Education for Democratic Citizenship in the Americas: An Agenda for Action

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Foreword

The study presented here was commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank for discussion during the workshop "Education for Citizenship and Democracy in the Americas: An Agenda for Action." The workshop will be held in the framework of the Fourth Meeting of Education Ministers of the hemisphere in Trinidad and Tobago. The recommendations that emerge from this meeting will be included in the preparations for the Fourth Summit of the Americas to be held in Argentina in November 2005.

Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean is experiencing a period in which electoral processes are solidly established in the great majority of the countries and the installation of military or *de facto* regimes as a solution to political crises seems to be a thing of the past. Thus, the region can take pride in the progress made by a key element of political citizenship, in other words, the rules and practices that allow peaceful competition for power through periodic clean elections to choose its leaders. However, this trend is taking place at the same time as an ongoing significant delay in the development of civil and social citizenship, which is expressed in unequal access to justice and the persistence of poverty and inequality. The combined challenges of poverty and governance urgently require active, politically informed and educated citizens, aware of their capacity to influence community events and government, at all levels.

While education for citizenship and democracy is a subject that has been present since the origins of public education systems in Latin America, in today's world, education is faced with an unprecedented challenge posed by complex demands. On the one hand, the development of our societies requires active, participatory citizenship. On the other, it seems that the great majority of young people are apathetic and uncommitted to participating in the processes inherent in democracies. Given this situation, the way citizenship education is imparted in schools—the traditional civic education—must be profoundly reformulated.

The Bank has been an active participant in the effort to strengthen democratic processes in the region and it has recognized experience in the support and development of a strong, participatory civil society. Using both financial and nonfinancial instruments, it has lent support to what could be called the fourth dimension in the struggle for human development. Three of those pillars are poverty reduction, economic growth with equity, and environmental protection. Inseparable from the other three, the fourth dimension is the consolidation of democracy and respect for human rights.

Among these efforts, it is worth emphasizing the importance of the international conference *Civitas Panamericano*, held by the IDB and other international institutions in 1996 in Buenos Aires. The conference explored different ways of strengthening the culture of democracy, making use of elements in both formal and informal education, such as introducing new curriculums in the schools and the extension of the teaching and learning process to families, churches, communities, labor unions and other civil society organizations.

The Bank's Strategy for the Modernization of the State (which has been in effect since 2003) states that "consolidation of democracy requires a political culture based on ethics, values and a democratic civil culture." It mentions areas that the "the Bank can support: incorporating democratic civic education programs into plans to reform the educational system and fostering programs and curricular reforms designed to promote a culture of tolerance, freedom, participation, responsibility and social solidarity." In the Education Strategy, it is reiterated that education "has an important role in shaping interactions among citizens and democratic governance."

The Education Network of the Regional Policy Dialogue organized by the Bank has held six regional meetings and five subregional meetings in which

participants have addressed priority themes for the educational policies of the member countries. The theme chosen by the Deputy Ministers, which was discussed during the seventh meeting held in February 2005, was that of citizenship education. To nourish these discussions, the Bank commissioned two studies comparing the situation of citizenship education in countries in the industrialized world with that of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Many countries in the region have initiated curricular reforms in which education for citizenship is seen as an indispensable requirement for economic growth and the development of a democratic culture. However, the emphasis on knowledge of the powers of the state, the duties of citizens and the law must be replaced. Instead, education for citizenship must not only focus on knowledge and political commitment, but also on social responsibility and participation in community activities.

This report analyzes alternatives for changing from civic education to citizenship education through schooling that incorporates citizenship at every level. It must redefine pedagogy to combine traditional academic elements with debates and community service experiences in a school environment that favors relationships of trust and mutual recognition. Empha-

sis is placed on evaluations that make their objectives visible. Such evaluations must measure progress and adjust policies at the macro level as well as the activities of teachers and educational institutions at the micro level.

A radical reevaluation of citizenship education in the schools represents an opportunity to establish a virtuous circle between democratic political institutions and a democratic political culture. Here, the leadership of countries and educators is essential in order to neutralize—especially among young people—cynicism and apathy with respect to politics, to inculcate democratic culture and to provide the tools for common action. All this will redound in the development of social democracy, today lagging behind in the region, which will assure minimum standards of security and welfare for all. With the presentation of this report, the Inter-American Development Bank confirms its commitment to these basic tasks for the development of the region.

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Introduction

Education offers the potential to achieve a democracy firmly rooted in society's cultural foundation, and holds out an opportunity that must not go to waste. The challenge is to establish, through education, a "virtuous cycle" between democratic institutions and democratic political culture. Education's potential to create capabilities among the new generation for active citizen engagement depends, fundamentally, on a reevaluation of civic education and the need for educators to ensure that their efforts to produce informed citizens will be meaningful in practice. The gap that exists distance today between young people and the obligations and practices of a political democracy can be breached. To do so will require new and meaningful answers to questions about the knowledge, values, and skills that comprise citizen education. Cynicism and apathy toward political processes must be eliminated, and democratic culture fostered as an ideal that endows a community with tools to act together.

The debate over how to foster democratic citizenship in Latin America is as old as the national public education systems; though it will never be over, it will always be new. And it will always be subsumed in the dynamics of the dialogue that seeks to define democracy and citizen participation (democracy as a way of life and as a process). The effort to educate people to become engaged citizens has long been threatened by interruptions in democratic governance and competing purposes within education itself.

Expectations of civic democracy and citizen participation are growing in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, much remains to be done. A recent study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2004) found that, according to the Support for Democracy Index, although democracy enjoys general support in the hemisphere, it cannot be taken for granted. Distrust in institutions and governments' ability to resolve urgent problems of poverty and inequality is high. A significant pro-portion of citizens are willing to abandon democracy for the sake of economic development.

Contemporary understanding of education for democratic citizenship is distinguished by the belief that the development of competencies is essential to civic and political participation (expertise, aptitudes, attitudes, and skills). Development of competencies involves several areas of education: 1) specific program content in courses on civics, history, and government; 2) cross-cutting content-rich themes in curriculums: promoting the competencies needed to live in a democracy; 3) pedagogical dimensions concerning students in their schools, where the teacher-student relationship still frequently embodies authoritarian traditions; and 4) the organization of the school itself.[1] Thus, it is necessary for a circumscribed view of civic education to be superseded with a broader one that recognizes that democratic education will permeate the various organizational levels of an educational institution, through novel modalities that allow students to develop the skills needed to become active citizens.

What are these skills? Those that allow the exercise of freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, speech, and movement; the right of assembly, to join with others in organizations, to vote, and to be judged impartially and under conditions of equality before the law. These skills also include exercising the obligation to vote, to participate in political processes, to pay taxes, to defend one's nation, obey the law, accept majority decisions, and respect the rights of

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[1] For a more detailed discussion of this broader model of education for a democratic citizenry, see F. Reimers, and E. Villegas-Reimers, *Educación para la Ciudadanía Democrática en Escuelas Secundarias en America Latina: Diez Propuestas para la Acción* [Education for democratic citizenship in secondary schools in Latin America: ten proposals for action], a work prepared for the Regional Policy Dialogue Meeting, Inter-American Development Bank, February 2005.

others; skills that enable a person to fully grasp what another individual seeks and needs; that is to understand the common good.

Thus, democracy and education confront major challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean. The major challenges of democracy consist of achieving good governance within a context of growing political competency, to find nonviolent solutions to conflicts (in the case of some countries within the region), and to ensure that the majority of the population support democratic forms of government. The upcoming agenda for education acknowledges that educational institutions are helping to promote universal skills that allow everyone to participate actively and to the full extent of their capabilities.

The weaknesses that educational institutions have in training citizens to use good judgment, understand the needs of others, and be willing to work for the common good, erode democratic culture as a way of life. The weaknesses of democratic institutions hamper effective actions to foster the role of schools in strengthening human development and train students in democratic skills.

These problems are recognized for what they are, precisely because the region today is more democratic than it has ever been. When authoritarian regimes prevailed, institutionalized intolerance could not be acknowledged as a problem. The current dynamism of Latin American democracies is what makes possible the urgent placement of democracy and citizen participation on the public agenda, and links this urgency to the goals in public education systems to foster stronger skills of democratic citizen participation.

This document reflects the need to base citizen training on a broader foundation than was traditionally the case not as an academic civics lecture but as a way of life in the educational system and to discuss the options for achieving a broader base. Educational systems should not cast aside traditional academic goals. Far from competing with academic study, citizenship training complements it and can fuel it. The challenge is to get students to develop their academic skills at the same time as they improve their interpersonal relationships and participate more profoundly in civic life. How can this be done? This study looks at available options and proposes a strategy for different participants in processes of educational reform to bring the necessary initiatives closer to fruition.

I.
Education for
Citizenship and Democracy
in Latin America and the Caribbean:
What's New with this Old Issue?

This chapter considers three important issues in contemporary analysis and debate over the role of education in strengthening democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean. First, it offers an analysis of the factors that require a specific response of democracy and education; among them, poverty and inequality; distrust in the political process; the trend toward individualism; loss of a sense of belonging to a political community beyond a local one; globalization; and the revolution in information and communications. Second, the question is then raised of how current public education in citizenship, which largely fails to meet these needs, can begin to be characterized. Finally, the chapter includes some educational and psychosocial precepts are offered, which need to be considered in the renewal of opportunities for learning democratic citizenship.

1.1. CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: NEW AND URGENT DEMANDS

One of the premiere tasks of public education is to shape informed citizens; to develop people who believe in the democratic ideal and its application in practice. Inherent is the intention to create opportunities for members of society to have their first community experiences. Public education can make a small or large difference in the intellectual and moral aptitudes that are the basis for a society's citizens to engage in political action; to reflect and act on itself, on its most pressing issues, purposes, and the meanings that provide social cohesion.

This formation of aptitudes and values should respond to the new set of requirements and conditions present in Latin America and the Caribbean today, which need to be identified. This is the overarching framework in which democratic citizen participation can be defined as an ideal by the current generation, as the sociocultural bases of new formative demands, more complex and urgent, that are made on institutions of learning.

NEW PARAMETERS

Three processes are identified here that may be thought of as parameters for the sociocultural and political redefinition of citizenship in the region: social realities combining poverty and post-modernity, the impact of globalization on the nation-state, and the revolution in information and communications.

Poverty and inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean lead citizens to distrust politics and the ability of institutions to address urgent problems.

There are trends toward greater individualization, fragmentation, and the unraveling of collective ties and identities that converge with a loss of trust in the public sector and the sense of belonging

to a community beyond a local one. These are identified as signposts and heightened risks of post-modernity.

Globalization, as it redefines the sphere of public life, challenges traditional notions of citizenship. Decisions made at global levels adversely affect decisions made in the nation-state and lead to redefinitions of citizenship.

The revolution in information and communications has a twofold impact on citizenship. On the one hand, it places within everyone's grasp enormous quantities of information on any issue affecting society. This requires an active citizen to acquire new capabilities to interpret and use the expanded information now available. On the other hand, politics becomes subject to profound and lasting effects as it gets channeled through the media, significantly redefining the relationship between citizens and their leaders.

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

Democratic governments have prevailed in Latin America and the Caribbean for more than two decades. Electoral democracy is the rule in the vast majority of countries in the region since the 1980s. A recent study indicates that countries undergoing political crises have not experienced a retreat to de facto or military regimes. The region may take pride in the progress made in this key aspect of political citizenship; that is, in the rules and practices that allow for peaceful competition for power through honest elections, regularly held to choose national leadership.[2] This trend is occurring, however, in conjunction with a slower development of civil citizenship reflected in unequal access to justice, and unrelenting poverty and inequality (which obstructs citizenship). The development of electoral democracy into a condition of democratic citizenship implies, according to Marshall,[3] the integration of three types of citizenship—political, civil, and social—and poses a great political, cultural, and educational challenge (UNPD 2004).

For a broad sector of citizens, the meanings and loyalties that democracy arouses are still ambivalent and uncertain. According to an (UNDP 2002) opinion survey[4] less than half (43 percent) of respondents have democratic orientations and opinions, 26.5 percent were classified as *not demo-*

cratic, and 30.5 percent as *ambivalent*.[5] Fifty-five percent of those surveyed would support an authoritarian government "if it could resolve economic problems." A similar proportion (56 percent) felt that "economic development is more important than democracy."

The growing distance between young people and politics and the public sphere is cause for concern. In the developed world, the phenomenon has caused alarm. A series of policies and educational responses at the highest levels explicitly seek to invigorate

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[2] Of 231 national leaders interviewed within the framework of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on democracy in Latin America, only 17 did not agree with the opinion that it had made significant progress during the last decade. UNDP (2004), *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy*. New York and Buenos Aires: (Chapter VI) [in Spanish, English and Portuguese].

[3] T.H. Marshall quoted in the UNDP report (2004), op cit., p. 61: "Political citizenship includes the right to participate in the exercise of political power as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of its members. The corresponding institutions are the Parliament and units of local government. **Civil** citizenship is composed of those rights relating to individual freedom: freedom of person, expression, of thought and religion, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. This last right is of different nature from the rest because it deals with the right to defend and uphold the set of rights of a person in conditions of equality with others, by means of due legal procedures. This shows us that the institutions directly related to civil rights are the courts of justice. Finally, **social** citizenship includes the whole spectrum, from the right to security and a minimum of economic welfare to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standard prevailing in the society. The institutions directly linked are, in this case, the system of education and the social services.

[4] UNDP (2004), *op. cit.* The study was based on an opinion survey with responses from 18,643 citizens from 18 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela.

[5] *The ambivalent* are persons with a *delegative concept* of democracy. "In principle they support democracy, but they believe it is valid to take anti-democratic decisions when running the government if, in their judgment, circumstances so demand." (UNDP (2004), op.cit. p. 134) The concept of delegative democracy was introduced by Guillermo O'Donnell to refer to countries where free, clean elections are held but in which the governments (especially presidents) feel authorized to act without institutional restrictions. See G. O'Donnell (1994), "Delegative Democracy," in *Journal of Democracy* 5 (1), pp. 94–108.

public education in active citizenship.[6] In the context of the countries of the region, the UNDP found that age was a determining factor in democratic orientation. A significantly high proportion of young people in the 16 to 29 age group (the group with the highest educational levels of those surveyed) 28.7 percent have a non-democratic orientation; 31.2 percent are in the ambivalent category and 40.1 percent have a democratic orientation. Evidence from a comparative study of civic knowledge and attitudes among high-school students (carried out with OAS support) indicates that the majority of young people today take part in community and solidarity groups. At the same time, they express distrust and detachment from political institutions and participation. Their social commitment is disconnected from a sense of value and commitment to politics and the procedures and demands of democracy (Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2004). An opinion study from the late 1990s that examined concepts of democracy in three Latin American countries (Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico) demonstrated that young people attribute a different meaning to democracy than does the adult generation. Young people accord importance to issues of diversity and safeguarding political minorities, whereas adults identified democracy with concepts of order and electoral competition (Ai Camp 2001).

The ambiguities concerning young people's relationship to politics and democracy illustrate the growing complexity of our societies and its impact on the next generation: social commitment that shows solidarity and is local; detachment from politics; high value on diversity and pluralism; rejection by many of electoral participation; integration into youth subcultures providing group solidarity and reason for being; and disinterest in society at large. Many big cities in the region have seen a marked increase in violence and illegal behavior, such as drug consumption and trafficking, crimes against property and people, participation in criminal groups or gangs (known as *maras*) in several countries of Central America and in the United States.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are undergoing processes of unprecedented social, economic, and political change that are having an impact on institutions and traditional forms of social cohesion. New problems and challenges proliferate. They were brought on by the globalization of processes, production patterns, and material and symbolic exchanges, all of which place complex demands on political institutions, practices, and culture.

We are faced with a paradox: The complexity of modern life, now more than ever, demands democratic politics as a space in which to develop common responses to old and new problems. Nevertheless, the demands fail to engage the next generation, which is the best educated in the history of the region.[7] We must urgently examine what educational institutions offer today in terms of citizenship education and explore ways to explicitly and consistently encourage their transformation.

The combination of the challenges of poverty and governance, more than any others, calls for active citizenship. Trust in others (the foundation of all civic participation) needs to be raised to a higher level. Respect for the law, a necessary condition for all democratic regimes, must be matched by criteria for justice and the knowledge and skills needed to change laws through peaceful and responsible means. The principles of transparency and accountability must steer relations between citizens, their representatives, and government authorities. Citizens must be politically informed and educated and believe they have a say in community issues and government affairs at every level.

A citizen democracy needs to be formed in the region that can work through Marshall's above-cited three dimensions—political, civil, and social citizenship (UNDP 2004). Without these conditions, steady development and integrated societies will not be possible. A democratic culture must be established to strengthen or create in individuals (and in society) an appreciation of the public and political spheres, the ability to interpret information, and to cooperate, participate, and resolve conflicts.

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[6] This is the case for the British government and its 1998 *Advisory Group* on citizenship education, as well as the recent private U.S. consensual initiative (liberal and conservative, from the worlds of research, education and policy design) to diagnose the weakness of civic education found in the schools and the political, social and economic importance of decisively invigorating it (Carnegie Corporation of New York and CIRCLE, (2003) *Civic Mission of Schools*). See box 2.

[7] See "*Expanding the Knowledge Capital of Latin America and the Caribbean: A Strategic Framework for Education and Training, 2005–2015*," Inter-American Development Bank, 2005.

AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY

The theoretician of democracy Giovanni Sartori has written, "Democracy is, more than anything and above all, an ideal…Without an idealistic tendency democracy cannot be born, and if it is, it will soon weaken. More than any other political regime, democracy runs against the current, against the laws of inertia that govern human groups. Monarchies, autocracies, dictatorships are easy, they collapse from their own weight; democracies are complicated, they must be nurtured and believed in." (Sartori, 1991, p. 118) For education to become effective in building beliefs and skills for active citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean, the learning opportunities offered by civic education need to be completely updated. The prevalence of democracy offers an unprecedented opportunity for this task. From an educational perspective, its importance is that schools can teach something that is real and that enjoys legitimacy in society. The skills taught in classrooms and schoolyards have an external correlation: either in fact, because democratic institutional structures operate appropriately, or as normative criteria against which the true conditions of systemic political operations may be judged, should ideal institutional structures be lacking.[8]

1.2 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN CREATING CITIZENS

The challenges and opportunities described in the previous section on how to consolidate a democratic culture among young people may appear to present a paradox, given that, since their establishment, educational systems in Latin America have proposed the need for students to become politically socialized. Ideas promoted by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento about people's education, based on Horace Mann's concept of the community school in Massachusetts, essentially had civic purposes their aim was to integrate groups of different origins and cultures in order to build a single nationality and citizenry, and what Sarmiento saw as the need to build a new political order to confront the rule of the *caudillos* who have competed for power in Latin America ever since the wars of independence.

The shift from traditional civic education to a broader view requires the development of competencies (skills, aptitudes, and attitudes) for civic and political participation. It involves several areas of education: high quality education for all, including explicit program contents (in courses on civics, history, and government, as well as other curricular areas). It also involves addressing the school/teaching environment and the educational structure.

HISTORICAL EMPHASIS ON THE POLITICAL ROLE OF SCHOOLS

The clear political aims that fueled the creation of Latin American public schools were admirably successful in creating universal primary schools in most countries of the region during the 20th century. An unprecedented expansion in access to every level of education took place (Reimers 2005). Political ends were expressed more intermittently through the contents of study programs geared toward preparing a large sector of the population to master the cultural codes that make political, social, and economic participation possible.

In the 20th century, schools were consolidated as public institutions, with public acceptance and support and became among the most trusted institutions in society. In the late 1990s, parents of school children in Mexico indicated that 74 percent had considerable respect for the Secretariat of Public Education, 71 percent for local education officials. These percentages were somewhat less than the proportion of trust in the armed forces (77 percent) and in the Catholic Church (82 percent), but higher than the level of confidence in the President of the Republic (67 percent), the private sectored (40 per-

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[8] Regarding the existence of democracy—at least electoral— "outside" of school, an analyst of citizenship and education in the developed world stated: ".... if societies do not offer their citizens significant opportunities to use the competencies they possess and value, then the most likely outcome is erosion more than strengthening of such competencies.*" D.P, Keating (2003) "Definition and Selection of Competencies from a Human Development Perspective," in D.S. Rychen, L.H. Salganik (Editors), *Key Competencies for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society*, OECD, Hogrefe & Huber, p.60. [*This is the English translation of the Spanish rendition, not a direct quotation from the original text.]

cent), and the police (43 percent) (Fundación En Este País 2003).

Nevertheless, many cracks in the democratic order in Latin America over the course of the 20th century left their impact on political socialization in schools. The encouragement of people to think for themselves in order to master cultural codes and thereby enable themselves to participate in every social sphere is a recent phenomenon and exists in opposition to the longer authoritarian tradition in the region's educational institutions. The aim is questioned, and consensus is spotty (Reimers 2005). The meanings of democratic citizenship and notions of democracy are also diverse. Ideas of who is a citizen diverge. In practice, clear constraints exist on the full exercise of citizen rights for women, the poor, indigenous people, people of African descent, religious minorities, and immigrants. What it means to be a citizen, what the rights and obligations are that attend citizenship are open to different interpretations, reflecting diverse concepts of democracy (such as republican, federalist, and communitarian positions); so too the meaning of political participation (with concepts fluctuating between a minimalist view that identifies the right to vote and the idea of more direct everyday participation in the public affairs of the community and of other spheres).

As already noted, the debate over how to teach democratic citizenship in Latin America and the Caribbean has been going on for a long time. This is partly because of the interruptions in democracy and because of its competition with alternative goals for education. In recent years, concern for raising economic competitiveness has led to an emphasis on skills that increase productivity. The expansion of economic participation could be considered as an expansion of one aspect of citizenship; nevertheless, it is hardly synonymous with the attainment of full political participation. Even in economies based on traditional forms of production (industries to extract raw goods or primary products) the skills that make it possible to increase productivity are not clearly the same ones that open the way for democratic participation. It may be that there is more overlap among these competencies in economies dependent on knowledge-based industries; in other words, in those economies that depend on the value added of highly skilled labor, as opposed to ones that rely on factors of production with lower costs. Essentially, we are referring to industries and tasks that cannot be easily automated, which require symbolic operations and complex thought for production of goods and services.

HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

There are clear educational expressions over the democratic proposals for education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Curriculum development, national programs of study, and efforts to make access to basic education universal reflect the centuries-old democratic concern for broadening access to cultural codes. These efforts facilitate citizen participation, acceptance of the legitimacy of the State and its legal system. Segmentation of instruction levels within schools is scant. In general, advanced courses are not available in any subject in the schools of the region. Consensus continues to grow in favor of general basic, undifferentiated education, which reflects the democratic idea that everyone has a fundamental and equal right to participation. This justifies the right to education.

There is a lack of consensus on the need for political purposes in education to be embodied in programs of study and in teaching quality. Nor is there agreement on the most relevant forms of political socialization, so a democratic dynamic citizenship leads to social fragmentation between schools. Marginalized social groups receive fewer opportunities to develop skills that would permit them to participate in political, social, or economic spheres. Students who fail to achieve minimum competency in literacy, mathematics and sciences will face greater obstacles to developing their political voice and participation. In more ways than one, as Sarmiento understood, political strongmen still depend on the poor education of the majority.

A basic problem in Latin American and Caribbean schools, from the perspective of education for democratic citizenship, arises from low curricular standards and deficient teaching mechanisms and processes. The result is low reading levels, and poor mathematic and scientific reasoning among students who have completed their basic education. Even though there is little information, it is possible that low levels of achievement are also found in the subjects of history and civic education.

CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The competencies required for effective political participation in a democracy are more extensive than general skills that enable access to knowledge and

contemporary cultural codes. They include knowledge of the history of the countries of the region (for an understanding of the origins of contemporary political dilemmas), their representative institutions through which democracy finds expression.

Competencies are needed that explore the options for local participation and how to exercise it, and develop the predisposition to do so. These skills are developed and acquired as much from schooling as from opportunities to develop aptitudes that are essential in order to live in a democracy, that is, the ability to listen to others, to concur with others, to negotiate differences, to recognize one's own rights and the rights of others. The ability to tolerate differences and to accept cultural diversity and diversity in the choices others make.

All of these competencies, which have to do with behavior and attitudes in relation to others, are learned and make up an important component of political socialization. But their acquisition depends on the school organization and culture, on the nature of interactions among peers, between students and teaching and administrative staff, and the pedagogical forms used by teachers, as much as on the actual teaching content used.

A second level of analysis of the performance of Latin American educational institutions concerns the teaching of civic education. The inclusion of this course within programs of study reflects, in most countries, a traditional view of citizenship associated with knowledge of public powers and branches of government and the formal exercise of the right to vote in a representative democracy. There are serious deficiencies in this regard.

Comparative studies of some countries in the region indicate poor knowledge of democratic institutions among young people. A mere half of young people in Chile and 77 percent of Colombians can correctly identify who should govern in a democracy. This makes it all the more worrisome that the percentage of people who answer correctly is so low. Because the survey that yielded this response relied on multiple choice questions, respondents had a 25 percent chance of getting the right answer. Likewise, one-third of Chilean students believe that experts should govern in a democracy (Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2005, pp. 50–51). In Mexico, 50 percent of ninth-grade graduates answered that experts should govern in a democracy and only 41 percent identify as correct the answer that popularly elected representatives should govern (Tirado and Guevara 2005, p. 23). Equally low is the knowledge of the constitution, the function of civic organizations and of laws, the ability to identify corruption, the function of regularly held elections, political parties, congress, and the press.

It is likely that these disappointing results reflect both the structure and content of educational programs, since the information from the answers is largely incomprehensible and alien to the actual experiences of the students. A lack of integration with other subjects in the school curriculum is also apparent. The teaching methodologies used for civic education may simply be particularly ineffective. In Mexico, a recent study of students in their senior year of high school indicates that the civics course is the least liked of all. Whereas 24 percent indicate that they like the Spanish language course very much; only 13 percent responded positively for the civics course. A high proportion reported that their knowledge of civics is less than their knowledge of other course material (Tirado and Guevara 2005).

SCHOOL AND PEDAGOGICAL SETTING

A third level of analysis concerns the existing disparity between what is taught and what is practiced in schools. The understanding of what it means to live in a democracy students develop from their daily interactions with teachers is more directly meaningful. Curriculum content on the rights between men and women will have little meaning in schools where gender discrimination is the rule. Schools where corruption takes place (including frequent unjustified teacher absenteeism, union intervention to prevent sanction and irresponsible or unprofessional performance, or charging illegal fees to enroll students) teach students undemocratic interactions. As a result, the content of civics courses remains theoretical and disassociated from actual experience.

The school organization and the values that teaching staff hold and express are an important part of the school setting, and contribute greatly to a school's hidden or unofficial curriculum. Recent surveys of teachers in several countries of the region reveal non-inclusive attitudes, which are neither accepting nor appreciative of diversity. Surveys indicate high rates of negative attitudes toward diversity in Argentina, Peru, and Uruguay. Homosexuals are the most common targets of discriminatory attitudes: 20 percent of teachers in Uruguay, 34 percent in Argentina, and 55 percent in Peru would not accept homosexuals as neighbors. Strong rejection on the

basis of nationality, ethnic origin, or social condition is also apparent: 11 percent of teachers in Uruguay, 15 percent in Argentina, and 38 percent of teachers in Peru discriminate against people based on their nationality or ethnic group. Discrimination against "outer-city" slum dwellers is shown among 16 percent of the teachers in Peru, 33 percent of teachers in Uruguay, and 52 percent in Argentina (Tenti-Fanfani 2003, p. 4). Negative attitudes are found toward nationals of neighboring countries, immigrants and people of other religions. Between 19 and 20 percent of teachers in Peru discriminate against Arabs, Jews, Japanese and other Asian nationals, Ecuadorians, Paraguayans, and Chileans. Discrimination in these cases is lowest in Argentina and Uruguay. Rates of discriminatory attitudes among teachers in Argentina are indicated in 9 percent of cases against Bolivians, 6 percent against Chileans, and 4 percent against Arabs, Jews, Japanese, Ecuadorians, and Paraguayans.

In Mexico only a minority of teachers indicate that it is the obligation of a citizen to obey the law (29 percent) or respect the rights of others (18 percent). Only 40 percent of the teachers stated that citizens must always obey the law; 80 percent believe that justice administration and law enforcement agencies are corrupt and that they would not receive fair treatment were they arrested for a crime they did not commit. Forty-eight percent of Mexican teachers indicate modest satisfaction with democracy, and 29 percent indicate little satisfaction.

Just half state that voting is the best way to influence government action; fewer still indicate other options as having effective influence on government: 21 percent mention radio and television spots and 14 percent public protests.

These attitudes mean that the young people who graduate from these educational institutions will lack the necessary skills to become active citizens in a democracy.

EXAMPLES OF COUNTRIES THAT HAVE TAKEN ACTION

Some countries in the region have taken the first steps to identify the skills required for effective democratic citizenship and to design programs to help develop them.

A seminar on curriculum development for Caribbean countries was held in 2001, in which participating countries described their efforts to identify the ideal type of citizen competencies to be developed in schools. As shown in Box 1, several countries included tolerance for diversity, respect for human rights, and responsibility for one's own actions and those of the community. However, the skills identified in the seminar are only a first step and do not include all the skills that we have identified as essential for democratic citizenship.

BOX 1

GOALS FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SELECTED CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

- To have respect for human life; to be emotionally secure with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem; to accept ethnic, religious and other forms of diversity as a source of strength and richness; to be aware of the importance of living in harmony with the environment; to appreciate family and group values; to have community cohesion in moral matters, such as being responsible for oneself and for the community (Barbados Report, p. 7).

- To prepare young people to be active, generous and compassionate citizens ready to continue their education to improve their own quality of life and that of others (Bahamas Report, p. 5).

- To promote understanding of the principles and practices of a democratic society (Trinidad and Tobago Report, p. 11).

- To prepare students for life in such ways that they may effectively adapt to technological changes and proactively participate in the country's social, economic and political activities (Belize Report, p. 3).

- To design basic education to develop in young children the knowledge, understanding, skills and values that establishes the basis for their personal development and for optimal participation in society (Netherlands Antilles Report, p. 5).

Source: Byron, Isabel and Saskia Rozemeijer, Curriculum Development for Learning to Live Together: The Caribbean Sub-Region, UNESCO, International Bureau of Education, 2001.

BOX 2

CARIBBEAN NATIONS THAT INCORPORATE
DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION INTO SCHOOL CURRICULUMS

In Jamaica, students learn to:

- Show that they believe in the democratic process.
- Demand their rights and fulfill their responsibilities as citizens of a democratic society.
- Appreciate those who have physical and mental disabilities as equal members of society and recognize their contributions.
- Examine the impact of various ethnic and racial groups on the culture and evaluate their level of influence.
- Develop a sense of responsibility for the consequences of their actions and act with attention to the rights, life and dignity of other persons in the family, community, nation and world.
- Recognize the ties that bind all Caribbean peoples, independently of man-made boundaries.
- Recognize and respect cultural differences, and show tolerance for persons of other cultures.
- Develop the values and skills required for personal, family, and community harmony, as well as harmony in the nation and in the world.
- Understand that interdependence is necessary for the survival of human groups (Jamaica Report, p. 6).

In Trinidad and Tobago, students learn to:

- Show empathy with the values and perspectives that guide the behavior of persons from different cultures and understand that they all contribute to the progress of the human experience.
- Respect and act to preserve the basic principles and ideals of a democratic society at all times.
- Respect and act to preserve human rights at all times
- Show respect for and pride in themselves, their communities, nation and region.
- Show an attitude toward community life in which they recognize its place and progress in human experience in real, concrete ways (Trinidad and Tobago Report, p. 16).

In the Bahamas, citizenship education must:

- Empower young citizens with a knowledge and understanding of their country.
- Promote democratic processes.
- Promote concern for preservation of the environment.
- Promote regional cooperation.
- Instill values, self-esteem and tolerance.

Source: Byron, Isabel and Saskia Rozemeijer, 2001.

Only three of the countries participating in the seminar proposed education in democratic values as an explicit curriculum objective (see box 2).

Chile, Colombia, Mexico, the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries have shown an interest in the need to improve the effectiveness of citizenship education.

Several years ago, the Education Minister of Colombia undertook a long-term program to develop citizenship competencies. "The program is a restatement of the school's role in citizenship education. Schools are moving from a consideration of these matters in one civics class for one hour, once a week, toward organizing all their activities around the democratic values to be taught. This means that these values will become part of every decision and social interaction" (Jaramillo 2005). The program involves defining standards (see box 3), evaluating citizenship competencies, organizing training workshops throughout the country, organizing regional and national forums to identify successful teaching experiences including those of universities and nongovernmental organizations, promoting citizenship education for university students, and offering structured programs to promote citizenship. In the development of these programs, the Ministry combines

BOX 3

CITIZENSHIP COMPETENCIES STANDARDS IN COLOMBIA

The national citizenship competencies program is a concrete, structured, long-term response of the education sector to the problem of violence in Colombia. Rather than creating a civics department, the government created a program in *competencies,* which seeks a definite change in people's individual, social and political *behavior.* In education, the idea of competency implies not only acquiring knowledge, but also learning how to apply that knowledge in relationship to actions, performance or products—whether concrete or abstract. It allows a student to confirm how much he/she understood what was learned and to develop an individual identity through works performed.

What are citizenship competencies? Citizenship competencies (CC) are those cognitive, emotional, communications and integrative competencies that, coordinated among themselves, along with knowledge and attitudes, enable a citizen to be willing to act—and in fact act—in a constructive way, in a democratic society. CCs foster citizens actively contributing to *peaceful living together, responsible and constructive participation* in democratic processes and understanding *plurality* as an opportunity and richness of the society. This includes a person's immediate environment (family, friends, classroom, school institution), as well as the community, country or the international level. As a result, CCs come together in the framework of respect, promotion and defense of human rights.

Groups

Living with others and peace: People's capacity to establish quality social relationships based on justice, empathy, tolerance, solidarity and respect for others.

Participation and democratic responsibility: This is the way to the full exercise of citizenship. It fosters the capacity and willingness to lead and take part in collective and participative *decision-making* processes; construction of *fair standards* for achieving common purposes; formulation and maintenance of *agreements* among persons or groups.

Plurality, identity and placing value on differences: Recognition of equal dignity, starting from valuing the characteristics of gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, social group, among others. This inclusion starts by legitimating the various ways of being, living and creating, and guaranteeing equal rights.

The three groups of standards are differentiated above, but it is recognized that there are multiple intersections and relationships among them.

Competencies

Cognitive Competencies: Capacity to step outside the box, coordinate perspectives, generate options to deal with conflicts, think critically about one's own and other people's statements, identify the consequences of a decision, etc.

Emotional Competencies: Capacity to identify your own and other people's emotions and respond to them constructively.

Communications Competencies: Capacity to establish a constructive dialogue with other persons. Active listening, rational and precise arguments, expression with different symbolic systems, assertiveness, willingness to hear all voices under equal conditions and to consider different alternatives in order to build consensus.

Integrative Competencies: Capacity to coordinate, in a single action, the other competencies and the knowledge required for the exercise of citizenship.

Knowledge: Information—theoretical and practical—that persons must know and understand about the exercise of citizenship. Knowledge about each country's constitution in order to share the social ideals set forth therein.

a top-down strategy with a strategy to identify local efforts.

For some years, the Ministry has been putting together case studies of students getting along with each other so that teachers can be shown how others have been able to resolve conflicts intelligently, cooperatively and peacefully. This is an effort to find real situations in which students have developed an

awareness of matters related to interpersonal conflicts, getting along, and peace or discrimination. Then, the students have tried to understand these matters in depth, in order to see how cultural differences can enrich the country. With support from the program "Business People for Education," the Ministry undertook the task of collecting some of these stories and requesting that experienced journalists publicize them.[9]

The Ministry then sought to make use of regional experiences collected at the forum and the reflections generated by teachers, connecting them up with Colombian and international researchers on these matters. In turn, the researchers developed texts on these issues, and, based on their experience with education systems (at both the school and continuing education levels), were able to implement them. (There are 32 structured programs based on the research, including publications, methodologies and pedagogical proposals.) Workshops were planned in seven Colombian cities (Bogotá, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, Florencia, Manizales and Medellín) to create a *diálogo de saberes* [knowledge dialogue] that would allow them to gather "bottom-up" experiences with structured pedagogical programs based on the research.[10]

In the United States, recently, interest has arisen in education for democratic citizenship (see box 4). For example, the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools is a response to the perception of a group of educators that during the last decade, schools have neglected their civic purposes. Many of them have reduced students' opportunities to participate in civic instruction and extracurricular activities such as service, school newspapers and student government. Meanwhile, the civic and political participation of young people has diminished (Academy for Educational Development 2004).

In 1998, the Education Commission of the States established the National Center for Learning and Citizenship, which defined the definition and contents of citizenship education. This organization sees citizenship as an amalgamation of three kinds of competencies: 1) civic knowledge, both historical and contemporary. This has to do with understanding the structure and functioning of the constitutional government, knowing who local political officials are, and understanding how democratic institutions function, 2) cognitive and participative skills such as the ability to analyze data on government and local matters, and the skills required for a student to resolve conflicts within a group, and 3) civic attitudes such as a preference

and support for justice and equality and a sense of personal responsibility (Torney-Purta and Vermeer 2004).

At the end of the past decade, England developed a policy response at the highest level to the perceived inadequacies in the quality of citizenship education and its consequences for a democratic system.

In November 1997, the British Minister of Education convened an "advisory group" comprised of five representatives from the fields of education (school and university), politics, religion and communications for the purpose of advising and making proposals regarding an effective program for citizenship education in the school system. The group had six observers from the Ministry of Education and was headed by Bernard Crick, a leading British political intellectual. After a little less than a year of deliberation and an in-depth process of consultation, the *Advisory Group on Citizenship* delivered its diagnosis and proposal.[11]

The diagnosis found "worrisome levels of ignorance, apathy and cynicism" of the policy and a school provision for citizenship education offered "under different names, in different forms and in very different quantity; and we suspect, of varied quality, given that there are no national standards or goals (of learning) by which it can be evaluated."

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[9] The result was the book *15 experiencias para aprender ciudadanía… y una más* [15 experiences for learning citizenship…and one more] which was presented at the Foro Nacional de Competencias Ciudadanas [National Forum for Citizenship Competencies] in 2004 and used by various communications media to show the friendly face of Colombia.

[10] The work carried out during this meeting was set down in the Forum's reports, which were recently published on the Educational Portal www.colombiaaprende.edu.co. A summary of some 70 of the most significant experiences collected to date have already appeared there, and they are developing continuing education systems with educators throughout the country by means of alliances among those who have developed the experiences, the universities, teachers colleges, some NGOs, and research centers interested in the expansion of these ideas. Along with 32 structured programs, this opens up an array of opportunities so that educational institutions have an entity with which they can communicate about ideas for improving their democratic practices.

[11] Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, (1998) "Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools": final report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, London; Department for Education and Employment and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (1999), "The National Curriculum for England: Citizenship," London.

BOX 4

THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES (2003)

Sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement [CIRCLE], the *Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools* (www.civicmissionofschools.org) is a long-term effort to renew civic learning in the schools. The proposal consists of promoting changes in national, state and local policies to promote civic learning and to implement the recommendations of the report, "The Civic Mission of Schools."

The report identifies the decreasing political participation rates of young people and the relative neglect of civic education in study programs. At the same time, it emphasizes the potential of educational institutions to develop the cognitive competencies essential to civic participation. The report emphasizes six options for developing competent and responsible citizens:

1. Provide formal instruction in government, history, law and democracy.
2. Incorporate the discussion of local, national and international issues into the classroom, in particular those topics that young people perceive as important.
3. Design and implement programs that give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned through community service integrated into the formal curriculum formal and class instruction.
4. Offer extracurricular activities that give students opportunities to be involved in their schools or communities.
5. Promote participation in student government.
6. Stimulate student participation in simulations of democratic processes.

The report's main recommendations are:

7. Schools must work with education departments in the states and with local educational authorities to develop and establish civic education programs based on combinations of the six focuses proposed. These programs must be part of the student's experience in each grade.
8. School administrators must stimulate educators to discuss complex and controversial contemporary issues in class.
9. The federal government must increase financing for civic education through, for example, a National Foundation for Civic Education, which would commission research on civic education, promote development of model programs, and would help design and implement programs. It would serve as a center for compiling and disseminating information on civic education for teachers and schools in the United States.
10. Civic education standards must be established.
11. Schools of education must increase the civic dimension of pre-service and in-service education of teachers and administrators.
12. Researchers must develop and implement more rigorous studies (including longitudinal research) on effective focuses for learning through community service (service learning) and other areas of civic education.
13. Financing agencies must support efforts to build national and state coalitions of educators, policymakers, parents, young people and community leaders to demand more and better civic education in the schools.

(Report, par. 3.11) They determined from their observations that this did not constitute a coherent basis for the education of an active citizenry.

The advisory group's proposal had two key recommendations. It devised a concept of education for an active citizenry: "Our understanding of citizenship education in a parliamentary democracy assumes three heads on one body: moral and social responsibility, involvement with the community and political knowledge. Responsibility is an essential

virtue that is both political and moral, because it implies a) concern for others; b) premeditation and calculation of the effects actions may have on others; and c) comprehension and concern about the consequences." (Report, par. 2.12).

Secondly, it proposed that citizenship education be a compulsory part of the curriculum, with learning objectives for the various stages of the school sequence between the ages of 11 and 16. The learning objectives should be specific enough so that their attainment could be monitored and evaluated. Since 2002, citizenship education has been compulsory and a key element of the British curriculum.

1.3 EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Interest in what the other person is saying is at the heart of democracy as a political system. This system strives for all voices to be heard in order to make collective decisions inspired by the common good. This cannot exist without participation of all groups with their interests, needs and opportunities for real action. The legitimacy of democratic institutions is based on the participation of different groups in society. Unlike elitism, which seeks the best, wisest, most honest and most illustrious—the philosopher kings of Plato's Republic—to oversee and govern for the common good, democracy aims for everyone to participate in decisions, because the articulation of voices reflects the needs, wishes and interests of all, which must be negotiated in order to obtain the common good. Also, only by participating do we learn how to participate. Therefore, it is essential in a democracy to understand how to hear various different voices, understand where they are coming from, what they are looking for and why they demand and claim what they do.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

By the fifteenth century of the Protestant Reformation, the chance for everyone to participate in the interpretation of the Bible had already opened up and with it came the possibility of "free interpretation," whereby anyone could think and offer a criti-

cal opinion on the most important subject of the time: religion. During the Enlightenment and its subsequent modernity, it was logical to concentrate on the opportunity to speak, on freedom of expression, given that politically this was the most important element standing in the way of any person becoming a free citizen. Therefore, liberal ideas centered on the potential to have a place where ideas of free men who wished to participate in the shaping of laws and decisions could be presented, so that in such a place they could speak freely and frankly ("parler") in the Parliament.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, science was developed because it strove to free itself from the ties of the church, which prevented freedom of thought. Freedom of expression moved to the academic sphere, where it was possible to express any idea, no matter how ridiculous it seemed to common sense or religious orthodoxy, in order to support the idea in theoretical arguments and in empirical results decanted through the scientific method. Education at its higher levels began to reflect the same idea: that philosophical and scientific truths could and should be disseminated without censure. In this way, academic freedom was built as the university form of free expression.

The modern idea of citizenship emerged within this context, which was symbolically fulfilled in the American Revolution with the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Revolution with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789). However, even by the beginning of the twentieth century, women, the illiterate, those who did not own property and minors under 21 years of age were still not considered citizens. The inclusion of a greater number of people in the definition of citizen was slow and was nurtured by the great revolution in paradigms that occurred in the past century.

During the course of the twentieth century, a consensus on what we could call *formal citizenship* (or legal) for all men and women over the age of 18 began to take shape, except for those who were mentally handicapped. Formal citizenship was recognized even for those for whom the exercise of citizenship was restricted (soldiers, prisoners, etc.). The *education* of citizens, male and female, was thought to include knowledge of the Constitution, the laws, the three branches of Government and the duties of citizens. Civic education in Latin America traditionally reflected that conception.

However, once that consensus on formal citizenship was attained, various authors, social and

political movements, ethnic groups and other social agents began to question, expand and differentiate various concepts of citizenship and seek its fulfillment in political and cultural settings. The authorities and theorists began to feel the need to expand the idea of citizenship from the formal and legal aspects to the psychological, social, political and cultural aspects associated with belonging to the country, participation in discussions and decisions, environmental consciousness, interpersonal relationships favorable to the well-being of the community or society and participation in the monitoring and control of state organizations. Genetic psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics and other academic disciplines shared their points of view, their findings and proposals for discussion on the conditions, skills, competencies, knowledge, attitudes and feelings associated with the exercise of citizenship at the end of the twentieth century and for the third millennium. For its part, moral and political philosophy embarked on new developments enriched by the ideas coming from the psychological and social sciences. The first with Dewey, Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Noddings, Apel, Habermas, Cortina; the second with Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, Rawls, Heller, Fraser, Amartya Sen and others. Education quickly began to receive challenges, inputs, pressures and other influences coming from all those new perspectives.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

After Dewey, perhaps the most important figure in reigniting the teaching of values in the school was Lawrence Kohlberg, who set out to combine many of the previous alternatives into his own expanded and logical position, based on the theories of Kant, Dewey himself, Piaget, Rawls and his debates with Habermas. He was successful because he was able to prepare an operational proposal, associated with development and autonomy, which was based on a deep interrelationship between philosophy, psychology and pedagogy (Kohlberg, L. & Mayer, R., 1972). A descendant of Piaget, Kohlberg demonstrated the importance of considering the cognitive processes of decentralization, coordination of perspectives and cognitive conflict as fundamental to the moral development of students. At the same time, he made us see the importance of reflection in the school so

that from pedagogy it was possible to refine theory and improve its fundamental practice.

Thanks to reflection and, in part, the criticism of Kohlberg's work—particularly by feminists—we are now convinced that the cognitive dimension is not enough and how the focus on justice must be complemented by a focus on care ("the care approach"). That people are conscious of their connection to other human beings and understand how both can be enriched in the relationship are key elements in education (Noddings 1992; Gilligan 1982; Buber 1965).

Instead of someone learning how to internalize the external world, these authors suggest learning how to develop in relation to others. Piaget and Kohlberg's model for individual development was centered on autonomy, decentralization and objectivity. However, and without denying that decentralization already opens the individual model to others, the relational models seeks to understand how people grow in their interaction with others and gain in judgment and significance given that these relationships are built, defined and rebuilt together (Rogoff 1990; Schunk and Zimmerman 1997; Vygotsky 1960, 1978; Wertsch 1985, 1991).

The transition from the paradigm of individual reason to communicative reason in Jürgen Habermas goes in the same direction, but does not sufficiently emphasize care for others, concern for the relationships themselves and the contribution that this care and concern can make to the ideal conditions for communication. In him, empathy, the emotional appreciation of others, and the tendency to maintain and improve the quality of the personal relationship do not represent an abandonment of the desire for truth and objectivity, but rather he opens up a new opportunity to foster it. Interest in the other, in his or her way of seeing the world and the subject of discussion, changes the intent to impose my thesis on the other (as occurs in modern parliaments). This is because of a desire to overcome differences by seeing what each one sees, considering the visions of each one as potentially complementary instead of contradictory.

Today with the relativization of all philosophical systems and the epistemological criticism of all sciences, we have stopped speaking of "The Truth."[12]

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[12] Physics, the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics called into question the accepted concepts of objectivity and the truth. Biology imposed evolutionary concepts, from the Big Bang to the sociobiology and the epistemology of evolu-

Citizens of the twentieth century began to accept that no one had the whole truth, but only some results achieved with greater or lesser rigor within the paradigms shared by philosophical and scientific communities. Those results did not reflect eternal truths but partial and historically conditioned truths. Therefore, today's idea of freedom of thought and expression is now taken for granted and it is accepted that the potential for progress is subject to the ability to understand that the other person also has part of the truth, that his or her vision matters in order to better understand things and that it is thus crucial to listen and learn. With this in mind, democracies can no longer be based solely on Parliaments, but instead we would say on the *Listenings*, or better yet, on the *Communicatives*, where people are able to listen attentively and carefully to others, speak with clarity and sincerity. They must bear in mind what the other person is very likely to think, while appreciating that the contributions are important to the understanding of what is most appropriate for the group or society. We can no longer depend on the wisest leaders or the most expert technocrats. Instead, it is necessary to have a well-informed and inclusive public that can question those wise leaders, discuss with those experts and make them understand the public's needs and own solutions and aspirations.

In terms of administration and decision making, it is more evident than ever that there is a much more powerful procedure than telling others what they must do based on centrally created models, which is how it seems from an analysis of best practices. It is more valuable to understand what people do, help them and engage them in a dialogue with those who have developed theoretical generalizations, which are undoubtedly important, but lack sense if not given from the *Communicative* position. The logic of the centralized administration perspective, with the vertical arrangement "from top to bottom" (from administrative institutions to educational institutions), has demonstrated its inefficiency by its ignorance of everything the others, "those at the bottom," have already built and know. It is better for central organizations to engage in a dialogue, understand that different groups have different ways of understanding how to do things and take steps toward democratic relationships with regions and localities in order to implement the development of concerted policies.

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tion. Genetic psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics and other academic disciplines contributed their points of view, their findings and their proposals to the discussion on the conditions, abilities, competencies, knowledge, attitudes and feelings related to the exercise of citizenship in the late 20th century and the third millennium. Meanwhile, both moral and political philosophies were enriched by contributions from the psychological and social sciences. Moral philosophy advanced following Dewey, Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Noddings, Apel, Habermas, Cortina, etc. while political philosophy built on Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, Rawls, Heller, Fraser, Amartya Sen and others.

2.
Curriculum, Pedagogy and Evaluation

This chapter presents a range of considerations on citizenship education to strengthen democracy in the region. These have been organized in three key dimensions of education: *curriculum* (content and proposals), *pedagogy* (ways of structuring teaching and learning), and *evaluation* (forms of measuring and communicating results).

The first section looks at a shift in the paradigm on civic education worldwide and examines the difference between moral education, human rights education, and citizenship education. In the next three sections of the chapter—on curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation—current ideas and practices are presented, from education systems in the region and from other parts of the word, which aim at responding to the new needs of citizenship education.

2.1 SHIFT IN PARADIGM

The definition of citizenship curriculum—content, educational proposals and time schedule—shapes in the school system what society asks from the next generation. It has direct influence from initial instruction and the professional development of teachers, up to the definition of textbooks and teaching resources, and even evaluation. It is at the "beginning of the chain" that consists of cultural transmission through schooling and it should receive much more attention that it has previously been given.

FROM CIVIC EDUCATION TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Traditionally, curriculum material on politics, nations and the law has been presented as the subject matter of "civic education," or "civics," often taught at the end of high school. Its focus was on government and its institutions. As has been shown, that vision has evolved internationally. The evolution of "civic education" to "citizenship education" reflects a new conceptualization of education in the field, based on the concept of competency. This approach represents a shift away from an almost exclusive focus on content to a focus that gives equal emphasis to *skills* and *attitudes* and to addressing the *contexts* in which relationships occur in the school. How do these proposals directly or indirectly affect the notions of government, politics, participation and democracy?

This shift was based on a three-way expansion of the traditional civic education: *subject* expansion, *quantitative* expansion, and *educational* expansion. *Subject*, because the focus of the material grew from political institutionality (nation, state, government, law) to current conflicts in society, such as equality, human rights, the environment, science and technology in the contexts of societies that deliberate over their ends and means. Also, knowledge on conflict resolution, or on how and why to grow from differences. *Quantitative*, because the presence of citizenship education has been significantly redefined. In many cases it has traditionally been taught at the end of the school cycle—in the last years of high school—and it is shifting to be present throughout the entire cycle, from kindergarten up to the end of high school. Previously a specialized subject, its contents have spread out and been distributed in several disciplines, as well as being part of what is called "horizontal" goals. And *educational*, on proposing educational goals that, together with acquiring knowledge, refer to abilities and attitudes and to the very structure of the classroom or school that educates on the social relations we would like to see in political, civic, and social citizens. The shift includes a radical enrichening of the means and methods of teaching about citizenship, in which the

FROM CIVIC EDUCATION TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

CIVIC Education	CITIZENSHIP Education
• Focus on political institutionality	• Triple focus: political institutionally and expansion on subject of "current conflicts in society" and competencies needed for conflict resolution
• Taught as final subject in high school	• Present from beginning to end of school cycle
• Aimed at acquisition of knowledge —focus on content	• Aimed at acquiring knowledge, abilities and attitudes in contexts and practices based on democratic and participatory relations

guiding principle of the new paradigm is the combination of study and practice of participation, debate, democratic decision-making and collective action. Box 5 (below) presents the dimensions of this shift.

It is important to clearly define the meaning of citizenship education demanded by current circumstances in Latin America and the Caribbean—not only with respect to traditional civic education, but also with respect to two specific areas of curriculum many of our countries combine with citizenship education. These two curriculum areas are moral education and human rights education.

Moral education refers to the education and teaching of values and attitudes in classrooms and educational institutions. Values can have an individual or social reference and may arise from the most diverse sources and orientations. Democratic citizenship education is based on highly specific and historically determined values. One pillar is the universal doctrine of human rights. From this perspective, democratic citizenship education is based on a particular ethic: the valued definition of human rights.

MORAL EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The morality cultivated in public schools is "minimum morality" or "morality of minimums" (Cortina, 1999, p.40). What are these minimums and how do we arrive at them? The proposal of the ethical dialectic, which can be considered as the doctrine of human rights, is that these minimums refer to:

- Respect for others' valid voices.
- Respect for basic rights: respect for human rights of the first, second and third generations.
- Appreciation for the basic values that underlie the declaration of each of these generations of rights: liberty, equality and solidarity.
- Development of a dialectic attitude and competence needed to enact this minimum ethic.

To meet these minimum standards, citizens must assume a "dialectic ethic," i.e., to be willing to establish communications with those people who will be affected by a decision so that they can express their needs and interests, and allow the freedom of conscience and expression to "critique the agreements already made, and constructively criticize the conventionalism and established powers" when considered necessary (Cortina, 1999, p.110). In compensation, these ethics also assume a commitment to participate in a debate in which we can explain our positions when others need it.

As Jürgen Habermas (2001) showed, the practice of discerning between good and bad does not arise through individuals reflecting on their own conscience but through *dialogue* and the *rational debate* that leads to identifying and agreeing on *minimum common norms, legitimized by diversity*. He proposes the possibility of agreement based on *rational*

processes of communicative action, especially when related to principles of ethics of discussion and the rules of reasoning in an ideal situation for dialogue in order to argue through the differences and build an ethic that allows the coexistence of diversity (see part *ii. Deliberation and debate)*.

BELIEFS AND CRITICISM

A basic paradox in schooling (curriculum design for citizenship education should address it) is the tension between order and criticism. Or between the education in belief in and loyalty to a community and its laws, and at the same time, in critical capacities needed to transform society and its laws. In the same way, school experience should effectively inculcate and develop a notion of belonging and valuing identity, which is inseparable from a shared view of history. Also, it should offer tools of critical reasoning and teach objective reflection. How to do this without provoking citizens incapable of critical reasoning and innovation? That challenge is especially vital in education right now given the on-going circumstances of globalization.

2.2. CURRICULUM

In the most consistent recent curriculums reforms, several efforts merge in response to the demands from an active democratic citizenry with the previously mentioned combination of *knowledge, abilities and attitudes*, which together make up the *citizenship competencies* defined at the beginning of this report.[13]

Any effort at a generic definition of what would be included in a relevant citizenship education for Latin America and the Caribbean today, from the perspective of the enormous historic and political diversity in our region, runs the risk of not representing such diversity or not approximating the concrete sociopolitical contexts of the case. Few dimensions of education are so historically and nationally specific as the education of citizens in a country. At the same time, the global and universal dimensions of the requirements of a citizen active in current circumstances are clear; they rest on a nucleus of common values (human rights and demo-

cratic ideals). In this framework, it is useful to point out—as an instrument of analysis and discussion—the main dimensions of the content nucleus. In light of recent international experiences in reform and discussion, citizenship curriculum appears to play a relevant and essential role.

ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

The core content contained in contemporary curriculums, such as IEA's (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) international civics test, includes:

- Institutional structures and processes by which a democratic society reaches decisions: basic concepts of democracy and its institutions.
- Individual and collective rights, duties and responsibilities: concepts of citizenship and law.
- Nature of volunteer and political action: knowledge of the political process, arena, and political stakeholders.
- The economic system as it relates to the individual, community and politics.
- National identity and international relations: patriotism and cosmopolitanism.
- Social cohesion and diversity.

To design curriculum on citizenship education, this type of education must teach how to discern, judge and act *within or in* the tension between principles and opposing criteria. These must be taken into consideration simultaneously since this is the essence of political democratic action. From this perspective, to merge these opposing stances in cooperation and competency with others can be very valuable since they reduce the sterility of citizenship education and also the risks of indoctrination

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[13] These distinctions were mainly used in most of the curricular reforms of the 1990s in OECD countries, as well as in various countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, consider the curriculums of the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain and Colombia or the aforementioned document, *The Civic Mission of Schools,* from the educational field in the United States. See Braslavsky (2004) (PowerPoint presentation shown at the Regional Policy Dialogue Meeting, Inter-American Development Bank, February 2005); B. Fratczak-Rudnicka, & J. Torney-Purta (2003); D.S. Rychen, & L. Salganik (2003).

in the teaching. The following concepts are considered key in the political knowledge of an active citizen:[14]

- Democracy and autocracy
- Cooperation and conflict
- Equality and diversity
- Sense of justice, rule of law, regulations, and human rights
- Freedom and order
- Individual and community
- Power and authority
- Rights and responsibilities

Essential skills needed for citizenship in the twenty-first century in Latin America include knowing the risks to democracy, sharing a culture of legality and understanding how the modern economy operates.

The international evaluation of civic knowledge and provision in the student body of several countries in the region (Torney-Purta, Amadeo 2004), along with UNPD data on beliefs and opinions on democracy together emphasize the importance of educating on the *risks to democracy*. Citizenship education in the region tends to focus more on democratic ideals than on democratic practices. When countries in the region are compared to countries in other parts of the word, the students in Colombia and Chile, for example, are less aware than the average young participants in the study of the risks to democracy (nepotism, political influence on courts of justice, or monopoly control of communications media).

A relatively forgotten focus in the curriculums of the region is the treatment of anti-social behaviors and crime, and the institutional counterparts of justice, the penal system and police. Little doubt remains about the importance of economic literacy as a factor for modern citizenry to understand the profound relationship between economic theories and political positions such as "left," "center" or "right," for example.

ABILITIES

Contemporary curriculums encompass the following core skills:

- Verbal communication and expository writing (argumentation) on political issues.

- Interpreting public information and effective use of distinguishing between fact/judgment and opinion.
- Critical reasoning and recognition of mechanisms of manipulation, persuasion or secrecy in relationships of power.
- Understanding and appreciation of others' experiences and views in personal, historic and cultural contexts.
- Cooperation, organization and effective work with others—both similar and heterogeneous.

It is possible to organize the above array of abilities in two dimensions contained in the basic core of the policy (the word and action with others): abilities to *deliberate and participate* (Arendt 1958). With respect to the skills on participation (the last three in the above list), an array of abilities can be described that are *specifically political*. An academic education for active citizenry—especially at the high-school level—should aim at developing the skills of *persuasion, advocacy, conciliation, leadership* and *representation*.

ATTITUDES

Attitudes are intimately tied to values and are at the affective and motivational core of action. From this point of view, citizenship education should be rooted in belief in and appreciation of values, knowledge and skills previously mentioned and on their affective and motivational dimensions. The factors listed in this third aspect of the curriculum are less coordinated and precise than the previous two aspects, but still a minimum core for developing attitudes includes:

- Appreciation of the political community at the local, national and global levels.
- Appreciation of the democratic system and its practices and institutions (elections, rights and freedoms, legal framework).
- Individual and collective responsibility for the common good (tendency to respond

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[14] This list comes from the analytical and deliberative effort in the British educational policy field in 1998, set forth in the United Kingdom's citizenship education curriculum, see note 11.

with discernment to the consequences of one's actions on other people and society in general).

- Valuing of human dignity and equality.
- Valuing cultural, racial, religious and gender diversity in daily life and in politics.
- Inclination to work with others and for others in collective projects.
- Willingness to accept differences and resolve them in a peaceful way, understanding that differences is fruit of plurality.
- Willingness to defend one's own point of view, while at the same time being able to modify it and allow others into the spotlight of discussion, evidence and empathy.

2.3. WHAT PEDAGOGY FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION? COMBINATION OF METHODS

A universally accepted guiding principle for pedagogy of citizenship education is that it is not possible to conceive of the students as future active citizens if their learning experience of citizenship has been predominantly passive. Comparative studies—as well as recent national efforts for deliberation and consensus on active citizenship education[15]—support the need for a pedagogical approach that combines instruction through the formal teaching of content, discussion of social and political events, and reflection on experience. In the following section, criteria and experiences on each of these three pedagogical approaches will be presented.

SPECIFIC CONTENT

One of the more direct ways to prepare for a democratic citizenry is to offer instruction on the democratic political institutions in each country: the constitution that reflects social ideals; government agencies and the forms of participation at national, state, municipal and community levels; issues that merit public debate. In a certain way, this is the focus of the traditional forms of civic education in the curriculum, even when it is possible that the levels that are currently being used to teach this

content are not sufficiently deep or well developed. The ineffectiveness of these models led to the question of how they can be made more effective. How can this field of study be better defined to hold the interest of young people? One way is to *integrate the study of government into the study of history*. It is difficult to understand the origins of the contemporary political debates—including the conception of citizenry or of democracy—without knowing their history. In the United States, for example, the struggle between the Republican vision of Thomas Jefferson and the federalist view of John Adams and Alexander Hamilton form the basis of debates even today on the balance between the rights of the individual and the obligations of the state. To understand the civil rights movement and different way of battling racism is essential in order for young people to understand the context of contemporary political debates on civil rights.

It is possible to teach history in an inviting way that motivates and interests the students. Also it can be done with an evolutionary focus, which prepares the students from the earliest stages of education, gradually and accumulatively. Textbooks in elementary school can include historical content and present it in an appropriate way for the level of development of the students. Also it is possible to teach the students in such a way that allows them to establish connections between the study of historical events and the development of their own individual responsibility. That is, take themselves seriously in a historical context. For example, the organization *Facing History and Ourselves*, based in Brookline, Massachusetts, does an exemplary job of educating students in the study of episodes in history that significantly ruptured the democratic and humanitarian order. The students learn about the connection between evolution of these events and the actions of specific individuals, connecting this study with the individual responsibility that the students

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[15] J. Torney-Purta, R. Lehman, et. al. (2001) *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries,* op. cit.; Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998) *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*, DfEE, QCA, London; CIRCLE, Carnegie Corporation (2003) *The Civic Mission of Schools*, New York; Ministry of Education of Chile (2004)*, Informe Comisión Formación Ciudadana* [Citizenship Education Commission Report], Santiago.

have in the context of the political issues of their own era.[16]

There may be advantages to including in the study of history and civics the comparative study of history and development of civic institutions in other contexts. In the same way that the study of democratic ruptures in Germany allows American or British students the distance to reflect on important events in universal terms, the study of the civil rights movement in the United States offers young Latin Americans the opportunity to learn about historical events of universal significance in the building and deepening of democracy. The same can be said for the advantages of studying social and political movements such as the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa, for example, or the study of genocide in Rwanda or Darfur.

MODERN HISTORY AND ISSUES OF CONFLICT

In some countries of Latin America, one of the challenges to making the study of history into an authentic experience is to include in the curriculum the analysis of recent historical conflicts. How can citizens be formed if young people are not taught about political conflicts that in recent decades have affected countries in the region? How can citizens be formed without their knowing the origin and history of the violence that still persists in some countries? How can citizens be formed without studying the origins of the rupture of institutional democracy in the Southern Cone and the almost two decades of military dictatorship and its consequences on the rights and civil liberties of the population? How can citizens be formed without studying the dirty war and the violations to human rights that characterize military regimes? How can democracy be established and consolidated without studying the recent armed conflicts and peace agreements in Central America?

To propose to study recent history in Latin America—painful and divisive—is undoubtedly difficult. In part because it is possible to generate alternative versions of the same history. However, the education of democratic citizens calls for young people to be able to understand the differences between democratic societies and authoritarian ones, between a system that guarantees civil rights and one that violates them. In the same way that the in-

depth study of conditions that led up to the Jewish Holocaust, as painful and difficult as it may be, is a way of allowing future generations to understand the fragility of democracy and how it is possible for an authoritarian regime to gradually replace a democratic one without people perceiving the shift with clarity. Latin American youth should study the history of violence and political conflict, some very recent episodes, in their respective countries. Citizenship cannot exist without memory of history.

However, relevant education for active democratic citizenship cannot happen without discussing contemporary events of society, including issues that divide it. Comparative international evidence reveals the value of exposing students to the political issues that their society is debating. The lessons should be designed to correspond to the age and maturity of the students without avoiding the controversies that the adult world grapples with and which are reported on daily in the media. According to Chile's National Commission on Citizenship Education in 2004 (see box 8): "*The omission of controversial material not only deprives the education of important areas of knowledge and human experience, but also of one of the basic constitutional rights—which the school has the responsibility of teaching—the existence of opposing or disputed views and interests on what are the values of the society and what are the institutions and procedures anticipated to arrive at such a definition.*" (Commission on Citizenship Education, p.189)

To address controversial issues it is essential that the teachers and academic institutions adopt explicit strategies against indoctrination and manifestation of biases. All teachers who work to meet the goals of teaching citizenship education should keep in mind the following: ensure that all versions of an argument are aired and voiced; present opposing views in a balanced way; not present evidence in an indisputable way; not present opinions as facts. Beyond this, the most important "anti-bias" strategy is to train the students in skills of recognizing their

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[16] Some of the most effective programs developed by *Facing History and Ourselves* focus on the rupture of the democratic order in Germany and the progression toward Nazism and the Holocaust. They have also developed programs designed to study the civil rights movement in the United States and genocide in Armenia. Currently this organization is working with governments and nongovernmental organizations in Colombia, South Africa, Ireland, and some other countries (www.facing.org).

own biases. For example, through comparing the same public event as reported by different media, students can study the use and manipulation of statistics on public information, exercises to distinguish between fact and opinion, etc.[17]

TEACHING SOCIAL AWARENESS IN THE DISCIPLINES

In a recent interview, Robert Selman, a professor of education at Harvard University and a close colleague of Lawrence Kohlberg, has proposed integrating civic education into the most traditional disciplines: "I believe that teaching about ethical and social awareness can been successfully integrated into public and private education. Given the current settings, one of the most practical vehicles to achieve this integration is in language and literature classes. The best children's literature not only addresses moral issues, but also generates appropriate feelings about situations of conflict and moral confusion." (Selman 2003)

In his most recent book on promoting the conscious perception of social tensions and the social effects of school activities, Selman refers to the real possibility of teaching social competencies, the metacognitive ability to be aware of these social tensions and effects and the way to respond to them and act.

Classes in other subjects also offer opportunities to handle mistakes and explore ways to learn from them, resolve conflict through dialogue and debate issues relevant to the students or the school.[18]

In integrated projects cross-cutting several curriculum areas, many situations can be found to practice and explore this same perception in greater depth. Even in disciplines that appear to be distant from social studies or language and literature classes—such as math, natural sciences, and physical education—teachers and students can learn to spot opportunities to increase their ethical and social awareness. The social impact of statistics in the media and ways to distort information are issues addressed in the classic book by Darrell Huff, "How to Lie with Statistics." The chemistry professor can take advantage of chemical attractions between elements—which if combined appropriately can present very strong new emerging properties—in order to demonstrate parallels with social life and make students aware of the possibilities of the potential of

their actions and increase the probability of success if they know how to work together and cultivate the advantages of each member of the group.

A physics professor can use the theory of electromagnetic fields or high-energy physics to demonstrate that there is a model of particles separated by empty spaces and another model of fields that change from local properties and from undulating variations in which it appears that mutual relations and variations are what produce the phenomenon that we call particles, a model that has clear implications to understand social phenomena from a relational point of view. In physical education, many opportunities arise to allow students to become aware of the need to count on others to achieve spectacular effects, to confide in one's companions so no one falls down or to make human pyramids, to practice "team building" in sports such as soccer and basketball.

In several Caribbean countries, the social science curriculum teaches multicultural education and the valuing of diverse cultural and ethnic perspectives, as shown in box 1.

DELIBERATION AND DEBATE

The development of political participation skills depends on promoting interest in public events and the ability to deliberate on these events. This can be

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[17] See the material for teachers by the English Ministry of Education: Making Sense of Citizenship: A Handbook, Department for Education and Skills, London, 2004.

[18] In Colombia, Enrique Chaux and several of his colleagues at the Universidad de los Andes published a book called *Competencias ciudadanas: de los estándares al aula* [Citizens' competencies: from standards to the classroom.] A proposal for integration into academic areas whose basic objective is to present a set of strategies showing how citizenship education can be fostered in school. The first part of the book describes a set of initiatives that seek to develop the following academic and citizenship competencies in tandem: classes in peace, moral dilemmas, role playing, cooperative learning, projects and training through service and institutional strategies. The second part provides ideas on how to integrate education in citizenship competencies into the daily life of educational institutions, particularly, into education in the traditional academic fields. For example, it offers alternatives on how to work these themes into mathematics, physical education, computer training, and language or art and music classes.

advanced daily in schools by using pedagogies that promote active work on the part of students, debates, recognition that legitimately diverse points of view can exist on certain issues and that it is possible for reasonable people to reach some kind of agreement, without one point of view imposing itself over the others.

A key problem of taking an active approach to citizenship education is how to treat contingent political issues in the school context. *Discussion (debate, deliberation)* is one active method for effective learning for many students. International studies that surveyed young people on their opportunities to discuss current events in class repeatedly show that those students who have had this opportunity have greater interest in politics, better critical reasoning and communication skills, more civic knowledge, and more interest in discussing public events outside of school (Civic Mission of Schools, p.24).

In the same way that promoting in-depth study of history helps students develop the ability to understand current issues and political debates, analysis of current public issues allows children and young people to develop deliberation skills. This has been attempted in several different ways in the region. One way has been to promote critical reading and discussion of newspapers in schools. Another is to promote school student government. Or promote student debates. It is possible for local governments and educational institutions to collaborate with newspapers—for example to use one-day-old unsold newspapers—so that students read and discuss the news. Several newspapers in the region have sections for children. It is important that reading material be within the reach of the children's ability, that issues of national interest be studied, avoiding trivial items. Children and young people can easily validate the relevance of their deliberations based on the newspapers, on the access they have to communications media, and on their communities.

Finally, some countries in the region in the last decade have launched initiatives of civic participation for children and young people. In Costa Rica, for example, on several occasions young people have been consulted about presidential candidates. In Ecuador, there was a youth council on children's rights. In Chile in 1996, the survey "Children's Voices" was conducted on children's perceptions of the school environment. In Buenos Aires in 1997, a children's council evaluated their perceptions of more-respected and less-respected rights. In Mexico, the National Electoral Institute held children's elec-

tions in 1997 in which children voted on their rights (Tapia 2003, p. 58).[19]

This new approach to so-called "school discipline" problems, instead of repeating the usual rules on the clarity of the regulations, the severity of punishment and the increase in vigilance, proposes that the school use public debate, deliberation on the norms that are being questioned or violated, and aspects of the "hidden curriculum" that are worth putting on the table, among other things.

Habermas understands communicative competence as the capacity to generate action through the medium of language. The building of relations among human beings is mediated through language and based on the exchange and negotiation of meanings in which recognizing and understanding others' ideas form the basis of civic competence. Communicative competence is also very important in peaceful resolution to conflicts, the ability to actively listen to others, including those with whom one has conflicts, and the ability to express ideas in an effective way, without insulting others. These are all fundamental skills that a good citizen should develop (Fisher, 1991; Stone, Patton and Heen, 1999).

It is not about promoting accusation and criticism, although these have their place in deliberation, but instead creating a climate of dialogue, participation, and collective growth. The practice of democracy does not automatically come in adulthood after leaving school, but instead it is practiced in daily student life, through school governments and in incidents that interrupt the normal flow of school activities.[20]

It has been said that conflict, war and aggression are the genetic heritage of humanity, mainly to defend territory. Thus, it is not viable in the long

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[19] Tapia, Erika. 2003. Socialización Política y Education Cívica en los Niños. Queretaro, Mexico. Instituto Electoral de Queretaro, p.58.

[20] There are abundant theoretical traditions and practical experiences that may be used by educational institutions to incorporate conflict resolution strategies into daily school activities. See: R. Fisher R. & W. Ury (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating an agreement without giving in.* Sydney: Business Books; Enright (2001) R.D. Enright (2001). *Forgiveness is a Choice: A Step-by-Step Process for Resolving Anger and Restoring Hope.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; Selman (1997) *Fostering Friendship: Pair Therapy for Treatment and Prevention* (with C.L. Watts, L.H. Schultz, and members of the GSID); *Making a Friend in Youth* (with L.H. Schultz) (1990) *The Growth of Interpersonal Understanding* (1980).

BOX 6

THE *FORGIVENESS LABORATORY* AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN[21]

The *Forgiveness Laboratory* has shown that to be able to forgive, the person who is a victim needs from 10 to 15 hours of very specific work on the subject. That person must name his anger and offender, must restructure the offense through memory, and must regain control over his/her own emotions. It is a complex and difficult exercise for the purpose of recovering internal harmony.

The Escuelas del Perdón y la Reconciliación [schools of forgiveness and reconciliation] (ESPERE [their Spanish initials]) are groups of 10-15 persons who meet to transform their rage, hatred and desire for revenge. Ordinarily these groups meet every week, at informal places, with minimal rules—above all, with complete confidentiality—agreed upon among the participants and signed by everyone in the group. Facilitators, that is, persons from the same neighborhood who are trained for that purpose, guide these groups. These *facilitators* may be children, young people, men or women.

Aggressors are never invited to these groups, because no one wants to be identified as an aggressor. They always invite victims. This is where people discover that they are not only victims but also aggressors. Guerrillas, the paramilitary, the military, delinquents of all kind, are surprised to find out that behind their rage there are offenses from the past that escalated into hatred. Just like bleeding wounds, that hatred must be urgently treated so it does not continue to hurt people's entire lives.

When a person has been the victim or aggressor of some offense, large or small, it normally hurts the three most important pillars of human existence: the significance of life, security and socialization. The great task of the ESPERE *facilitator* is to work with people so they can recover the integrity of those three pillars.

Methodology

It must be emphasized that forgiveness and reconciliation are not achieved only through cognitive or rational approaches. Intervention is necessary in four dimensions: thinking (cognitive dimension), feeling (emotional dimension), action (behavioral dimension) and transcendence (the spiritual dimension). To achieve an adequate dose in these four dimensions is a success for the whole process of forgiveness and reconciliation.

The psychology of traumas speaks of three basic tools to help in this process. *First* it is necessary to guarantee a *secure environment*. It is the group setting or *empathy*, a basic element that facilitates people in the expression of their pain. It must be a *holding environment*, which prevents the pain from spilling out and helps people to recover divided parts of their being.

Second, it is necessary to help people to *tell the story* of what happened to them. To relate and create a memory is an exercise with high value for healing. There is a reason why Catholics, when they celebrate the Eucharist, *remember* a crime every day, but see it with new eyes. For Catholics, the cross and the death of Christ, regardless of their cruelty, are transformed into powerful acts of salvation.

Third, through this process, victims are gradually re-socialized and recover their capacity to relate to other people appropriately, including, in the future, the very people who committed offenses against them.

Source: "Sin reconciliación no hay futuro" [Without reconciliation there is no future], Narváez, 2004.

run to achieve peaceful resolution for all conflicts. But authors such as Fisher and Ury W. (1991), based on ethical studies, show that cooperation is also part of our human nature. And just as the emotional genetic components can been utilized to incite people to war, they can also be used to reach peaceful resolutions to conflicts. In the Bahamas, for example, there is a program that explicitly teaches skills to reduce impulsiveness and aggressive behavior in

children and increase their social skills. It develops skills in empathy, impulse control and control of aggression.

In the observable array of pedagogies that include students' life experience as one element in

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[21] This strategy has been tried in El Salvador, Brazil, Colombia and other Latin American countries.

citizenship education, today there are two that stand out worldwide for their presence and impact measured by research: *participation in student centers and community service.*

EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICE OF PARTICIPATION

Learning through experience is a basic dimension in the education of active and committed future citizens. In many countries, student government have been set up with the participation of teachers, parents, former students and one or more student representatives with the right to speak and vote. For example, in Santa Lucia, secondary schools have student councils. There are also models with student councils made up of representatives from each course or each grade (see box 7). In some countries, schools have also set up a student spokesperson, both one per course as well as one spokesperson for all students in the institution. These spokespersons take responsibility for representing and defending the students' interests.

Such student organizations with the participation of different strata that were traditionally excluded from the directors' decisions provide very valuable opportunities for exercising participation, deliberation, sharing of responsibilities, rendering accounts and other competencies of democratic life that previously were only practiced by adults of legal age, if by any citizens.

Even the difficulties, features and attempts at bribery or buying votes that also occur in these processes may serve as a subject for public debate. [This could be] to discuss the consequences of said practices, to establish parallels with the phenomena of political corruption and/or to develop different citizenship competencies in the course of the practice, through the students' own experiences.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY COMPETENCIES

Learning through service (*service learning*) is a teaching methodology based on active participation. Students learn and develop through service deliberately organized to meet community needs. Learning

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BOX 7

STUDENT GOVERNMENT IN THE "NEW SCHOOL"

Government by Children or Student Government

Government by children consists of: a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Led by the Children's Government, classroom and project committees are set up. They assume and distribute the various responsibilities of school management.

This initiates students into democratic and civic behavior, in order to develop *attitudes* and *habits* of living in a community and, from there, strengthen *social/affective development*. This tool allows students to develop values related to democracy, solidarity, discipline, and, generally speaking, fulfillment of the rights and duties of community life.

The particularly interesting feature of the New School student government is that leadership is distributed equitably, allowing and fostering *all the children* to have responsibility for the various tasks of organizing and controlling classroom activities on a rotating basis. It does not develop leadership in those who are already leaders so much as provide various opportunities for everyone to develop these skills. In other words, it promotes truly democratic leadership.

Other participative instruments are also developed, such as the suggestion box, student control of attendance, the participation book and the travelers' notebook. These instruments motivate and facilitate students' direct participation. The various committees may form links with other community action groups.

In addition, the school gathers and incorporates local identity into the learning process through legends, stories, rhymes and the recovery of local history, with the participation of the parents and other community groups in some school activities.

Source: Fundación Escuela Nueva [New School Foundation] "Let's go back to the people."

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through service is coordinated with schools, universities, community-service programs and with the community itself. It is integrated into the academic curriculum and/or the educational components of a service program and strengthens them. A critical component of learning through service is assuring that there is structured time for reflection to evaluate the service experience. Learning through ser-

vice allows students to understand how to establish authentic connections between academic learning and the value of serving their communities. In addition, it allows students to learn how communities really function.

This methodology is related to a concept of democracy expressed by Benjamin Franklin and others in terms of "democracy as a public work." Franklin is one model—the study of this life offers many opportunities to learn about democratic ideas and values—of citizenship in action: [how to] identify problems in the community and associate with others to solve them. The development of this capacity, which allows each citizen to ask him/herself "what can I do, in association with others, to solve this problem?" is one of the most important ways of preparing young people for direct democratic participation. It is important to distinguish between learning through service and only serving the community. It is possible to serve the community without trying to establish specific links with the curriculum and without providing opportunities for reflection on what was learned.

In the United States, it is estimated that 69 percent of public schools involve some 15 million students in community service projects. A recent survey indicates that 83 percent of school principals indicate that learning through service has had positive results on the academic performance of their students (Boston, Pearson and Halperin 2005). One example of learning through service is found in the students in a primary school in Massachusetts. In nutrition classes, they prepare lunches for a popular cafeteria while developing a survey to study why that cafeteria is necessary. In Indianapolis, a program puts students to work with children and people who have been victims of family violence. In Washington, several English and Communications courses include activities involving interviews with community leaders to identify community needs and explore options for meeting them. In Granada and Antigua, a *Young Leaders* extracurricular program develops citizenship competencies through community projects.

2.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

One instrument that contributes to launching a curriculum and its translation into learning results is an evaluation of the citizenship knowledge and abilities of the students in the national systems. Establishing it may reinforce and strengthen learning levels in an important way. It serves as a stimulus to teaching and learning by publicizing the fact that knowledge, abilities and attitudes are especially valued. It also helps both institutions and individuals [involved] to be clearer about taking responsibility for their achievement.

Similarly, it allows significant and precise information to be acquired about the students' civic knowledge and abilities, which makes it possible to plan and implement policies based on the evidence.

The following is a minimum list of the advantages and risks of national learning evaluation:

ADVANTAGES

- Developing instruments that require agreement, at the political level or the level of the education system, on teaching/learning focuses and achievements in the area. This requires detailed specification of the learning objectives.
- Making these focuses visible both to the teachers and to the society.
- Assigning additional importance and value to the curriculum, teaching staff and activities in this field, even if the evaluations have no consequences for the students.
- [Such evaluations] provide key information for initial educational activities and instruction and professional development for the teachers.

RISKS

Diminution of the curricular element, [because] teaching is done through measurement. As measurement depends on "paper and pencil" tests, there is a risk of reducing the importance of abilities and attitudes that are not so easily measurable through this medium.[22]

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[22] The *Saber de Competencias Ciudadanas* [Knowledge of Citizenship Competencies] tests in Colombia and some questions on the IEA test do measure attitudes and abilities.

In this regard, it is worth considering the advantage for school systems in Latin America and the Caribbean of establishing an international evaluation of citizenship knowledge and abilities. Colombia and Chile's experience of participating in the international study of civic education sponsored by the IEA—as well as the subsequent comparative analysis of the results sponsored by the Organization of American States—offers broad and rich evidence on the contribution such an undertaking would have on the efforts to improve citizenship education in our countries (Torney-Purta, Lehman, Oswald and Schulz 2001 and Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2004).

3.
Strategies for Educating an Active Citizenry

This last chapter looks at the most critical aspects of putting into practice a policy to transform democratic citizenship education in schools, as well as criteria for related policies. Several suggestions are made for including the subject in a society's general political agenda. And the decisive issue of teachers is examined and the need to prepare and support them as they respond to new and growing demands in the area of citizenship education. The chapter ends by setting forth the needs to conduct research and amass knowledge on the subject to keep citizenship education updated and evolving in accordance with the rapid pace of change in society and politics in the region.

3.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

How to successfully meet the challenge of establishing a stable policy framework for democratic citizenship education? With guaranteed political and social support from the highest levels? A genuine effort to transform civic education in the school system is a *policy* challenge: it requires a broad consensus throughout society on what it means to be a "good citizen" and how to teach someone to be one. The collectively determined definition should be precise enough to help provide a guideline for educational policy. In societies with great inequality and politically conflictive cultures, this shift may appear especially difficult to make. But it is not impossible. Without sufficient consensus in a society that citizenship education should be an underlying principle in the organization of a school system, neither the school system nor its teachers will be able to do

anything significant. Teachers need the support and authorization of an entire political system—not just the current ruling party—to be able to educate effectively, tackling with the next generation the issues that unite and divide a social order, norms and values that inspire it, as well as realities that challenge it.

It is an essential political condition that curriculums for effective democratic citizenship education receive broad and visible support that crosses the administration-opposition barrier. Unlike other academic subjects, citizenship education touches the same nucleus as society's issues in conflict, in the present and in the future. Academic institutions and teachers cannot effectively implement it if they cannot count on sufficient authorization to do so.

DELIBERATION AND BROAD CONSENSUS

In light of recent experiences in developed countries in the region, two factors are key to gaining support and a level of agreement: i) information, and ii) deliberation in national-level politically diverse forums.

The catalytic role that information plays is essential in conceptualizing the new demands and breaking the traditional conformity of the school system and revealing the new "state of the question." Reliable data is needed on both the new citizenship demands of each society and the achievements of education. To assess the democratic skills of a population—including teachers, education policymakers and students—would provide needed data. In fact, the gap between the citizenship education needs demanded by society and that which is provided by

the school system—made available and organized by political and education leaders—has been the key point in a strategy of change in almost all national cases on citizenship education.

Evaluations and diagnostics are not enough, however. These should be discussed and deliberated in politically plural legitimate forums, from which proposals on citizenship education can arise. The forums should include the following elements:

- Representatives of society and its various different political parties and ideologies;
- Legitimate representatives, highly respected in political and educational arenas;
- Forums should provide information on new demands, as well as characteristics of the civic education currently provided.
- They should constructively process the different views and interests, and reach a consensus on key definitions to provide a framework for the respective policies and plans.

There are many ways to implement a blueprint of a plan. Is it a process that takes place within officially defined parameters? Is it more "closed" or more "open?" Short-term or long-term? A tie to the government, should it implement what was proposed by the deliberations in the forum or not? Among many variables, the fixed factor is the synergy established between new information and knowledge discussed and gathered in debate forums with representatives from all sectors of society; and from which definitions arise to frame the education goals. The most common instrument is the government-sponsored *ad hoc national commission*, which after examining the background and after deliberation introduces definitions and proposals that later the same government tries to enact. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the most recent experience of a commission of this type is in Chile (described in box 8 below).

COURSE OF ACTION

Once the nucleus of definitions is reached on what democratic citizenship education for society is, two parallel courses of action are recommended. One is governmental: to design a policy for implementing a revitalized citizenship education. The other is aimed broadly at society: to promote the appropriation of the new meanings of citizenship education, as well as participation in its enrichment and ongoing development.

The first course of action relies on executive power, and mainly the function of formulating policies for the Education Ministry, one of whose axes should be that the very education system adopts the new definitions. Basically this happens through actions of support and teacher preparation. The second course of action, if well promoted by the government, lies mainly with civil society. A key factor here is the promotion of opportunities for dialogue and participation on what civic education has been and what people want it to be. The main goal of these forums should be to diagnose and formulate proposals, as well as to look at and learn from innovative models of existing citizenship education programs.

The recognition by national and local society of the importance of citizenship education and its new elements has potential impact on the symbolic and political support to school systems and teaching staff. Also such recognition has a very concrete and significant influence on each school: citizenship education needs to have effective ties between the school and the community. Otherwise, it will not be able to carry out what was presented as "service learning." These ties are easier to form and maintain if the community has debated over how to make citizenship education effective.

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

In the efforts to put citizenship education in the foreground, it is naturally important to count on the collaboration of mass media. Print and television media are inseparable parts of public life. Without them, modern democracy would not be possible. It is a strategic challenge in and of itself, rarely attempted by the education field, to collaborate with media—especially television—in promoting a culture of democratic citizenship. How to create better relationships between TV media and teachers, so that teachers can understand the codes of the medium and use it for educational proposals? How to get the media to volunteer editorial criteria to promote, through its regular programming, participation and values of a culture for democratic citizenship? A concrete step in the right direction is that representatives from the communications media be mem-

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: THE EXPERIENCE IN CHILE

Chile reformed its curriculum for elementary education in 1996 and secondary education in 1998. The new curriculums included a basic redesign of civic education, cross-cutting through several disciplines, in both elementary and secondary school, based on an active pedagogy.

In 2004, as a response to concern and alarm on the part of the country's political leaders about the extraordinarily low level of voter registration among youth, the Education Ministry appointed a high-level commission, politically and institutionally plural, to "propose a sound vision of the new demands for a democratic citizenry, as well as criteria and measures to improve the classroom experience of citizenship education."

The commission had 17 members (representatives from many fields, including educational, legal, political, medical, religious, student, and human rights organizations, as well as unions). The commission received supported from a four-member technical secretariat of the Education Ministry. The commission met weekly from July 27 to December 13, 2004, inviting a wide array of stakeholders to speak and share their perspective and opinions, including Ministry officials, private education professionals, national and international research specialists, teacher trainers and government officials. Despite its diverse political and ideological composition, through a process of sustained deliberation, the commission reached a consensus on a diagnosis and proposal.

The commission's main proposals were:

a) A definition of democratic citizenry, agreed on by all sectors, which integrated notions of liberal traditions (title rights that must be upheld in the face of the nation-state), democratic traditions (citizens belonging to a self-governing community) and republican traditions (the citizenry as a place of specific virtues);

b) The need to make adjustments to the sequence proposed for civic education in the new curriculum started in 1998, emphasizing a close at the end of secondary school, based on democratic institutionality;

c) Correction of two deficiencies observed in the curriculum—to educate on risks to democracy, and on anti-social behavior and the basic elements of the penal system—as well as enriching the contents on economics, observed to be insufficient; and

d) Suggestions for methodology on academic teaching on citizenship, based on an approach that combines classroom lectures and traditional formal study with debates and experiences (community service and participation in openings in student government).

The political and educational impact of the process and results are, in the context of Chile, highly significant: broad and in-depth agreement, in a society that until recently was profoundly and tragically divided, on what the school system should try to teach, academically and morally, to the citizens of the next generation.

Source: Education Ministry of Chile (2004) Report of the Citizenship Commission, Santiago. For the commission's final report, go to: www.mineduc.cl

bers of the national forums for deliberation and consensus building on citizenship education.

3.2. TEACHERS

Without an appropriate strategy for continuing education and support for teachers, the new definitions will not reach the classroom. This gap is the acknowledged weak link in reforms to the quality of education in the region. It encompasses not only the area of initial teacher training, but also the continuing professional development of those already in the workforce. A redefinition of citizenship education assumes that teachers—those already working and those still in training—need to learn new content and refine their pedagogy. Teachers need to study and prepare. And the administration needs to provide the conditions that allow such a process: education workshops by specialists, alliances with local

actors with proven experience and programs, the compiling of experiences developed by the teachers that illustrate what is possible and how to achieve it. Finally, controls and supports need to be provided by committed supervision.

In many countries, a major problem is that teacher-training programs have not kept up with curriculum changes, leaving teachers ill prepared to put changes into effect.

The strategy should tackle equally the initial education and the institutionality—of university students and student teachers—responsible for it. Also, it should include on-going professional development in centralized or decentralized services and modalities.

If you want to teach virtue, Plato wrote, institutions must be structured according to the values that you wish to instill in the members. Thus, to develop democratic citizenship implies organizing educational institutions in a participatory way and avoiding imposed hierarchies that hinder the practice of deliberation, debate and reflection. Institutions should be governed by people capable of creating safe settings for learning and genuine interest in the ideas of others, who allow positive exploration, free from pressures of prejudice and stereotyping. A safe

climate should be generated (an environment in which people do not feel criticized or threatened, where they feel they can explore their own ideas and not those they feel obligated to think).[23]

Creating a genuine democracy in the school allows both students and teachers to become confident people learning reliable knowledge (Raider-Roth, 2005). This type of knowledge is created through reflective experience that arises from doubt, curiosity and authentic questioning with the resulting research methods (tentative conjecturing and interpreting) and precise and consistent analysis. A confident person is not fearful, not afraid of making an error, but instead will take advantage of exploring and better understanding a problem. A confident person is assertive and recognizes that part of human nature is to make mistakes and learn from them in order to grow. This approach forms part of scientific methodology and reasoning, even when it is not the exclusive way of thinking.

3.3. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT

Perhaps unlike in any other area of curriculums and school operations, there is a severe lack of empirical information on the way in which schools in the region teach democratic citizenship. Precise and reliable information is needed from each country on what are the civic and democratic skills of children, adolescent students, and teachers. Studies conducted in Chile, Colombia, and more recently, Mexico, on young people's civic knowledge is an important first step. It would be good if all countries in the region could conduct similar studies, expanded to different degrees, including teacher skills and extending the range of attitudes assessed to learn more about tolerance and acceptance and diversity. It would be good to know exactly what

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BOX 9

PROBLEMS TO SOLVE IN TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS: EVIDENCE FROM INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

When teachers feel insecure on the topic of citizenship education, they teach in conservative and traditional ways.

- Teaching controversial subjects is not the only source of teacher insecurity—it can also arise from current pedagogical approaches such as project-based work, which take longer to show results.
- Problems arise from faulty definitions of what citizenship education is and what its goals are.
- The isolation of citizenship teachers in their schools can be another major problem. It is particularly important for the whole school to support the work of citizenship teachers.

Source: A. Osler, H. Starkey (2004) Study on the Advances in Civic Education Systems: good practices in industrialized countries, Report prepared for the Inter-American Development Bank, Education Network of the Regional Policy Dialogue, 2005.

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[23] Only in a friendly environment can a person consider how he/she would *really* act in a given moral situation and the true reasons that would lead him/her to make that decision. Clearly it is important to know how we should act in accordance with the commonly accepted moral precepts, but with the right and the opportunity to explore the reasons why this may or may not make sense, exploring when this conventional behavior is not appropriate. As we have said, our capacity for moral judgment is developed when we reflect on the reasons why we act, when we have to justify our actions.

are the democratic skills in the region, and, based on this, it would be possible to identify which skills should be further developed.

Also it is necessary to measure what is already being done to promote democratic citizenship, and what are the results. To identify real experiences and organize the information on results will provide an array of options to governments and educators interested in promoting citizenship education.

Together with a broader range of models to promote citizenship education, it is essential that these models be carefully evaluated to understand the effects and construct a database that allows us to discern which models are more effective in different contexts.

Finally, it is important that research results be widely disseminated in appropriate ways to reach different discussion groups interested in education so that the research can contribute to articulating policy and program decisions promoting democratic education. Only if broad groups of the population understand the importance of citizenship education and if they are informed about the most effective ways to develop tolerance, participation, and comprehensive knowledge of recent history, then they can request and support educational changes in that direction.

To develop and disseminate this information, it is essential to establish networks of schools connected to universities and research centers, as well as to non-governmental organizations that promote democratic education. As in other information areas, international networks that share ideas are appropriate mechanisms to accelerate innovations and develop this area of study. The model followed by the National Education Ministry in Colombia—which identifies innovations developed in the country and disseminates them together with models created in other contexts—is a promising methodology that could be extended to other countries in the region.

3.4 FIVE STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

As presented in the preceding discussion, from the perspective of policy implementation, the challenges of academic citizenship education (capable of responding to the new demands of social cohesion and active democratic citizenship) are both political and educational. Five key challenges can be identified.

SOCIAL CONSENSUS

The first challenge is political. It consists of achieving widespread and deep agreement in society on what it means to be a "good citizen" and consequently, how to form good citizens. The agreed-upon definition must be sufficiently precise to help orient its translation into education. In societies with inequality and political cultures with great internal disagreement, this can be especially difficult. But it is not possible to avoid it. Without an adequate level of agreement in a society that citizenship education is what should organize a school system, teachers cannot achieve anything significant. Teachers need the support and authority from the political system—not only from the government—to be able to effectively teach in this dimension. To address with the next generation both what unites as well as what divides a social order, the norms and values that inspire it, and the realities that complicate it.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum challenge is two-fold. A result of the political effort to build a consensus on the type of citizens desired, a clear definition should arise on how to define citizenship education, what it consists of, and what it aims at achieving. Secondly, if it is appropriate, the positioning of citizenship education in the curriculum should be evaluated and redefined. A common problem in this area is the paradox that citizenship education is declared of maximum importance for the society but it is relegated to a low-status position in the curriculum: rarely is it evaluated and often it is a part of one or more subjects in the curriculum. It occupies a position of low visibility and is one among many "horizontal" subjects. The issue of the position of citizenship education in the curriculum depends essentially on questions of how the curriculum is organized: Include citizenship education in or more subjects? In a single block of time or throughout the school cycle? Combining "vertical" presence (in one or more specific subjects) with "horizontal" presence throughout the curriculum? As has already been seen in the reforms in the '90s in this material, a wide range of countries—both developed and developing—have expanded the position of citizenship education in the curriculum. Countries that do

not have a discipline devoted to it have established one. In many cases it has been extended down from secondary school to elementary school. And the objectives, in many systems, are part of what is known as "horizontal," that is, they are the responsibility of all areas of the curriculum.

TEACHERS

Without an appropriate strategy of teacher training and support, the new definitions will not reach beyond the classroom. This is clearly the weakest link in the reforms for quality education in Latin America and the Caribbean. It includes both initial teacher training and the professional development of teachers already in the workforce. A redefinition of citizenship education assumes that teachers—those who are already working and those who are still being trained—need to learn the new content. This means they need to study and prepare. And the administration needs to provide conditions that allow this process, opportunities to for training provided by specialists and controls and support provided by a committed supervision.

PUBLIC OPINION

The fourth challenge is the development of social and contextual support for citizenship education. It is essential to create a climate of favorable public opinion in support of citizenship education in the schools. This means getting communications media to articulate and voice their support for the effort to educate committed citizens. Also, in the context of each specific school, the challenge is to get parents' approval on the one hand, and teachers' approval on the other, for the work done by teachers who teach citizenship education. The way to educate active citizens calls for not only traditional methods of instructional content but also on the

experience and practice of debates on controversial issues and participatory exercises (in student government) and service (to the community). This way, the requirements of "contextual support" take on their full meaning.

To provide local social support, it is particularly appropriate to consider the logistics of "campaigns" or "special programs." Through use of resources and communications and training activities, various different audiences can be reached and informed and educated on the pro-citizenship education effort. Often these initiatives—with high political visibility and the advantage of being quickly put into practice—help support the longer-term progress in the education environment.

ALIGNMENT

Four fundamental factors in teaching citizenship education should be coordinated: curriculum, textbooks and learning materials, teacher training, and evaluation. Often in our region these components are not coordinated, which impacts negatively on the changes in the teaching. Resolving this problem is a challenge mainly for education ministries. It is part of their institutional responsibility to move toward this necessary cooperation, which calls for not only high-level policy definitions but also management skills such as reliable systems of evaluation that make sure the implementation of the new initiative follows the new policy guidelines. Or that the necessary information is made available to decide on or undertake adjustments.

Clearly to take on these challenges requires financial resources, but also especially good management. It is worth noting a factor that is often ignored: it takes a long time to implement changes in curriculum—at the national level—that have significant impact on classroom teaching. Certainly it takes longer than the time period of a presidential term. Agreements need to be reached that allow sufficient time periods and the design of a plan appropriate for the transformations that are viewed as essential.

Conclusion

Education for citizenship, an essential task of school systems, currently faces several urgent challenges in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Today's generation of youth, the best educated in the region's history, shows signs of moving away from politics and democratic participation. At the same time, the combination of old problems such as poverty and inequality, along with new problems from post-modernism and globalization, demand as never before an active and capable citizenry. The simultaneous occurrence of ever-growing demands on democratic policies, along with the apparent disinterest on the part of the younger generation, calls for reexamination with fresh eyes of the citizenship education offered by today's schools, as well as actions to transform it.

The effectiveness of citizenship education should be examined from at least three levels of analysis, as presented in this study. In the first place, universal high-quality education should be available to all students. Students who do not succeed in mastering minimum basic reading and writing skills and mathematic and scientific reasoning cannot easily develop an effective political voice and skills for action.

Secondly, students should learn civic skills, which include acquisition of knowledge, abilities and values through certain curriculums content and active pedagogical approaches in safe participatory settings. If the content of the teaching material is not relevant or up-to-date, it will not hold the interest of the students nor educate them in skills required by society and politics. If the way the material is presented does not generate confidence and interest, the targeted abilities and values will not be developed.

A third level of analysis looks at the school setting and the gap that can exist between what is taught in schools and what is practiced there in terms of power and participation, rights and responsibilities, norms and practices. It is in the daily interactions between teachers and students that the students directly learn what it means to live in a democracy. In schools where gender discrimination exists, for example, little does it matter that the curriculum speaks of equality of rights between men and women.

NEW CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

There is a gap between the new requirements of citizenship education and the practices and results of the typical educational institutions in the region. A gap whose elimination would call for a transformation and substantive enrichment of what the school systems offers as learning opportunities in this area. Such a change needs to take place not only in the explicit curriculum but also in the hidden one as well (school environment, relationships, rituals) in the pedagogy as well as in evaluation.

Based on relevant innovative experiences from countries in the region and developed countries outside the region, the work proposes a change in civic education to citizenship education, which means: i) moving from a single-subject focus on political institutions to a three-part focus on: a) political institutions, b) current events in the society, and c) competencies in conflict resolution, ii) moving from a curriculum predominantly taught in the last years of secondary school to one expanded throughout the entire school cycle, and iii) shifting the focus from acquisition of knowledge (focus on content) to one aimed at acquiring knowledge, abilities, and attitudes in contexts and practices based on participatory democratic relations.

While all curriculums for citizenship education have specific aspects from the country where taught, a universal moral base exists that should underlie all curriculums, based on the doctrine of human

rights and the common need for education to develop the dialectic competencies that uphold such a operational ethic.

Current curriculum reforms also are generally based on promoting citizenship competencies developed in the school setting. These include developing abilities to respond to complex demands in a sociopolitical context, through mobilization of psychosocial resources including knowledge, abilities and attitudes.

Current pedagogy of citizenship education includes a three-part approach i) teaching specific information on history, government, political institutions and civics; ii) deliberation and debate on current public problems; and iii) experience—participation in student centers and decision-making in schools as well as participating in community service. With respect to the first two components, the use of different disciplines in the curriculum has also been put forth as a way of promoting social awareness, and the importance of not shying away from political events that include the practices of deliberation and debate.

The effort to evaluate the success of citizenship education has important advantages—objectives and contents must be defined, making them visible to the society and teachers, and revealing the value and importance of this area of the curriculum, traditionally limited to the final years of high schools. On the other hand, an evaluation runs the risk of only measuring what can be evaluated by tests with paper and pencil; the dimensions of abilities and attitudes of the targeted competencies are not so easily assessed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Any effort to transform citizenship education that addresses the needs of different countries in the region must have a broad and in-depth consensus from the society about what makes an ideal citizen. The consensus has to be precise enough to provide a guideline for education policy, and to rally enough support to grant authority to teachers and school institutions to help them produce contexts and practices of student deliberation on conflicts in society and the political processes in democracy.

The second basic factor in offering a successful education for citizenship is the policy of initial teacher training and continuing professional development of teachers. "A redefinition of citizenship education assumes that citizenship teachers—those in training and those already teaching—need to learn the new contents and redefine their pedagogy. This calls for study and preparation on the part of the teachers, administrative conditions that allow such procedures, opportunities to learn from specialists, alliances with local stakeholders who offer already proven experience and programs, sharing of experiences on the part of teachers to reflect on what is possible and how to achieve it, and also the controls and support that a committed supervisory unit should provide.

Not only implementation but also the sustained development of what school systems offer on citizenship education requires investigation and development of information. Without empirical information in this area, or evaluation and analysis of the results, governments and educators will lack the minimum tools necessary to define an effective course of action to transform and improve what the school system offers to educate active democratic citizens.

In conclusion, a radical reevaluation of citizenship education in schools creates the opportunity to establish a virtuous cycle between political democratic institutionality and a culture of political democracy, which is only possible through practicing democratic principles inside and outside the classroom in each and every instance that makes up a modern state: in the public sector, the private sector, the academic sector, civil society organizations, political parties, opposition groups and in every sector of society.

ANNEX I.
Competencies for democratic citizenship

A. Cognitive competencies: Education for moral autonomy

a. Critical reasoning

- Education on communications media. Learn to interpret presentation of information in the media (press, radio, TV). Constructive analysis of the personalities and learn to read the slant between the lines of information offered by the media. People who read newspapers have more civic knowledge, with no difference to which economic sector they belong (IEA).
- Critical analysis of movies and TV.
- Analysis of hidden curriculum (power relations in which we are immersed and the potential to reveal them in order to regulate them, identifying ourselves in these roles, sometimes even as victim or perpetrator).
- Analysis of civil rights movements in other geographic and historic contexts. For example, through programs such as Facing History and Ourselves.

b. Moral issues

Moral issues. Also it is possible to use them in discussing other academic subjects. In a science class, for example, a moral dilemma can be presented on questions related to scientific and technological advances of modern society and in this way take advantage of the pedagogic possibilities of this strategy. For example:

- Is it correct to conduct experiments on animals for the purpose of scientific data?
- Is it all right to manipulate genes of animals in order to obtain more productive animals for our own use?
- Scientists such as Albert Einstein who helped discover the physical principles of atomic energy—did they make a positive contribution to humanity?
- Should experiments be conducted in search of the genes in humans related to intelligence?
- What should be done when building a dam to generate electricity for a needy population could also cause environmental damage?

c. Sanctions by reciprocity

Sanctions by reciprocity directly related to the imbalance they invite to repair, and reflections on the meaning.

d. Activities to create democratic and participatory settings

- Encourage debate in decision-making events on issues that affect all. From the classroom, where discussions and decisions take place on norms, recognitions, evaluation methods, and promoting ideal conduct and collective decisions among education leaders and teachers and the entire school community, when it is called for.
- Permit decision-making in different levels in the academic institution to allow collective analysis of cause and effect (intention and consequences). And through this learn to critically reflect on all schoolwork.

- Promote cooperation to achieve common goals, in such a way that all feel the call to participate in the same ideal.
- Establish norms to guarantee these goals and that allow the understanding of the meaning of that norm and the law.
- To face collectively the consequences of decisions, it is possible to make new decisions. Social collective reflection leads to experiences that are eventually successful and ones that build confidence. The sense of personal confidence and well being grows when discussions of moral options are promoted and the relationship between morality and politics is made evident.

e. **Activities to make moral decisions.** While most decisions we make in daily life are moral decisions, they are not always just, inclusive, considerate or even compassionate. Classroom analysis and discussion of school ethical and political problems or problems in other social contexts help develop citizenship competencies. The sense of public awareness strengthens when reflection is encouraged on what belongs to all (space, time, ideas, physical elements) and it makes use of it in an equitable, rational and efficient manner.

f. Learn to make intelligent distinctions that allow one to **overcome stereotyping and inappropriate generalizations.** For example, learn to distinguish between fact and opinion and between dishonesty and errors (the program "Civitas" is an excellent example of a serious pedagogical initiative in this area).

B. **Social-emotional competencies:**

a. Learn to recognize emotions, control negative ones and promote positive ones.

b. Remember those moments when we have been treated with loving care.

c. Denounce forms of hidden aggression in situations of intimacy or exclusion (both male and female partners).

d. Evaluation as feedback.

e. "Constructive" instead of destructive criticism. Proposals for evaluation of citizenship competencies: collective forms of evaluation that arise from what is the best of each of the works done by fellow students. Based on this, identify criteria of what constitutes a good job. This joint evaluation empowers students and

helps build autonomy, gives them control of their work, and thus, their future. When the evaluation is used in a constructive way (students participate in understanding what others are trying to do and they assess the products of their peers), the weight is lifted off the teacher's shoulders. Evaluation of the portfolio allows the process of growth of the child to be revealed, and the patterns of understanding and expression they show. Evaluations with matrices are bit more complicated and difficult, but when done, produce splendid results. One begins to see that the patterns are repeated and the evaluations most likely follow similar patterns.

C. **Communicative**

a. Cooperative activities and group learning.

b. Community service activities.

D. **Education in the practice of reflection**

a. **History as a place of reflection** on moral decisions that we face daily and that allow us to understand the reasons that people act as they do. We stay as passive observers, allowing that others get exploited; people make poor decisions, inventing excuses that allow them to avoid thinking. The sense of community strengthens when the children regain their individual and collective history that bring them to seek alternative ways of relating and solving conflicts, and to give them a sense of the processes that are occurring in the school, the neighborhood, the city, the country.

b. Exercises of **metacognition.** Doing exercises of meta analysis on the work sessions with the same students is an excellent way to create a healthy pedagogical setting. When we ask ourselves what happened, what strategy was used, which ones worked and which didn't, and how do we feel? Then we better understand the nature of different strategies, gaining a reflective knowledge and not only practice of strategies. We will continue to refine and adjust the strategies to the current contexts.

c. Articulate the moral point of view in schoolwork through integrated projects.

d. Use of electronic media. Construct learning networks. For example, "Congenuine" (genu-

ine conversations on pedagogic practices). Put teachers online (virtual teaching) with courses that begin in a classroom but are accompanied by learning on the basis of participating in a network, conversing on decisions made to prepare the class, how it went, what worked and what did not, why, and what can be learned from it. Teachers are needed who know how other teachers can help prepare the classes.

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