



# **Federación Internacional Fe y Alegría: A Model of Social Justice Education and Sustainability**

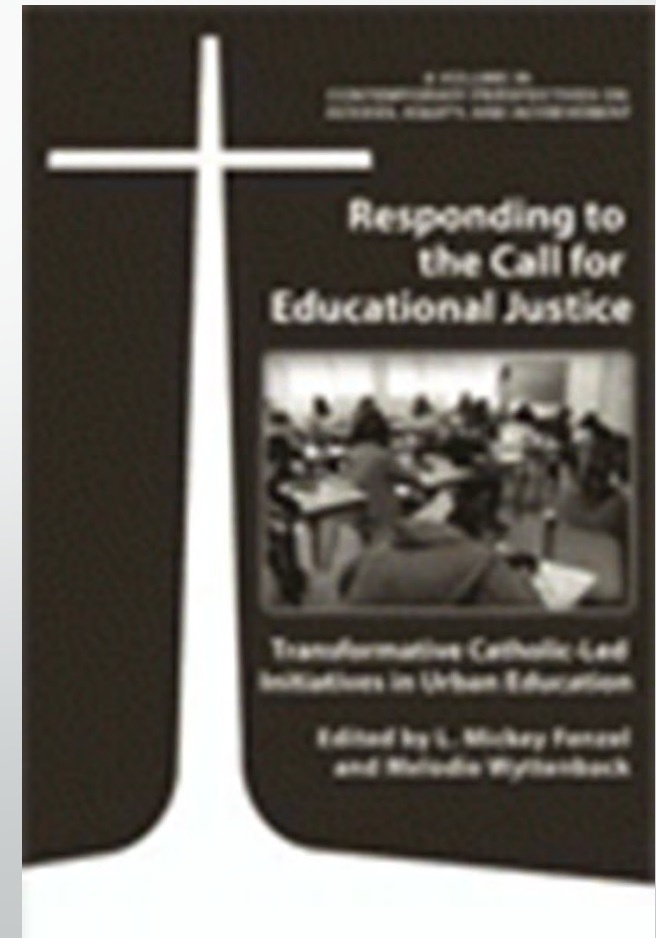
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# Fe y Alegría

Movimiento de Educación Popular Integral y Promoción Social

<http://www.infoagepub.com/products/Responding-to-the-Call-for-Educational-Justice>



# Objectives of Presentation

- Examine Fe y Alegria model of education for historically underserved children, adolescents, and adults:
  - What makes them successful
  - The focus beyond the three Rs
  - How they ensure sustainability while serving students placed at risk



# Jesuit Education Principles

- Academic excellence
- Commitment to educate underserved groups
- Engaging the community in solidarity
- Engaging in global outreach and partnerships

# Fe y Alegría

- Movement founded by Jesuit, José María Vélaz, S.J., in 1955 to educate children in the slums of Caracas, Venezuela
- First schools relied heavily on the generosity and labor of community members, parents, volunteers, Catholic universities committed to poor
- After Paulo Freire, committed to educating the oppressed to provide path to transformation of their reality
  - Consistent with Freirean principles of *conscientization* and liberation theology
  - Mission: contribute to the eradication of “poverty, inequality, injustice, and the suffering of excluded and impoverished peoples”

# Federación International Fe y Alegría

- Formed in 1987 after years of development in Central and South America
  - ... to provide oversight of the common goals of the Fe y Alegría approach to transforming communities with a focus on education
- Operates as a federation of national organizations, each of which is a registered non-profit entity in its home country
- Operates in 22 countries including Europe, Africa, & SE Asia
- International office facilitates communication and sharing of effective practices among member countries and facilitates growth of the Movement.

# Organization

- International headquarters (in Bogotá) oversees regional operations, promotion, data gathering, securing and managing resources for regions, organizing international conferences
- Each region or country is organized under the office of the Jesuit provincial which advocates for funding of projects, and ensures consistency with mission
- Each region is divided into sectors that oversee the educational enterprises



# Case Example: Venezuela Organization

- Sponsors 170 schools that included basic education beginning in preschool and middle technical education
- Involved in five universities; operates 24 radio stations (distant learning)
- Oversee 91 job training centers that support out-of-school youth in particular
- Sponsors a professional training center that includes teacher training



# Data Sources 2018 Study

- Interview Exec VP of Entreculturas (Madrid)
- Interview Director of Friends of FyA (Washington, DC)
- Interview with former FyA student from Lima, Peru
- Bogotá, Columbia visits
  - Interviews with Exec Director and Exec Secretary of Federation
  - The Schools:
    - Middle and high school; facility owned by FyA Columbia;
    - PreK-12 public school operated by FyA and taught by FyA teachers

# Findings: School Visits

- Clear mandate to educate children and adolescents at or near the margins of society:
  - Technical education program for school dropouts supported by foundation funds
    - Observed presentation of apps to support emerging small businesses
  - Lower SES neighborhood school that opens doors to community
    - Participated in teacher meeting on evaluation and planning
    - Planning included developing culture of mutual support and peace (Mindfulness practice)
    - Interdisciplinary projects to benefit the community

## Findings: School Visits (2)

- FyA works with local and national government to either staff public schools or operate their own
  - Cooperation with government to provide quality mission-focused education with well-trained teachers, relationships with parents and community, careful planning and assessments
  - Identify and meet needs of young people that are not being met otherwise (e.g., technology program)

# Findings: The Federación Organization

- Exec Dir and Exec Secretary ensure that schools stay consistent with mission that includes quality education for marginalized communities
- General Assembly with reps from all countries oversees the carrying out of objectives of the Federation
- Annual meeting held for professional development and sharing and setting new directions for the organization
- Each country has: National Office, Regional Program Offices, and Education Centers
- Support from organizations such as Entreculturas and other agencies or foundations.

# Findings: Entreculturas and Friends of FyA Interviews

- Most of funds raised support FyA operations (17+ million euros annually)
  - Corporations and foundations targeted
  - Moved a staff member to Washington to strengthen Friends of FyA in US
- Formed to further Jesuit goals of international communication and cooperation
  - Also supports Jesuit Refugee Service and social justice agency among youth

## Findings: Alumna of FyA Lima

- Attending a FyA school was a marked change from her early government school: increased cleanliness, safety, technology
  - FyA teachers noted her leadership capabilities and encouraged her
- Qualified for scholarship to a Jesuit university in Lima
- Led to work for NGOs in Peru and graduate study in US
- Seeks to work for women's issues internationally

# Developing Program: Democratic Republic of the Congo

- Local chapter organized meeting of personnel from 15 high poverty, poorly resourced schools and community members in Iniagi region
- Fe y Alegría organization presented its plan for assisting schools with helping children to read
- Began reading tutoring program
- Proposed an agricultural plan to help schools plant and harvest cowpea crops and sell produce to support school activities
- Fe y Alegría sponsors provide materials and consultation
- Realizing goal of supporting schools and communities to help raise skills and living standards



# Summary

- FyA schools honor the lived experience of the community members and engage students in critical dialogue and analysis.
- FyA and Entreculturas respond to the mandate to help transform the lives of historically underserved and oppressed persons across the globe to serve the goal of contributing to a world of justice and peace
- Quality transformative education for historically underserved is possible, sustainable, and replicable
- The 450 year-old Jesuit organization is ideal for such an international undertaking



*Rebelión: No le pegue a la negra*

Questions?

