Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability. The 5<sup>th</sup> dimension : Accountability, is included based on the 2017/2018 Global education monitoring report - [Accountability in education: meeting our commitments](#).

## [The need for a coordinated regional response to ensure access to education for people on the move in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

In recent years, LAC has experienced an increase in intraregional movement and large-scale displacement, raising a unique set of protection concerns and emphasizing the need for a coordinated regional response to ensure the rights of people on the move. In referring to cross-border movements in the LAC region, the term “people on the move” recognizes the diversity of experiences in terms of motivation, legal status, magnitude, and composition, and includes migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and returned persons. Although Venezuelan displacement is one of the largest humanitarian crises in the region’s history, with more than 5.9 million migrants and refugees across LAC, it does not represent all regional mobility.

Host countries in the region have faced the challenge of integrating people on the move into their national education systems, ensuring the right to education for all. In the face of **large-scale regional human mobility** and a **lack of comparable quality data on inclusion in national education systems**, there was a **need to mobilize and create a coordinated response**. This included **strengthening the planning and monitoring capacities of national education systems based on the generation of comparable and quality data and the development of regional instruments for monitoring** considering the commitments related to SDG 4 and relevant national policies, under an inclusive approach.

In 2019, UNESCO carried out an [analysis of Education Management Information Systems \(EMIS\) in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru](#) and identified existing challenges related to monitoring and producing reliable, accurate, and relevant data. The diagnosis highlighted the **need for the development of guidelines to harmonize statistical processes and the provision of technical assistance to obtain indicators that adequately inform the education response**, and data that is disaggregated by sex. This need was **reaffirmed by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of Education of the region within the framework of the Quito Process**, which states that strengthening data production and monitoring frameworks at the regional level is a priority that will facilitate intergovernmental coordination.

### [The approach:](#)

Considering the regional needs and commitments of MoEs, and in line with its regional strategy to support affected countries in guaranteeing the right to education of the situation of people on the move, ORELAC UNESCO is coordinating, as part of the regional component of the Multi-Year Resilience Program (MYRP) for the Venezuela Refugee and Migrant Crisis funded by Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the development of the Regional Monitoring Framework for Students on the Move (RMF). This multi-partner initiative is strongly driven by the involvement of 18 Member States: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Anguilla, Bahamas, and the British Virgin Islands.

The RMF attempts to address the challenges caused by the lack of data and to transform the way education data is collected to support the formulation and implementation of educational policies aimed at guaranteeing the right to education of people on the move. It is developed through policy dialogue and by strengthening the planning and monitoring capacities of national education systems in the LAC region to enable the generation of timely, relevant, and comparable quality data, in alignment with relevant national policies to facilitate:

- [Knowledge and monitoring of the educational situation of students on the move in the region](#) in relation to the fulfilment of their right to education.
- [Consolidating a space for knowledge, diagnosis and support for the formulation and implementation of educational policies](#) aimed at guaranteeing the right to education of people on the move that is based on evidence.
- [Providing visibility to good practices for the educational inclusion of people on the move](#) that have been implemented by Governments and NGOs in the region.
- [Contributing to the monitoring of SDG4 in the region](#) with information on the educational situation of students on the move.
- [Establishing a dialogue on the criteria for the identification and comparability of indicators](#) that allows for having comparable regional indicators.

The RMF is composed of complementary quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The **quantitative element consists of a set of comparable and relevant statistical indicators** to monitor the educational trajectories of people on the move, support the strengthening of national planning for educational interventions, and better understand progress across the region. The **qualitative dimension contains a normative map of national policies** for the educational inclusion of students on the move, an **inventory of innovative experiences** and promising practices, and a section on **policy implementation analysis**. The open data platform [Educación y Movilidad en América Latina y el Caribe - EMAC](#) disseminates all the results of the initiative, the knowledge generated and relevant information on inclusive education at the regional level.

#### Implementation:

The Regional Monitoring Framework **promotes policy coordination, harmonization, and inclusion** of data on the right to education for people on the move, through **mechanisms to systematically engage regional partners, especially ministries of education**. The implementation of the RMF is based on the creation of an environment for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and advocacy related to the right to education for people on the move. Ultimately, the objective is to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices and to promote the development of policies and practices that ensure access to education for all students, regardless of their mobility status.

Key steps for implementation include :

1. **Better understanding of actions implemented in different national contexts** to guarantee the right to education and **identification of needs to improve processes to strengthen data production and capacity**, in close collaboration with the Quito Process, the [Grupo Regional de Educación \(GRE\)](#) and the Education and Human Mobility Working Group, bringing together the region's Ministries of Education and education partners, through:
  - A **rapid diagnosis of the availability of information on students on the move in the Institutional Educational Information Systems** in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatemala (2019)
  - A [regional study to analyze and provide recommendations](#) for the modification and development of normative frameworks and national policies that guarantee access and educational inclusion of people on the move (2020)

2. **Setting up [technical working roundtables](#)** bringing together designated national technical focal points from 18 ministries of education in the region, education specialists of UNESCO, education partners from the GRE working with people on the move, and education and migration statistics experts. Technical focal points are appointed by each MoE involved. These (sub-)working groups provide a **platform for sharing knowledge, information, and experiences between different countries and partners, and function as a collective decision-making structure**, and are essential to coordinate implementation of the RMF across the development-humanitarian nexus with leadership from the ministries of education and the coordination of UNESCO.
3. **Developing an online open data platform** designed as a tool for analysis, visualization and dissemination of data, indicators, knowledge, and diagnostics collected under the RMF, to enable the implementation of lessons and best practices in the different countries of the region. Ultimately, it will be possible to visualize and track the educational trajectories of students on the move on its online web platform, allowing for data and policy comparisons across the region.

## **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESULTS OF THE PRACTICE**

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The RMF successfully met its initial aims and objectives by transforming the technical support offered to governments and supporting capacity development to inform inclusive education policies based on regionally comparable, quality data :

- The formation of Technical Working roundtables in which each ministry is represented by a technical focal point, **created a space to advocate for the right to education for POTM, make decisions and mobilize of political will**
- **Member States reaffirmed their commitments to inclusive education and participation in the RMF** in the [Declaration of Buenos Aires \(May 2022\)](#) and the [Joint Declaration VIII of the Quito Process \(July 2022\)](#)
- February 2022 : the sub-regional working group developed a concept note on **"Towards a definition of people on the move" presenting a harmonized understanding of human mobility trends** in the region and allowed for a clearer interpretation of the Framework
- November 2022 : the Framework's quantitative component, consisting of **a matrix of regionally comparable educational indicators was validated and adopted by the MoEs through a multi- stakeholder process**. These indicators aim to provide an organized and systematic view of the regional progress towards guaranteeing the right to education for POTM, covering the 5 dimensions of the right to education. Based on UNESCO's proposition, a small committee of 8 MoE developed and detailed 14 indicators. During the technical roundtable meeting, 12 of the proposed indicators were validated and adopted.
- Starting in April 2023 : all 18 **MoEs involved will begin testing the indicators at the national level**. Data collected and information on the process (including challenges faced) will be shared with UNESCO using specific online templates and made available on the EMAC platform. As this will be the first pilot of the indicator matrix, it is not expected that all Ministries will test all the indicators or collect the same level of detail, depending on their specific capacities and resources.

## KEY LEARNINGS AND EVIDENCE

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- 3 learnings to strengthen crisis and risk-related education data within national education systems :
  - **A bottom-up approach to educational data management for people on the move** provides national ownership and greater willingness on the part of Ministries of Education to steer the selection of information that would be useful to collect in a coordinated and harmonized manner across the region.
  - **UNESCO's strong relationship with Ministries of Education is instrumental** in convening a collaborative space for co-designing the RMF's conceptual framework with MoEs and partners.
  - The recognition by member states in the region of the need to improve processes for data production, capacities, and build a common conceptual framework to implement the different components of the RMF was facilitated by UNESCO's **preliminary diagnosis of status of data on students on the move in institutional education information systems** and its support to **participation in various dedicated political forums**, such as Quito Process. This recognition led to improved commitment to lead and actively contribute to the initiative's development and implementation.
  - Generating greater attention to the issue of access to education for students on the move by increasing awareness, building commitment, and fostering an enabling environment, the practice helps ministries of education collect the most essential data on students on the move
  - Progress made on improving data collection and decision making on education for people on the move at the national level contributes to increase member states' engagement and commitment to the implementation of the Regional Monitoring Framework.

- 1 learning for education actors to strengthen the use and sharing of relevant crisis and risk-related data:

The technical working roundtables give ministries of education the opportunity and space to engage in critical discussions, shared knowledge, built consensus and made joint decisions to strengthen the collection of data and information on the move in the information systems of the Ministries of Education of participating countries. This collaborative forum also facilitates coordination.

- 2 key learnings to improve coordination and harmonization of crisis and risk-related data to support system strengthening aims within national education systems and across the humanitarian-development nexus:

The technical working roundtables are a key element to build an enabling environment for better coordination and harmonization among all actors involved by:

- › **bringing together actors who generally remain siloed** to address the inclusion of people on the move in national education systems, such as the partners of the *Grupo Regional de Educacion* (GRE) composed primarily of humanitarian actors, UNESCO education specialists, experts in migration statistics and education, and a

technical and professional team from MoEs of the region, but also within different departments within the same ministry, that may not typically collaborate (i. e. EMIS and Human Mobility departments)

- › **producing harmonized indicators and data by establishing minimum harmonization criteria** for data collection (Indicator Matrix of the Regional Monitoring Framework for Students on the Move)
- › **ensuring regular and active engagement by MoEs**, which is central to the practice as it ensures the operational functionality of the Regional Monitoring Framework in a horizontal fashion, rather than a top-down imposition of global data frameworks

**Greater engagement of humanitarian partners** from the outset would be very beneficial to the process, as they are the ones on the ground with many communities on the move. However, the inclusion of humanitarian data at the initial stages of implementation was considered too complicated, including, because due to the localized nature of their response, which often lacks regional presence that would allow them to participate in discussions with MoEs at regional level. Efforts are being made to get these partners more involved in a sustainable way.

## **MAIN CHALLENGES FACED**

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Because the RMF requires coordinated action of education experts from the development and humanitarian sector, and Ministries of Education to address the gaps in EiE data in a harmonized manner:

- **Securing consistent, equal, and fast engagement from partners** is a significant challenge as it requires continuously building trust through existing communication pathways
- The Framework is designed in a way that attempts to show partners what can be provided to them rather than exclusively asking for partners to provide something to the Framework, resulting in a **labour-intensive engagement process that demands high-level involvement from all partners, particularly MoEs.**
- **Some member states are more involved than others**, and more support is continually requested from countries. Regular consultations and exchanges aim to address this challenge with ORELAC/UNESCO Santiago sending MoE representatives documents prepared for consultation in advance and then incorporates suggestions received into a revised document
- **The horizontal relationship established with the ministries is the main driver of their participation** as they feel that the work is theirs rather than a proposal from UNESCO. This is central to the functioning of the Framework. It is the hope that engagement will be more equally distributed in the future.

**UNESCO**, as the lead UN agency responsible for coordinating the international education community's efforts towards SDG4 while tracking and monitoring progress, including in crisis

affected contexts around the world, is committed to addressing the inequalities and exclusions that affect the most vulnerable populations, among people on the move (POTM). Within this framework, UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (ORELAC/UNESCO Santiago), in coordination with UNESCO Offices in the region, developed the UNESCO Regional Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean in response to the situation of people in a context of mobility 2019-2021, aiming at supporting countries in their efforts to ensure the right to education of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, displaced persons and returnees. The updated Regional Strategy (2022-2025) focuses on the following four pillars:

- Strengthening multilateral and regional education response to human mobility
- Planning for inclusive and equitable access to education systems
- Ensuring provision of inclusive and enabling educational and social environments; and
- Lifelong learning opportunities and recognition of previous education.

**The Ministries of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean** adopted the Declaration of Buenos Aires in 2022 reaffirming, in continuity with the Declaration of 2017 and the Cochabamba agreements of 2018, their institutional and regional commitment to guarantee the right of populations on the move to inclusive, equitable and quality education. As part of this commitment to regional solidarity to achieve SDG4 and respond to the Education 2030 agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the ministries have committed to advance collective and intergovernmental actions. More recently and as agreed by Member States participating in the Quito Process and Ministers of Education during the latest Regional Ministerial Meeting (2022), UNESCO/Santiago is supporting countries in implementing the Regional Monitoring Framework for Students on the Move (RMF), a flagship regional initiative aiming at advancing collective and intergovernmental coordination through the strengthening of the planning and monitoring capacities within national education systems. These capacities are crucial to reducing the risk of crises and strengthening educational interventions aimed at displaced populations while generating comparable and quality data across the region. The initiative, with the participation of 18 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean,<sup>1</sup> was highlighted as a [good practice by Thematic Action Track 1](#) on Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools of the Transforming Education Summit and by the [United Nations Network for Migration](#) (Global Compact for Migration).