

Research and development in Central America: panorama and prospects for international cooperation

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Abstract This article examines the state of scientific research and development in Central America, highlighting the potential contribution of international partners. It separates Central America from the larger region of Latin America and the Caribbean to underscore its differences and how these affect scientific and technological capacities, priorities and possibilities. Using primarily data from the Ibero-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators and the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization Institute for Statistics, current research and development trends in the region are explored, as defined by international Frascati norms, and juxtaposed against broader scientific and technological parameters. Challenges within this environment include educational quality and completion rates; low public and private funding of scientific research; lack of institutionalization; limited understanding of the potential returns associated with research; and the fact that the region operates almost entirely in Spanish, limiting opportunities for global publication and exchange. In addition to national efforts, collaborative international initiatives that appear to be yielding dividends against these obstacles are multinational and intergovernmental supported research training and monitoring partnerships; cross-border university- and research institute-led programs; and international joint publishing projects.

Keywords Central America · Research · Development · Science · Technology

Introduction

This article examines the status of and prospects for scientific research and development in Central America, emphasizing the potential contribution of international partners. It separates Central America from the larger region of Latin America and the Caribbean, within

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