

ANNEXES

TESTIMONIES

➤ **Section I: Quality of Education**

Witness: Samuel

Age: 16 years old

State: Sucre Municipality, Caracas

“The current system is too old and doesn’t work, even our parents are victims, we learned nothing of the subjects we studied, we did it mostly out of interest, to access the resources and with our own discretion. And now with the quarantine and the bombardment of homework, we can’t do anything else.”

➤ **Access to Technology**

Testimonies extracted from the following report:

“PROCESSES, PRACTICES AND COMMUNICATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN GREATER CARACAS DURING THE COVID-19 QUARANTINE”

ININCO - CECODAP

Witness: Karina

Age: 17 years old, Fifth Year of High School

State: Caracas, Capital District

“I have a classmate who lives nearby. When we weren’t under quarantine she came to my house and I helped her. She has no television, phone or computer. She can’t come right now and is asking her neighbors for help to call us over the phone and we have to give her the homework and also explain it to her. She is one of the people who does not know what to do. She also has an old cellphone with which she sometimes gets in touch with me over WhatsApp, but not always. There are at least 10 people in my promotion with the same issue: they have no way of getting the information. The rest of us have our means, even if it’s just a cellphone, a computer, something. I don’t know what the teachers are going to do. Some take that into account and give them an extra chance, more time.”

➤ **Education on Human Rights**

Witness: Anonymous

Age: 15 years old

State: Los Teques, Miranda

A witness consulted for the creation of the present report said that she has not learned anything significant about the Rights of the Child as part of her school education and that she did not fully know of the existence, importance and contents of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We believe that this shortfall in the education system makes it difficult for children to defend their rights in contexts where they might be relevant.

➤ **Violence and Bullying**

Witness: Miguel Da Costa

Age: 17 years' old

State: San Antonio de los Altos, Los Salias Municipality, Miranda

"I experienced my first cases of bullying when I was 5 or 6 years old," alarming, because it makes the daily school experience unpleasant for many children that are merely starting their learning process in educational institutions. Miguel Da Costa says: "I suffered bullying since I was 5-6 years old until right before the quarantine, basically I've suffered it my entire life; it angered me to be mocked by my physical appearance each day, they called me things like fat, walrus, whale, among others." These comments are quite harmful for the victim because they affect their self-confidence and self-esteem. Our respondent specifically emphasized two situations he experienced out of the myriad he went through in his life: "I was in 4th grade, when I arrived at school, I was going to tie up my shoe laces and a girl shouted "His butt strip is showing!". Everyone laughed at me that day. I couldn't stand it and went to my seat to cry. I covered my face with the sweater so they wouldn't see me, it was my birthday." "In 3rd year, someone was bothering me all the time. The bully went to the classroom where I was and put a cellphone right in my face with a song about a whale playing very loudly and putting up a show in front of everybody; they mocked me and didn't stop laughing."

He also says that in his school he has seen many cases of bullying at various levels and aggressions. He often saw the bullies mock the victim's physical appearance, adding that: "[The victims] need attention, we should receive education on these issues so they don't happen again."

➤ **Impact of mental health on the quality of education**

Witness: Alberto

Age: 17 years old

State: Chacao Municipality, Caracas

The witness suggests that his lack of motivation comes from the method used for teaching, explaining that a person does not learn out of their own interest, they merely focus on memorizing some things in order to pass exams and thus remember them, a methodology that feels to him like a considerable waste of energy and time. However, he also says that the excessive amount of homework is rather unfair, considering how it limits the time available for other activities that allow him to develop his potential and that he likes.

➤ **Migration phenomena that limit the quality of education**

Witness: Anonymous

State: Charallave, Cristóbal Rojas Municipality, Miranda

Young single mother of three children, a girl and two boys, she lived with her mother and was forced to leave the country in search of better work opportunities in order to support her children and mother. She left them under the care of her mother who is elderly and ill. The children continue studying but they do not have a person who can help them with their homework and personal care. It has been almost four years since their mother left, the eldest boy also emigrated recently, leaving his studies and his siblings who are likely to emigrate as well at some point.

➤ **Education in the context of the pandemic**

Witness: Sofía Alves

Age: 15 years old

State: Maturín, Monagas

1. Have you attended virtual classes during the COVID-19 pandemic? Do you think that what you have learned in them is sufficient?

Yes, after the state of emergency for COVID-19 was decreed, the education zone of Monagas State took some time to implement virtual classes at the primary, secondary or university level so that the students could continue their studies and avoid missing classes.

2. Do you miss your school? Would you like to return?

Well, sincerely no, because this modality of study is good and useful, but it has important problems that it would be better to solve. For instance, Math and Chemistry are subjects that involve exercises that need to be explained at some point, which the teachers don't do. Nobody does their job, teachers don't teach and students don't learn.

3. Do you prefer virtual education or face-to-face education?

If I had a choice, I like face-to-face education better, because many issues would be solved and everyone fulfills their role both in correctly teaching and learning every subject. Although right now I prefer this kind of education because the circumstances demand it, we only need to be patient until the emergency of danger for this virus ends.

4. Which one do you think gives you the best learning?

In face-to-face classes, we learn through teaching but if there are no teachers, who can learn? So I prefer face-to-face education, an education where everything has an order, a rule and a function: learning. This mode is applied because we have no choice, but there are people who think it's better not to have a schedule, or exams, or presentations so often, because they don't want to study, something that also causes issues, in addition to the most important aspect, the internet connection fails a lot and makes the situation increasingly harder.

5. Which measures do you think could be taken to minimize the impact of virtual classes? Do you think there should be changes?

Well, I think it'd be better if teachers didn't send math exercises or that we had a teacher that could explain difficult exercises to use twice a week. It would also be a good idea if they set up a small connection center where students could go and research, with all the necessary measures, of course. I think the way in which activities are done should change; activities should be done on a computer and sent over email, it would be easier to do them and deliver them. We should also be allowed to go research twice a week, to get a teacher to guide us provided the necessary measures and safety are in place, so many problems would be solved that way.

➤ **Socio-economic situation of teachers and its influence on the quality of education in Venezuela**

Witness: Anonymous teacher

State: Valencia, Carabobo

Regarding this problem, a teacher (who prefers to remain anonymous) of the Valencia Municipality, Carabobo State, says that she has had to set up a shop in her home in order to get the income to satisfy her basic needs and provide for her family because the wage she receives from her job as teacher is scarcely enough to buy two

products from the food basket per month; additionally, she says that teachers are unprotected from every point of view because in case of illness, the wages are not enough to buy medicines and this is why they have to work on other things, so teaching becomes secondary to them and this affects the quality of education in Venezuela, because they are unable to offer the full attention their students require. Teachers find it more profitable to dedicate all of their time and effort to various activities that allow them greater financial stability.