

# Adult education in an interconnected world

Cooperation in lifelong learning for sustainable development  
Festschrift in honour of Heribert Hinzen

Uwe Gartenschlaeger and Esther Hirsch (Editors)

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## **International Perspectives in Adult Education – IPE 71**

The reports, studies and materials published in this series aim to further the development of theory and practice in adult education. We hope that by providing access to information and a channel for communication and exchange, the series will serve to increase knowledge, deepen insights and improve cooperation in adult education at an international level.

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Tel.: +49 (0)228 9756 9-0 / Fax: +49 (0)228 97569-55  
info@dvv-international.de / www.dvv-international.de

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**Editors:** Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Esther Hirsch

**Copy Editor:** Ricarda Motschilnig

**Managing Editor:** Ruth Sarrazin

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**IPE**

International Perspectives  
in Adult Education

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# Foreword

Nasreddin Hodja said one day: “Between youth and old age there is no difference!” – “What do you mean?” asked somebody. He explained: “In front of our door there is a massive stone that only a few people can lift. In my youth I used to try to lift it. I never succeeded. Later, as I grew old I remembered it and tried to lift it. Once again without success. Because of this experience I say that there is no difference between youth and old age!”

Nasreddin – from the 13th or 14th century – the extremely popular Turkish-Islamic legendary author of a diverse number of infinitely humorous stories that are very reminiscent in their dialectic of Jewish discourse, gets to the heart of the matter in this little story. Heribert Hinzen, if we count the years, has grown older now, and we are honouring his retirement, but in spirit and action he is a youngster. Fortunately, in adult education and lifelong learning, age calculations don't count. The immense spiritual freedom which now opens up is that which, through the accumulation of experience and knowledge, brings with it a surplus of quality. This is a deeply enlightened and democratic process, an enrichment for society as a whole, which must lead to action for exactly this society. And this society is global, as Heribert Hinzen has always made clear.

Heribert Hinzen has for over 40 years greatly helped to energetically shape this process and – above all – left his mark on it. The Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, in short, DVV International, owes its relevance in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, the Balkans and in the transition countries of the former Eastern Bloc particularly to the commitment of Heribert Hinzen. He will continue to support us; we need his expertise, his experience, his wisdom.

If I know Heribert Hinzen, he actually lifted the stone Nasreddin Hodja speaks of. Not alone, but with neighbours after a workshop. That does not change the statement: young is old and old is young.

## **Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth**

President of the German Adult Education Association  
(Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV)



# Editorial

There are very few individuals who can claim to have influenced the global discussion on youth and adult education in recent decades in the way that Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen has. His work encompasses various continents and themes as well as the institutions and sectors of non-formal education which are still, unfortunately, often far apart from each other.

When Heribert Hinzen joined the German Adult Education Association (DVV) in 1977, his studies in Education, Catholic Philosophy, Philosophy and Sociology were already behind him. Early on, he specialised in the then really exotic field of adult education, in which he finally received his doctorate on “Adult Education and Development in Tanzania” in 1978 at the University of Heidelberg. This link between development and adult education would be the defining leitmotif of his work. In the tradition of Julius Nyerere and Paolo Freire, his constant commitment was to the disadvantaged and oppressed, initially, particularly in Africa, where – after spending some time at headquarters in Bonn – he worked from 1984-87 as project manager for DVV International in Sierra Leone. Important to him there was the preservation of individualistic traditions and the narratives of the culture, which he sought to save through the transcription of oral traditions and lore. He then returned to Bonn and served first as Deputy Director until, in 1991, he was finally appointed Director of the Institute by DVV. This period saw many important decisions, such as the vigorous expansion of work in the transition countries of Eastern Europe and work with the programme policies of the European Union.

Heribert Hinzen has always been an advocate of rotation, i.e. swapping between domestic and international activities at DVV International. His conviction was that only this could prevent calcification and guarantee a vigorous link between the reality of project work and the work at headquarters. So it was only logical that he moved to Hungary and served as Country Director there from 1996-99 in order to help in the redesign of Hungarian adult education during the exciting period of change. He succeeded outstandingly in this, putting special emphasis on the training of adult educators, especially in cooperation with various universities. It was also during this time that he was appointed full professor at the University of Pécs.

Back in Bonn, new challenges were waiting. In addition to a modernisation of the domestic and foreign structures of DVV International (the systematic development of regional offices took place during this period) Heribert Hinzen, as head of the Institute, initially focused on the field of information and communication. First of all, the Institute put up a website, and his successful work as editor of the journal “Adult Education and Development” also continued. He co-founded this journal in the 1970s, and today DVV International has the most important technical journal on adult education and development in the world. This was augmented at the end of the 1980s by the series “International Perspectives in Adult Education (IPE)”. When Heribert Hinzen left in 2009 to establish and manage the new Southeast Asia Regional Office in Vientiane, Laos, he left behind an Institute which under his direction had become one of the major players in international adult education.

If one talks with Heribert Hinzen about adult education, it doesn't take long until he starts to speak of what he calls the “Golden Triangle”. In the fruitful interaction of three actors – politics, science and (civil society) adult education providers – he sees the guarantee of further development for the benefit of the people. Thus the role of DVV International consists in the balanced development of all three elements, in the creation of opportunities for dialogue, networking and learning events that allow the transfer of experience and knowledge. Unfortunately, we are still dealing with a variety of barriers: scientific insights hindered from achieving their practical application; political power which prevents civic engagement; or ivory tower-related research which is separated from “profane” reality. Changing this remains a Herculean task, but thankfully not a Sisyphean one. Some examples of actions in which Heribert Hinzen played a key role will demonstrate this:

- In 1997 at the UNESCO CONFITEA V conference in Hamburg, in a way never seen before, non-governmental organisations were successfully included as an integral part in the consultation process on an equal footing with the government officials who were present. The result was the “Hamburg Declaration – The Agenda for the Future”, which became one of the most influential documents of international adult education and formulated important recommendations for the development of the sub-sector. Heribert Hinzen significantly supported the efforts of the sitting President, Prof. Rita Süßmuth and the then Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Prof. Paul Belanger, who helped this conference have a successful long-term effect.
- After regime change in Central and Eastern Europe, many of the local universities were in a precarious situation. The teaching positions and

faculties of Adult and Continuing Education were affected in a significant way. If it was possible to create sustainably secure and prestigious courses at individual universities, such as in Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, this is also thanks to Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen. This has now been acknowledged and honourably rewarded by his induction into the “Hall of Fame of Adult Education”. In the meantime, some outstanding people from partner universities in Eastern and Central Europe have also been inducted.

- Finally, one must make a reference to the encouraging signals as regards adult education in the post-2015 process: Both the requirements revealed for the World Education Forum in Korea in May 2015 as well as the discussion of the “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) give reason to hope that the mistakes of 2000 will not be repeated. At that time, the agreed upon focus of activities for the education sector was on primary education; as a result, major players such as the World Bank pushed through this one-sided agenda. In the last 15 years knowledge and awareness has increased that only a holistic approach to education in terms of lifelong learning makes sense, which also even recognises the special potential of non-formal youth and adult education. Heribert Hinzen, through his work with the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), has contributed to the fact that this positive change in the global political framework has been made real. A large part of his work in Asia in the last five years, in particular the cooperation with the Asian Association for Adult Education – ASPBAE – and the Regional Office of UNESCO in Bangkok, was dedicated to this goal.

This volume brings together contributions from associates who have accompanied Heribert Hinzen during the last four decades. Representatives from the German Adult Education Association (DVV) and the Adult Education Centres (*Volkshochschulen*), as well as friends and partners from academia, major international networks and civil society organisations, have a say here as well. The volume is divided into three parts:

- *Adult education – The international discourse* addresses the central global discussions and guidelines which Heribert Hinzen is convinced are also becoming increasingly important for national policies and realities.
- The second part, *Adult education – trends and practices*, focuses on central issues such as vocational training, the professionalisation debate or the challenges of immigration. It includes both German, European and global experience. Of particular note is certainly the contribution by the Chairman of the DVV, Dr. Ernst-Dieter Rossmann, MP, whose well-re-

soned plea for the public responsibility of further education combines many of the core beliefs of DVV and DVV International.

- In the third part, *Adult education and development*, the focus is on a basic constituent part of the work of DVV International and Heribert Hinzen, the combination of adult education and development. This connection defines the global uniqueness of DVV International, which is nourished by the belief that youth and adult education outside the formal system can play an important, often a central part, in the creation of equal opportunities and emancipation.

DVV International was lucky enough to have some influential and successful personalities among its leadership for the past few decades. Heribert Hinzen unquestionably belongs among those. This volume provides current positions and insights into debates in which he played a decisive role and – we are sure – will continue to help shape.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the copy editor of this volume, Ricarda Motschilnig, for her substantial and dedicated work.

**Uwe Gartenschlaeger and Esther Hirsch**

DVV International



# Adult education – the international discourse

# The post-2015 education agenda and youth and adult literacy in a lifelong learning perspective

*The article describes key milestones in the development of the post-2015 education agenda and its key features in terms of vision, principles, scope and content. The article discusses the proposed targeting of youth and adult literacy and the difference between the formulation of these targets as proposed by the Muscat Agreement and the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. It also highlights the importance of the broadening of the education agenda which led to the inclusion of the targeting of youth and adult literacy, which, if adopted, would entail the opening of unprecedented opportunities for strengthening and improving youth and adult literacy globally.*



## Introduction

As we approach the culmination of both the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All agenda (EFA) in 2015, a wide array of consultations and reflections have been held, aimed at shaping the post-2015 education agenda and its articulation with the wider post-2015 development agenda. UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), in its role as leader of the coordination and monitoring of the EFA, facilitated these consultations in close collaboration with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and other key education stakeholders. The consultations took into consideration lessons learnt from the implementation and outcomes of the EFA agenda and the education-related MDGs as well as recent trends in education and current broader socio-economic development trends and challenges which affect developed and developing countries alike in a globalised, interconnected world and their implications for education.

The consultations culminated in the Muscat Agreement (UNESCO 2014), which was adopted by education leaders and ministers at the Global EFA Meeting in May 2014, and which represents a vision shared by the key stakeholders of the international education community for the post-2015 education agenda. The Muscat Agreement outlines an aspirational, transformative, balanced and holistic post-2015 education agenda of universal relevance and with a focus on equity, quality, learning outcomes and lifelong learning. It contains an overarching goal: "Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030". This has metamorphosed into seven global targets, covering early childhood care and education; basic education; adult and youth literacy; skills for work and life; skills for global citizenship and sustainable development; teachers; and financing of education.

At UN level, several multi-layered and interlinked processes were set up to develop the post-2015 development agenda. The most recent milestone of the UN process is the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG)<sup>1</sup>, which put forward a proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN General Assembly 2014). The proposal contains 17 goals, including one on education: Goal 4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all" and a set of global targets which were also informed

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<sup>1/</sup> The intergovernmental Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was set up under the auspices of the UN General Assembly in 2013 as a follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference, with the mandate to develop a proposal on Sustainable Development Goals.

by the Muscat Agreement proposals. The UN General Assembly, at its 68th session, welcomed the report and decided that it “should be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda in the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiation process” (UN General Assembly 2014), while also considering other input.

However, there are still a few reservations about some formulations of the current OWG education targets. Therefore, further work in terms of a technical review and to refine and clarify some of the target language would be desirable as we go forward. This would aim at ensuring that they are clearer and more measurable. In his synthesis report on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the UN Secretary-General states: “What is needed now is a technical review to ensure that each goal is framed in language that is specific, measurable, achievable and consistent with existing United Nations standards and agreements...” (UN General Assembly 2014: 28). At this point in time it is unclear if there will be a possibility to further refine target formulation. Member States will make a decision on this issue during the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations.

The key challenge in the months ahead is to ensure that the future education agenda, as an integral part of the broader development agenda, will be transformative, holistic and universally-relevant to all countries, and that the targets are feasible and measurable. The post-2015 education agenda will be discussed in the upcoming World Education Forum 2015, to be held at Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015, which aims at reaching an agreement on a joint position for the finalisation of the education goal and targets in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda to be adopted at the high-level UN Summit in September 2015.

### **Key features of the proposed post-2015 education agenda**

The post-2015 education agenda, as proposed in the Muscat Agreement, recognises the continued relevance of EFA. It builds on what has been achieved in EFA since 2000 and aims at completing unfinished business, while addressing new challenges.

The agenda will be universal in nature and applicable to all countries, while taking into account differing national circumstances and respecting national policies and priorities. Therefore, its implementation will be context specific, allowing for national target setting and indicators based on the global vision. This is aligned with the approach of the broader post-2015 development agenda.

Reflections on what kind of education is required for the future have also included the examination of the interrelation between education and

broader development. The fundamental role of education in social and economic development and growth is widely recognised. A recent policy paper published by the EFA GMR (Global Monitoring Report) gives an evidenced-based overview on ways in which education can advance the proposed post-2015 sustainable development goals, and underscores that “sustainable development for all countries is only truly possible through comprehensive cross-sector development efforts that begin with education” (UNESCO 2014: i).

The agenda reaffirms the fundamental principles of education as a fundamental human right and inextricably linked to the realisation of other rights; as a public good; as a foundation for human fulfilment, peace, sustainable development, gender equality and responsible global citizenship; and as a key contributor to reducing inequality and reducing poverty. It is thus understood as central to the sustainable development agenda.

The vision of the post-2015 education agenda is rights based, with a focus on equity, inclusion and gender equality. This is founded on the analysis that there are persistent inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes at various levels of education, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, people affected by conflict and disaster, the disabled, minorities, and girls and women. The focus of equity, inclusion and gender equality is reflected in the targets and through indicators that measure and monitor inequalities. There is a need for better measures and disaggregated data in order to enable effective measurement of equity gaps and to help inform policies that seek to reduce inequalities. As the Joint Proposal of the EFA Steering Committee on Education Post-2015 notes, “targets should only be considered achieved if they are met for all relevant income and social groups” (UNESCO 2014: 2).

Quality education and learning are core constructs of the post-2015 education agenda. While the focus on quality and learning is not new in the world of education, and was already spelt out in UNESCO’s landmark publication “Learning: The Treasure Within” (1996), as well as in both the 1990 Jomtien Declaration (UNESCO 1990) and in the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO 2000), the concerns with quality learning were lost in favour of universal access to primary schooling.

The renewed interest in learning has taken on a new shape, based on the recognition that the focus on the provision of education and training, often spurred by international development agendas, which tended to emphasise schooling at the expense of effective and relevant learning, had clear implications. Recent data show that globally, there are insufficient levels of basic skills acquisition and issues of quality and relevance of education. At least 250 million children are not able to read, write or count well, even among those who have spent at least four years in school (GMR 2013).

Indeed, a report by the Brookings Institution (2011: 3) states that there is a “global learning crisis” affecting children and youth both within and outside schools. This has led to a move beyond placing emphasis on access, enrolment and completion pure and simple and put quality of education and learning outcomes at the centre of the post-2015 education agenda.

The shift from focusing on access to education for all (at primary level) to achieving learning outcomes at all levels of education has been manifested in the Muscat Agreement and Goal 4 of the Open Working Group proposal. This has been expressed in the proposed overarching goal “Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030”, and more particularly in five of the seven proposed targets of the Muscat Agreement – including school readiness at pre-primary level; relevant learning outcomes at primary and secondary level; proficiency levels in youth and adult literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society; relevant knowledge and skills acquisition for decent work and life; and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies. This also includes the acquisition of “transferable” or “transversal” skills, including intra-personal and inter-personal skills/competencies.

The achievement of such learning outcomes requires that the necessary inputs and processes be in place. While views differ about the nature and determinants of quality education, as well as the most effective policy levers for enhancing learning outcomes and targets, it is clear that context plays a powerful role in influencing “quality” education (UNESCO and UNICEF 2012). The World Education Forum (Dakar 2000) identified the key elements of quality education as: well-nourished and motivated students; well-trained teachers employing active pedagogies to support personalised learning; adequate facilities and instructional materials; clearly defined, effectively taught and accurately assessed curricular knowledge and skills; and a healthy, safe, gender-sensitive learning environment that makes full use of children’s local language skills (Expanded Commentary 2000: 15-17). Today, additional elements of quality are being emphasised. For example, quality education may also involve: fostering practices that promote sustainability in local, national and global communities; acquiring skills for competently navigating a technology-intensive world; promoting political and civic engagement and intercultural dialogue; instilling a passion for learning throughout life; and nurturing innovative and creative producers of new knowledge (Council of Europe 2008). These elements are reflected in the post-2015 education agenda.

Lifelong learning is a central principle of the post-2015 education agenda. This is based on several considerations. Lifelong learning gained renewed focus due to rapid socio-economic changes and the related

challenge of emerging professions and higher levels of skills needs which require learners to continue to acquire and master entirely new skills throughout life. Consequently, there is a need to develop more responsive education and skills policies that allow for a flexible adaptation of skills supply to rapidly-changing requirements and ensure that individuals can continue to learn and apply competencies effectively (UNESCO 2012). Lifelong learning is further supported by technological and scientific development, and the exponential growth and changing nature of information (UNESCO 2012). There is growing recognition that the ways in which knowledge is acquired are changing. Learning can occur in any space and at any time, and is no longer confined to educational institutions as “transmitters” of knowledge (CISCO 2010). UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) states that “encompassing formal, non-formal and informal learning, lifelong learning emphasises the integration of learning and living – in life-wide contexts across family and community settings, in study, work and leisure, and throughout an individual’s life” (UIL 2012: 3). Consequently, learning should be addressed across the life cycle, and future approaches to education need to be underpinned by a life-long – and a life-wide – learning approach. This requires the creation of learning opportunities in all settings for people of all ages, which will support the ultimate goal to build coherent lifelong learning systems and learning societies.

## **Youth and adult literacy in the post-2015 education agenda**

Both the Muscat Agreement and the Open Working Group proposals include targets for youth and adult literacy. It has been recognised that youth and adult literacy remains a key global challenge. Worldwide, some 781 million adults (UIS 2014) are reported to be unable to read and write, two-thirds of whom are women. Low literacy skills are also a concern in many high-income countries. The European Commission (2012: 21), for example, notes that in Europe an estimated 20 % of adults lack the literacy skills they need to function fully in a modern society. The results of the recent Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) (OECD 2013) and results from national surveys undertaken in recent years (i.e. Germany, 2010, Scotland 2009, France, 2004/5), confirm that poor literacy skills in high-income countries are a wider problem than often recognised.

Importantly, the formulation of the Muscat target – “By 2030, all youth and at least x % of adults reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society, with particular attention to girls and women and the most marginalised” – takes the approach of an understanding that literacy involves a continuum of learning. This implies

that there is no “magic line” between a “literate” and “non-literate” person, but rather that there are different proficiency levels of literacy. The required proficiency levels of literacy and how people apply reading and writing skills depend on specific contexts and evolve over time. The Open Working Group target, in turn, is more limited in its formulation, as it proposes: “...by 2030 ensure that all youth and at least x % of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”. Such a formulation refers to a narrow divide between literate and illiterate which does not reflect the current understanding of literacy. In particular, it is limiting for high-income countries, where the challenge is not to overcome high levels of illiteracy, but rather to tackle low levels of literacy proficiency.

The 2nd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (UIL 2013) has argued that while there is still no common understanding of how to approach literacy as a continuous learning process, lifelong learning offers the most successful lens to address the literacy challenge. In this view, the lifelong learning approach of the post-2015 education agenda is highly relevant and will provide the basis of improving literacy provision. Literacy policy must focus on raising and developing basic skills as a whole, to enable everybody to actively participate in society. Because of the diversity and scope of adult learning provision, and the varying needs of learners, it is important to focus more on the quality of the provision, on making funding more efficient, on developing more partnerships, and on more effectively facilitating the access of adult learners to learning (UNESCO 2013).

## **Concluding remarks**

A major change in the current proposal of the OWG as concerns education compared to the MDGs is that it contains a target for youth and adult literacy. If maintained in the final post-2015 development agenda, this opens unprecedented possibilities of making major improvements in youth and adult literacy and adult learning and education. Global targets, once approved, will have to be transformed into national targets and action. As stated in the OWG report, “each government will set its own targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances” (UN 2014: 9). Important reflections and consultations with all stakeholders should be undertaken on what would be required for the transformation of the global youth and adult literacy target into national targets and action in terms of policies and practices and how to best support countries and communities in this undertaking. There is a wealth of expertise, knowledge and experience which should be drawn upon. One key consideration is the provision of increased funding, by governments,

local partners, the private sector and global development partners. In this view, it is hoped that development partners will align their funding strategies and focus areas with the post-2015 education agenda. One important currently ongoing activity to be mentioned at this point is the development of a global Framework for Action by UNESCO and its partners which aims at providing support and guidance for the implementation of the future global education agenda at the global, regional and national levels.

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# The contribution of ICAE to the development of a global lifelong learning agenda

*The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) was created to make a difference to international decision-making affecting the education of young people and adults. It is a commitment shared by DVV International (the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association), and over the last three decades plus no one has done more to foster the right to education for adults and the partnership of ICAE and DVV International than Heribert Hinzen. This chapter focuses on ICAE's contribution to global policy-making affecting adults, its strengths, weaknesses, and prospects for the future.*

## ICAE – from Tokyo to Toronto and Montevideo

ICAE was founded by a group of non-state actors following the third International Conference on Adult Education in Tokyo in 1972. They were determined that civil society needed a voice in global discussions affecting the future of adult learners. ICAE developed a distinctive blend of advocacy, combining evidence-based policy analysis with celebration of popular education, and negotiating hard to secure the realisation of education as a human right. In this it developed a close relationship with the work of UIL – the UNESCO Institute for Education (later the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning). Perhaps that relationship found its best expression in CONFINTEA V (Conférence Internationale de l'Education des Adultes) in Hamburg in 1997 – the fifth in the twelve-year sequence of UNESCO International Conferences on adult education. There, the agenda for action closely reflected ICAE's declared commitment to the right to education for all adults, and to the view that adult learning was life-wide, touching on the full range of development agendas. At CONFINTEA V ICAE also played a pivotal role in securing the commitment to develop learning festivals and Adult Learners' Weeks, and greater centrality for the demand for gender equality (UNESCO 1997).

Yet soon after CONFINTEA V, ICAE had hit difficulties. It established a Renewal Task Force (ICAE 2000: 1) which was paralleled by an evaluation of its work commissioned by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) working with participation from aid agencies in Sweden, Canada and Norway (ICAE's principal funders). The DANIDA review concluded that ICAE seemed to have been trapped in a 1980s agenda, and to be in need of urgent revitalisation. Nevertheless, the report was clear:

“That there is a need for a global organisation to represent the adult education and adult learners movement, to promote and develop adult education and learning internationally and to take an active part in the policy debate... the efforts of the non-governmental level must be planned and co-ordinated at regional and international levels” (DANIDA 1999: 4).

In response ICAE called a Special General Assembly in Manila, Philippines, in 1999 at which Paul Belanger, the principal architect of CONFINTEA V, was appointed President with a new Executive. ICAE's new Strategic Plan gave continuing priority to work on policy, advocacy and monitoring on behalf of adult learners and their organisations; but added to this strengthening strategic alliances with other global social movements and organisations, along with international networks in the field of lifelong learning, and emphasising that the interests of adult learners in many countries relied on broad alliances of actors seeking the creation of a world order in which

human rights of all sorts are recognised. This renewal process shifted the balance of its partnership work – and of its formal membership – towards bodies representing community-based adult education practices, and towards securing a stronger voice for agencies in the global South, and following ICAE's sixth World Assembly in Ocho Rios in Jamaica, with the move of the office and leadership of the Council from Toronto to Montevideo.

## **Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals**

The World Educational Forum in Dakar in 2000 provided an opportunity for ICAE and its seven regional associations to work together to influence major international commitments affecting education across the span of life. The Forum met to agree on global development goals for education. Key NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) demands at the conference were for 8 % of aid budgets to be dedicated to basic education, and for a minimum of 6 % of GNP (Gross National Product) to be spent on education – but these were not accepted in the final inter-governmental declaration which built on the findings of a 1990 conference in Jomtien, Thailand, and agreed six global goals to secure Education For All (EFA). The difficulty in getting the interests of adults addressed were reflected in Maria Almazan-Khan's report for ICAE news, entitled 'Does EFA (Education for All) stand for 'Except For Adults?' (Almazan-Khan 2000). Despite the frustrations, there were two commitments in the renewed EFA goals – to reduce the rate of illiteracy by fifty percent by 2015, and the vaguer goal to ensure:

"... that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes"  
(UNESCO 2000: 1).

These goals, alongside the goal to secure gender equality in participation, were to provide a focus for one significant strand of the work of ICAE throughout the next decade. They were, alas, made significantly harder to achieve when universal primary education and gender parity in school attendance were singled out as the education goals for inclusion in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted at the UN later in 2000 (UNESCO 2000, UN 2000). After the MDGs, development aid and in-country budget priorities focused on these goals to the exclusion of the wider lifelong learning dimension. Successive EFA Global Monitoring Reports have shown just how little progress has been made on the adult goals – with 775 million adults still lacking literacy in 2014, a gain of just 2 % in 14 years (UNESCO 2006, 2008, 2014).

The EFA/MDG picture was in striking contrast to the breadth of commitment to lifelong learning enshrined in the European Union's Lisbon Treaty in the same year, where the ICAE regional partner, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), played an effective advocacy role in securing support for non-formal and informal learning alongside continuing professional development (EC 2000).

## **Working on multiple fronts**

After the generosity and inclusiveness of the CONFINTEA V vision, the early years of the 21st century provided one disappointment after another for adult educators. The declaration of the ICAE Ocho Rios conference caught the frustration powerfully:

"We have come to Ocho Rios from all parts of the world dreaming of a new international community of justice, democracy and respect for difference. Yet everywhere we see an economic globalisation that widens the gap between the haves and have-nots creating needs among the ever-growing number of excluded women and men and also degrading the environment. It shifts the focus of learning from the collective to the individual...

We are caught in a dilemma between the possibilities of a genuine democratic and sustainable learning society, and the passivity, poverty, vulnerability and chaos that economic globalisation is creating everywhere. We commit ourselves to work for an equitable world where all forms of discrimination are eliminated and peace is possible." (ICAE 2001: 19-22).

It resolved to work on four fronts at once. First, in preparation for the mid-term review conference of CONFINTEA in 2004, ICAE prepared a Shadow Report, taking a representative sample of 20 countries (chosen to reflect the full range of development reflected in the UNDP Human Development Reports) and monitoring progress in implementing the agreements made at CONFINTEA V. The report made depressing reading, but was in the event the central point of reference in an event which confirmed the low status being given by governments to adult education as a key tool of development, whilst it was increasingly central – at least in so far as it concerned work-related learning – in the strategies of industrial countries (ICAE 2003).

The second ICAE priority was to engage actively in the work of the World Social Forum, meeting annually to explore alternatives to the dominant neo-liberal consensus of international discourse, and the role

education could play in bringing other possible worlds into existence. This work resulted in creative and resilient partnerships with a wide range of NGO and civil society formations, and was solidly grounded in a rights-based approach.

Third: ICAE continued to work actively in the UN processes, in particular through the work of its Gender Education Office as a member of the UN Women's Major Group – one of nine coalitions of non-state actors recognised by the UN as a formal part of its decision-making process. This was to prove invaluable in the complex post-2015 UN decision-making process – where parallel streams of work were initiated – one building on the Earth Summit, Rio Plus 20 in 2012 through an Open Working Group; the second through thematic consultations leading to a report by a High-Level Panel; followed by further regional and national consultations, and due to complete in September 2015. Engagement with the parallel Education For All processes was less central to its work until 2011, with ICAE relying on the high-quality advocacy work of its Asia-Pacific regional partner, the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE).

The fourth initiative, and perhaps the most impressive, was the decision to strengthen the cohort of adult learning practitioners who could act effectively as advocates, globally, regionally and nationally. Its first International Academy for Lifelong Learning Advocacy was held in Norway in 2004, targeting emerging leaders in adult education from member organisations across the globe. The Academy included analytical work, skill-building exercises and a strategic workshop. ICAE has run Academies annually since, in Latin America, Africa, and the Arab region. This work has been supplemented by comparable leadership development programmes in its regions, organised by ASPBAE in Asia and by the EAEA in Europe. The result has been the development of highly-motivated activists, an international network sharing experiences, and the ability to act together to advocate effectively for adult learning locally, nationally and globally.

An important addition to these strands of work was cooperation with DVV International on key policy areas of development – notably on the financing of adult learning, and on migration, for each of which Heribert Hinzen played a key role in facilitating and hosting joint DVV International and ICAE events; and with NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education) in the UK and UIL in arguing for learner voice representation in international fora affecting adult learners.

## CONFINTEA VI and the FISC civil society forum

These various strands of activity coalesced in the preparations for CONFINTEA VI in Belém, Brazil in 2009. ICAE's civil society partnership work bore fruit in securing the participation of 1,200 people in the civil society forum (Fórum Internacional da Sociedade Civil, FISC) that preceded CONFINTEA VI. Unlike much of the main event, this was a vibrant, optimistic and colourful festival of learning, embodying the creativity of the World Social Forum, an evidence-based approach to policy making, and the advocacy skills of the IALLA graduates. FISC offered a sharp critique of the state of provision in 2009. Its statement opened with a stark challenge to CONFINTEA VI:

“There needs to be a recognition of the enormous scale of the violation of the fundamental human and social **right to education** of adults and young people. As such CONFINTEA VI should declare a state of crisis, requiring urgent action.” (FISC 2009: 1)

It pointed to the current justiciable human right to basic education long accepted (if not always acted on) by nation states, and called for legislation to secure the right to adult education more widely. It called for transparent governance structures for adult learning, fully costed programmes to achieve the EFA adult learning goals, and for recognition of the rights of marginalised groups. FISC demanded an end to the simplistic collection of data that reported literate/illiterate, when literacy is a continuum.

Judged against the generous inclusiveness of the previous CONFINTEA V (Hamburg, 1997), CONFINTEA VI demonstrated more modest aspirations. There were, though, things to celebrate. Learners' voices were included in the work of the conference, and an international learners' charter was presented to the conference, and future commitments to strengthen learner participation were agreed. The needs of migrants were accepted as a priority for future work, and governments agreed to the production of a 3-yearly progress report by UNESCO, to monitor progress in achieving the 2009 agreements in all countries.

### “The education we need for the world we want”

The focus of ICAE's global advocacy work following CONFINTEA VI was firstly on the Earth Summit in Rio in 2012, where ICAE, led by Celita Eccher, convened a coalition of educational organisations that agreed a policy document *The education we need for the world we want* (Education



Working Group 2012), that outlined the educational challenge in respecting universal human rights, securing economic and human development, and sustainable natural resources. ICAE was active in both the civil society and governmental conferences, though once again achievements in the final declaration were slender.

Second, ICAE made a much greater commitment to the Education For All (EFA) process, playing an active role through membership of the overall EFA strategy committee, the NGO coordinating committee, through the hosting of virtual seminars engaging more than a thousand activists in online reflections on the challenges in achieving EFA.

However, the major focus of work since 2011 has been on what should follow the MDGs and EFA post-2015 process. Working together with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), Education International (EI), and with ICAE's regional associations, ICAE worked hard to secure a positive policy statement at the 2012 Consultative Conference for NGOs supporting EFA (CCNGO). This had a major influence on the position UNESCO adopted for the World Consultative Conference at Dakar in 2013, where ICAE, EI and GCE called for an overall and inclusive education goal for the post-2015 global targets. The conference accepted the broad analysis, and agreed to 'Quality education and lifelong learning for all'. The overall UN process has been immensely complex, with new formulations appearing almost weekly, as the post Earth Summit and post MDG processes have been woven together (UN 2013a, 2013b). Working in New York, with the same allies, with the active support of the Open Society Foundations, with parallel work through the Women's Major Group, and engagement of UN Women, the broad formulation has survived, with one welcome addition – calling for *Quality, Inclusive Education and Lifelong Learning for All*. It is, though, one thing to win visibility for lifelong learning in the title of the goal.

## Conclusion

The devil, though, is in the detail. How can the UN argue that no one is to be left behind if at the same time progress on literacy is to be limited for adults to an 'x' percent improvement, leaving hundreds of millions – mostly women – without reading and numeracy skills? How can we call for decent work for all without addressing the learning needs of the millions working outside the waged economy? How can we say we want lifelong learning if all of our attention is focused on the very real needs of the young? These questions continue to shape the debate as it enters the last year before new educational commitments are agreed in Korea in May 2015, and new

development goals are adopted by the UN in New York in September. However, unlike earlier times, we are at least able to secure a hearing for the needs of adult learning. In part this is through systematic briefing of members, networks and activists close to ICAE, through the ICAE on-line journal *Voices Rising*, through *Advocacy Briefings*, through strategic conferences, and through the continuing flair and commitment of the small ICAE staff team.

Networks like ICAE rely for success on forging formidable alliances, trusting that others will make the arguments in spaces it cannot reach, and through the strength of its vision. If ICAE has helped in a small way in putting a broad rights-based conception of lifelong learning onto the global agenda, it is through the work of its regions, through partners like DVV International, through the work of its allies in global agencies, and through myriad local initiatives of its members. But the lessons of the last forty years tell us that it is only when global agreements translate into effective local practice that progress is made.

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## Reflections on the unfinished CONFINTEA agenda<sup>1</sup>

*The Hamburg Declaration in 1997 set out an ambitious agenda for adult education globally. Twelve years later, the Belém Framework for Action urged us 'to move from rhetoric to action' in a bid to operationalise what was denominated the Agenda for the Future. In 2015 Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) both come to an end. To what extent will the unfinished CONFINTEA agenda be contemplated in the new international agenda and exert its influence on the education we need for the world we want?*

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<sup>1/</sup> These reflections take as their reference The CONFINTEA agenda: work in progress, In: Ireland, T. & Spezia, C. (org) (2014): Adult Education in Retrospective: 60 years of CONFINTEA. Brasília: UNESCO, MEC.

Next year (2015) will be an emblematic date for the global education and development agenda. The two principal international initiatives – Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – both come to an end. Within the CONFINTEA (International Conference on Adult Education) cycle, 2015 should also see the midterm meeting to review recommendations and commitments assumed during the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education in Brazil in 2009. The international debate on what will succeed the EFA and MDG goals should culminate in the World Education Forum in Incheon, Korea, in May, and in the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in September. Current proposals suggest that the MDGs will be substituted by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that EFA will gain a new global goal “to ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030”<sup>2</sup> and a set of seven goals. In this article we intend to reflect on the unfinished CONFINTEA agenda and its relation to the ongoing debate.

In 1997, the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning (CONFINTEA V) concluded “To that end, we will forge extended alliances to mobilise and share resources in order to make adult learning a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility” (UNESCO 1997). In 2009 the Belém Framework for Action (CONFINTEA VI) exhorted us to move from rhetoric to action: perhaps not so much ‘to move from rhetoric to action’ as to secure the articulation of rhetoric with action. In the past years, we have given greater attention to adult learning as a tool, as a right and a shared responsibility, but much less to the contribution which the joy of learning should aggregate to human well-being and happiness (Ireland 2012) with the result that lifelong learning has tended to be “conceptualised largely in terms of maintaining a flexible and competitive economy in the modern ‘knowledge society’” (Finnegan 2008).

## **The background to CONFINTEA 1997**

In the international arena, the period prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Adult Education produced a rich cycle of conferences beginning with the World Summit for Children (New York, 1990) and the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien) and closing with the Hamburg CONFINTEA in 1997. Discussion at these conferences centred on a new agenda for world development with themes linked to the converging

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<sup>2</sup>/ Overarching education goal proposed in the draft Muscat Agreement during the Global Meeting on Education for All (Muscat, May 2014)

agenda of peace, development and human security. The cycle sought to strengthen a common understanding of development which underlined the role of democracy and the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties, including the right to development (Ireland 2009). However, as Elfert (2013) points out: “(...) these years (the 1990s) were marked by the tension between the UN’s and UNESCO’s renewed interest in human rights, manifested by “summits of idealism”, and a neoliberal turn in organisations such as the World Bank and the OECD, stressing the economic and utilitarian agenda of education”.

The rights to development and education, the centrepiece at Jomtien, traversed the decade and were central to the Hamburg Declaration. That placed men and women at the heart of the development process, which was premised on learning. The right of all to education was subsumed in the concept of lifelong learning. According to ICAE (International Council of Adult Education) (2013), CONFINTEA V made it clear that “(...) whilst adult learning and education is a good in itself, it is also a fundamental pre-requisite for the achievement of a range of other social policy goals”.

The economic backdrop to the cycle of conferences provides a strong contrast to its inherent humanism and optimism. The 80s and 90s were a period of crisis for many emerging economies, especially in Latin America, not only in economic and financial terms but also in terms of values. The ethos of community and participation was steadily eroded by the growing spirit of individualism. As Judt (2010: 1-2) forcibly argues:

“For thirty years we have made a virtue out of the pursuit of material self-interest: indeed, this very pursuit now constitutes whatever remains of our sense of collective purpose. (...) The materialistic and selfish quality of contemporary life is not inherent in the human condition. Much of what appears ‘natural’ today dates from the 1980s: the obsession with wealth creation, the cult of privatisation and the private sector, the growing disparities between rich and poor. And above all, the rhetoric which accompanies these: uncritical admiration for unfettered markets, disdain for the public sector, the delusion of endless growth.”

His position is shared by Hessel and Morin (2012: 23-24), who argue that “the notion of well-being has dwindled in contemporary civilization to the strictly material sense that implies comfort, wealth and ownership. These have nothing to do with what really constitutes well-being: furthering personal growth and fulfilment, relationships of friendship and love, and a sense of community”.

## The Hamburg Agenda

The Synthesis Report of the Global Public Consultation – part of the Global Thematic Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda – entitled *Addressing Inequalities* (2013: 22), is categorical in affirming that there can be little doubt that the set of policy prescriptions known as the Washington Consensus has favoured a strongly market-based approach, whilst undermining some of the key functions of the state and overlooking the human cost of this strategy, particularly for people living in poverty. The elimination of subsidies on basic commodities, trade liberalisation, privatisation of state enterprises and deregulation has, in particular, resulted in down-side costs to the populations of developing countries.

It is our contention then that CONFINTEA V sets out a positive, diversified and rich agenda for adult and lifelong education against the backdrop of a socio-economic climate which exalted opposing values, emphasising greater individualism and the power of the market as the arbiter in human affairs and contributing to ever growing inequalities between nation states and within countries. At the same time, Hamburg greatly amplified the breadth and depth of what was understood as adult education:

“It is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically-sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice. Adult learning can shape identity and give meaning to life.” (UNESCO 1997: 1)

In so doing it gave greater meaning to the concepts of adult lifelong learning and education, but inhibited the establishment of indicators to monitor the outcomes of such processes. The notable absence of such mechanisms for monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Hamburg agenda and the reversals in foreign policy whereby development and cooperation were replaced by security and preventive intervention following the 9/11 attack in New York, diluted and dispersed the power of those demands. The optimism and huge expectations generated by the Hamburg Conference were undermined by its own lack of pragmatism and an increasingly hostile international context. Only six years later at the Mid-term Review held in Bangkok (2003), the final document noted “a disturbing regression in this field” (UNESCO 2003:18) and concluded that despite the commitments made in 1997, adult education and learning had not “received the attention which it deserves in major education reforms and

in recent international drives to eliminate poverty, achieve gender justice, provide education for all and foster sustainable development” (idem). Other international agendas also tended to limit the broad focus on diversity, sustainability and lifelong learning propounded in Hamburg, despite taking education for all as their rallying call. Both the Jomtien World Declaration and the Dakar Framework for Action reaffirm the non-discriminatory right of all to education independent of age. However, the renewed agreement on EFA in Dakar and the Millennium Development Goals were referenced by reduced and, in the latter case, exclusive concepts of lifelong learning and education. The MDGs made no direct reference to adult education, although it was implied that their achievement would be impossible without new investments in adult education with a special emphasis on literacy – a strictly instrumental vision of the role of education in the struggle against poverty.

The conjunction of the implementation of the Dakar and Millennium Development Goals with the global economic context, dominated by neo-liberal policies in which the outcomes of strategies are measured more by their short-term results and their economic impact than by their long-term contribution to a renewed comprehension of development, both reduces the focus on development and education as rights and instils a distinctly instrumental perspective to the agenda. At the end of the day, the traditional GNP (Gross National Product) and GDP (Gross Domestic Product) tend to carry more weight in deciding what development embraces than any other alternative metrics.

## **A framework for action**

The combined result of the multiple crises, which dominated the international scene from 2008 onwards, was to create a climate indifferent if not hostile to the demands of the broader development and education agendas. For poorer countries the cost of the crises was translated into less disposable income to invest in education and for the richer nations a weaker commitment to contribute to overseas development through ‘foreign aid’.

CONFITEA VI was held at the height of the crises. Given the adverse economic climate, little had been achieved since Hamburg. Despite the powerful influence of economic factors, there also existed a certain lack of political will amongst some Member States inspired by the progressive nature of the Hamburg Declaration and by the lack of evaluative mechanisms. The Global Report on Adult Learning and Education - GRALE (UNESCO 2009: 118) notes that “The evidence collected presents a rather



depressing picture of a sector that has not yet managed to convince governments of either the benefits it can deliver or the costs of failure to invest”.

The Global Report draws up a balance sheet of adult education worldwide using primary data from the national reports and secondary data from other reports and sources. On the one hand, it points to the traditional and manifest diversity of activities developed in the field of adult education. It does however identify a growing polarisation between visions and practices of adult education in industrialised countries and in developing countries. In the former, an instrumental interpretation of adult education predominates in which emphasis is given to professional training and qualification with a view to ensuring economic competitiveness. In developing countries, activities tend to centre on second-chance and compensatory schooling with an emphasis on literacy acquisition. Hamburg’s vision of lifelong learning is frequently present in educational discourse but largely absent in practice although in industrialised countries it achieves a more tangible presence. The report concludes that while “There have been improvements (...) these have been patchy and piecemeal. Many governments have yet to formulate a clear and shared definition of what constitutes adult education and how it should be measured” (UNESCO 2009).

Whilst the Belém Framework of Action embodied the consensus possible at CONFINTEA VI, in subscribing to the goals established by Dakar, the Millennium Development Initiative, the UN Literacy Decade and others, it tended to reinforce the negative interpretation of the role of adult education for the international education and development agendas. Although Elfert (2013) contends that UNESCO and UIL represent the humanist “first generation of lifelong learning” in opposition to the competing economic and utilitarian approach put forward by other international organisations, it would appear that in practice the neoliberal approach has maintained the upper hand. Consequently, the adult education agenda has become reactive and defensive rather than proactive and progressive as discussions advance concerning the international development and education agendas post-2015.

## **The core messages**

CONFINTEAS V and VI present two core messages: a vision of lifelong learning for all as the basic tenet for the organisation of educational policy and the concept of development as a human right firmly anchored in human beings and not reduced to a commodity determined by an

all-powerful market. A third core message has been incorporated into the international agenda with the decision by the Rio + 20 Conference (2012) to establish a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which would build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to converge with the post-2015 development agenda. Whilst the concept of sustainable development is not recent, nor is the recognition of the central role of education in contributing to the creation of sustainable communities and environments, the proposal to attempt to establish universal goals is.

Nevertheless, these three core messages continue to constitute a liberal Western understanding of development and lifelong learning and the relation between the two. Moosung and Friedrich (2011) argue that international stakeholders should recognise that the ideological field informing lifelong learning policy should not be reduced to the solely European derivative and that in order to enlarge or democratise “the world’s educational terrain, the future of international lifelong learning must exceed European liberalism [and] (...) Western paternalism”. Alternative educational and development paradigms do exist which could contribute to the complex and at times rather incestuous web of discussion on the world we want.

## **Concluding considerations**

The Belém Framework for Action was an explicit recognition that the ambitious agenda set out in the Hamburg Declaration constitutes work in progress and that to introduce a new agenda made little sense when an expressive number of countries had still to fulfil their EFA and MDG commitments. Despite the centrality of sustainability in the post-2015 debate, the future paradigm of development continues in dispute as does the role of lifelong learning in this process. Lifelong learning continues to maintain an important place in educational discourse and a far less evident presence in educational policy and practice.

Notwithstanding the global dimension of the post-2015 debate, its content largely reflects a European liberalism and ‘Western Paternalism’ in which the tension between a more progressive liberalism and a classical neoliberalism is evident. Alternative paradigms of development with their own specific interpretations of sustainability and the relations between human and natural environments have found little space. These contending paradigms with their divergent interpretations of what constitutes development in a planetary context (ample evidence points to the suicidal limits of the current paradigm and the evident limitations of extant metrics of western progress) suggest that the current consultative process has

failed to establish a broad international dialogue capable of giving voice to counter hegemonic world views.

The post-2015 agenda could then be interpreted not so much as a debate on whether market-orientated paradigms of human progress are superior to traditional liberal paradigms but as a battlefield in which two essentially conflicting ideologies are confronted: neoliberalism and those which include human well-being, sustainability and planetary co-existence as fundamental goals of the development process. This would reconfirm and redimension the basic tenets of the original CONFINTEA agenda: sustainability, lifelong learning and human-centred development for all, reaffirming adult learning as a “joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility”. To this end, UNESCO’s role as a counterpoint to the market influence of the World Bank, IMF, the European Union and OECD is essential. The confrontation is not so much over the future architecture of development and education as over the basic values of human life in community.

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# Building a learning society: Conceptual evolution and policy implications

*The idea of the learning society is not new; it has been discussed as a concept since the late 1960s. We now live in a more complex and fast-changing social, economic and political world to which we need to adapt by increasingly rapidly acquiring new knowledge, competences and capabilities in a wide range of contexts. It is self-evident that an individual will not be able to meet life challenges unless he or she becomes a lifelong learner, and a society will not be sustainable unless it becomes a learning society. This short paper serves as a literature review, which covers the conceptual evolution of a learning society, learning regions/cities/communities and learning organisations as components of a learning society, and building blocks of a policy framework for building a learning society.*

## Conceptual evolution

The first notable book on this theme, called *The Learning Society*, was written by Robert Hutchins in 1968. In this book, the author argued that ‘we need a learning society’, as education systems were no longer able to respond to the demands made upon them. Instead it was necessary to look towards the idea that learning was at the heart of change. “The two essential facts are... the increasing proportion of free time and the rapidity of change. The latter requires continuous education; the former makes it possible” (Hutchins 1968: 130).

As for change, even in the 1960s the change in various sectors within a lifetime was considered as a fact.

Hutchins quoted Margaret Mead as saying “No one will live all his life in the world into which he was born, and no one will die in the world in which he worked in his maturity”. For those who work on the growing edge of science, technology, or the arts, contemporary life changes at even shorter intervals (op. cit.: 130).

As for free time, Hutchins quoted Arnold Toynbee as saying:

“In our world, the dawning age of automation is soon going to provide ample leisure for all industrial workers without loss of income or self-respect or social esteem.... In the rich society of the future, we shall be able to afford to offer part-time adult education to every man and woman at every stage of grown-up life” (op. cit.: 131).

Based on these two premises, Hutchins concluded that it was possible to go further and foresaw the learning society. He actually referred to Ancient Athens to argue that it was indeed possible, and there:

“Education was not a segregated activity, conducted for certain hours, in certain places, at a certain time of life. It was the aim of the society. The city educated the man. The Athenian was educated by culture, by *paideia*” (op. cit.: 133).

In addition, it needs to be emphasised here that Hutchins envisions a learning society as one in which citizens are free to cultivate their intelligence through liberal education, and a learning society based on humanistic values.

Donald Schön, a great theorist of the learning society, published a book titled *Beyond the Stable State: Public and Private Learning in a Changing Society* in 1971, in which he argued that “technological change

has been continuing exponentially for the last two hundred years, it has now reached a level of pervasiveness and frequency uniquely threatening to the stable state" (p. 28), as a result, "our society and all its institutions are in continuing processes of transformation", and "we must learn to understand, guide, influence and manage their transformations" (p. 30).

In 1972, the concept of a learning society was put forward in the report to UNESCO by the International Commission on the Development of Education, chaired by Edgar Faure, entitled *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow* (hereafter referred to as the Faure Report). The Faure Report argued that education is no longer the privilege of an elite, nor a matter for one age group only: it tends to cover the whole community and the whole lifetime of the individual. And the Faure Report appealed to UNESCO Member States to reorganise their educational structures on two basic premises: first, that a learning society is one in which all agencies become providers of education, and second, that all citizens be engaged in learning, taking full advantages of the opportunities provided by the learning society (Ahmed 2002). The Report argued:

"The school has its own role to play and will have to develop it even further. But it will be less and less in a position to claim the education functions in society as its special prerogative. All sectors—public administration, industry, communications, transport—must take part in promoting education. Local and national communities are in themselves eminently educative institutions." (Faure et al. 1972: 162)

Most clearly, the Faure Report promoted the principle that "every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his life. The idea of lifelong education is the keystone of the learning society" (op. cit.: 181). The concept of learning society was developed further by Torsten Husén in his book titled *Technology and the Learning Society* in 1974. Torsten Husén argued that it would be necessary for states to become 'learning societies' – where knowledge and information lay at the heart of their activities. Among all the 'explosions' that have come into use as labels to describe rapidly changing Western society, the term 'knowledge explosion' is one of the most appropriate (Husén 1974: 239).

Furthermore, Husén contributed significantly to the reform of traditional forms of learning. The organising principles of Husén's vision of a relevant educational system have been summarised by Ranson and Stewart (1998), and included:

- Education is going to be a lifelong process.
- Education will not have any fixed points of entry and 'cut-off' exits. It will become a more continuous process within formal education and in its role within other functions of life.

- Education will take on a more informal character as it becomes accessible to more and more individuals. In addition to 'learning centers', facilities will be provided for learning at home and at the workplace, for example by the provision of computer terminals.
- Formal education will become more meaningful and relevant in its application.
- 'To an ever-increasing extent, the education system will become dependent on large supporting organisations or supporting systems... to produce teaching aids, systems of information processing and multi-media instructional materials' (Husén 1974: 198-9)

In addition, Husén was also clear that the changes required to reform education to respond to the transformation of the time could not be understood in a socio-economic vacuum. He argued:

"The problems facing educational planners are not just problems of pedagogy. They are problems of social justice, of national economy and of preparation for a rapidly-changing society where lifelong learning becomes imperative. Educational problems in a rapidly-changing society are too important to be left entirely to educators" (Husén 1974: p. xvi).

The idea of a learning society became enormously influential in the 1990s. In the developed countries, Van de Zee (1991: 163) highlighted the trends of social and economic changes in Europe at that time, and then he pinpointed five strategic issues for the development of a learning society (Van de Zee 1991: 165):

1. The need to broaden the definition of learning (education as a dimension of society).
2. The need to redirect the goal of learning (growth towards completeness).
3. The need to go beyond learning and instruction (increasing collective competence).
4. The need to foster autonomy in learning (self-education).
5. The need to stress a political approach to learning (the right to learn).

In 1996, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, stressed in its report to UNESCO (*Learning: The Treasure Within*, hereafter referred to as the Delors Report) that the concept of learning throughout life is the key that gives access to the twenty-first century, and that it goes beyond the traditional distinction between initial and continuing education. The Delors Report discussed



further that the concept of learning throughout life leads straight on to that of a learning society, a society that offers many and varied opportunities of learning, both at school and in economic, social and cultural life, whence the need for more collaboration and partnerships with families, industry and business, voluntary associations, people active in cultural life, etc., and that should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community.

Ranson and Steward (1998: 254) summarised that in the context of change, a learning society will be characterised by:

- a society which must learn how it is changing;
- a society which must change what it has to learn;
- a society which must learn how to change;
- a society which must change the way it learns;
- a society which involves all its members in learning;
- a society which learns to change the (institutional) conditions of learning;

It is worth noting that a very important development in the conceptualisation is that a learning society needs to be participatory, or to have a learning culture, to be a learning democracy. For building a learning society, there is no doubt that the national government has an important role to play. However, the national government has limitations: it cannot easily encompass the diversity of the circumstances or achieve diversity in response. As Ranson and Steward (1998) pointed out, participation is built more easily at local level than at national level, and the evidence is that citizens are more ready to participate at the local level. In the words of Van der Zee (1996: 176): "I have very little faith in initiatives determined from on high which do not take the day-to-day experiences of those involved into account". Therefore, a learning society also needs to have a commitment to decentralisation and involvement of regions, cities, communities, villages as well various organisations in the process.

### **Learning regions/cities/communities as components of a learning society**

The concept of a *learning society* can apply to a nation as a whole, or communities, regions, provinces or even villages. A learning society can only be achieved if its component parts learn to learn (Ranson 1998). Evidence for some countries shows that building a learning region/city/

community can be an effective approach to embodying the philosophy of lifelong learning and making learning part of citizens' everyday lives. A learning community consciously enables conditions for learning in which potential (both social and individual) can be converted into actual achievement capabilities.

In recent years, parallel to the broad acceptance of the concept of 'lifelong learning' as a "master concept for educational policies" (Faure et. al. 1972), some pragmatic approaches have been adopted, and an example of these approaches is the building of a 'learning community', 'learning city' or 'learning region'. In more and more countries, there are local-level authorities which claim to be learning cities/regions/communities. These geography-related concepts imply the key role of learning in the development of basic prosperity, social stability, personal fulfilment and mobilises all its human, physical, financial resources, creativity and sensitivity to develop the full potential of all its citizens (Longworth, 2006). The goal of establishing lifelong learning systems or building learning societies cannot be achieved only by the efforts of national governments; cities/regions/communities have a crucial role to play.

Some scholars have made attempts to answer the question of the characteristics of learning regions/cities/communities. For example, based on a comprehensive review of a variety of principles, policies and approaches in building learning cities in both the developed and developing countries, Yang (2011) synthesised nine general characteristics of learning cities, ranging from political will and commitment to promoting wealth creation and employability, which all entail policy implications.

### **Building blocks of a policy framework for a learning society**

While the idea of a learning society was under debate in the circle of academics and was promoted by UNESCO and other international organisations, policy makers in some countries have started to apply the idea of a learning society into policies and practice. However, there are daunting tasks to translate the concept of a learning society into a policy framework. Drawn from discussions synthesised by Yang and Valdés-Cotera (2011: p. xvii), as well as the policy developments in some countries as reviewed above, the following considerations could have policy implications in developing a policy framework for building a learning society.

- Policies for building a learning society need to be supported by broad social consensus, legislative instruments and coordination mechanisms to facilitate collaboration between various stakeholders.

- Building a learning society and making lifelong learning a reality for all calls for increased financial investment in education and learning. Given the principle that learning should continue throughout individuals' lives, it is essential to establish a financial incentive mechanism to mobilise greater and broader participation. Innovative financing strategies have to be tried out.
- The need for learning pervades every political, social, environmental, cultural and economic issue. Diverse formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities must be developed and made equally accessible to all, with an emphasis on serving the needs of marginalised groups.
- Formal learning opportunities provided by primary, secondary and higher education form the 'basic education' of modern society. It is imperative to reform the curricula of schools and higher education institutions to reflect today's vision of lifelong learning, and to build new teaching/learning relations, to enable students to become lifelong learners.
- Facilitating synergy between diversified various learning systems calls for a learning outcomes-based qualifications framework or system and a co-ordinated approach to recognition, validation and accreditation as well as the transfer of learning outcomes from non-formal and informal settings.
- The development of information and communication technologies (ICT) has made available a pool of e-learning resources, alternative delivery mechanisms and massive open learning opportunities. Further efforts need to be made in the effective use of ICT and open learning approaches so that a quality learning opportunity is accessible to all at reasonable cost.
- A learning society is a society of learners, and a learning city is where a new learning system emerges, revolves and grows to lead economic, social and political development as a whole. Evidence from some countries shows that building a learning city (region, community) can be an effective approach to embodying the philosophy of lifelong learning and making learning part of citizens' everyday lives.
- Effective policies for building a learning society need to be informed and inspired by evidence generated by research. Monitoring and evaluation, appropriate indicators and benchmarks on the effectiveness of policies, and accountability of programmes, are essential for evidence-based policy-making.

## Concluding remarks

In finding solutions to address the existing and emerging social and economic challenges, such as globalisation, poverty and hunger, demographic shifts, unemployment, climate change, urbanisation, migration, peace

and security, and so on, there is a trend that many countries have embraced the idea of a learning society. As learning remains the driving force of the human being, and societies undergo continuous transformation, the international debates on a learning society are bound to continue.

However, the political, social, economic and cultural conditions of each country are unique and different, and different countries have different 'moral and political orders' and different 'polity', hence different learning societies. Therefore, the definitions of a learning society, as well as summaries of policy implications reviewed in this paper, are merely 'food for thought', and they should not in any way be treated as cure-all prescriptions. Although the idea of a learning society has been accepted by more and more countries, there will never be a single clear definition of a learning society and a ready-made formula for implementation in the world. Instead, there will be many 'working' definitions and contextualised policy implications in different countries. To a certain extent, the building of a learning society *per se* is an open-ended learning process.

Furthermore, building a learning society calls for more than a mere tinkering with education systems. Education systems will have a role to play, but only if they are radically reformed in ways that enable them to interact with and shape the society that surrounds them (CISCO, 2010). The building of a learning society presupposes lifelong learning as a reality for all, and only a successful application of the principles of lifelong learning would result in creation of a learning society (Boshier, 1998; Ahmed, 2002). To make lifelong learning a reality for all implies not only a holistic and sector-wide educational reform, but also the creation of learning opportunities in all settings or modalities (formal, non-formal and informal) for people of all ages (infants, children, youths, adults and seniors).

In addition, the promotion of the building of a learning society embodies a vision of what a society wishes to become in the long term, therefore, the building of a learning society is a long-term process. As the European Commission pointed out in its 1995 White Paper that '[t]he learning society will not come about overnight. It cannot come about by declaration. It has to emerge from an on-going process' (p. 53). This is true for the European Union with 15 Member States at that time; this is also true for any country, big or small, whether developed or developing.

Lastly, a learning society offers a new way toward the transformation of society, therefore, as Walters (2009) commented, building a learning society is no doubt in the end a political process. Thus, just as any other efforts engendering social change, the building of a learning society needs political courage, steadfast commitment and pioneer spirit. For generating momentum and sustainability, innovative approaches need to be explored in promoting decentralisation and active participation.

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# Europe needs the power of learning

*This article discusses the challenges for adult education in Europe in times of economic crisis and political change. Conversely, the author highlights the wider effects of adult education as an important tool for European society. In times where adult education providers in particular are facing significant shifts in the attitude of national authorities towards the purpose of adult education, there is a call for a stronger focus on the benefits of adult education.*

These are exciting years for adult education in Europe. Since the economic crisis hit the western European countries at the end of the first decade of the new millennium, a number of changes have had an impact on the adult education environment in Europe.

The economic crisis affected European countries in different ways and to different extents. The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) has been monitoring how the situation has developed. In 2014, EAEA launched a survey for its members to create specific country reports regarding the situation of adult education in Europe. In order to provide an updated picture of the situation for adult education in Europe, I will extract the five conclusions from these national reports.

### **The challenges facing adult education in Europe**

1. The first, and very important, conclusion is that the financial situation for adult education is threatened in many European countries. Regrettably, the tendency is for governments to strive for considerable savings in our sector.
2. Another conclusion is that the political framework that adult education providers are working in is becoming more fragile. National governments' policies towards adult education change every time the colour of the government shifts.
3. A third conclusion is that in several European countries there is a shift towards continuing education now being provided by labour market authorities instead of through state funds and increased funds being allotted to the vocational sector. In this way, governments and industries seek to support employability and prevent (youth) unemployment in their countries. Thus the focus shifted strongly towards raising educational levels through vocational training and focusing on labour market needs. And although some EAEA members agree that there are undeniable benefits in education developed in the context of "market learning opportunities", they see a danger. The focus of investment in employability strengthens mechanisms of exclusion, through practices that tend to value differently and thus polarise the most (formally) qualified and unqualified.
4. A fourth conclusion is also directed towards the adult education institutions and organisations in Europe. Regrettably, as a consequence of the economic crisis, the good offer of adult education tends not to reach all social groups in society. Course fees are relatively high in several countries, and as a result persons with restricted financial means have little chance to participate in non-formal adult education. This is



alarming from the viewpoint of lifelong learning and equality because the persons most in need of education and training are at risk of being left out.

5. Although the challenges are huge, the members of EAEA see the wider effects of adult education as an important tool for European society. Europe is facing an increase in nationalism, and populist movements and their parties are attracting more support. At this time, adult education via learning is obliged to enlighten the voters of Europe.

## **The role of adult education**

A very concrete issue is how the people of the European nations cope with the rise in immigration the continent has been experiencing in the past few years. Adult education can play an important role as a place where newcomers learn the new language and new culture. Adult education institutions can also, via courses and other enlightening activities, be an important tool for integrating newcomers with the people living in their new neighbourhood.

The dilemma for us in EAEA is that while the conditions for many institutions have been more difficult, we see a stronger need for adult education in society. Therefore, new strategies of strengthening our arguments are being developed. Two examples of this new strategy are: better documentation of the benefits of adult education and better effectiveness of our lobbying. Over the past few years we, together with other stakeholders, have undertaken a research project on the wider benefits of adult learning, and we have also initiated a project in which our members exchange their experiences of awareness-raising.

In many countries, the non-formal adult education organisations have grown out of social or political movements, and in many countries there is still a strong connection between adult education and these movements. As part of our strategy to renew the European agenda for adult education, we have to recognise that our strength as non-formal adult education is this link to these kinds of movements.

Europe needs the power of learning!

## The importance of an 'Education for All (EFA) process' in shaping the post-2015 education agenda

*2015 is the deadline for meeting commitments made to education as outlined in the Dakar Education for All (EFA) Framework of Action and in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since 2013, there has thus been a flurry of activity in debating and defining a new post-2015 development and education policy agenda. Education – having been one of the 6 Millennium Development Goals – has remained part of the discourse on the new development agenda, which will be agreed on in the UN Summit in New York in September 2015. Similarly, arising from the dynamic of the EFA global processes, the UNESCO General Conference at its 37th meeting in November 2013, announced a series of processes defining the new education agenda culminating in the World Education Forum in May 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea. This article explores the implications for lifelong learning policy of these twin processes set to define the post 2015 education agenda.*

The merits of having two processes – in parallel – defining the new education agenda has been a matter of debate among various stakeholders within the broad education constituency. It has been argued that defining the new education agenda, solely and primarily within the dynamic of the processes defining the new development agenda, would be most strategic and practical. The divergent global agendas for education as set out in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on the one hand vs. the Education For All, Dakar Framework of Action did very little good for education over the last 14 years. While the wider education community built consensus on six goals for education within a lifelong learning framework in April 2000, as set out in the Dakar Framework of Action, governments agreed on a much narrower set of education targets for an education goal within the MDGs a few months after (September 2000), focused primarily on completion and gender parities in primary education. These MDG goals and targets prevailed in setting the education priorities for the next decade and more – in country-level action, budgeting and aid priorities. Many had argued that a focus of efforts in defining the new global *education* agenda within the processes defining the new *development* agenda would better lend to policy coherence and a stronger education agenda globally. It was also pointed out that governments have found it impracticable to be expected to submit multiple reports on the same subject to convey adherence to agreed global commitments.

### **Civil society perspectives on the new education agenda**

Several civil society organisations have however argued the importance and value of retaining an education-specific process in defining the new education agenda, whilst aggressively influencing the processes defining the new development agenda on its education focus, and ensuring complementation and harmonisation between the two emergent agendas and processes. Civil society organisations active in the post-2015 processes such as the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and its regional civil society network partners such as the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) have argued that the broad education constituency should define its own post-2015 education agenda that stands on its own right, one that addresses the unfinished agenda of EFA, builds on the lessons and rich experience of the EFA decades, and seeks complementation and harmonisation with the education goals and targets defined within the overall development agenda. They have argued that this approach would stand a better chance of securing a global education agenda post-2015 that is broader and more ambitious – wary that

subsuming the education agenda solely within the overall development agenda risks dilution and simplification. In late 2013, a public statement, “Toward an Equitable Quality Education for All Framework”, garnering the support of more than 300 scholars and educationists from all world regions, was circulated during the 37th UNESCO General Conference in Paris. The statement called for EFA partners “.. to work together for an improved, aspirational and up-to-date global educational agenda, guided by a rights-based approach, based on an adequately comprehensive understanding of how education systems work” (GEPS/UAB 2013). “This means that the post-2015 education framework should go beyond a narrow focus on those components of ‘basic’ education that donors find palatable in an era of austerity...” (GEPS/UAB 2103). ASPBAE and fraternal CSO (Civil Society Organisations) networks championing the right to education for all children, youth and adults, such as the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), have further contended that lifelong learning should be an overarching principle in the new education agenda and this should be fully expressed in concrete goals and targets that cover each of the phases of the education life-cycle. It should recognise the importance of non-formal and informal, as it does of institutionally-based learning. The post-2015 agenda should explicitly recognise the value of adult education and learning not only on its own but as a catalyst to the achievement of all other development and social goals and indeed of sustainable development.

The fears over a much narrower education agenda emerging out of the post-2015 MDG processes have not been unfounded. The UN Secretary-General’s Report on the post-2015 MDG agenda released in July 2013 identified education as one of the “key transformative actions” to realise the post-2015 vision, and formulated the education goal as “*Providing quality education and lifelong learning*” (UN 2013). When elaborated, however, the proposed education goal revealed a rather limited scope and a narrow interpretation of ‘lifelong learning’. It proposed, in the main, attention to early childhood, primary and secondary education and additionally, life skills and vocational training for young people. It was silent on non-formal education for children and adults, adult and women’s literacy and all other education and learning opportunities needed especially by marginalised and vulnerable communities to meet their basic learning needs as guaranteed by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – and to address the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges to development, poverty, inclusion, sustainability and peace.

## The Muscat Agreement

The 37th UNESCO General Conference in November 2013 in Paris was pivotal in the education constituency, laying claim to defining a post-2015 education agenda. UNESCO presented a concept note proposing a “Post-2015 Education Agenda” and cognisant of this, the UNESCO General Conference adopted a resolution on “Education Beyond 2015” which called upon UNESCO to:

- facilitate the debate and continue to consult Member States and stakeholders in the development of the global objectives and targets as well as the development of a “framework for action” for education post-2015, including through the existing global and regional EFA and MDG coordination mechanisms and regional consultations;
- carry out efforts to ensure that the global education conference, which will be hosted by the Republic of Korea in spring 2015, will result in concrete recommendations and an approved framework of action on the post-2015 education agenda;
- promote the outcomes of this global education conference as an agreed position on education and as part of the global development agenda post-2015 to be adopted in the United Nations Summit meeting in September 2015 (UNESCO 2013).

Working within the EFA mechanisms as the UNESCO General Conference stipulated, the EFA Steering Committee<sup>1</sup>, a body constituted to provide strategic direction to the EFA partnership, was tasked to lead on the discussions developing the post-2015 education agenda. This formation offered a broad, multi-stakeholder platform to debate and build consensus on the larger education constituency’s positions on the new education agenda, marrying different experiences and perspectives of the wider EFA community. Starting with the UNESCO “Concept Note on Education Post-2015”, the EFA Steering Committee developed a proposal, which was then presented to the Global EFA Meeting (GEM)<sup>2</sup> convened in Muscat, Oman in May 2014 – to seek an even wider mandate. The GEM agreed a vision,

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1/ The EFA Steering Committee consists of 19 members representing UNESCO Member States, the E-9 Initiative, EFA convening agencies (UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank), the OECD, civil society and the private sector.

2/ The Global EFA Meeting is an annual forum that brings together representatives of UNESCO Member States, EFA convening agencies, United Nations and regional organisations, civil society organisations, bilateral agencies, the private sector, research institutes and foundations to appraise EFA progress, agree follow-up action and prepare the future education agenda.

set of principles, overarching goal and targets for a post-2015 education agenda as outlined in the document, the “Muscat Agreement”.

The GEM agreed the overarching goal to “ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030” and seven targets on 1) early childhood care and education; 2) basic education; 3) adult literacy; 4) technical and vocational, upper secondary, tertiary education and skills for life and work; 5) education for sustainable development and global citizenship education; 6) teachers; and 7) education financing (UNESCO 2014).

This agreed goal and the seven targets exemplified a broad lifelong learning agenda, on the fundamental premise that education is a human right. It underscored priority to equity and education quality in its broader meaning and across all stages of education.

The Muscat Agreement also called for support to UNESCO's leadership and coordination role in facilitating the development of the post-2015 education agenda in collaboration with the EFA partners, ensuring wide consultation with Member States and other key stakeholders through national, regional and global level consultations. The participants also committed to “using this Statement as a reference for the negotiations in the global consultations on the post-2015 development agenda, in order to ensure that this has a strong education component” (UNESCO 2014). In this regard, they asked the Director-General of UNESCO to share the Muscat Agreement with the co-chairs of the Open Working Group and the Committee on Sustainable Development Finance – the two main sites of negotiations at that period on the post-2015 development agenda and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The participants affirmed that “the World Education Forum to be hosted by the Republic of Korea in May 2015 will approve the new post 2015 education agenda” – and “the expectation is that this will be an integral part of the global development agenda to be adopted at the UN Summit in New York City in September 2015” (UNESCO 2014).

## **Influencing the post-2015 development agenda**

With this mandate, the EFA Steering Committee and UNESCO organised dialogues with members of the Open Working Group (OWG) during their sessions in 2014. Civil society organisations also lobbied with member country governments in these processes on the proposed education goals and targets. The Open Working Group Report to the UN General Assembly on the Sustainable Development Goals (August 2014) recommended 17 Goals and 169 Targets, with education as one of the stand-alone goals:

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

Notwithstanding some of its weak areas, notably in its inattention to the importance of teachers and education financing, the proposed education goals and targets were a stark improvement over the earlier proposals on education coming out of the MDG/SDG post-2015 processes – and had come very close to the language and spirit of the Muscat Agreement. This buoyed hopes for a strong convergence between the education agendas as defined by the processes leading to the World Education Forum in Korea and the UN Summit in New York – with heightened expectations that the agenda agreed in Korea will hold strong sway on what will be ultimately adopted in New York.

The next step in the process of agreeing the new development agenda is intergovernmental negotiations, to be launched by the UN in 2015. The UN General Assembly asked the UN Secretary-General to prepare a Synthesis Report of the full range of inputs generated so far towards defining a new development agenda. This Report will serve as a basis for the intergovernmental negotiations in the lead-up to the UN Summit of September 2015. The Report entitled “The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet” was released on 4 December 2014.

The Synthesis Report maintained reference to education as a priority in the new agenda, but is worrying on a number of counts: it underscores that “Member States have agreed that the agenda laid out by the Open Working Group is the main basis for the Post-2015 intergovernmental process” (UN 2014). However, it also refers to “...the possibility to maintain the 17 goals and rearrange them in a focused and concise manner that enables the necessary global awareness and implementation at the country level” (UN 2014). This keeps open the possibility that the current stand-alone education goals may in fact be diluted.

Following the OWG recommendations, the Synthesis Report retained reference to “lifelong learning” in the education goal, but returned once again to a much narrower appreciation of lifelong learning. It is once more limited to children and youth, completely ignoring adult literacy and the education of adults as part of the new agenda. Education quality (through teachers) is referred to primarily with respect to work and keeping up with technological development. There is no reference to education for sustainable development or global citizenship, key themes defining the vision of education quality in the Muscat Agreement. Teachers are perceived in an instrumentalist way – solely as contributors to delivering learning without reference to their own human rights and the barriers to their enjoying these

rights affecting their motivation, their professional development and ability to play their full roles in education meaningfully.

This development perhaps accentuates the importance of the EFA-based processes in defining the post-2015 education agenda:

The new development agenda remains highly contentious. To secure a strong education agenda – fully in step with the vision of “ending poverty, transforming lives and protecting the planet” – will require a strong, organised, critical mass advancing the same within the UN MDG processes and independently. This is what the EFA movement and its broad-based, multi-stakeholder efforts to define a new education agenda, represent.

It is simply a good process for the education constituency to be proactively defining its own agenda for the future. The EFA's history, which started in Jomtien in 1990<sup>3</sup>, is replete with lessons and wide experiences that should bear on the processes defining the new education agenda – to ground, deepen and enrich the education community's collective aspirations.

There is limited sense in reinventing the wheel. The Synthesis Report calls for a “fit for purpose UN” that “is committed to working more collaboratively to leverage the expertise and capacities of all its organisations in support of sustainable development” (UN: 2014). It would be in keeping with this desire to build on the existing structures and mechanisms such as those set up in the EFA regime, and to more clearly locate the specialist roles of UNESCO and UNICEF in the post-2015 agenda-setting and implementation strategies. It is surprising and worrisome that the Synthesis Report makes no mention of the EFA review processes and the Muscat Agreement, in the long enumeration of post-2015 processes the UN Secretary General drew from in framing the Synthesis Report.

## Uncertain outcomes

The timing of the two events defining the new education agenda obviously makes for some complications. The education community will agree its global education agenda at the World Education Forum in May 2015 in Incheon, Korea while the UN Summit will agree the new development agenda, with education likely as one of its goals, in September 2015 in New York. Ideally, the UN Summit will fully adopt the recommendations of the World Education Forum on the education agenda and incorporate the same in the fuller development agenda. If this does not eventually happen, decisions will have to be taken by the broader education consti-

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3/ World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 1990



uency, UNESCO and its partners on its approach – presumably informed by the mandates offered by the World Education Forum and an analysis of the distance between the “Incheon” and “New York” agreements on education.

For now, how the two tracks would conclude is difficult to predict. The situation is very much in flux, and several processes are still underway towards finalising the new education agenda. The experience over the last few months however calls for perseverance and vigilance of the EFA movement in advancing its vision of a bold, ambitious and relevant education agenda post-2015 on different fronts. It should surrender no ground and aggressively engage the wider platforms defining the new development agenda while shaping its own.

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# MDG and EFA – from the mud to the stars and back: What went wrong? A reminder

*The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for All Programme (EFA) are being developed without looking back in depth at the previous global agendas – Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and EFA. This article serves as a reminder of the various analyses of the failures and omissions of the past programmes, which may raise questions as to whether or not the new plans are based on wrong premises and the real challenges are being ignored.*

## A critical sunset

The sunset of the 15-year period of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All Programme (EFA) was supposed to be dedicated to the summary of the results, to the analysis of achievements and the process of changes and improvements. These two big international agendas, the first of their kind on a global scale, deserved serious analysis of the processes, results, gaps, positive and negative factors that influenced the final outcomes of the ambitious plans made in 2000.

In the course of implementation, there was plenty of analysis, considerations, criticism, suggestions, but also mid-course initiatives such as the EFA Fast Track Initiative/Global Partnership for Education. But the focus of monitoring was on the established mechanisms, such as the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* and the MDGs report, which were trying to obtain the most reliable data and to capture the real dimensions of the problem. The end of the given period was expected to deliver final figures, to draw the lessons and to provide arguments and evidence for the planning of future actions.

But somehow, 2012 brought about a change in perspective. The questions *Are we on the right track?* and *Will we make it?* changed to *What do we want by 2015?* Turning the MDGs into SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and setting a new agenda started early enough and with impressive preparations – the number of meetings, conferences, consultations, papers, reports, resolutions, reactions, proposals, etc., was enormous. Still, a question could be asked: *Did we invest enough time and energy to analyse what was achieved, to draw a balance and set the new agenda on a solid basis of knowledge and information about what went well, and what did not?* The enthusiasm for the new goals and new agenda overshadowed the final phase of the previous agendas. So there is not even a consensus about the assessment of what was done: *Was it a success, or a failure?*

In the middle of the dynamic negotiations about the new goals, it might be useful to remember some of the discussions, arguments and analyses related to the goals generally, but especially to those related to education.

## A happy ending or a painful awakening?

Following some of the findings of the United Nations, one may come to the conclusion that no changes are needed, the approach was good and the results are great: “Enormous progress has been made towards achieving the MDGs. Global poverty continues to decline. More children than ever

are attending primary school. Child death has dropped dramatically. Access to safe drinking water has been greatly expanded. Targeted investments in fighting malaria, AIDS and tuberculosis have saved millions. The MDGs are making a real difference in people's lives [...]. After 2015, efforts to achieve a world of prosperity, equity, freedom, dignity and peace will continue unabated" (UN 2014). The UN General Assembly Open Working Group reports optimistically: "The MDGs have been the most successful global anti-poverty push in history [...]. Major progress at the global, regional, national and local level shows in the many millions of people whose lives have improved due to concerted, targeted efforts by many countries, groups and individuals. Several targets have already been met, such as halving the number of people living in extreme poverty. It is expected that more targets will be reached by the end of 2015" (Rio+20 2014).

But some basic figures may put another light on these statements. For example, Oxfam and the *Human Development Report* say that 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day, while the 85 richest people globally have as much wealth as the 3.5 billion poorest in the world; improvements in life spans, education and incomes are slowing due to natural disasters, misguided government policies and increasing inequality. Although poverty is shown to be in overall decline and improvements have been made in health and nutrition, 2.2 billion people are still living in or near poverty. There is evidence that the overall rate of progress is slowing across all human development groups (UNDP 2014: 13, 21, 41). Huge disparities and inequalities were already characterised as "grotesque" in the earlier *Human Development Report* (UNDP 2002: 19), but during the last 12 years they became even bigger.

The achievements are made in certain areas (primary education enrolment; access to clean water), but a closer look reveals that this improvement is not universal – children from the most marginalised groups are still excluded, and there are huge differences among the countries. Education performance in terms of access, enrolment and completion varies greatly across regions and economic status.

The same applies to illiteracy – "the adult literacy rate, for the population of 15 years and older, increased from 76 percent to 84 percent. Still, 781 million adults and 126 million youth worldwide lacked basic reading and writing skills in 2012, with women accounting for more than 60 percent of both the illiterate adult and youth populations" (UN 2014a: 18). The ratio of the illiterate population decreased, but mostly due to the improvement of a few countries, the first one being China, and the overall number has increased (UNESCO-UIS 2012: 8).

Even *The MDG Report 2014*, saying that some of the goals have been achieved and substantial progress has been made in most areas, admits

that the progress is uneven and not only single countries, but also whole regions, are lagging behind. Adding to this, the reports about increasing inequalities, ridiculously uneven distribution of wealth and food<sup>1</sup> and numerous data about huge gaps in education, leave the impression that they are reporting from a different planet. Two different realities or a lack of courage to admit that we have failed in our promises?

## Were we really happy with the goals?

Looking back at the analysis of omissions and failures of the educational goals of the MDGs and EFA, several types of argument could be made. The first group of arguments relates to the concept of education in the goals, which left space for further distortion (Torres 2004, 2011; Colclough 2004). R. M. Torres summarises this view in her famous ten points, stating that the educational agenda of the EFA proposal approached the complex field of education in a very narrow way.<sup>2</sup> The goals were based on reductive learning and education concepts and there was no coordination among the two agendas in the educational aspects.

R. M. Torres also argues that the “EFA goals replicate the conventional education mentality and do not facilitate a holistic understanding of education and of learning throughout life” (Torres 2011: 42). She confirms this argument claiming that the EFA goals are simply a list of goals which are treated and measured separately, organised by age without articulation between them; goals that adhere to the traditional formal/non-formal dichotomy, leaving out informal learning.

It is evident that the concept of lifelong learning, the leading idea in the 90s, lost its power and was widely reduced to schooling and to basic education. At the very beginning, many organisations, especially NGOs, warned us about that. The IIZ/DVV (Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association) clearly said: “The focus on primary education was a regrettable consequence of the policy of the convenors of Jomtien, especially the World Bank. Most resources have gone into primary school enrolments. Far less attention has been given to meeting basic learning needs of adults and out-of-school youth” (IIZ/DVV 2000: 158). Similarly, M. Almazan-Khan warns about “a highly compartmentalised, *functionalist* view of education, with a priority on primary schooling,

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1/ According to the *Global Burden of Disease* Study, obesity kills three times more people than malnutrition, as it claims more than three million lives per year worldwide (IHME, 2012).

2/ See details in: Torres, 2000 and Torres, 2011.

still dominated. By and large, the discourse accommodated adult learning only in terms of adult literacy or skills training” (Almazan-Khan 2000).

The ideological character of the shift from adult education to lifelong learning was noticed by many authors, and it became obvious in the two global agendas: lifelong learning was used as an excuse to exclude adult education or to reduce it to illiteracy. This fact widely ignored the potential and capacity of adult learning to contribute to the achievement of other goals. Once the adult education community agreed to “dissolve” adults in the fluid, blurred concept of lifelong learning, they were lost for EFA and invisible for MDGs. Once seen as a big victory for adult education, *lifelong learning* turned out to be a defeat and a Trojan horse in education policy.

### **The hidden discourse of EFA**

The EFA concept was widely criticised for the ideological discourse behind its rhetoric, having in mind the principles of discourse analysis and the power of language. Many authors pointed out that neoliberal elements are embodied in the EFA text. L. Tamatea summarises this criticism with several points: “critique of the Framework has focused upon its structure; the prioritising of monitoring over a needs-based approach; its quantitative orientation; its top down approach, its prioritising of performance over learning, and efficiency over quality; and its McDonald’s-like homogenising of global education, etc.” (Tamatea 2013: 313). The “McDonaldisation of education in EFA”, including a *one-size-fits-all* approach, was criticised by many authors.<sup>3</sup>

The criticism about the neoliberal elements is extended by several authors to the claim that neoliberal outcomes are clearly defined “in the West”, which becomes obvious when suggested strategies and means of implementation are considered – they reveal the real nature of the EFA. The discursive power of the Dakar Framework (EFA, adopted by the World Education Forum 2000) is not in these goals because they have immanent humanistic character and intentions, but in the fact that it reflects the power relations behind them. The whole agenda is obviously coming from a certain perspective, which is not an inclusive one, as some voices in its creation were clearly missing. This is probably the reason why civil society was particularly critical towards EFA.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the Framework doubly exploits

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3/ See for example the discussion “McEducation for all: opening a dialogue around UNESCO’s vision for commoditizing learning” in Swaraj, 2003).

4/ See for example NGO Declaration on Education for All (International Consultations of NGOs, 2000) and ICAE’s criticism (Tuckett and and Popović, 2014).

the very same ambivalence in liberal humanism that facilitated the European control of *others* in an earlier era of globalisation (Tamatea 2005: 311).

The *colonial* character of the Framework, discussed by many authors, is based on: missing voices in its development, the *obsession* of controlling the *others*, measuring as the main way of controlling, imposing a quantitative and statistical approach, ignoring cultural and educational diversity and local realities (and local knowledge), the pressure of artificially created *global* standards, etc. This is close to the criticism of R. M. Torres that EFA assumed a serious dichotomy, accepting dual standards and a dual education agenda – basic education for the South, lifelong learning for the North (an idea that was close to the World Bank), which means “consolidating and deepening the gap between North and South” (Torres 2004: 15). Thus, the countries lacked either the ownership or the motivation (to aspirational goals) or the interest (some goals have already been achieved).

The mixture of humanistic goals and the narrative of human rights on one hand and neoliberal, postcolonial discourse of mechanisms for implementation and control on the other might be the result of the *unnatural* marriage between the main actors who stand behind it: UNESCO with its discourse of universal humanism and the World Bank with its neoliberal discourse.

### **Implementation: Did we miss the targets or the point?**

The Dakar framework *per se* contained the elements which paved the way to its limited results. Harvey stresses the *empty*, rhetorical character of the goals if they are perceived in a real economic context: “But commitments to eradicate illiteracy, for example, sound hollow against the background of substantial and continuing declines in the proportion of national product going into public education almost everywhere in the neoliberal world. Objectives of this sort cannot be realized without challenging the fundamental power bases upon which neoliberalism has been built and to which the processes of neoliberalization have so lavishly contributed” (Harvey 2007: 187).

The implementation of the two agendas was highly dependent on the World Bank and donor agencies who had only the *soft power* to implement its policy. Therefore there were serious warnings about the need to see implementation in the context of development cooperation (such as suggestions about the donors’ commitment in *International Consultations of NGOs*, 2000), but it simply became part of the usual donors’ policies. The humanist rhetoric of the MDGs did raise the hope that they would really be respected. There are plenty of reports about the huge amount of money that was invested in implementation. When the Fast Track Initiative



started and the ninth president of the *World Bank Group* James Wolfensohn said in an interview “Now, let’s get the cash and let’s make sure that it gets there to fill the gap in the education needs” (World Bank 2005), hope was there. But in reality, a big share of the money which was allocated to the implementation of MDGs went to the other sectors – almost half of it was given over to the payment of debts. At the London G8 summit in 2005, the cancellation of debts was agreed and promises were made to increase the investment in development aid. In fact, the biggest portion was given to the payment of debts (Taylor 2012; Hulme and Scott 2012; Oxfam 2005). Some studies show that the percentage is even bigger and the rest of the money was used to minimise the consequences of natural disasters and as support for buying weapons (Millet and Touissant 2004). Furthermore, the global mantra of *bank credit* as a kind of *help and support* can be seriously doubted. Some research proved, for example, that a reduction of poverty of up to 50 percent would have been possible with the cancellation of debts. The *Jubilee Research* and *The New Economics Foundation* conducted a study in 2002 and found: “To achieve the first MDG of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty in the HIPC countries, will not only require 100 % debt cancellation; but also an increase in the current level of aid to the HICPs [Heavily indebted poor countries] from \$15bn to \$46bn a year; this is less than the increase in US military spending in one year – 2003 – and would cost each person in the developed world only \$1 per week, or \$50 a year” (Greenhill 2002: 3).

The global priorities did not have the same prioritative character for everyone: “If the MDGs are to be met, all of the HICPs will need full cancellation of all of their debts. This is not an act of charity, but a moral imperative. While eight million die each year for want of the funds spent by the rich countries on their pets; when millions of children stay out of school for want of half a percent of the US defence budget; and when the amount spent on alcohol in a week and a half in Europe would be adequate to provide sanitation to half the world’s population, something is very wrong” (Greenhill 2002: 22). Even the whole amount of global donations looks ridiculously small if it is compared to the costs of for example Germany’s reunification or European agricultural subsidies (King and McGrath 2004: 29), and military budget is far above these categories.

Ambitious programmes such as EFA and MDGs require huge investments. The data shows that developing countries were pretty much left alone with their problems, which became even worse after the financial crisis. It is difficult to find innovative approaches that would help them to bridge the gap between needs and scarce resources alone.

The criticism by J. Vandemoortele summarises several arguments: “The MDGs are being misappropriated to gain support for a specific

development strategy, agenda or argument, mostly being used as a call for more aid or as a Trojan horse for a particular policy framework. As relative benchmarks, they are extremely difficult to meet in countries with low human development. Their misinterpretation as one-size-fits-all targets is leading to excessive Afro-pessimism, begging the question whether Africa is missing the targets or whether the world is missing the point. The global MDG canon is dominated by a money-metric and donor-centric view of development, and is not ready to accept that growing disparities within countries are the main reason why the 2015 targets will be missed” (Vandemoortele 2009: 355).

Even at the beginning of the implementation period, one tragic event changed the political will for support. “Sceptics would consider the initiative [MDG] as little more than a re-run of previous development decades, although the MDGs were embraced at a time of clearly rising levels of development aid and fresh impulses for debt relief and forgiveness. The impact of September 11 and the subsequent offensive against terrorism for MDGs is problematic. In particular the resurgence of anti-UN political sentiment in the United States and the imposition of US unilateralism in world affairs, have complicated multilateral commitments to MDGs to a very considerable extent” (Jones 2007: 21).

The whole context changed even more later – when the two global agendas were adopted, the enthusiasm of the lifelong learning *epoch* was still alive. The optimism after the fall of communism still coloured international relationships and the long-term impact of Thatcherism (and Reganism) in global economy was still not so obvious. But after the economic reforms and the outbreak of the global crisis, the neoliberal discourse became stronger since education was increasingly perceived in the context of economic development, as a commodity, and not a public good.

### **Post-2015 and EFA: The Emperor’s new clothes?**

In the process of dynamic consultations and negotiations about the new goals, the goals of sustainable development (SDG), it is important to remind ourselves about the principle of *evidence-based policy*. Wouldn’t a deep analysis of the omissions and failures of the previous global programme be expected at the beginning of the development of the new one? “Too many conferences, too many follow-ups” – a bitter complaint from R. M. Torres in 2004 might be applied even today. The *Post-2015* euphoria is not taking into account the fact that the majority of the factors and reasons that influenced the implementation of MDGs and EFA are not just still present, but they have even worsened. The strong contemporary con-

viction that the lack of clear, measurable indicators was one of the main problems is not rooted in the research evidence and not in the context analysis, but is more similar to the World Bank's *deliverology* – “A system to focus on specific targets in service delivery, monitor achievement in real time, and make corrections mid-course” (Bretton Woods 2013), which could make one suspicious about the potential to reach equity, equality and access in this way.

The belief that indicators will drive the framework for implementation and this will drive the financing looks naive when confronted with the reality of global politics and globalised neoliberal capitalism, and the reality of weakened UN structures. Even the great tools for monitoring and measuring progress might not be helpful – maybe there will be nothing to measure: while the world is busy with developing the tools, the decisions are being made somewhere else.

Did we draw a lesson from the MDGs? The “results-based approach resulted in blaming the poor, which only exacerbated inequalities; we need to pose questions regarding what is gained by having technically-adequate data and robust systems of validation, and what is lost in not having wide public understanding of measurement, the choice of indicators, and the locus of responsibility. The lack of a means for dialogue [...] is also a problem of inequality in participation and review of the MDG targets and indicators” (Unterhalter, 2013: 21-22). Unterhalter and Dorward (2013) believe that the Post-2015 discussion still hasn't adequately articulated the *top down* and *bottom up* approach – there are plenty of groups included, but many voices are still missing. Another missing part are those who possess the power to make important global changes, demonstrating it daily in another arena.

The problem pointed out by King and Palmer (2013: 42) relates to the focus of the new process: “One of the implicit concerns ... has been that the process of determining goals and targets may be more driven by politics and sound-bites rather than real evidence”. The implementation process will surely be driven to a large extent by politics, ideology and neoliberal economic doctrine. Are the numerous activities and consultations only providing legitimacy for the future explanations of not-done, for withdrawals and failures? What can be done to assure political will for the implementation of the new goals, and where will the resources be found? Who is to be held accountable, and how, based on what? In order not to ask the same questions in 2030, it would be good to stop at this moment and ask: Who do we hold accountable for MDGs and EFA in 2015?

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# Horizontal and vertical derestriction of “adult education” – the historical German example and the contemporary view of education policy

*“Adult education” does not mean “enlightenment” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century sense, and is no longer necessarily institutionally regulated. The sector has undergone a tremendous change in institutional form, concept and content since its early manifestations at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Reichsschulkonferenz [Reich Education Conference] 1920). This change parallels the history of education in general, but it is often not properly recognised publicly. It has occurred vertically, in that adult education has expanded beyond the task of providing for adults in the ordinary, legal sense, by engaging in pre- and post-educational processes for young people and older adults. It has also occurred horizontally through the expansion of its own understanding of its content, so that there has been a break with traditional ideas of education. Adult education has seen itself as having the duty to provide life coaching, career assistance and leisure activities.*

## Towards vertical derestriction – more than just a change in concept

Up to the 1950s, the entire field of adult education in Germany was seen only in practical, institutional terms. Community adult education centres almost exclusively identified themselves with artistic development, political education and general cultural education. For a long time, this perception hampered the horizontal expansion of content into fields such as vocational training, health education, and basic education in economics and ecology, and it restricted the role of adult education in correcting educational deficiencies such as illiteracy and in promoting new skills. This is reflected in the image conveyed by its “literal” definition.

Between the 1920s and the early 1950s, adult education was thus perceived within the traditional civil concept of education as a place for socio-cultural education, but since then it has expanded well beyond this limited field and has redefined itself in response to subjective and objective educational needs: “Adult education/further training is the continuation or resumption of organised learning after an initial phase of education and entry into employment” (German Education Council 1970).

This definition allowed adult education to escape from its age-specific framework and from its restricted content. It is similar to a later interpretation put forward in the “Recommendation on the development of adult education” (1976) and it is found in combination with the concept of lifelong learning in the Belém Framework for Action (2009/2010), which reads as follows:

“Lifelong learning from cradle to grave is a philosophy, a conceptual framework and an organising principle of all forms of education, based on inclusive, emancipatory, humanistic and democratic values...”

Over the course of time, adult education has come to see itself in Germany as having the following attributes (e.g. *Die Volkshochschule in öffentlicher Verantwortung* [Public Responsibility for Adult Education Centres], Deutscher Volkshochschulverband 2011):

### Adult education

- is not narrowly defined as age-specific, that is, it sees itself as an entity within the continuum of lifelong education
- is organisationally secure and adequately funded
- is not a single-issue event



- is a public responsibility, is an integral fourth sector of the education system, and fulfils the requirements and purpose of public education (e.g., LEO research investigation and autochthonous literacy in industrialised countries)
- benefits from international developments, e.g. from the impact of global international learning on German adult education
- has demonstrated that its interaction with the academic discipline of adult education and other relevant areas of knowledge is on a solid foundation (public higher education and research)
- has operated under the motto: “Think globally, act locally” (taking action in one’s own community and city)

### **Horizontal derestriction – aspects of changing content**

In 2002, the Board of the German Adult Education Association saw the following expanded list of topics as pertaining to the role of adult education (they are not in any order of priority):

- Environmental education
- Immigration and minority policy
- Health education and population policy
- Rehabilitation
- Labour market policy
- Civic and social education (now meant as empowerment, as personal skills).

These high-level categories are mirrored in the prospectuses of adult education courses, which may nonetheless be arranged differently. This is how the Bonn Adult Education Centre divided up its programme for the first half of 2014 into areas of work:

- Politics, science, international
- Learning for a structured life
- English and other languages
- German and integration
- German for everyday life, women’s courses, citizenship tests
- Occupation and qualification
- Learning region
- Culture and art
- Health and nutrition

The horizontal expansion of the perception of adult education is even more obvious in the titles of individual topics such as energy-use advice, civic engagement, IT and the Internet and meditation as a technique and as a source of neurobiological information.

Of course, the traditional template has not necessarily been displaced by such novel titles. Statistics from the German Adult Education Centres demonstrate the persistence of traditional perceptions, and reveal a number of shortcomings. It seems, for example, that there has been a failure in recent years to significantly increase the number of participants (see: Huntemann and Reichart, 2013), and that women (75.9 % of participants) and seniors (40.2 %) still dominate the public image of Adult Education Centres. Growth is noted, however, in courses with formal qualifications (school examinations and certificates in foreign languages). The summary judgment by Helmut Bremer about total further education statistics is equally true of Adult Education Centres: "The increase in the participation rate is, if you look closer, primarily due to vocational continuing education" (Weiterbildung [Further Education], Issue 1/2004: 20).

### **From the national to the international debate on the horizontal derestriction of lifelong learning**

The change from traditional content and forms of delivery to international modernity also affects the part that German Adult Education Centres play in the development policy of the German Federal Government, which is mainly guided by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Over the years, DVV International has served as the channel within the German Adult Education Association for the international application of adult education, and it has simultaneously greatly promoted international discussion of matters concerned with structure and content, taking into account regional specifics. We can thus add an important international element to the discussion of the horizontal derestriction of the understanding of adult education.

A more detailed breakdown of content into ten topics that should characterise today's adult education internationally was drawn up by UNESCO in 1997 (CONFINTEA V 1997, Hamburg). The main headings are:

- Adult learning and democracy: the challenges of the 21st century
- Improvement of the conditions and quality of adult learning
- Ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education
- Learning in adulthood, gender equality and empowerment of women
- Learning in adulthood and changes in the world of work

- Learning in adulthood in relation to environment, health and population development
- Adult education, culture, media and new information technology
- Learning in adulthood for all: the potentials of different population groups
- The economic conditions of learning in adulthood
- Intensification of international cooperation and solidarity.

(These are presented in more detail on the UNESCO website, with descriptions of the content)

Here too, it is evident that the previous rigid divisions between formal, non-formal and informal education, and the restrictive placing of adult education within non-formal education, no longer hold true. If one considers “educational outcomes” rather than “certificates”, “skills” rather than formal “diplomas”, and “equivalences” rather than “informal education”, it is plain that the structural categorisation of educational sectors is becoming increasingly obsolete. The German Federal Government has recently pointed the way very clearly to such a change. Under the bold heading “Vocational and academic education are of equal value”, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) announced in a press release (21 February 2014): “Vocational and academic education are of equal value, and this is to be made immediately visible to everyone. Certificates of master craft skills will from now on point out that they correspond to Level 6 of the German and European Qualifications Framework (DQR-EQR). This is the level associated with a university Bachelor’s degree. The first master craft skills certificates referring to the DQR level will be presented today by Federal Education Minister Johanna Wanka at this year’s Masters Ceremony of the Dortmund Chamber of Crafts on 22 February 2014”.

This example reflects both horizontal expansion in vocational training and vertical expansion because in a way it solves the problem of formal certification for different age cohorts.<sup>1</sup> The lifting of the former boundaries between formal, non-formal and informal education is, however, not automatic and is certainly not thought to be completely applicable everywhere. The UNESCO concept of “adult education” shown above (Hamburg 1997) should not be understood as a closed curriculum, but should highlight selected key points, depending on differences between states and regions (demand) and the competences of teaching staff (supply). Nevertheless,

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<sup>1/</sup> See also: Talent Beyond Diplomas, a conversation with Regina Kraushaar, Head of the Children and Youth Department at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in: Impulse, Bulletin of the German Youth Institute 4/2013: 15 ff

we draw attention at this point to some common features that are present where so-called “Learning City” projects are being tested. There are now numerous projects which presuppose an underlying concept of lifelong learning (LLL), meaning that all levels of education are interconnected and can by their very nature be understood as an “educational chain”.

### **Theoretical and practical approaches to the concept of a “Learning City”**

The concept of the Learning City embraces both the vertical continuum of educational stages related to age cohorts, and the horizontal expansion of the concept of learning. One of the leading protagonists describes it thus:

*EcCoWell*

Ec = Ecology & Economy

Co = Community and Culture

Well = Well-being & Lifelong Learning (<http://eccowellcork.com>)

This project, which refers to the Cork City Region (Ireland), provides a very clear and realistic implementation of the concept of the “Learning City”, and covers most of the details. This applies to both the definition and the positive consequences:

*Definition of a Learning City:* An approach to urban development where learning is a key tool for social inclusion and urban regeneration. Learning refers both to individuals (usually lifelong learning) and institutions (openness to innovation), and strategies are developed through active partnership and networking between communities.

*The benefits of a Learning City*

- A much increased awareness of the wide variety of learning opportunities, both in local areas and across the city
- the encouragement of those contemplating returning to learning in some way – whether to gain qualifications or to enhance their quality of life
- the opportunity for those participating in learning to showcase their achievements – with exhibitions, displays, performances, open days

- the encouragement of the development of the culture of lifelong learning in the city.<sup>2</sup>

Without entering into the international debate too deeply here, reference should be made to one event which extended the concept of the Learning City beyond the narrow sense of skills. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, made a powerful plea for lifelong and post-2015 education at the International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing, 21-23 October 2013, and has since promoted and supported various follow-up actions.<sup>3</sup> The “Beijing Declaration on Learning Cities” adopted at the end of the conference is based on observable structural changes in demographics and development policy taking place worldwide, under headings commonly used in research literature such as urbanisation, suburbanisation, and internal migration resulting from the push-pull movements to which crisis-prone Asian and Latin American mega-cities are especially susceptible. Thus the conference formulated the following actions:

1. Empowering individuals and promoting social cohesion
2. Enhancing economic development and cultural prosperity
3. Promoting sustainable development
4. Promoting inclusive learning in the educational system
5. Revitalising learning in families and communities
6. Facilitating learning for and in the workplace
7. Extending the use of modern learning technologies
8. Enhancing quality in learning
9. Fostering a culture of learning throughout life
10. Strengthening political will and commitment
11. Improving governance and participation of all stakeholders
12. Boosting resource mobilisation and utilisation.

Presumably, such actions are not intended to harmonise existing models. There needs to be a conceptual development so that the “vision” of learning cities becomes part of the historical awareness of educational traditions and of citizens’ attitudes and openness to learning. Historical evaluation of the German examples should not be overlooked.

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<sup>2/</sup> See in this context the recent posts in the journal *Education Lifelong Learning* between programmatics and control, Issue 4, Cologne 2013 and the English version of “Lifelong Learning and Governance, From Programming to Action, Selected Experiences from Asia and Europe”, by H. Hinzen and J. H. Knoll, DVV International, Laos 2014; see also: *Learning cities and lifelong learning*, in: Jin Yang et al. *Conceptual evolution and policy developments in lifelong learning*, UIL Hamburg 2011

<sup>3/</sup> See NEXUS, UIL Letter, e.g. Vol. 8, No. 4, Oct. to Dec. 2013

## Remembering German approaches

I wish to advise strongly against the idea of designing a binding model for a “Learning City”, even though there is evidence of the development of similar concepts in the past in Germany. The same terminology may not have been used, but some facets of the content intended for a Learning City were present, such as the horizontal and vertical dimensions of learning, which have already been mentioned. I am thinking in particular of a regional discussion (in North Rhine-Westphalia), which took place in the early 1970s about training centres. This went beyond the bounds of the vertically-structured formal German school system, and applied the notion of an “educational chain” to individual training centres (Joachim H. Knoll et al., Training Centre, Essen 1972). This approach on the part of adult education led to training centres in Leverkusen and Marl being brought together with the Adult Education Centres there in association with local industrial companies (Bayer Leverkusen, Chemische Werke Marl-Hüls). These combined education centres were no longer defined solely as places of learning, but also as places of cultural and sporting activities, which functioned as grassroots communication centres. These facilities were created with the existing financial resources of the local industrial enterprises.

There are further examples of similar cultural and social organisation, such as the settlement developed by the Dessau Bauhaus (in Tötten), which aimed to include “normal” citizens both socially and culturally, and not just to provide the well-known exclusive houses for the elite. Unfortunately, today this example is known only as a tourist attraction. In a recent article in *Die Welt* (1 March 2014: 24), Eckhard Fuhr called attention to this forgotten side of the Bauhaus Foundation: “Dessau in the twenties was a fast-growing industrial city, a laboratory of modernity. The Bauhaus wanted to reconcile people with the modern, not just through practical furniture. Even through healthy food. The thinking was holistic”. Today, the Carl Zeiss Optical Works in Jena has a comparable approach, cooperating with the citizens of the city and the university in creating a new urban development policy. Even more striking are the 15 projects of the ZukunftsWerkStadt [Future Working City] ([www.fona.de](http://www.fona.de)), in which “citizens, together with politicians, business leaders and researchers, design concepts and measures to sustainably develop their cities. The projects, which are funded in the community, deal with key challenges such as climate neutrality, energy supply and demographic change. Citizens have the support of technical colleges, universities and research institutions, which act as consultants. By funding the ZukunftsWerkStadt as part of its high-tech strategy, the BMBF is pursuing an integrated approach to innovative policy issues in

the field of sustainable urban development across all departments of the Federal Government.

Unfortunately, this concept has not yet broken into the international consciousness in the same way as the innovation-orientated model near Poitiers launched with extensive publicity by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).

One should also point to supporting research publications (e.g. by the Berlin Institute for Population and Development, and the German Foundation for World Population), which track the causes and effects of urbanisation and present structural models of national and international demographic developments.

## Outlook

Finally, the German Federal Government, albeit in a somewhat understated manner, is certainly willing to support programmes of modern innovation-oriented post-2015 education. It entered the discussion some time ago with its “post-2015 agenda for sustainable development”, formulating the following “German core intentions for the post-2015 Agenda”:

1. We are committed to a new value-orientated post-2015 agenda.
2. We are committed to central, sustainable development-related topics.
3. We advocate a globally-oriented nationally-differentiated, action-guided and results-based target system universally applicable to all countries.
4. We emphasise the leading role of the UN in discussions, negotiations and monitoring of a new framework for sustainable development, involving a broad spectrum of actors.

The following details were also given:

“A thematic field of improved inclusive welfare and sustainable wealth creation could incorporate the following areas: general health care and access, shared opportunities and social security, job creation, with the goal of productive employment and decent work, youth employment, education, social inclusion, population dynamics, culture, decent housing/ sanitation and disaster preparedness.”

This statement seems to me to promise an enduring commitment to projects such as Learning Cities.

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# Andragogy: Because “adult education” is not beneficial to the academic identity!

*In many countries of the world a new educational (sub-)discipline dealing with the learning and education of adults has come into existence in the past few decades. This contribution focuses on this academic discipline and its struggle to find a professional identity in universities and for their graduates. It suggests that “Andragogy” helps to clarify the specifics of the scholarly approach, thus contributing to a professional identity of this group of academics and graduates. International readers are invited to compare the following arguments coming mainly from the German and European background with the developments in their countries, the similarities and differences.*

## **The growth of a new academic (sub-)discipline**

In Europe, universities from Finland and Estonia to Serbia, Hungary and Italy, from the Netherlands to the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania offer programmes dealing with the learning and education of adults. The same is true for Thailand, Korea, Australia, Nigeria and Venezuela and many other countries. In Germany more than forty, in the United States and Canada more than eighty universities offer programmes for students and do research and theory development. A wealth of publications, national and international societies, conferences and cooperation demonstrate that today a new reality exists in adult education, an academic discipline with professionals and specific tasks.

But this new academic field is still in question in many places. It appears that sound academic work and successful graduates are not sufficient to build a professional identity in universities and for graduates. What also seems necessary is to work explicitly on image and identity. As an attempt to contribute to a distinct identity, it will be argued that the term “adult education/educator” is “destructive” for the identity, role and perception of this new discipline and its graduates.

### **“Adult educator” – an everyman label!**

When using the term “adult education”, most people associate this with the institutions of practical adult education. In common perception “everybody” can be labelled as an “adult educator”:

- the grandma sharing her knowledge of baking cookies,
- the engineer instructing his staff about a new technology,
- the political or religious missionary preaching in the marketplace or on TV about the true and only life or society,
- the hundred thousand teachers in adult education institutions.

So: “everybody” can be an “adult educator”. This can also be confirmed by analysing historical cases of “key persons”, published in two international conferences (Standing Conference on the History of Adult Education 1996, 2006). These cases also confirm the variety of understandings of “adult educator” – from “everybody” to “academic specialist”, from “the wise” to “scholar and researcher”.

When “everybody” is an “adult educator”, it is difficult to build a specific professional identity of university programmes, students and graduates with this label. If people who graduate after more than five years from a university

are labelled “adult educator” similarly to “everybody”, this is destructive for the role and perception of the academic discipline and its graduates. In order to differentiate between the field of practice and the academic subject, it is suggested here that for academic programmes and their graduates the term “andragogy” and “andragogue” should be used to identify and differentiate this special group and their professional competency.

## **Andragogik – andragogy**

The first time the term *Andragogik* was used was by the German high school teacher Alexander Kapp in 1833 (more detailed in Reischmann 2004). In the 1920s in Germany academics started new reflections related to the why, what for and how of the education of adults. There *Andragogik* found a second birth. A new reality was emerging: a scholarly reflection level “above” practical adult education. Faber, systemising the academic development of this field, names this “the generation of adult educators out of passion (*Erwachsenenbildner aus Leidenschaft*): They came from different fields of society, they were active in a new sector of life without an academic mandate or an institutional structure” (Faber 2006: 64). The idea of “adult education” as a discipline was not yet born.

In the 1950s, andragogy can be found in scholarly publications in Switzerland (Hanselmann), Yugoslavia (Ogrizovic), the Netherlands (ten Have), and Germany (Poeggeler 1974, p. 17ff). Still, only insiders knew the term. But the increasing use of “andragogy” signalled that a new differentiation between “doing” and “reflecting” was developing with “professors in double disciplines”. At universities they were engaged in adult education *within* their main subject. They were, so to say, doubly interested, as professors of pedagogy or sociology and – as the first academics – reflecting as individual persons on professors’ positions at universities on questions of adult education” (Faber 2006: 66). And – something that was new – now students in university programmes could study adult education, at least as a minor subject.

## **The American understanding: Andragogy – a banner for identity**

A breakthrough for the term “andragogy” for the English-speaking adult education world came with Malcolm Knowles. He describes:

“... in 1967 I had an experience that made it all come together. A Yugoslavian adult educator, Dusan Savicevic, participated in a summer session I was conducting at Boston University. At the end of it he came up to me

with his eyes sparkling and said, ‘Malcolm, you are preaching and practicing andragogy.’ I replied, ‘Whatagogy?’ because I had never heard the term before” (Knowles 1989: 79).

In a short time, the term andragogy, now labelled as Knowles’ concept, received general recognition; “within North America, no view of teaching adults is more widely known, or more enthusiastically embraced, than Knowles’ description of andragogy” (Pratt 1998: 13). Providing a unifying idea to the amorphous group of adult educators connected with the term andragogy – “the art and science of helping adult learners” – as well as the scholarly access, were certainly the main benefits Knowles brought to the field of adult education. The problem: attaching “andragogy” exclusively to Knowles’ specific approach means that the term is lost for general use.

## The European development: Andragogy – an academic discipline

The European understanding is broader (Reischmann 2004). Where “andragogy” is used, it functions as a header for (places of) systematic reflections, parallel to other academic headers like “biology”, “medicine”, “physics”. It covers the academic discipline “the subject of which is the study of education and learning of adults in all its forms of expression” (Savicevic 1999: 97).

From 1970 onwards, Andragogy became connected with new academic and professional institutions, publications, and programmes. Ex-

Fig. 1: Publications from Yugoslavia, Canada, and Korea, using the term “Andragogy”



amples are: The Yugoslavian (scholarly) journal *Andragogija* 1969 and the Yugoslavian Society for Andragogy; Slovenia's Andragoski Center Republike Slovenije (1993) with the journal *Andragoska Spoznanja*; Prague University (Czech Republic) has a *Katedra Andragogiky*. A similar professional and academic expansion developed worldwide: Venezuela has had the Instituto Internacional de Andragogia, since 1998 the Adult & Continuing Education Society of Korea has published the journal *Andragogy Today*.

So now again we find a new reality with new types of professional institutions, functions, and roles, with fulltime employed and academically-trained professionals, with "explicit andragogy professors: with this specification I will express that now for the first time we have the academic reality in our science that adult education or andragogy is not an additional subject but – *expressis verbis* – only the main one" (Faber 2006: 73).

### **But still: The lack of identity**

As described: university programmes, research, publications and institutions give proof that such an academic field exists worldwide. But there are problems threatening the further development and identity of the discipline.

To name four:

1) An old-fashioned approach can still be found – in public and among university colleagues, administrators and other andragogical amateurs: "the knowledge that is utilised in the education of adults is, fundamentally, knowledge from other disciplines which is applied to the education of adults ... Adult education is an integration of branches of disciplines, rather than a discipline in its own right" (Jarvis 1987: 311). For sure, all disciplines (i.e. physics, biology, history...) utilise knowledge from other disciplines, but that does not mean they are a blunt mixture. This outdated position has critical consequences: Academic posts are given to persons that have not studied this field, thus leading to a loss of identity and knowledge. A voice from Africa expresses it unmistakably clearly: "it is too late in the day to toy with the idea of recruiting persons not trained in adult education into Departments of Adult Education ... about a century after the establishment of the first Department of Adult Education in the world and after 40 years of the establishment of the first Department of Adult Education in Nigeria" (Biao 2005: 13f). It seems that the professors, using the "everybody" term "Adult Education", now reap what they have sown: "everybody" can take over that university position.

2) Another problem is that adult education sometimes becomes primarily focussed on one “fashionable” field of praxis. Carroll Londoner, past chair of the International Adult Education Hall of Fame<sup>1</sup>, outlines this problem (private mail 31 January, 2014): “The Adult Education programmes in the States have shrunk dramatically as the Universities do not seem inclined to support adult education because they do not understand it. They have too quickly identified the broad field of adult education with the notion of “adult literacy”. That is a sad misunderstanding but nevertheless it exists because in the past there has been such a huge amount of federal dollars available to support the US literacy efforts. This is no more and that is for certain. We in the Universities have not done a very good job of explaining to our administrators what the broad field is about and why it should be studied academically”. Supporting practical fields certainly is praiseworthy, but for surviving in the academic arena it might have been better to “explain to our administrators what the broad field is about and why it should be studied academically”! The discussion about andragogy as a discipline could support that, also to keep the necessary distance “above practice” and above specific approaches.

3) A third threat for identity came – at least in Germany – with the Bologna system and its Bachelor-Master system: Reputable professors report (in Egetenmeyer/Schüssler 2012), that in the changing University programmes adult education becomes marginalised and disintegrated (p. 37), loses profile (p. 37), operates under dozens of names (p. 36), has a low reputation (p. 197), has difficulties to identify the core of the discipline (p. 278), and becomes invisible (p. 256) in the mixture of contents.

4) And a fourth thread is the confusing plurality of workplaces reported by the graduates. In the last three decades in many countries the working fields of the graduates far exceeds the traditional understanding of “adult educators” or “teachers of adults”. Only a small portion work in the traditional fields of adult education, only a small portion teach as “adult educators”. The disadvantage of this multi-functionality is: The graduates are not perceived (from the outside and even worse: from the inside) as a distinct group of professionals.

A shared identity of the academic field of adult education and its graduates seems further away than before.

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1/ <http://www.halloffame.outreach.ou.edu>

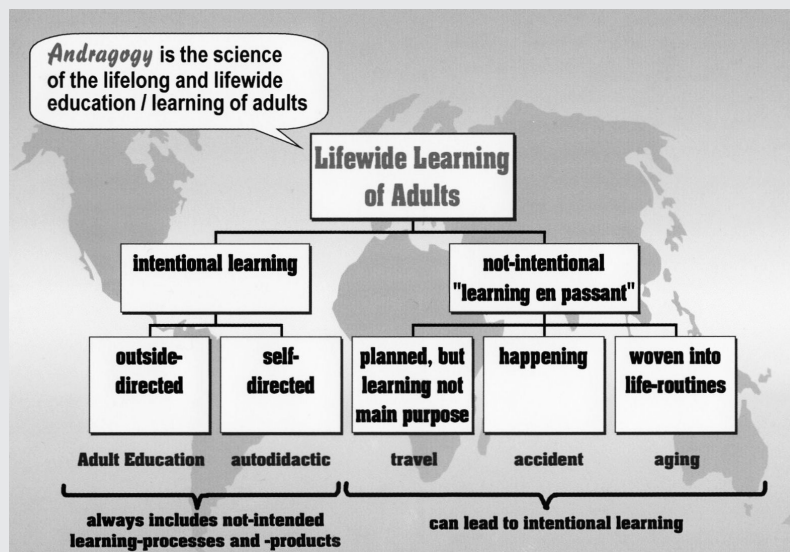
## Andragogy: A chance for identity?

How can the identity (and hopefully reputation) of this new academic field be supported?

1. Elaborating on the specific tasks of “andragogy” (academic) and “adult education” (practical) prevents confusion about the different responsibilities and strengths of each field.
2. When using andragogy in the academic arena, it is necessary to carve out the specifics of this subject, its identity and image. To support this, professors have to
  - explicitly work on and for the policy, legitimation and identity of their subject, and make this obvious to the outside world,
  - differentiate the subject from other subjects,
  - take care that in study programmes the visibility and identity of the discipline is respected – which also means to exclude persons who have not studied adult education/andragogy from appointments in this subject,
  - supply the students/graduates not only with knowledge and skills, but also with the awareness of their uniqueness and what only they have to offer, and
  - stay away from the confusing bunch of different names for the discipline.
3. Andragogy, by opening the perspective to “more” – to “Lifewide Education” (Reischmann 1986, Jackson 2012) in all forms and expressions (Fig. 2) – creates a new identity, not defined by “adult teacher”, but by “change agent”. This new understanding makes it clear that it is not by chance or mistake that the graduates can be found in companies, churches and culture, in armed forces and adult education centres, in management and media, in tourism, hospitals and many other fields. This plurality of workplaces is confusing only when thinking in the limiting category of “adult educator”. Andragogy makes us aware that there already exists a unifying, identity-giving function: to support change for individuals, institutions, and society – in various institutions, in various functions.
4. To support a shared identity under the perspective of andragogy, the curricula must prepare for this plurality of workplaces. The competencies of andragogues in this complex field are highly valued: to professionally teach, to plan and organise learning occasions, to consult and moderate, to evaluate and research – and produce the most successful mix of these ingredients (Fig. 3).

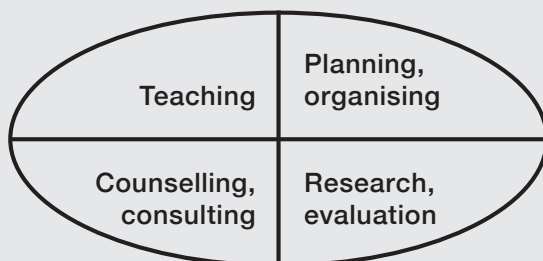
5. For building a distinct identity of the graduates (“andragogues”), the ingredients are available: first of all, graduation from a University programme. Second of all, the insights that learning and change processes happen in many contexts far beyond school-learning. Thirdly, the awareness that the graduates have shared competencies for all these contexts, unifying them to a distinct group: professionals supporting change.

Fig. 2: Structure of “Lifewide Learning” of Adults (Reischmann 1986, 2004)



Source: Prof. Jost Reischmann, University of Bamberg, Germany. [www.andragogy.net](http://www.andragogy.net)

Fig. 3: Core competencies of andragogy curriculum at Bamberg University (and elsewhere) (Reischmann 2010)





The label “andragogue” is – as our graduates reported – also helpful on the labour market: It made employers curious to invite them for interviews. In many cases this led to employment. This seems true even in Brazil, as I learned in a mail from there: “I prefer being called an “andragogue” because it ... is better for my professional marketing”.

This too may serve as confirmation: To be perceived as a distinct group, they have to avoid the all-embracing term “adult educator”.

Identity does not come about by itself. Professors and graduates have to explicitly work on this identity. It seems this was forgotten in the past. The discussion about andragogy as a unifying label has the potential to direct our attention to this missing identity development.

## Summary

Claiming a separate name for the academic discipline is not meant to devaluate the field and institutions of practice. DVV International is persuasive evidence of the valuable work done in practical adult education, and has been a premier and respected disseminator of this idea for more than 45 years. It also is a convincing example of much cooperation between the practical and academic access to adult learning and education – including academic honorary degrees to representatives of DVV International – congratulations, Heribert! A self-confident academic identity will in many ways strengthen adult education as a powerful concept and key to the twenty-first century.

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## Lifelong learning and learning cities in the ASEM process

*The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) brings together 53 nations (28 Member States from Europe and 25 from Asia, stretching from Russia to New Zealand). ASEM reflects the long histories between European and Asian countries, and more importantly, their increasingly close economic, political, security and cultural ties. Recent Summits have reaffirmed the role of lifelong learning in the development process, perhaps in different ways. In Europe, lifelong learning is linked increasingly with measures to address youth unemployment and to restructure European industry. In Asia, lifelong learning encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning across a broad range of settings and a range of outcomes. Increasingly, learning cities have become a useful framework for bringing together diverse forms of lifelong learning. ASEM could be a fruitful forum for enabling Asian and European partners to share their thinking about lifelong learning and learning cities.*

## Introduction

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) brings together 53 nations (28 Member States from Europe and 25 from Asia, stretching from Russia to New Zealand). The ASEM leaders have met every two years since 1996, most recently in Milan in October 2014, but there are also irregular meetings of other ASEM Ministers, senior officials, business and civil society. In particular, the Asia Europe Business Forum, the Asia Europe Parliamentarians Forum and the Asia Europe People's Forum feed into the ASEM Leaders' Summit. All these encounters recognise the long histories between European and Asian countries, and more importantly, their increasingly close economic, political, security and cultural ties.

Lifelong learning is on the agenda also, as ASEM sponsors a Lifelong Learning Hub, based in Denmark. The ASEM LLL Hub has five networks of researchers from Asia and Europe who collaborate to share insights into topics such as national policies, the role of information and communications technologies and workplace learning.

Recent Summits, both the Education Ministers in October 2013, and the Leaders in Milan, have reaffirmed the role of lifelong learning in the development process, perhaps in different ways. In Europe, lifelong learning is linked increasingly with measures to address youth unemployment and to restructure European industry struggling to become competitive again. In Asia, lifelong learning encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning across a broad range of settings and with a range of outcomes in mind. Increasingly, learning cities have become a useful framework for bringing together diverse forms of lifelong learning.

## Learning cities: Formal and non-formal learning

The link between cities and lifelong learning is not surprising. We live in a world of challenges for which solutions become more and more elusive, leading to the widespread conclusion that learning is central to personal and collective futures (see UIL 2013). Cities are increasingly important as over half of the world's population live in cities, a trend that seems likely to continue unabated for years to come. How can cities manage the economic, social and environmental dimensions of urban processes so that people can have decent livelihoods and fulfilling relationships, while enabling the long-term sustainability of their city. Cities become the focus of this kind of debate, partly because people choose them, and partly because the scale of a growing number of cities continually defies belief.

In November 2013, a conference in Hong Kong entitled 'Cities Learning Together: Local Communities in the Sustainable and Healthy Learning City' brought together people from Europe and Asia to share their perspectives on how learning can help to address crucial challenges that cities face in all parts of the world. These challenges encompassed the policy themes of Economy, Green, Health, Wellbeing and Social Welfare, and Social Justice.

The conference itself was designed as a 'temporary learning community', bringing together representatives of organisations focused mostly on learning and the application of knowledge. The EU Centre at RMIT teamed up with the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Pascal International Observatory, the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and DVV International, amongst others, to engage in a conversation about the kinds of partnerships that were needed amongst the key stakeholders in cities, and to share examples of learning communities providing key leadership on the key themes. Two days were spent in a conference facility, but the middle day was spent 'on location', in sites where practical action was occurring.

One important underlying thread was the encounter between West and East. 'Learning cities' gained traction in promoting new approaches to lifelong and collaborative learning in Europe, yet it is now apparent that some of the most important initiatives on Learning Cities are developing in Asia. In this respect, DVV International (the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association) was a very important partner. DVV International is such an important part of lifelong learning in Germany, yet it has also been a strong supporter of adult and basic education in the East, through its support for ASPBAE, the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education.

In 2009, Heribert Hinzen moved to set up a new DVV International regional office in Vientiane, in Lao PDR, 'investing technical expertise and financial resources to implement a variety of programmes and activities' (see Hinzen 2013: 282), in consultation with national and regional partners. One of the striking features of the work as it has unfolded in Lao PDR (and Cambodia and other parts of the region) has been the focus on building respect for the interrelationship between formal, informal and non-formal education. Lao PDR provides a helpful context for this kind of work, as discussion of non-formal learning is common, and serves as a base for longer-term interest in lifelong learning. However, the effective development of learning cities depends on frameworks which reinforce the linkages between the formal, informal and non-formal aspects of learning.

This was apparent in a comment by Heribert Hinzen, looking at post-2015 policy initiatives:

“... despite a variety and diversity of views and arguments, there is a growing common understanding, which in respect to the different agendas calls for:

- an education-specific agenda covering all aspects of schooling, training and learning,
- and that education must be everywhere in the implementation of the development agenda.” (Hinzen 2014: 29).

The importance of an inclusive learning framework for learning cities was expressed in the Beijing Declaration on Learning Cities (UIL):

“In developing learning cities, we will promote inclusive learning in the education system by:

- expanding access to early childhood care and education;
- expanding access to formal education from primary to tertiary level;
- expanding access to and participation in adult education and technical and vocational education and training;
- improving the flexibility of lifelong learning systems in order to offer diverse learning opportunities and meet a range of proficiencies; and
- providing support for marginalised groups, including migrant families, in order ensure access to education.” (UIL 2013, Section 4).

## **Learning from others**

In many parts of the world, learning cities need to be innovative to deliver these as outcomes. Whether in Lao PDR or Australia, new ways of thinking will develop: about education, about the linkages amongst different arenas of learning and about framing learning with health, employment and community development activities. We can learn from those sites where it is occurring already that innovation will result from the obstacles which arise from lack of communication, from the challenge of new circumstances, and because of limited resources.

In this process, Australians (and many Europeans) will have much to learn from the experience in Lao PDR and in other Asian countries. ‘Learning’, in Australia, is associated much more commonly with formal education; it’s what you do at school or university to get a qualification and hopefully a job. The experience of informal and non-formal learning, and its

value, is much less likely to be recognised or valued. Even where 'learning' cities are found in Australia, there is unlikely to be broad agreement about the meaning of the concept of 'learning', or its breadth of application. There is much to be gained from understanding better the care taken in distinguishing formal, informal and non-formal learning opportunity and delivery in some Asian countries.

The Pascal International Observatory has sponsored a research and development programme on Learning Cities to support their own process of exploring the practical application of these ideas. In sharing some resources to help cities 'learn', Tibbitt and Wheeler propose asking questions such as:

- How is my city performing? What are the trends?
- Are we doing a good job in connecting learning with its application for innovation, and with economic and social development?
- How do we compare with others? What could we do better to improve things?
- What will be the likely consequences if we continue as we are?
- How can we get government, business, educators and civic society to work together? (2014: 1).

Pascal also supports a series of networks of learning cities, encouraging them to learn from each other.

Work on learning cities is complicated by the use of different language to describe what people are doing, leading to some confusion in comparing activities in one place with others. There are 'smart cities' programmes for example, often with a focus on the use of new information and communication technologies to facilitate city processes – traffic management, for example. The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) has led a number of programmes, which focus on higher education and regional engagement, often linking their focus on regions with particular cities.

One of the key issues which arises from these studies has been the issue of capability: Developing and sustaining networks with multiple parts and activities can become quite sophisticated, requiring people and organisations that are able to take on this kind of infrastructure. These requirements have been summarised in a commentary on the kind of collective impact which can be achieved when organisations come together to focus their efforts. Kania and Kramer describe the five conditions for success:

- A common agenda (or shared vision, would be another way of putting this);
- Shared measurement systems so that meaningful data can be exchanged easily;



- Mutually reinforcing activities, contributing to an over-arching plan;
- Continuous communication, facilitating mutual awareness of each other's activity; and
- Backbone support organisation, providing an infrastructure to coordinate and support a clear decision-making process. (2011: 39-40).

Campbell has summarised much of the thinking about learning in an organisational, city and regional context. He draws the clear conclusion that cities where collective learning occurs effectively benefit from a planned and institutionalised approach which supports collaborative spaces and networks. New technologies can support a better understanding of city-region processes, but effective city-regional learning depends on its social milieu, which facilitates cross-sectoral networking and collaboration (see Campbell 2012). This applies particularly to efforts to link the non-formal and informal dimensions of lifelong learning with formal learning processes.

However, confusion can arise from the issue of governance: Who decides on the learning city programme? While this might typically be the city or regional government, there have been examples where the responsibilities might move, almost like in a relay race. City authorities might take a lead, but then higher education institutions step in and exercise leadership for a period before civil society networks take on the coordination of the learning city arrangements, and so forth. This can work well providing, as Kania and Kramer say, that the process is clear at any one point in time. Different cities in Asia and Europe will deal with governance according to their political systems, local institutions, cultures and resources. One potentially fruitful discussion, which might occur under the ASEM umbrella, would be the different implications of various approaches to governance.

## Conclusion

In a formal sense, the role of learning cities is not yet on the ASEM agenda. However, it seems inevitable that this will occur. This is partly because of the intense growth in importance of both urbanisation and of lifelong learning as a means to advance both individual and community benefits. We have examples from European and Asian cities of the benefits that can come from recognising the power of collective learning which can flow from co-producing knowledge, developing understanding through extensive conversation and learning through shared implementation. This is collective impact in practice. We know also that individuals gain knowledge and qualifications from formal education processes; however, we know too that the informal and non-formal learning which occurs in their communi-

ties and workplaces transforms abstract and generalised knowledge and skills into personal attributes, which have value in employment, but also in citizenship and public life.

The ASEM Leaders meet again in Asia in the second half of 2016. This will be a genuine opportunity to encourage them to see that the idea of learning cities can bring together both their ambitions for their cities, and also the purposeful development of lifelong learning opportunities and resources for their people. I think that Heribert would approve of this.

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# Adult education – trends and practices

## Further education in public responsibility

*Adult Education Centres<sup>1</sup> are special public institutions. They contribute to the realisation of the human right to education because in the field of education they bring together the free educational needs of people with free further training programmes for teachers. The emancipatory basic understanding of Adult Education Centres is realised through the special public responsibility in the communities as places of civic self-government. Here, this relatively new public good of training must be backed by government legislation initiatives for continuing education and adequate resources. The standards for a modern further education policy are comprehensiveness and integration. Essential for the quality of further education is the improvement of the employment conditions for professionals in continuing education. Challenges for the future lie in the digitisation of learning, in the internationalisation of living and education cultures and the threat of privatisation of public goods in the course of economic globalisation. Public institutions of further education have a resistance to these radical market interests through their “progressive conservatism”. They can thus be the avant-gardes for a renewed culture of public education guided by the human right to education.*

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1/ In this article “Adult Education Centre” refers to the German *Volkshochschule*

The following sentences speak of self-confidence and self-assurance: “Communality – the close relationship with the community – is, for Adult Education Centres, a constitutive feature of their identity. Adult Education Centres are funded directly or indirectly by local self-government and through this imbued with democratic legitimacy. In the cities, towns and counties of Germany, the Adult Education Centre is the most reliable central institution of municipal services in the area of continuing education. The public mission of Adult Education Centres is defined by the states and implemented by the municipalities. It consists of offering comprehensive continuing education for the entire population”. This is how the German Adult Education Centres expressed their common position in 2011 in their so-called “Blue Book” – a programmatic policy paper for their whole organisation. In fact, the elements of this ambitious identity are important enough to reflect on in more detail.

## **The Adult Education Centre – an amazing public institution**

### The human right to further education

The central point is the offer of comprehensive continuing education for the entire population. If education is a human right for everyone, further education is also a human right for everyone. This trivial logic, however, does not necessarily mean that in practice the respective educational institutions reach everyone and in principle are accessible to everyone. So school – as the only educational institution, incidentally, specifically defined in the German Constitution and in the basic rights – addresses all children and young people of a certain age. However, not just as a right but also as a duty. Of course, the paths of each individual become differentiated in the course of their passage through the institutions of vocational or academic education. These facilities then don't usually appeal to all people equally, but have specific access requirements and are set out in very special formal education pathways.

These special entry requirements and institutional objectives are also present in further education and especially in vocational training. As a primarily voluntary institution open to educational opportunities for all people – regardless of grades and certificates, ability to pay or personal diversity – Adult Education Centres are, in comparison, very special educational institutions, even though unconditional accessibility constitutes a public good. As a public good in a free society, they are thereby not only protected by public responsibility, but also cared for and designed through public responsibility.

## The freedom to learn – the freedom to be educated

Rights to education and rights to freedom are indissolubly symbiotically connected. Education, as part of an ethically-responsible self-determination and self-realisation, presupposes freedom. And freedom, as a constituent feature of ethically impregnated states and societies, is based on the education of the people belonging to them. Schools, vocational training institutions and universities can of course also be found in unfree states and societies. They have a functionality that is not primarily derived from the free individual, but from the rationality of replication of the state and society. Of course this may include further education institutions in the broadest sense because the learning biography of humans is not finished, even in totalitarian states, with school and vocational training. But the essence of the Adult Education Centres as institutions of liberal adult education is the constituent feature of the unification of the free continuing education needs of their users with the free training opportunities of their teachers in a form useful to both, in which education is not treated as a commodity, but as a public good exchanged between members of the community.

So it is also no historical accident that further education institutions and Adult Education Centres in particular, despite the fact that they were derived from the social dynamics of the dawn of industrialisation, are still relatively young educational institutions. They arose from the impulse toward freedom coming from an enlightened bourgeois education movement, which contained a paternalistic element, and their own self-interest, as well as solidarity with the struggles for freedom of a working class, which was emancipating itself, who found freedom in education and wanted to find further freedom through education. These people found freedom in education and wanted to find further freedom through education. The historical heritage of freedom ingrained in the Adult Education Centres, which are not primarily state educational institutions, may in the present be so obvious that it is no longer consciously taken into consideration and identity-bolstering. But the birth of Adult Education Centres from a sense of freedom and demand for liberty makes them very special components in the multiplicity of current educational institutions.

## The public responsibility of the community

This historic moment of freedom had to almost inevitably lead to Adult Education Centres being public facilities, but not developing primarily as a responsibility of the state. As institutions of education for all – without social exclusivity and financial overburdening and aligned with the common good – Adult Education Centres found and still find their democratic legitimacy

primarily in the community. Communality – “the close connection to the community” as expressed in the current position statement of the Adult Education Centres from the year of 2011 – is therefore the proximity to the immediate educational needs, which are owed to the people. Adult Education Centres pick people up from the point at which their knowledge and skills lie, which is a tried and true pedagogic principle for good education. And they get involved in the daily lives and the social environment of the people, which is a mantra for good social education and community work.

The local authorities, whether as municipalities, cities or counties, are therefore the natural carriers of these educational institutions because the principle of local self-government corresponds with the educational self-government in the free Adult Education Centres. The quasi-natural position of communities requires a facility of further education, which accepts the regional factor and its unique flexibility and can translate it into a correspondingly regionally relevant education. The multifaceted nature and individuality of each Adult Education Centre obtains its legitimacy from the self-governing community, so it is not just a case of state diplomas and certificates, but the community is a place where people find their *raison d'être*, that enriches the lives of its citizens most directly and immediately and also does this through offers of education. Communities are the classic sites for civil liberty. It is good that they take public responsibility for their Adult Education Centres.

### Adult Education Centres – institutions of a “progressive conservatism”

The amazing thing about this institution, the Adult Education Centre, is that in view of its institutional character, it has up to now largely detached itself from all the modern developments regarding state legalisation on the one hand and economic privatisation on the other. Adult Education Centres have been able, as well, to mostly keep themselves free from the imposition of the constraints of formalisation as well as the lure of trivialisation and keep their focus on their educational concepts and maintain their practical implementation. A contributing factor could certainly have been that they are not in the centre of education policy, but currently in more of a “niche” and have their focus in general education, health, cultural and political education. Also, the momentum towards freedom and personal responsibility of the participants as well as the institutions is in principle contrary to a transformation that could be followed by either a radical market-orientated conformity or an exclusively state-compliant logic, which then takes the pertinent organisational forms.

Finally, the community level in the history of self-governing free cities and municipalities is already in principle a political action level, in which

tradition, perseverance and self-reliance are still particularly at home, rarely to the detriment of the people – not to rigidities and lack of dynamism and old-fashioned organisation of public goods – and usually to their advantage when it comes to the maintenance and development of locally-based community-orientated services. Because of this “progressive conservatism”, Adult Education Centres are still, and have been for over 100 years, free further education institutions in self-governed communal public responsibility with an educational mission and access to education for all people. This makes them truly amazing institutions.

## **The responsible exercise of public responsibility**

### The new public good of further education

Further education as part of education is a relatively new public good. The right to further education as part of the human right to education has not always been self-evident. Further education as part of the biography of human education is after all under special auspices.

In the elementary basic human understanding of education, school education and vocational training are immediately obvious. The self-evident nature of further education as a natural part of any educational biography first had to be established through the need of each individual interested in or active in further education with psychologically-based learning awareness, in which the lifelong ability to learn and preserve and expand this capability could be scientifically proven. In contrast to the right of children and young people to education – which is a quasi-fiduciary guarantee for their protection due to their impotence through the public responsibility of the state, and is then in practice carried out as compulsory individual education – further education is a right for adults based on their own responsibility for their educational needs and their implementation. The question being asked up to the present day is: Why then is there a need for public responsibility in the context of state laws, rules and financing?

### Public responsibility for individual further education

Indeed, it is no coincidence that the public responsibility for the quaternary form of educational goods was taken late in comparison to the secondary and tertiary sectors of education. A national vocational training system with clear laws, responsibilities, quality requirements and financing was in any case there long before the first laws for further training in general, cul-



tural and political education. Certainly, the higher expectations of economic benefit also played a central role.

In addition to this, there were usually also central government laws which were connected with clear desires, efficacy and obligations for the individual entities such as companies and administrations. The current further education laws for general, cultural and political education are, in comparison, much more federal in nature. In Germany, for example, they differ from state to state, and some states have dispensed entirely with continuing education legislation. While a few continuing education laws have declared further education as a compulsory responsibility of the local community, with all the consequences for financial support from the state and local community, others are only directed at employees for their rights and claims to their educational interests. The different value and importance of vocational and general further education is locked into in this heterogeneity of responsibilities and in the lack of transparency of legal codification, which, however, has in its scope neither the holistic conception of modern further education nor the still important future trends. There is, here, a need for reform.

#### Comprehensiveness and integration as requirements in a modern further education law

Undoubtedly the public, i.e. state, and thus political responsibility must still grow in order to open up opportunities for the individual economic subject for professional as well as vocational training and to provide protection and legal security. The public responsibility for professional training is documented in developed economies such as Germany in comprehensive legal systems like those for employment support, social education support through student loans (Federal Training Assistance Act) and career advancement training support, or in comprehensive government support programmes. That this doesn't need to be embedded system-logically, but is tied to a democratic public culture and welfare state, can be shown by a comparison of the status of further education in Germany and in some other European countries, with the status of further education in, for example, America, major emerging countries or even developing countries.

The trustworthy handling of public responsibility makes it even more imperative to protectively accompany the development of the knowledge-intensive economy of the future with its completely new and intensifying demands on competence, skills and education of workers with massively expanded legal rights, quality guarantees and investments in both quantity and quality of training institutions. That is therefore why political ideas and claims are being increasingly enacted, such as work insurance

which includes training in the current system of unemployment insurance, or demands such as part-time education, integrated time for learning, training and education in the labour market.

The human right to professional training, made real by a training guarantee of at least three years of professional training, should therefore be combined with the human right to further education, to be realised in at least three years of further education, which can be distributed over a working life and be supported. This legal right to further education should then, however, not only relate to professional development in the narrower sense, but must also involve general, political and cultural further education. Finally, many roads lead to motivation for further education and the ability to be educated that also only needs to be developed as prerequisite for lifelong learning.

### Professionalism and quality through equivalent value

Good further education needs good professionals. Further education should also fight against the divisions in the labour market because further education can cope even less with a split in the market for trained professionals, especially if a dramatic loss is to be suffered in quality, reliability and sustainability. It is certainly already foreseeable that competition among professionals and between various levels of education will become toxic. Unfortunately, it lies in the logic of the existing further training system, so that a trainer is usually paid much better to cater to high-skill-level participants than to the low-level ones, even if the requirements for language courses for migrants, remedial courses for school and vocational qualifications, or even literacy measures for adults, are particularly complex and require extensive expertise as well as pedagogical qualities. As a matter of course, since the clientele is socio-politically marginalised, it has a prejudicial effect on their facilities, on their educational opportunities and on their committed teachers. A policy of further education in public responsibility should not make this acceptable.

### The further education architecture of the future

#### Digitisation – lightning on the horizon of further education

The basic rules of interaction between the workforce and their relation to production are also valid for the future of learning. Information and communication technology greatly influence the standards of teaching and

learning materials, and thus affect the conditions under which learning, qualification and education take place. Through digitisation, new information and communication worlds are built that know no bounds and which are potentially ubiquitous, low-threshold, participatory and low-cost. The group of participants will thus be relatively widely dispersed when compared to the current regional catchment area. Time flexibility and availability will increase. The international dimension will grow and asynchrony in the lives of the people will be noticeable.

And yet, digital learning is not being force-fed in the present; rather, it works according to anthropological constants: it depends on the needs and requirements of immediate and direct communication, from a personal relationship and direct educational reference by teachers and students as the original units of learning and educational progress. The social functions of humans are also in effect in the digital future. Learning is after all primarily a social process. Concepts of blended learning and its institutional implementation will therefore obviously increase in importance. Educational offers and institutions that do not respond to the demand for digitally-supported or at least digitally-transmitted learning, will, under the penalty of marginalisation, no longer be able to ignore this digital potential.

Blended learning then results in blended institutions and their increased cooperation. The classical separation between vocational training institutions, universities for scientific or academic education and adult education institutions will increasingly dissolve. There will be mixed institutions.

### Internationalisation – an opportunity and a challenge

Adult education centres will grow in the mobile society of the future as places of internationality and interculturality the like of which has never been seen before. At the speed of light, the worldwide network transmits information and communication, multiplies the indirect exchange between people and ultimately of material goods. The growing global market for services, but also the increase of multi-state forms of living, including those born out of necessity from precarious existences, makes possible the immediate social exchange between people of different nationality and culture. The world's people live in a state of flux and overlap. A person who resides in another country, as a specialist in the world of work, as a seasonal traveller with a second residence, as a world citizen of several cultures, or as a migrant, regardless of background and life history, and arrives in this "second country" and wants to integrate, needs an institution that receives her/him socially and competently as an adult with educational needs.

Adult Education Centres are challenged here in a very special way by taking in people – often at relatively short notice, under extreme pressure from personal problems and often with previously ambivalent experiences regarding school – from paths of education that lie in the distant past. The previous biography of adults can certainly be helpful, but it can also bring with it specific individual barriers to learning and intercultural hurdles, especially with the great divergence in the education and previous experiences of adult migrants. Adult Education Centres of the future will in a very real sense be “schools of the nation”, i.e., training institutions for those with a newly-acquired nationality and at the same time of a profounder international character.

Their contribution to the building of human capital in a society – to put the value of this development in economic terms – has not yet been sufficiently recognised and appreciated in politics, economics and society. Otherwise there would not be so much resistance to a strengthening of programmes and institutions of integrated education. And this is despite the fact that immigrating into the education system is always the best way, so that one doesn’t become stuck in the social system as a long-term migrant.

### Commodification and the global trade in further education

Whether or not it will be possible in the future to find further education as a special state as well as a community public good will no longer be decided in a purely nation-state environment. In the discussion about competition law, service policies and free trade agreements, questions increasingly emerge about the deregulation of public responsibility for further education. What kind of competition should there be in the further education service sector? Must private companies be guaranteed market access next to the community because of a so-called obligation that the performance of tasks of general interest be guaranteed? Are state and local governments allowed to promote targeted further education, or is this a distortion of competition? These questions cannot yet be answered conclusively in the sense of whether or not we are privileging the publicly – funded public services responsible for education and further education.

Up to now, Old Europe has been strong enough to withstand political and economic principles that emanate from Anglo-American neoliberal capitalism and are being pushed on markets and in society. In the competition regulations of the European Union, as in the negotiating contracts, for example, in far-reaching transatlantic free trade agreements, there are still barriers that exclude further education as part of the general interest of rigid private sector competition. But future development is open. For this purpose, political traditions and resistance in states that have signed these

agreements have contributed just like the fact that now further education is very different from school and higher education because it is a very mixed market with many small-scale private as well as public education service-providers. However, in the differentiated market of further education, national and international education corporations are also emerging, not least because of the new educational possibilities offered by digital media and its capitalisation.

### **Further education in public responsibility – historical reminiscence or avant-garde**

For the global media and education corporations of the future, how conditions in Europe develop will not be the decisive factor since, foreseeably, they only comprise 5 % of the world population. It is therefore even more important that the international debate about the value of public further education be very focused and result-oriented. Policy advice, as provided by civil society organisations – such as DVV International, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), the UNESCO World Conference on Adult Education CONFINTEA – contribute as much to that as does the strategy of good example through projects in developing and emerging countries. The fate of further education as a public responsibility will ultimately be decided in this great global struggle for more market or more government, more profit or more public interest. The Adult Education Centres in Germany and the international Adult Education Centres and their protagonists and supporters have to accept and actively pursue this political debate because it is that debate that will decide whether they are thought of as historical nostalgia or as public institutions of the avant-garde.

# Lifelong learning and big data<sup>1</sup>

*There are two significant trends across the world that are likely to have significant impacts on the field of adult education and lifelong learning in the future. The first of these is a drive to use Big Data and other quantitative methods to address inequalities in education and to develop interventions for the promotion of widening access and lifelong learning. The second is the focus on cities as sites of learning in the context of rapid urbanisation around the world. In the paper we consider both of these issues, and draw a link between them through illustrating the work of the newly-established Urban Big Data Centre at the University of Glasgow.*

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<sup>1/</sup> The authors are very grateful for the comments on this paper by Professor Piyushmita Thakuriah, Director of the UK ESRC Urban Big Data Centre at the University of Glasgow.

## Big data

While there are many explanations of 'Big Data', it is the term being applied to very large volumes of data that are difficult to handle using traditional data management and analysis methods (Thakuriah and Geers 2013). According to Lynch (2008), there are various ways in which data can be 'big'. There is no specific size, although the datasets involved are likely to be large and beyond the capacity of most relational database systems to manage. More significant perhaps is the complexity of the data, its variety of form, the rapidity of its development and change, and the need for novel methods to capture, analyse and interpret it. Datasets are becoming bigger because of the increasing use of information-sensing mobile devices, aerial sensory technologies, cameras, software logging and a variety of other devices that are capturing information. To this can be added the greater volume of administrative data held by public and private organisations, and consumer data held by private businesses.

'Big' therefore is a broad and all-encompassing term, and it highlights the use of new technologies to capture and exploit existing data from a number of sources, such as social media, public and private data records, and existing data archives. Mayer-Schonberger & Cruikier (2013) enthusiastically describe big data as 'the next phase in human evolution', stating that it will lead to huge advances in health, education and pressing scientific and social issues. Given that big data could address research questions in education from 'cradle to grave', that is from pre-school education to lifelong learning, it is surprising to find that there is a current lack of research concerning the utilisation of the methods that it offers to the field.

## Cities and learning

There have been many pronouncements by national and international organisations about the importance of cities in recent decades (see European Commission 1997, 1999; OECD 2001). Cities have been projected as being able to develop competitive, cohesive and sustainable forms of living (Buck, Gordon, Harding & Turok 2005) for the increasing proportion of the world's population that is being urbanised. With the recent recession and financial crisis in the West, there has been further emphasis on cities as a means to promote growth; this however has to be set against reductions in public funding and greater demand for services (Hastings, Bramley, Bailey & Watkins 2012).

Policy makers in cities are presented with increasingly complex decisions in determining priorities for services and investment. They have

to make these decisions based on consideration of a range of variables, including *inter alia* those linked to systems of housing, transport, skills and training, health and the environment. In many societies, policies are underpinned by issues of fair distribution of wealth and equity in access to services. In pursuit of such goals, they need to understand how these systems interact.

There is much data that can be used to gain insight into the links and interactions in these systems, but many barriers exist in investigating urban systems in a comprehensive and cross-cutting way. Data are produced in many ways and by many entities, and typically are not linked well. Nor are the tools and knowledge to interrogate the data well-developed. However, there are now a range of novel ways that have been developed in computing science that allow new ways to mine information by means of 'data-driven models'. Furthermore, in addition to the contribution of academics, some working in new inter-disciplinary coalitions, the diverse range of cities' data that has emerged has attracted the involvement of a wide range of new stakeholders. These include non-traditional Information and Communications Technology (ICT) enthusiasts in civic matters (called *civic hackers*) in the generation, curation and processing of information and in urban engagement and citizen participation (Thakuriah, Dirks and Keita-Mallon, *forthcoming*).

In the field of lifelong learning, cities have become increasingly prevalent in discourse, as has been the search for metrics and measurable features of learning at an urban level. This is most evident in the work of UNESCO's Institute of Lifelong learning (UIL) in Hamburg in the development of their International Platform for Learning Cities within which 44 Key Features are specified (UNESCO 2013 a, b and c; Yang 2012).

## **A response to challenges**

One of the most recent responses has been the setting up of an Urban Big Data Centre (UBDC) in Glasgow funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council. The UBDC aims to allow authorities and private businesses to realise the value of their collective informational assets through a data research service and the development of researchers skilled in the analysis of these kinds of data. For those working in the field of adult education, it offers both an enhancement of some traditional methods, and some novel approaches to collecting data on learning patterns and skills development in later life. Much of the work of the UBDC is methodological, and looks to adapt current statistical methods and to create new methods to link records within diverse datasets. Further work seeks to generate



indicators for various aspects of the urban environment, including housing, economic development, transport, education, social exclusion. Very important in this process is communication to non-expert audiences, and part of the centre seeks to create information that is comprehensible using visualisation techniques. Some of the work of the centre involves the creation of primary contextual data within a project entitled *Integrated Multimedia City Data (iMCD)*.

## **Integrated Multimedia City Data (iMCD)**

It is in this area of work where the role of adult and lifelong learning comes to the fore. An initial element of this work will be a survey of a representative sample of approximately 2,000 households in Glasgow (with all adults present within the household participating). Booster populations will be sought for populations of interest, such as migrant workers, school leavers. There have been many surveys of adult learning and skills, notably the recent Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (OECD 2013), but seldom will they have been so comprehensive in terms of the range of domains related to education that will be assessed. A further novelty of the approach is that the survey data will be linked to pre-existing material in a diverse range of other datasets, and will be linked to other primary data.

The survey will broadly measure individuals' and households' demographic backgrounds and profiles, as well as attitudes, values, literacy/knowledge and behaviours in five domains. The domains to be assessed are education and skills, sustainability, transport, time use/activities, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT)/other technologies. The survey sets out to investigate the extent that values, attitudes, beliefs, skills and learning influence behaviours and activity within the greater Glasgow area.

This survey will be supplemented with GPS (Global Positioning System), and life-logging data with a subsample of the survey population. These data will give a more accurate picture of peoples' daily activity and mobility, and would stimulate cross-disciplinary social and urban informatics by collating information into a single, linked Digital Mobility Information Infrastructure (Thakuriah and Geers, 2013). Concurrently, background, contextual data on current activities occurring in the city will be collected by means of a significant information extraction exercise to create a Glasgow Memories Server consisting of data from a variety of unstructured multimedia data including location-specific video, image or still photos, web-based text and 2D or 3D images that will be captured from various

data streams available in the city of Glasgow, other sources such as the web, blogs, newspapers, administrative reports and social media sources, and infrastructure-based sensors such as traffic detectors, environmental and weather sensors and CCTV, as well as participatory sensing systems and citizen science projects. The dual data collection approach – the purposive, survey-based approach, and the information extraction Memories Server solution, will allow us to understand the context and motivations driving the social aspects of the urban environment, thereby supporting research on how such a context might affect people's attitudes, lifestyles and beliefs, and their mobility and time use patterns. The effort will also allow us to compare and contrast results from extracted structured and unstructured data with data from a statistically-representative sample of respondents who are administered in a battery of social science surveys.

## **Survey development**

A tripartite approach has been used to measure each domain to be included in the survey. Data from individuals will be collected on values, attitudes and perceptions across a range of topics that can then be related to behaviours and daily activity as well as knowledge and literacy regarding the domain. Given a thorough review of behaviour change models, such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), and with the aim of ultimately promoting behavioural interventions, it was decided that each domain would tap into attitudinal, behavioural and knowledge/literacy components.

The psychometric approach was to exhaustively review and expertly select national survey questions in the domains of interest. A team of five researchers led a review of existing survey measures, targeting mainly national level surveys. This highlighted valid and reliable education and cultural/civic engagement questions were taken mainly from the Adult Education Survey (AES) (English Version, 2013), the British Household Survey (Wave 18) and the British Social Attitudes Survey (2009). Behaviours and attitudes regarding sustainability and transport were mainly taken from national surveys, such as the Scottish Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours (Davidson, Martin & Treanor 2009), the Euro-barometer (2008) and the House Condition Survey and Sustainable Home Report from the (Northern Ireland Housing Executive 2010). Literacy questions were identified from a number of sources including the Skills for Life Survey 2011 (BIS 2011). In addition to national level surveys, smaller validated questionnaires were identified within the academic literature, such as a survey of attitudes and behaviour towards travel and the environment (Barr, Gilg

& Shaw 2011), and measures based on Schwartz's (2006) cultural values and orientations. From this an exhaustive document was produced of possible question items in each domain, organised by theme and colour-coded to indicate whether it tapped attitudes, behaviours or literacy. To assess content validity, a team of eight subject matter experts (SMES) from inter-disciplinary backgrounds then adopted a rating system for these items on a 3-point scale (Essential, Desirable, Possible) in line with Foxcroft, Paterson, LeRoux & Herbst (2004). Consensus was agreed, and all questionnaire items deemed to be essential were included in the final draft, supplemented by desirable questions where agreed.

The draft survey content was compared against the 42 UNESCO indicators for learning cities, in order to ensure that it directly measured (or allowed indirect comparisons at the city/country level) all key concepts for a successful learning city. In addition, literature behind national surveys was sought to insure the inclusion of the most valid and reliable questionnaire items to tap into each domain (e.g. AES National quality reports).

## **Data collection and analysis**

It is expected that the survey will be implemented in the spring of 2015 and the data, once collected in the 2,000 households, will be factor-analysed and fully explored using inferential and Bayesian statistics. Inferential and predictive (linear and non-linear) models will be analysed for the effects of place and other key variables on school, formal, informal and non-formal education variables. Finally, theoretically visual models will be developed to explore the relationship between education, place, transport, sustainability, cultural and civic engagement and other demographic factors in order to develop and test directional models leading to learner engagement and lifelong learning. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) will be key in testing such visual models, to develop simple pathways and interventions for promoting inclusion and adult learning.

## **Future projects**

The iMCD is one of a number of data contributions to the UBDC, and the set of linked datasets will all be interrogated against many research questions. One particular issue of concern to us is the relationship between place and educational opportunity. We know that educational inequalities exhibit strong spatial dimensions, with wide differences in attainment levels for example between schools in different areas and young people

living in different neighbourhoods, even within systems that are notionally comprehensive. Upon completion of the iMCD project, we will specifically be assessing links between education and place and re-visiting targeted populations one year on from the initial survey. Regeneration initiatives over many years have often recognised education disadvantage as an issue, but have very rarely had a strategic approach to schools. While the connections between poverty, health, place and educational disadvantage are generally recognised (see Kintrea, St Clair and Houston 2011; Osborne & Tibbitt 2014), there has been little research to examine the nature of the problem, its dynamics and its policy and practice dimensions. We envisage that Linked Big data sets will provide a powerful means to bring together data about the lifelong learning trajectories of individual young people and their post-school destinations and outcomes of post-compulsory training with data about their households, the neighbourhoods they live in (including their housing), and the schools they attended. This will enable a much enhanced understanding of the spatial variations in educational services, and in the neighbourhood differences in educational attainment between age, gender, class and ethnic groups. Also, it will provide the means to consider how educational disadvantage is influenced by residential segregation processes including, in Glasgow, the divisions created by resurgent private renting, by 'neighbourhood effects' across the spectrum of urban areas, and by spatial planning and urban policy. Unequal educational outcomes (and hence unequal employment outcomes) at an urban level are frequently wrapped together in the concept of the Learning City or Region, one facet of which is concerned with the degree to which a local infrastructure has been created to promote learning that is both socially cohesive and economically rewarding for individuals and enterprises.

## **Concluding remarks**

The approach that we will be utilising in the city of Glasgow is equally applicable in other cities and regions around the world using similar techniques. Big Data approaches linking diverse datasets and comprehensive surveys of representative samples allow us, because of the new methodologies being used to link data and the power of modern computing technology, to explore the learning patterns of adults as never before. Further, we are able to link learning to other variables in ways which we could never have envisaged previously. For example, in Glasgow we will have access to the records of the British Geological Survey and will be able to investigate associations between the nature of the bedrock of the city, the contaminants of the industrial age, health statistics and participation in

learning. That is but one example of a large range of research questions that can be imposed upon the linked datasets. The quantitative data in itself of course provides only partial answers to research questions, but it does offer an important foundation from which further spin-off work of a qualitative nature can be undertaken. We see the area of work as offering some important new directions for adult education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## Education policy towards lifelong learning in Korea

*Building a learning society emerged as a priority agenda of Korean education reform in the 1990s. A series of five-year plans for promoting lifelong learning was started in 2003 according to the Lifelong Learning Act. The long-term plans accomplished some remarkable results towards a lifelong learning society. Now the third five-year plan (2013-2017) is underway. Administrative agencies responsible for implementing policy are in operation at the three levels inter-dependently: national, provincial and local. It is noticeable that the scheme for validating and recognising lifelong learning has been one of the essential ingredients of lifelong learning policy in Korea.*



## Lifelong learning in education reform

Korea set up the promotion of lifelong learning as a priority policy of education in the 1990s. This was a period of education reform ignited by the information age as well as by the civilian government after three decades of the military-orientated regime in Korea. In 1995, the Presidential Commission on Education Reform (PCER) created a new epoch for Korean education. The PCER proclaimed a new education system for 'the new Korea' as follows (PCER 1995: 19):

"The vision of a new education system is to establish *Edupia*, a utopia of education, meaning an education welfare state: a society of open and lifelong education to allow each and every individual equal and easy access to education at any time and any place."

It is noteworthy that the PCER advocated open, lifelong education to supersede a closed schooling system. The aim of education reform was to get rid of a closed schooling system so that a new education system could enable every person to learn what he or she wanted to learn at any time and any place. It meant virtually a lifelong learning society.

In accordance with the Education Reform Plan, the Lifelong Education Act replaced the Social Education Act in 1999 that was established in order to implement Article 31 of the Constitution, reading 'the State shall promote lifelong education'. Hereafter the Lifelong Education Act has mandated lifelong education with the implementation initiative specified in the Constitution. The Act was amended in 2007 to establish the National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE), a key driving force for implementing national lifelong learning policy and to reinforce the role of regions and local communities in providing lifelong learning. The Act defined lifelong education as follows:

Lifelong education refers to all types of organised learning and educational activities that are conducted outside formal schooling and are inclusive of, but not limited to, supplementation of academic skills, literacy education for adults, vocational training, liberal arts education and citizen participation programmes (Lifelong Education Act, Article 2).

Consequently, many policies were developed for expanding learning opportunities to meet people's diverse needs. Accordingly various organisations and facilities joined in lifelong education as programme providers. The government recognised them as the lifelong education providers. Those providers were operated not only by public entities but also by

private ones. Some private providers gained profits by running lifelong education programmes. Providers were classified as:

- After-school programmes
- School and university-affiliated lifelong education institutes
- School-type lifelong educational institutes
- Corporate universities
- Online learning institutes
- Company-affiliated lifelong education institutes
- Civil organisation-affiliated lifelong education institutes
- Press/media-affiliated lifelong education institutes
- Institutes for knowledge/human resources development

### **Long-term plans for a learning society**

When the 21<sup>st</sup> century began, lifelong learning became a top priority in Korea's national policy. The government affirmed this by making an all-out effort to build a learning society. A series of five-year plans was started in 2002 on the basis of the Lifelong Education Act that required the Minister of Education to form the national plan for promotion of lifelong education every five years. The five-year plans have continued to be formed and implemented by the Ministry of Education.

The 1<sup>st</sup> National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2002-2006) set forth the five goals as follows: 1) to ensure equal and expanded opportunities of lifelong learning for all, 2) to encourage lifelong learning programmes at the regional level so as to develop a local culture of learning, 3) to reinforce lifelong learning support policies for the educationally underprivileged, 4) to promote structured learning activities at work places and to activate vocational lifelong education, and 5) to consolidate infrastructure for the provision of high quality lifelong learning. Some notable accomplishments of the plan were: 1) establishment of a solid infrastructure for lifelong learning including Lifelong Learning Information Centers in every province and Lifelong Learning Centers in local municipalities, 2) systematic support to the learning cities, 3) expansion of programmes for the underprivileged, and 4) increase of the participation rate in lifelong learning (NILE 2008: 7).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2008-2012) comprised 18 policy items under three objectives: 1) to nurture creative knowledge workers capable of contributing to national competitiveness, 2) to promote the values of inclusiveness and tolerance throughout society and 3) to build a solid infrastructure for lifelong learning. A particular

emphasis was placed on the mobilisation of the lifelong education capacity of the local communities as a key measure for building a learning society (NILE 2008: 8).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2013-2017) is now underway. The major goals of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plan are: 1) the realisation of a college-based lifelong learning system, 2) the construction of an online and offline total support system for lifelong learning, 3) support for customised lifelong learning for social integration, and 4) reinforcement of the learning capacity of local communities (NILE 2013: 3).

## **Support and management**

The Lifelong Education Act also requires the Government to install the Council on Lifelong Education Promotion in the Ministry of Education to supervise and review major policies on lifelong education as follows:

- Mid- and long-term policy goals and basic orientation of lifelong education promotion
- Establishment of a lifelong education infrastructure
- Expansion of investment in lifelong education and the provision of funds
- Examination and evaluation of lifelong education promotion policies
- Other issues related to lifelong education promotion.

At the regional level, a Municipal/Provincial Lifelong Education Coordination Council is to be established for each metropolitan city and province to deliberate on and review issues of lifelong education. The Council consists of 10-20 members. The Act encourages local communities, namely city or county, also to operate a council for discussing relevant issues.

In addition to the councils at three levels of administration, the Lifelong Education Act mandates the national government, and regional and local governing bodies, to establish institutes for operation at each level as follows:

- National Level: the National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE)
- Regional Level: the Municipal/Province Institute for Lifelong Education Promotion (17)
- Local Level: the City/County/District Learning Center (more than 230).

Recently the national government has strengthened collaboration with the regional governments and also increased financial assistance.

## Major society providers

Although the role of the national and local government is highly significant in building a learning society, participation from every quarter of society is also indispensable. Lifelong learning policies have encouraged all kinds of organisations, including government organisations and NGOs, to take a part in the lifelong learning enterprise. Among others the roles of community, university and industry are noticeable.

While virtually every community has provided lifelong learning programmes, since 2001 a number of local municipalities have been recognised as successfully active in the project of learning so as to be designated as a 'learning city' by the Ministry of Education. The total number of learning cities is 120; that is more than half of all local municipalities in Korea. To the local municipalities designated as learning cities', the national government awards financial grants and professional consultations to help them make learning-orientated communities.

The learning cities play a pivotal role in community development and the nation's learning society policy. The cities provide a variety of programs to meet citizens' learning needs. The cities make efforts to strengthen networking among organisations such as universities, schools, cultural centers, libraries, museums, women' centers and so on. Networking among the participant organisations accelerates the wider provision of education programmes and learner participation.

In the meantime, the university is an institution that holds the most plentiful sources of learning in a society. Accordingly, the higher education institution should play an important role in the national learning society project. Taking a central part in community networks for learning is one of the roles of a university. Meanwhile, in accordance with the Adult Education Act, every higher education institution has operated a 'lifelong education center' for extension programs since the early 1980s. All universities and colleges, 390 in total, have offered a variety of programs to communities for non-credit, as well as for credits which could lead to a degree or diploma by accumulation.

Recently the government persuaded some of the higher education institutions to transform themselves to be more flexible and more open to the community, called *Lifelong Learning-Oriented University*. The Lifelong Learning-Oriented University is the title of a project initiated by the Ministry of Education in 2012 to innovate universities into institutions more appropriate for a lifelong learning age. In other words, it is designed to transform universities into 'adult learner-friendly' institutions. Those universities which participated in the project were provided with government financial

support. At present, 25 universities and colleges have taken part in the project.

On the other hand, industry and the workplace is another big provider of adult education and a rich source of learning. There are also various institutes of vocational education and training (VET) in a community. Learning in workplaces and in the VET institutes is indispensable to a sustainable learning society. The VET system outside formal schools has provided enormous learning opportunities for the vocational competence of workers in Korea.

The VET system of Korea has stepped up along with the enactment of the Employment Insurance Act (1993) and the Promotion Act for Vocational Training for Workers (1999). The Employment Act set the framework for the vocational training of workers with financial support by the insurance fund, which substantially expanded workers' participation in education. The Promotion Act aimed to emphasise worker-centered vocational training and to transfer from public-oriented to private-oriented training. In 2004, however, the Promotion Act was changed to the Vocational Competence Development Act, which emphasised the partnership between employers and labour unions for vocational training. One of the aims of the new Act was to amplify the training of disadvantaged groups like part-time workers and employees of small and medium-sized enterprises (Jin, 2010: 564). It was also noticeable that the Act recognised employer associations, labour unions and private organisations as training providers with equal weight.

## **Recognition of lifelong learning**

The most important educational scheme needed in the society of lifelong learning is a system which can assess, validate and recognise a variety of learning, which is admittedly done outside the formal education system. As a matter of course, the scheme for validating and recognising lifelong learning has been one of the essential ingredients of lifelong learning policy in Korea.

The first attempt was the Bachelor's Degree Examination for Self-Education (BDES) launched in 1990 as an alternative track that awarded the bachelor degree based on a series of examinations without attending higher education institutions. The BDES aimed to provide the opportunity of obtaining a higher education degree by self-education to adult learners who cannot afford university education due to various reasons such as economic constraints, time limitation, health, etc. It is a system of validation and recognition of learning by self-education.

The BDES consists of four stages of qualifying examinations: general examination, major basic examination, major advanced examination and comprehensive examination. Learners who already achieved a certain number of credits from university, or who have obtained certificates in a relevant area can be exempted from one or two examinations. NILE operates the BDES in 12 major fields of study including for example Accounting, Chinese Language and Computer Science; university faculty members manage the examinations for each. A total of 14,000 persons have been awarded the bachelor's degrees since 1990.

Another scheme for recognising lifelong learning is the Academic Credit Bank System (ACBS). When the Presidential Commission on Education Reform proclaimed the vision of the 'new education system' in 1995, it delineated the vision as 'a society of open and lifelong learning in which everyone is entitled to equal and easy access to education at any time and place', as mentioned earlier. As one of the measures to realise the vision, the Commission proposed the introduction of the ACBS as an alternative way of obtaining a higher education degree through recognition of lifelong learning without enrolling at university.

The ACBS is so inclusive and permissive that it acknowledges a wide range of learning occurred in non-formal education, workplaces, military training and so on. It also approves training programs operated by firms as viable credits by arrangement with the National Technical Qualification and the National Competency Standards. The minimum number of credits is 140 for awarding a four-year university degree, 120 credits for a three-year junior college degree, and 80 credits for a two-year junior college degree. About 50,000 learners were granted degrees for 109 major fields of study by this system 2013 alone. More than 70 percent of the degree awardees were 30 years of age or older (NILE, 2013).

Still another scheme of recognition is the Lifelong Learning Account System. The Lifelong Learning Account System (LLAS) was conceived as an overarching management system of the lifelong learning society for the accumulation, assessment, validation and recognition of all kinds of each individual's learning. The philosophy of the LLAS is that all kinds of learning deserve to be recognised, whether it had been acquired through formal education or on non-formal as well as informal situations. The LLAS was recommended by the Presidential Commission on Education Reform in 1995, but waited to be implemented until 2010.

The National Institute for Lifelong Education takes charge of the operation of the LLAS. Learners are encouraged to register their records of learning such as schooling, learning portfolios, technical certificates and licence and formal, non-formal and informal learning at the LLAS center which recognises and validates learning for educational qualifications or

credentials, for vocational qualifications or certificates, and for job competences (Han 2010: 57). The LLAS is now in a stage of demonstration and refinement. About 5,000 learners are registered at present.

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## Education for sustainable development and global citizenship education: Partnering for quality education

*Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCEd) are global education initiatives that will continue to be key drivers of achieving quality education within the Post-2015 Development Agenda. While there are concerns about how such global initiatives can be promoted within a context of limited resources, I illustrate how these concerns can be overcome. Explicit contextual and conceptual alignment between ESD and GCEd, and strong endorsement of partnerships in delivering both initiatives, are solid foundations to begin with. However, advancing these global education initiatives requires that we learn (or unlearn) what we mean and how we engage in participation, and how we nurture partnerships. This type of learning involves critically reflecting and transforming ourselves, our practice and our institutions, to challenge the narrow application of participation and the practice of establishing organisational turfs, at the expense of a shared approach to achieving quality education for active global citizenship and a sustainable future.*



As we applauded the end of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) during the closing session of the World Conference on ESD last 12 November in Nagoya, Japan, we welcomed the commitment of UNESCO to continue to advance the practice of ESD through the Global Action Programme (GAP).

The GAP renewed UNESCO's commitment to the original vision of the Decade of ESD, "a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation". (UNESCO 2005: 6). The GAP committed to contributing and aligning to the post-2015 development agenda and to "strengthen education and learning in all agenda, programmes and activities to promote sustainable development" (UNESCO 2014a: 14).

As the applause in Nagoya faded, I found myself in conversation with colleagues who mentioned that some participants expressed concern about how the two UN education programmes of ESD and Global Citizenship Education (GCEd)<sup>1</sup> would fare in a period of declining resources and competing priorities.

These were not new questions. I heard similar questions from education advocates when the DESD was launched in 2005, concerned that this new initiative would siphon much needed limited funds away from Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

To examine these concerns, I will argue that significant conceptual alignment exists between ESD and GCEd which is an excellent starting point for greater convergence rather than competition. However, conceptual alignment does not necessarily ensure institutional alignment. While there has always been strong support for partnerships, translating this support into action was a challenge. I will propose that to advance ESD and GCEd, we ourselves as education practitioners and advocates need to learn (or maybe unlearn) to be global citizens with the "understanding, skills and values [needed] to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (<http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/priorities.html>).

To explore these arguments, I draw from my own experiences having been involved in a number of projects and organisations during the past decade on ESD and GCEd.

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<sup>1</sup>/ While earlier publications would have used GCE as the acronym for Global Citizenship Education, more recent documents and discussions use GCEd to help to distinguish it from the Global Campaign for Education (GCE).

Since 2005, I have been an expert panel member of an Asia-Pacific ESD Programme conducted by UNESCO and the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) that developed the HOPE ESD Framework.

My leadership roles in civil society education networks, like the Asia-South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), have allowed me to participate in Rio +20 in June 2012, the Kominkan-CLC International Conference on ESD in Okayama, Japan, in October 2014 and in the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Nagoya in November 2014.

My academic role at RMIT University, Australia, in mentoring undergraduate students conducting their internships became an action research project and book on *Educating for Global Citizenship: A Youth-led Approach to Learning through Partnership* (Wierenga and Guevara, 2013) together with Plan Australia and the Australian Youth Research Centre at the University of Melbourne.

As these projects progressed, on seemingly parallel paths, it became clearer to me that the objectives of both ESD and GCED were very much aligned.

## **Alignment of context and purpose**

Both ESD and GCED share an understanding of the urgent, complex and interrelated world we live in, and a view that education has a key role in addressing these problems, if we are to achieve the vision of a more sustainable, just, peaceful and equitable future.

ESD arose from distinct priorities of the United Nations, education and sustainable development. The Decade was an outcome of the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The International Implementation Scheme (IIS) prepared by UNESCO for the DESD in 2005, states that...

“the environmental, social, and economic implications are enormous and touch many aspects of life of the world’s population. The overall goal of the DESD is to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning” (UNESCO 2005: 7).

Global Citizenship Education is one of the pillars of the UN Secretary-General’s Education First Initiative (GEFI), launched in 2012. To foster Global Citizenship is the third priority of GEFI, with the two other priorities being

to put every child in school and improve the quality of education. The GEFI describes the context and purpose of GCEd as:

“These interconnected global challenges call for far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings. It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life” (<http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/priorities.html>).

Both education initiatives are very much aligned in terms of a holistic contextual analysis and a commitment to quality education.

The DESD-IIS identified “the four major thrusts of education for sustainable development: improving access to quality basic education; re-orienting existing education programmes; developing public understanding and awareness and providing training” (UNESCO 2005: 6).

Similarly, GEFI aims to: “put quality, relevant and transformative education at the heart of the social, political and development agendas; and generate additional and sufficient funding for education through sustained global advocacy efforts” (<http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/about.html>).

## **Explicit recognition**

Alignment of context and purpose alone will not result in collaboration for quality education. There must be explicit recognition, which is not as apparent from a review of key ESD and GCEd documents.

The DESD-IIS acknowledged that quality education “views the learner as an individual, a family member, community member and a global citizen and educates to create individual competency in all four roles” (UNESCO 2005: 27).

The UNESCO Resolution that adopted the ESD GAP explicitly named GEFI and acknowledged that “sustainable development challenges have acquired even more urgency since the beginning of the Decade and new concerns have come to the fore, such as the need to promote global citizenship” (UNESCO 2014a: 33).

Since the launch of GEFI in 2012, UNESCO has hosted two events<sup>2</sup> and synthesised the outcomes in a publication entitled, “Global Citizenship Education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century”.

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<sup>2/</sup> Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education (Seoul, September 2013) and the first UNESCO Forum on Global Citizenship Education (Bangkok, December 2013).

ry” (UNESCO 2014b). Despite DESD and ESD being listed in the acronyms page, both acronyms are absent from the text of the document itself. However, education for sustainable development, in lower case, is mentioned five times, in the context of GCED being described as a “multifaceted approach employing concepts, methodologies and theories from related fields, including human rights education, peace education, education for sustainable development and education for international understanding” (UNESCO 2014b: 15).

Will conceptual alignment and explicit recognition be sufficient to develop a strong partnership between these initiatives?

## **Developing partnerships**

If the experience of ESD and EFA is anything to go by, cross-initiative partnerships are easier said than done. The DESD-IIS strongly endorsed the need to establish links across international education initiatives.

“It is essential to situate the Decade with respect to efforts in which the international community is already engaged. In particular the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) process, the Education for All (EFA) movement, and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) have close links with aspects of the DESD. All agree on the central importance of basic education and the need to extend and enhance its quality.” (UNESCO 2005: 8)

However, one can easily count the instances in the public record where both EFA and ESD are acknowledged.

There is one first draft UNESCO publication entitled “EFA-ESD Dialogue: Educating for a sustainable world” (Wade and Parker 2008) and one workshop<sup>3</sup> at the 2009 World Conference on ESD in Bonn, Germany. There was no EFA-ESD workshop at the World Conference on ESD in Nagoya in 2014.

In the Asia-Pacific region, collaboration with Wade and Parker resulted in the publication of “EFA and ESD Synergy: Taking Forward the Dialogues” (Wade and Parker 2012) and a joint workshop at the UKFIET 2013 Education and Development Conference.

Mochizuki (2012) attributed this lack of synergy to stakeholders assuming a “dichotomy” between ESD and EFA. She argues that to address

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3/ EFA-ESD Dialogue: Creating Synergies and Linkages for Educating for a Sustainable World (<http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/fileadmin/download/workshops/ESD2009WS18EFA.pdf>)

this “we should go beyond the traditional ESD-EFA dialogue and start articulating education as a critical lever for realising more resilient, equitable and sustainable societies”.

This EFA-ESD dichotomy can be observed not just within UNESCO but even within civil society organisations I have worked with. Limited resources and tendering processes have resulted in organisations competing with each other.

But partnerships are supported in the GAP, with Tang emphasising, ‘It is a joint effort of all stakeholders to make sure that the youth and the young generation can have the learning, so that they can have work and make a better future for tomorrow’ (UNESCO 2014a:41).

If we have conceptual alignment, some level of explicit recognition and the strong endorsement of partnership, why do we still have concerns about global education initiatives being competitive?

## Learning through participation and partnership

I would argue that establishing and nurturing partnerships requires a shift in how we conduct and manage global education initiatives, which is often very much in contrast with the way we characterise quality education.

One priority of the DESD-IIS is to reorient education programmes, which “should be done in a holistic and interdisciplinary context, engaging society at large, but carried out by individual nations in a locally relevant and culturally appropriate manner” (UNESCO 2005:29). Furthermore, it states that ESD “uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that **promote participatory learning** and higher-order thinking skills”. (UNESCO 2005: 31, emphasis added)

Similarly, GCED values “a learning process focusing not only on what students learn but also how they learn – about themselves and others, to learn to do things, and interact socially – **encouraging active and participatory roles**” (UNESCO 2014b: 18, emphasis added).

It is not enough for us to advocate for participatory education without embedding participatory approaches in the way we conduct and manage education initiatives.

## Learning through Participation

The HOPE ESD Framework was developed as a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework in response to the commitment that if ESD must contribute to “a transformation in the educational paradigm, then one must also transform the traditional ways in which ESD is being evaluat-

ed” (Nagata 2009a:vi). The first HOPE evaluation framework<sup>4</sup>, stood for HOListic, Participatory and Empowering. It has since been expanded as an acronym for Holistic, Ownership-based, Participatory/Partnership and Empowering and recognised as both a pedagogical and evaluation framework for ESD.

I participated in both the design and conduct of the first HOPE evaluation and described it as:

“... consistent with the very principles of ESD, the evaluation process was designed on the basis of ensuring that a holistic view of the projects was considered, that the participation in the evaluation of as many of the key players and their own perspectives, and that the process would empower those who participate; all of these criteria would be based on an understanding of the particular contexts of the projects” (Guevara 2009: 140).

Seven out of the eleven country projects were involved in the evaluation that included Palau, Bhutan, Thailand, Mongolia, Viet Nam, Malaysia and Indonesia. The participatory process was guided by the principles of Participatory Action Research (Wadsworth 1997) and Most Significant Change (Davies and Dart 2005). The evaluation involved site visits by a team composed of ACCU staff, expert panel members and representatives from the five ESD Centers of Excellence (COEs).

During the visits, the evaluation team conducted conversations with the participants (learners, parents, facilitators and project proponents) to identify their most significant change outcomes. The preliminary findings were then presented to the participants and other stakeholders (local government officials, members of the UNESCO National Commission, and representatives of the Ministry of Education) to assist them in identifying key lessons and ways forward. In addition, a paper-based survey was distributed that incorporated Holistic, Participatory and Empowerment criteria specifically tailored to the local context and a HOPE Timeline that allowed the participants to plot their feelings of hope at different stages before, during and after the project.

In total, 390 participated in the most significant change conversations and 761 participants (including the China project, which was not visited) completed the 2008 paper survey. The results of the evaluation were reported in *Tales of Hope II* (ACCU 2009b).

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4/ See Shibao Tomoko (2013) *Our Journeys of HOPE. Tales of Hope III: EFA-ESD Linkages and Synergies*. Tokyo: ACCU.

However, it was also the aim of the proponents of the HOPE evaluation to influence how ESD is evaluated. As Nagata (2009:118) underscored,

“... recent ESD evaluation has emphasized the logical framework. One therefore worries that most of the reality of the lives that people are creating is being lost at the evaluation stage because it cannot be logically divided into parts, and that one is losing the kind of “qualitative feeling” of the projects ... HOPE Evaluation was proposed as a way lending importance to the “qualitative feeling” of ESD projects”.

I argued that ESD should not only focus on quality education for the learners, but challenge organisations engaged with ESD to embed ESD principles in their work. The HOPE evaluation that allowed for ‘qualitative feelings’ to surface in conversation with the different project participants provided opportunities to identify instances of organisational learning and change.

Often, when we visited the project sites, the learners were the ones presented as the positive project outcomes. However, seldom would the project proponents reflect on how they worked on the projects themselves.

For example, when we arrived at the Bhutan project site, the women learners were ready to identify what they had learned. They shared stories of how this innovative literacy project allowed them to not only improve reading and writing, but allowed them to select what agricultural crops they should plant based on a situational analysis tool. The literacy instructor noted that “now they have confidence. They know how to select not only crops but animals, trees, etc. We were blind before. But now, through this handbook, we change” (Zaha 2009: 9).

However, when we presented these positive observations to the participants and the other project stakeholders, we were curious about what the project meant to them as project implementers. With some prompting, the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture to help with the development of the situational analysis tool gained greater significance when mirrored back to them. The project facilitator from the Ministry of Education eventually concluded, “they share agricultural knowledge with me and I share that of literacy—it is a both-way learning [bi-directional learning]” (Zaha 2009: 10). This, we emphasised, was as much an ESD outcome, often missed when we focus only on the learners.

I concluded that in evaluating participatory education, “unless the participants themselves come to the realisation of the significant factors that have contributed to the success of the project – we may end up with

what we wanted to avoid in the first place, telling them what they were good at – rather than discovering and learning with them along the way – also as ourselves part of this community of practice” (Guevara 2009: 147).

These experiences helped to illustrate that while institutions that fund and manage ESD projects, like the ESD Innovation Projects, will continue to measure impact from the perspective of the outcomes for the learners, we need to be reminded that we are all co-learners and co-participants in shaping a more sustainable future. And that our learning (or un-learning) also needs to be valued.

### Learning through partnerships

The importance of participation, not just within the learning experience, but within the conduct of ESD projects, brings to the fore the value of partnerships. My experience with the *Global Connections* program highlighted that like participation, partnerships are easier to describe than to achieve.

*Global Connections* was designed to engage secondary school students in Australia and youth groups in Indonesia in learning about global citizenship through exchanging communication pieces about issues that were relevant to them. The program, which ran from 2005 – 2011, was managed by Plan Australia, a child-centred development NGO, in coordination with a number of local schools in Melbourne. In Indonesia, the project was coordinated through Plan Indonesia and their own youth groups, which were either community-based or youth in detention centres. The program drew on models of ‘development education’ or similar terms like ‘global learning’ and ‘global education’ which referred to education aimed at building an understanding of international development issues in more developed country or donor country contexts (Bourn, 2007).

A participatory evaluation using the Most Significant Change (MSC) was conducted from 2006 in Australia and Indonesia, focusing on gathering stories from young people about what they learned and their own perceptions of themselves as global citizens. The UNESCO synthesis report on Global Citizenship Education identified the use of the MSC technique to evaluate *Global Connections* as an innovative approach to “understand the significance of the programme on participants, and the relationship between the different elements such as skills development, relationships, personal change and purposeful action toward social change” (UNESCO 2014b: 36).

However, similar to the ACCU Innovation Projects, the evaluation tended to focus on the learning outcomes of the youth, but not as much on the experience and outcomes for the institutions or the partnership element of the *Global Connections* programme. *Global Connections* can



be described as a partnership between non-formal education providers, like development NGOs, and a formal education provider, like schools.

Jeffrey King (2012) examined the potential of cross-sectoral partnerships to contribute to creating educational opportunities for learning about global citizenship that goes beyond what either schools or NGOs could achieve by working independently, particularly in a context of limited resources. From the perspective of the schools, the teachers were interested in the opportunity that the connection offered their students to learn authentically *about* the young people in Indonesia, which was envisaged as a demonstration of active 'global citizenship'. From the perspective of Plan Australia, aside from the educational purposes, *Global Connections* was fulfilling the organisation's commitment to youth participation.

In 2008 and 2009, building on the MSC outcomes and guided by participatory principles, King (2012) conducted a combination of interviews with key participants, document analysis and observation methods to create rich descriptions of the Australian-based partnerships, between the schools and Plan Australia. It is important to note that the program was conducted in schools by youth facilitators who were trained and guided by Plan Australia. This was one of the youth-led components, the other being that the students themselves decided on the issues they explored in the communication pieces they would exchange with the Indonesian youths.

Logistical delays in exchanging communication pieces with the Indonesian youth groups (who did not have access to the internet as they were in detention and required translation) within one school term (10-12 weeks) was a shared cause of frustration. However, despite these delays, the evaluation concluded that all the key participants recognised that a unique and productive learning environment had been created and retained a belief in the *promise* that the program seemed to offer as a way of engaging the students in social issues and ideas surrounding their sense of citizenship.

King (2012) argued that the partners developed slightly differing impressions about the effectiveness of the program, based on their own educational frameworks, despite the fact that the program was still recognised as transformative across these frameworks. For example, the teachers saw the transformative potential but felt that by the end of the program, it was still Plan who designed and delivered the program, and the school only provided the time, venue and the students that the youth facilitators could work with. Plan Australia, on the other hand, saw the strong potential of the youth-led component through the contribution of the youth facilitators and the confidence they gained as the program unfolded. The youth facilitators found the youth-led dimension, which they understood more as student-led, problematic, as they struggled to strike a

balance between giving the students freedom to control their learning and a structure to enable it.

These differences in perspective are merely a snapshot of the resulting evaluation of *Global Connections*<sup>5</sup>. It is being highlighted to illustrate the range of expectations, and potential tensions, between the formal and non-formal education contexts that need to be addressed if we are to encourage developing learning-based partnerships for global citizenship. Addressing these different expectations in establishing partnerships requires, according to King (2012:181) “active negotiation of organisational roles and processes alongside consideration of educational outcomes”. The UNESCO Global Citizenship report supports King’s findings and underscored the “importance of interventions that are sustained and systemic rather than ad hoc and episodic” (UNESCO 2014b: 37).

## Ways forward

In conclusion, I have attempted to illustrate that at the heart of the concern about limited resources for both ESD and GCEd, it is institutional baggage that we need to address. I have argued that there is a very strong contextual and conceptual alignment between ESD and GCEd. I have demonstrated that there is a very strong endorsement of the need for partnerships in delivering ESD and GCEd. However, advancing these global education initiatives requires that we ourselves, as educators, advocates, project managers and policy makers, need to learn (or unlearn) how we actually engage in participation and in partnership. The context of limited resources, institutional mandates and turfs, and the urgency for action, does not make it any easier. However, if we are committed to long-term sustainable change, we need to continue to critically reflect and transform ourselves, our practice and our institutions if we are to have any chance of achieving quality education for active global citizenship and a sustainable future.

The seeds of hope, the promise of participation and the commitment to partnership are all just waiting for us to harvest – together.

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5/ For a more comprehensive evaluation refer to Wierenga, A. and Guevara, J. R. (2013). *Educating for Global Citizenship: A Youth-led Approach to Learning through Partnership*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

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# National qualifications frameworks: Insights from South Africa<sup>1</sup>

*During the last thirty years, National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) have emerged to manage relations between education, training and work and, unsurprisingly, have been highly contested. There are currently around 142 national and regional NQFs around the world at different stages of development. In post-apartheid South Africa, the idea of the NQF was driven both by international processes and the need to address and redress wrongs and achieve equity for the Black majority. After eighteen years, the NQF is seen as an important relational device which enables communication, coordination and collaboration across the education and training system nationally, while also articulating globally.*

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<sup>1/</sup> This draws from a chapter by Shirley Walters and Samuel Isaacs (2014) "Governing Knowledge: Comparison, knowledge-based technologies and expertise in the regulation of education", in Tara Fenwick, Eric Mangez, Jenny Ozga (eds.) World Year Book 2014, Routledge, Oxford.

## Introduction

During the last thirty years, competency-based National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) have emerged as an attempt to manage the relations between education, training and work and, unsurprisingly, have been highly contested. The number of NQFs has grown rapidly and by 2013 there were around 142. Their initial emergence was informed by perceptions of fundamental changes in the global economy, which had implications for the traditional divide between education and training and for the formal recognition of workplace and life experience (Illeris 2003: 167). These views complemented the views of business and government, which saw qualification frameworks as a means to make education more relevant to the workplace and as a steering mechanism by which the state could achieve social objectives such as educational reform and equity.

South Africa provides an intriguing example of how a confluence of global influences were indigenised and adapted to meet national objectives. While in South Africa the idea of the NQF was 'borrowed' from international processes concerned with global knowledge governance, in South Africa the NQF has taken a local form. South Africa's NQF, which was conceived and established in the transition to a post-apartheid democracy, embodied many of the aspirations of the time, above all, transformation of the apartheid education and training system through an NQF that addressed access, redress, portability and progression which would enable people to become lifelong learners (Allais 2007: 225). Given the idealism of the times, hindsight understands the impracticalities of the model and of the qualifications and standard-setting processes which emerged as the policy was implemented.

This article provides a brief background to the development of NQFs internationally and gives insights from South Africa. I argue for a view of NQFs as works-in-progress and as contestable artefacts of modern society which have the potential to contribute to the way in which a society manages complex relations between education, training and work by finding 'common ground' between distinct forms of learning.

## NQFs in a nutshell

NQFs are global phenomena. They are located in economically-developed countries in the European Union, in fast-developing economies in Asia, in developing countries in Africa. As Chakroun (2010) describes, NQFs are classifiers that specify the relationship and the horizontal and vertical continuum between different forms of qualifications. The main distinguishing

features of NQFs compared to other qualification systems can be summarised as follows: a common definition of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes in most cases covering knowledge, skills and wider competences ranked in terms of levels and an inclusive set of occupational and/or knowledge fields.

In most cases, NQFs go beyond the role of classifiers and provide visions that aim to redefine the way qualifications relate to one another and how they are applied and valued in societies. In many cases, they are seen as drivers of reform, most often in vocational education and training (VET). As Chakroun explains, most government documents introducing NQFs refer to the need to: a) improve the labour market responsiveness of VET; b) establish pathways between VET and general and higher education; c) improve the quality and flexibility of VET and other parts of the education and training system; d) shift from input- to outcome-based systems. While the 'early starter' countries like Australia, Scotland and New Zealand emphasised VET, increasingly NQFs are aiming to bring all provision, i.e. basic, further and higher education, plus VET, into one system. South Africa was one of the first to do this.

Chakroun summarises NQFs' increasingly normative distinctive features. These are: a) qualifications are independent of the institutions; b) complex quality assurance systems are foreseen to validate qualifications, accredit institutions and ensure quality assurance in assessment leading to the award of qualifications; and c) they are seen to make it easier to validate prior learning and to put value on learning programmes that allow for credit accumulation and transfer to assist with the achievement of lifelong learning.

Increasing numbers of articles are being published which both elaborate the benefits of NQFs, and which critique them. Chakroun states that there are two broad policy arguments and rationales put forward in favour of an NQF, namely, internal systemic policy reform and external international recognition of qualifications in a globalised labour market. It is claimed that NQFs facilitate system-wide reforms and increase involvement of stakeholders in the development of qualifications with the result that VET, and other qualifications, are more responsive to labour market needs. NQFs also relate directly to the need for cross-border recognition of qualifications. Governments that are keen to attract foreign capital, to facilitate the mobility of their citizens and, more broadly, to ensure a stake in the global labour market, are increasingly concerned about the transparency and comparability of their national qualifications in relation to those that, are produced, awarded and used elsewhere. However, several authors have argued that, irrespective of their increasing appeal, NQFs are not necessarily good policy practice, especially in a developing country

context (Young 2005; Allais 2007; 2014). The key argument is that NQFs may achieve little if they are not fit for purpose and if they are not part of a wider strategy. NQFs and their value are, rightly, contested.

Castells (2009: 14) argues that “societies are not communities, sharing values and interests. They are contradictory social structures enacted in conflicts and negotiations among diverse and often opposing social actors. Conflicts never end: they simply pause through temporary agreements and unstable contracts...” If we accept this analysis, then we cannot assume that the debates and discussions within NQFs are politically neutral. The NQF comprises many different types of networks and communities which are part of society and are actively promoting particular interests and values within society. It would be true to say that the NQF, like society, is itself constituted of ‘contradictory social structures enacted in conflicts and negotiations among diverse and often opposing social actors’. The South African experience bears this out.

### **Illustrative insights from South Africa**

When the South African NQF (SANQF) was legislated in October 1995, it was the first piece of education and training legislation promulgated by the democratically-elected government. It was significant in that it was *enabling* as opposed to *prescriptive* legislation. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established as a statutory body in terms of the SAQA Act of 1995. The SANQF was to be one of the ‘first generation’ qualifications frameworks. The two international bodies that South Africans could learn from at that time were the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Other important systems’ learning came from Canada, Germany, Ireland and England. The concepts underpinning the NQF had to be developed and communicated. Policy and regulations had to be developed in democratic and legitimate ways. Given the transformation imperative of the South African context, this proved no easy task. Organisation and systems building at SAQA were difficult. The historical trajectories that pushed South Africa towards transformation also pulled it back.

There were many NQF sceptics. There were also conflicting knowledge perspectives – for example, many arguing from globalised Western perspectives, others from anti-globalisation standpoints, or in favor of indigenous knowledge systems. Given the racialised nature of apartheid education, there was a strong push by trade unionists and social movement activists for the massification of qualifications and the importance of recognition of prior learning. South Africa is a peripheral economy and had



been isolated from the world, so there were contradictory pressures to articulate with globalised discursive practices on the one hand, and to build an equitable education and training system to confront rampant poverty and inequality on the other.

The first SAQA Board, which was a stakeholder, representative body, was appointed by the National Minister of Education in May 1996. The first staff member was appointed in March 1997, the Chief Executive Samuel Isaacs, who led the organisation for 15 years. At the initial stage of developing and implementing the SANQF in 1997, Samuel describes how they had to find an acceptable and accountable way to proceed with building both SAQA and the SANQF. To do this, he as chief executive borrowed from the title of Paulo Freire and Myles Horton's (1990) book, and asserted that, 'We will make the NQF Road by walking reflectively, accountably and boldly'. This metaphor recognised that NQFs are social constructions; they require intellectual scrutiny, democratic participation, accountability, and bold leadership. They also require funding. (Isaacs 2001)

The first SAQA Board stated that the three necessary conditions for success were democratic participation, intellectual scrutiny and resourcing, especially the aligning of financial, organisational and extra-institutional resources. To date, SAQA has placed a high premium on its role as 'honest broker' in working with SANQF stakeholders and has striven to take very seriously intellectual scrutiny in its various forms such as academic scrutiny, international comparators and 'world-class best practice'. This is evidenced in its prioritisation of impact studies from an early stage (Bolton and Kevvy 2012). This approach has stood SAQA in good stead as it faced the many challenges in developing and implementing the SANQF. Meeting the test of rigorous engagement with intellectual scrutiny very often enabled SAQA to establish legitimacy in fulfilling its 'honest broker' role.

From an operational point of view, the following three interrelated subsystems were required: Standards Setting System; Quality Assurance System; Electronic Management Information System. Each of these systems is complex and demands contextually relevant policy choices. Key, complex themes that emanated from these three subsystems were the:

- Democratic participation of stakeholders
- Integration of education and training
- Separation of standards setting and quality assurance
- Exit level outcomes and assessment criteria
- Academic freedom and autonomy
- Power shifts and contestations among various stakeholders and role-players

- Sustainable organisational capacity and resources to lead and manage the processes.

From the SAQA Chief Executive's vantage point, it was the power shifts, contestations and the strategies to recognise and manage these that proved the most demanding. As evidence of the contestations, the SANQF was barely operational at the end of 1998 and already the call for its review was being mooted in some sectors, for different reasons. SAQA's ability to lead and manage processes in this climate was severely constrained by funding and other resourcing difficulties (Walters and Isaacs: 2014). A review did take place in 2001 and this finally resulted in new legislation, the NQF Act (2008). After the fourth national, democratic elections in 2009, the Department of Education was split into the Department of Higher Education and Training, which includes the Skills Development section of the Department of Labour, and the Department of Basic Education, which deals with schooling. This new environment brought significant opportunities to better manage and, in some instances, to placate some key tensions affecting the SANQF. The new architecture of the SANQF and its structures under the NQF Act has SAQA as the oversight body, with three Quality Councils i.e. Council for Higher Education (CHE), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Council for General and Further Education and Training (called Umalusi), which is concerned, primarily, with schools. This structural move signalled recognition of the deep differences, both organisational and epistemological, between parts of the education and training system.

One of the successes of SAQA has been the establishment and development of a SANQF discourse in South Africa, for example 'NQF levels', 'credits', 'notional learning hours', 'articulation', 'equivalence'. There are indications that the SANQF is alive, debated, contested and used. It is increasingly being understood, particularly by those most centrally involved in the governance of SAQA and the three Quality Councils, as a framework for communication, coordination and collaboration across education, training, development and work (SAQA Annual Report 2011). It continues to be seen as a key strategy for advancing lifelong learning which requires navigational tools, like guidance advice services, to help individual learners and institutions find their way. SAQA's role as the apex SANQF body in the further development and implementation of the SANQF is pivotal to enabling both access by ordinary citizens to information to study and career opportunities, and to keeping the aspirational goals of the NQF alive through advocacy, research and development. An example of this is the energy it has invested in recognition of prior learning (RPL).

## Conclusion

For an NQF to work optimally, what is required is recognition of the complexity of the knowledge questions involved. Once this is understood, there is a need for deep commitment of all 'role players' and 'stakeholders' to engage in an 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas 1973: 258) on NQF matters. An 'ideal speech situation' requires that all parties communicate openly with one another to educate and inform about their different positions, which can then inform rational debate and discussion, encouraging deep democratic engagement. This aspiration is held while simultaneously recognising that an NQF is constituted of 'contradictory social structures enacted in conflicts and negotiations among diverse and often opposing social actors' (Castells 2009). Although the existence of different knowledge fields and communities of practice does make agreement and articulation difficult to achieve, it does perhaps make it all the more worthwhile if the intent is to deepen democratic practices.

Active participation is essential for building the relationships that facilitate collaborative networks that make shared understandings, shared meanings and shared strategies within education and training possible, both nationally and trans-nationally. In South Africa this has led directly to current understanding of the SANQF as a framework for communication, coordination and collaboration across education, training, development and work. To this end SAQA, as custodian of the SANQF, has had to work hard and carefully at relationship building in partnership with a wide range of others. The South African experience illustrates that qualifications frameworks can play an important role in the transformation of an education and training system, provided that they are seen as important vehicles for knowledge flows and boundary negotiations through communication, coordination and cooperation across national and regional systems, for the public good.

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# International comparative research in adult and continuing education: Between governance and disciplinary configuration<sup>1</sup>

*During the last decade, the configuration of international comparative research in adult and continuing education has been interwoven with influences of stakeholders of (inter-)national educational policies and their agendas. This paper works with a broad understanding of international comparative research in adult and continuing education. This understanding includes the interpretation of similarities and differences as well as studies which focus on the cultural interrelationship networks of phenomena in adult and continuing education. Based on this approach, four approaches can be differentiated: (1) subject-oriented country studies, (2) juxtapositions and comparative studies, (3) studies based on cultural theories, and (4) methodological studies. The analysis shows that subjects and methods of research in most current studies are related to the agenda of stakeholders of international education policies and their agendas. Sometimes, studies are even evoked by these agendas. A main task of international comparative research in adult and continuing education will be to achieve a disciplinary configuration by means of examining these contexts and governance intentions and by creating connections to insights provided by the discipline.*

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## Introduction

Research into internationally-comparative phenomena in adult and continuing education is currently on the education policy agenda. Since the millennium, international as well as supranational organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, the European Union, but also the World Bank, have been discovering adult and continuing education as a social policy instrument (cf. Schemmann 2007, Ioannidou 2010). The transparency and harmonisation developments in the European education area not only raise questions about similarities and differences but also about issues of management of education systems in transnational space (cf. discussion of educational governance Altrichter/Brüsemeister/Wissinger 2007).

In recent years there have been tremendous international developments at German universities (e.g. by increasing mobility rates in studies, introducing international courses, and introducing Bachelor and Master degree programmes), and they don't stop in the face of the academic discipline of adult and continuing education. Increasingly, there are studies in the discipline that are based on international comparative questions, but so far they are still only sporadic.

When looking at the Asian region, where Heribert Hinzen (Hinzen 2012; Hinzen 2014) has been shaping adult education through DVV International, we find a high degree of diversity. While international organisations, such as UNESCO or the World Bank, seem to have a strong influence, there also seem to be voices that are critical towards these organisations' mainly economically-orientated education policy (see Duke 2014). Furthermore, there seems to be a high degree of terminological diversity: While in China the question of 'Learning Cities' (Carlsen/Yang 2014) is at the centre, the topic of 'Literacy' is central in the Philippines and in India (Raya/Soriano/Angian 2012), and you frequently find the term 'Development Education' in India.

This article concentrates on the current state of international comparative research in adult and continuing education that has references to the German context. It will mainly draw on articles published in the last ten years in the discipline of adult and continuing education. The article deals with the structure of the discipline of international comparative research in adult and continuing education in the context of educational policy control intentions. There will be a focus therefore on both thematic and cognitive-related perspectives. A distinction will be made between policy-driven educational surveys and research questions that are embedded in the disciplinary discourse of adult and continuing education (cf. Tippelt 2014). For this purpose, the article provides a terminology and concept for interna-

tional comparative research in adult and continuing education, followed by a differentiation and analysis of their research topics and methods. Finally, there is an outlook on the prospects of international comparative research in adult and continuing education.

### **Definition and conceptual classification of international comparative research in adult and continuing education**

The combined term ‘international comparative adult and continuing education’ refers to the conditional relationship between international and comparative issues. While the international perspective casts an eye on the situation in other countries, international organisations and their interdependencies, the comparison looks over individual cases, works out and examines similarities and differences and looks for their reasons. In principle, international and comparative issues can also be dealt with separately. Examples of this are the research of international further training policy (Zeuner/Schreiber-Barsch 2007) or the study of comparative educational profession research of Nittel/Schütz/Tippelt (2014). The term ‘international comparable research’ is only used in adult and continuing education if studies take both an international and a comparative perspective. Theoretically, international comparative research in adult and continuing education is faced with the challenge of taking into account the approaches derived from international education regimes (e.g. sociological neo-institutionalism and World Polity, see Türk 2004, Parreira do Amaral, 2013), and cultural theoretical approaches, each with their own meanings and interdependencies (cf. Amos, et al. 2013b).

The term ‘internationalism’ is understood in a broad sense in this paper. This also includes intercultural and transcultural issues. Therefore this article refers to the analysis of complex interdependencies in the sense of socio-cultural ‘inter-relational structure’ (Schriewer 1994) as part of international comparative research in adult and continuing education. Furthermore, next to internationality in the strict sense (i.e. between states) it also implies comparative questions with a focus on supra- and transnational contexts (cf. also Amos, et al. 2013b): Supranationalism in this instance refers to the ‘transfer of powers from national responsibility to a higher level, for example on the level of the European Union. Transnationalism refers to the collaboration of actors from different states under state structures, e.g. cooperation between adult education institutions from different countries.’ (Schmidt-Lauff/Egetenmeyer forthcoming)

The challenge for international-comparative research in adult and continuing education begins with the definition of the research subject.

An adaptation of prominent further training structuring approaches from school education (such as 'the cube' from Bray/Thomas 1995) has not yet been made for international comparative research in adult and continuing education. What has to be done here is to identify research subjects that are comparable. Adult educational actors, organisations offering adult and continuing education, forms of institutionalisation, paths to professionalisation, 'training systems', legal frameworks, and educational policy contexts by international standards differ significantly. No international classifications for comparison can be used in adult and continuing education in the same way that these are present for school and higher education (e.g. ISCED, EQF, three cycles of the Bologna Process). Assessments of the status and the development of international comparative adult education require this type of contextualisation.

### **The state of international comparative research in adult and continuing education**

A look at the studies of international comparative research in adult and continuing education that have emerged in the last decade with reference to German-speaking countries reveals the following main points: (1) subject-related country studies, (2) juxtapositions and comparison studies, (3) cultural theory studies, as well as (4) methodological studies.

#### **Subject-related country studies**

The roots of comparative research in adult and continuing education lie in country studies. Associated with the development of adult and continuing education and the establishment of the World Association for Adult Education (1919), and under the slogan *educational borrowing*, international examples and models from practice were sought (e.g. Danish home folk high school, the English university extension movement; Knoll 1996). Later, up until the beginning of the 21st century, there were studies explaining the situation of adult and continuing education in a given country from a macro perspective. A distinction must be made between descriptive country portraits (e.g. of the German Institute of Adult Education (DIE), DVV International, and the CONFINTEA Report of the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL)) and studies examining selected international manifestations of adult and continuing education based on specific subjects.

The current subject-related country studies show diverse interconnections between various configurations of the discipline and educational



policy control interests. The strategy of the UIL can be interpreted as prototypical: On the basis of country studies and the internationally-negotiated objectives of CONFINTEA VI, a monitoring method was implemented that closely observed the development of these objectives, accompanied them through publications about the respective focal points, and thus intended to control developments in adult and continuing education. The content of subject-related studies that examine selected international manifestations lies foremost in the creation of a connection to the German discourse in adult and continuing education. This points out that international connectivity cannot be achieved purely through translation. Studies such as *Citizenship Education* show that there needs to be a precise identification of connections between German-speaking and international discourses (e.g. Anglo-Saxon, European) in order for it to be understandable to the respective readers.

These phenomena can be understood only with a knowledge of the particular context and their interdependencies. These have to be identified in order to make them connectable to the German discourse. At the same time, the subjects of the research all show similarities to the priorities of the actors in international education policy.

#### Juxtapositions and comparative studies

In the strict sense, international comparative research in adult and continuing education consists of a feature-oriented comparison of individual cases (juxtaposition), the elaboration of similarities and differences of this comparison, and the interpretation thereof (comparison).

This group includes, first of all, studies that compare country or national culture-related individual cases with each other (e.g. further training vouchers (Käpplinger/Klein/Kulmus 2013), professionalisation (Egetenmeyer/Nuissl (2010)). Schemmann (2007), on the other hand, compares the international further education policy of the European Union, the World Bank, UNESCO, and the OECD in the context of the World Policy approach. His cases for comparison are not individual countries but cases that take place in an international (or supranational) space.

These studies are distinct from the large-scale, mainly control-intended and educationally motivated benchmarking and participation studies of international organisations. The central surveys in this field are the Adult Education Survey, AES (cf. Bilger, et al. 2013), the Continuing Vocational and Educational Survey, CVTS 3 (cf. Destatis 2011), as well as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, PIAAC (cf. Rammstedt et al. 2013). A central feature of these studies is that,

based on survey designs negotiated by international consortia, they present an evaluation which puts the results in a mainly quantitative ranking order and thus implies benchmarking. From an international comparative perspective, they are to be understood as data that can be used to carry out secondary analytical interpretations, and hence comparisons.

From a subject-oriented perspective, it becomes clear that international education policy evokes new subjects for research in international comparative research in adult and continuing education. It creates a common set of concepts which have drawn criticism from the European scientific community (e.g. Lima/Guimarães 2011). But whether that criticism is justified or not, these concepts do facilitate an initial understanding in the international arena. Because of the European Union's role model function in many regions of the world, this goes far beyond the European Community. Furthermore, the ongoing transparency and harmonisation efforts in the European education area generate research topics. All of the examples outlined are included in the educational policy priorities of UNESCO, the OECD and/or the EU. In addition, international data sets such as AES or PIAAC, which were initiated by educational policy and are now available, create potential for secondary analysis research. From a disciplinary perspective, complex sets of questions need to be developed which will examine the development and testing of hypotheses as well as the interpretation of differences and similarities in order to develop theory-guided explanations.

### Studies in culture theory

Studies in culture theory – particularly in the sense of inter-cultural and cross-cultural phenomena – have only emerged in recent years in German adult and continuing education. In a very broad understanding, these can be counted as international comparative research in adult and continuing education. While the international element is obvious, the implicit comparative element in the research topic must be searched for: cultural theory – in particular transcultural studies – explores cross-cultural learning spaces in which the everyday-life comparisons experienced by adults are examined as a learning experience and learning potential. This involves 'questions about the impact of cultural diversity in a society on child-raising and education (...), the encounter of different world views, different beliefs, differing cultures.' (Schmidt-Lauff/Egetenmeyer, forthcoming).

This group includes the study by Öztürk (2012), who used SOEP data to examine the influence (or non-influence) of an immigration background of adults on their possible participation in further training. Trans-cultural

studies in adult and continuing education rely mainly on Welsch (2009) and Reckwitz (2006). Of importance for adult and continuing education are studies that examine learning spaces that arise in such cross-cultural contexts (e.g. Robak 2012 on German expatriates in China, Gieseke/Robak/Wu 2009 on learning cultures in Taiwan, Egetenmeyer 2013 on German adult education students spending one semester abroad).

From a subject-oriented perspective, the benefit of these studies is the investigation of 'everyday-life comparisons', which adults, as learners, encounter in their environment. These 'everyday-life comparisons' have an influence on the learning behaviour of adults, while simultaneously providing learning potential. They can, through precise observation, help adult learners perceive and understand 'their own specific ways of thinking and traditions' (e.g. Olesen 2000) in their structures. Regarding their objects of inquiry, these studies initially seem to have mainly evolved from inside the discipline. Here, the influence of international political actors is evident in the type of reasoning when calling for more European and international mobility and the realities of life and learning demands of adults arising from that mobility.

### Methodological studies

Despite its long tradition, international comparative research in adult and continuing education is still very much in its infancy in terms of its methodological development. As stated above, the methodology of international comparative education research still needs to be adapted to adult and continuing education. Comparative research is usually done in individual studies rather than as part of a long-term research concentration (apart from the priorities of adult education-related research and development institutes). This is not least due to the high cost of resources, which is especially evident in time-consuming interpretations. The International Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE) has published two anthologies that present principles, challenges and typical errors, but also possible ways of drawing on comparative education research (Reischmann/Bron/Jelenc 1999; Reischmann/Bron 2008).

The contribution of Kaufmann/Reichert/Schömann (2014) and the few studies that have been funded in adult and continuing education as part of the 7th Research Framework Programme (Kilpi-Jakonen *inter alia* 2012; Saar/Ure/Desjardins 2013), attempt to develop, with theoretical models, an interpretation aid for the explanation of similarities and differences on the macro level. These attempts at theoretical explanations are mainly found in studies that examine a number of different European countries. If it is

possible to find relevant explanations here, then this can be expected to be a powerful interpretation tool for large-scale data sets. From a governance perspective (cf. e.g. Altrichter/Brüsemeister/Wissinger 2007; Amos, et al. 2011; Amos, et al., 2013a, 2013b), interdependencies, actors and levels have to be analysed. On a meta level, it can be considered worthwhile to critically analyse the specific control intentions that lie behind each interpretation aid.

## **Prospects for international comparative research in adult and continuing education**

In recent years, international comparative research in adult and continuing education has been massively influenced by international education policy, with the European Union exerting the strongest influence. Next to the studies initiated by international organisations, there are numerous studies that explore developments in international education policy and that originate from the discipline itself. In the context of international education policy, there emerge issues, concepts and approaches to adult and continuing education and (comparable) objects of research. The challenge for international comparative research in adult and continuing education is to configure itself in a disciplinary manner – that is, to use the resulting research options to critically accompany developments but also to identify comparable, substantial research objects for adult and continuing education (e.g. through a secondary analysis of existing data). A structure for the discipline is forming in the (educational) control arena of (inter)national actors. International comparative adult and continuing education must not only analyse that control arena, but also position itself in it, taking account of existing interdependencies.

Furthermore, a connection between German and international discourses is necessary. In order to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in adult and continuing education, parallel discourses in international and German-speaking areas need to be reduced. From the German perspective, the question is how existing approaches can be further developed and refined. Another striking aspect is that references to the Asian region are only very sporadic, and that there seem to be far fewer references to UNESCO's education policy than in Asian contexts.

Even though a common terminology has emerged, international comparative research in adult and continuing education largely lacks theoretical models of interpretation. For the existing large-scale data sets, reviewing and developing interpretive approaches at the macro level will be a key task. Here, it is possible to find interpretations and reasons for

the differences and similarities. Another challenge will be to find interpretation models which go beyond the narrow European and/or Western region. At the same time, there is a need for interpretation and reasoning aids on the meso and macro levels as well. Especially in smaller-scale studies, international networks (e.g. European Society for the Research of the Education of Adults, ASEM Research Hub for Lifelong Learning) provide important resources for interpretation at these levels. It is a challenge to develop theories and models that are substantial in the international and comparative sense, offer explanations at different levels, and can identify the interrelationships between these explanations.

Current studies have a territorial focus on Europe. At the moment, Asia and the USA are only represented sporadically. At the same time, India and China are the largest export markets for German further training (BiBB 2013). In the context of the proposed transatlantic free trade agreement with the United States, one can assume that an export market will emerge there as well. And one can also assume that science lags behind practice (Knoll 1996). New territorial perspectives will also emerge in research.

International comparative research in adult and continuing education is characterised by limited and difficult data sets. Causal relationships are not supported by documentary evidence of the current data. However, it is the duty of international comparative research in adult and continuing education to develop arguments and interpretations for differences and similarities. Rather than retreating behind the non-verifiability of data, the formulation of hypotheses is an alternative. The task of international comparative research in adult and continuing education is then to find evidence to support, refute or clarify these hypotheses. In this way, new studies can address open questions, and different surveys can make a joint contribution to the study of common hypotheses.

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## “Senior knowledge” international: A challenge for education theory and policy

*“Senior knowledge” is only a marginal theme in the discussions of Lifelong Learning, despite increasing scholarly attention to seniors and the aging of our societies. “Senior knowledge” is understood here as the knowledge belonging to seniors themselves, not as knowledge and ideas about older persons or communication of knowledge and educational offerings to them. This shift in the angle of vision presents new challenges to the concept of education. Attention to older people’s knowledge and the cultural integration of that knowledge will become indispensable criteria for a humane shaping of life, and that will be true throughout the world. The thesis will be discussed in the context of politics and education for citizenship.*

## The question of senior knowledge

The question of senior knowledge presents itself in distinct ways in different cultures and societies: in traditional cultures differently than in modern ones, in transitional societies differently than in the new “long-lived societies”. It is associated with questions of power and powerlessness, participation and exclusion, retention and renewal. The question is politically relevant both in democracies in which older persons are present as voting citizens, and in authoritarian or autocratic systems of rule, to the extent that even in such societies a certain degree of assent from the populace is indispensable.<sup>1</sup>

Since “senior knowledge” is not a widely-known technical term, I will give a brief description of the underlying idea behind the concept.<sup>2</sup> In what follows, “senior knowledge” will refer to the knowledge possessed by people of mature years, approximately from age 70 onward, but without fixing it at a particular year of a person’s life. It is a knowledge that, while associated with the life experiences of aging and being old, is not primarily about the process of aging itself, but rather about the whole of life and its meaning, in culture and society, current events and politics. This type of knowledge, primarily subjective and based on experience, is about the shaping of one’s person and way of life, dealing with oneself and others, acquired in the course of life through observation of human situations, active and passive involvement in the course of history, and the task of sustaining life, even in trying conditions. The broader concept of senior knowledge differs from the included idea of the wisdom of age, with its ethical and religio-ethical connotations, in that it is less value-determined and can—potentially—apply to all spheres of the practice of life.

Locating this kind of knowledge, which addresses the whole and not some specialized field, presents some difficulties for scholarship. No one discipline can of itself encompass the whole. Thus senior knowledge is subject to scholarly examination, if at all, only through a multidisciplinary approach.<sup>3</sup> Since it is not a knowledge gained and certified in a school situation, it can be contrasted with the knowledge of experts as a lay knowledge of its own kind and with its own dignity, but also with its own limitations and potential errors. From the point of view of the sociology of knowledge, it can also be called experiential knowledge, everyday knowl-

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<sup>1/</sup> For more on the development of civic involvement in various types of political regimes, see Martha Friedenthal-Haase (2008), esp. p. 12.

<sup>2/</sup> Here I am drawing on an approach developed in a thematic issue of *Bildung und Erziehung*. Cf. *Alterswissen und Pädagogik* (2012).

<sup>3/</sup> An attempt at bringing together several relevant fields of scholarship has been undertaken by a team at the University of Jena. Cf. Martha Friedenthal-Haase, et al. (2001).

edge, or knowledge of the lifeworld, but it differs from these in the specific emphasis placed on the subject's experience of aging and being old. In general, one may observe a tendency in scholarship-based civilizations to impute lesser importance to experiential knowledge. But it does not follow that knowledge not generated and tested by scholarship disappears entirely or becomes superfluous. At least at present and in the foreseeable future, we may assume a consensus in the human sciences that knowledge gained directly in life is part of human existence and must be regarded as a cultural-anthropological constant. The question of senior knowledge, that is, of the quality, legitimacy, effectiveness, usefulness and possible necessity of a specific senior knowledge, is no less crucial, even though it is viewed differently throughout the world. In Western "long-lived societies", the question is raised by the increasing percentage of older people and a declining percentage of children and youth; in contrast, in rapidly developing societies it can be motivated precisely by overwhelming numbers in the younger part of the population, facing a much smaller portion of older people. Even though fundamental changes in the proportions of the different age groups in individual societies can activate interest in senior knowledge, still the question possesses fundamental cultural and anthropological significance, independently of present demographic developments.

## Senior citizens

In every member state of the United Nations, citizenship is a defined status. The role of citizen knows no upper age limit. For adult persons the rights and duties attached to citizenship endure, as a rule, for a lifetime. They may only be restricted or withdrawn for particular and clearly defined reasons, which do not include growing old or being old. The role of citizen endures, even when a person is too old for an active working life or has fulfilled her or his family duties toward the next generation. Of course, the rights and duties of citizenship differ according to the political system.

In democratic states, the right to vote (both actively and passively) is central, and a citizen may be active until advanced age, as a voter or an elected official. (Among the examples of aged officials in our own day are President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, who held office until he was 79, or Israel's president Shimon Peres, who was in office until he was 91.)<sup>4</sup> Obviously, civic actions are not limited to political elections and referenda;

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4/ On this, see a study by this author based on the evaluation of autobiographies of outstanding political officials from various countries: Martha Friedenthal-Haase (2013).

they include a broad spectrum of political culture, for example, participation in meetings, formation of groups, clubs, societies and parties, taking advantage of the right to demonstrate, actions in support of political or philanthropic organizations serving the common good, and a variety of practical, civically-motivated actions in venues ranging from the neighborhood to the public sphere of the nation. Political action also includes participation in political communication through reading, the use of media, discussions and debates, whether in small circles or in larger ones.

In dictatorships or authoritarian states that cannot be regarded fully or at all as democracies, civic action differs from that in democracies that guarantee a free space for politics. But that does not necessarily mean that, in such states, every politically-relevant means of expression is closed to citizens. It can happen in repressive systems that public opinion creates for itself its own forums not officially sanctioned for the purpose, and that, for example, the bazaar becomes a resonant space for opinions and voices, indications of agreement with or dissatisfaction with government action that cannot be ignored without consequence. Here and there, larger forms by which citizens can indirectly signal their affinity with or distance from the political regime have come to public attention, including those beneath the surface of public support or resistance.

In summary, it can be said that in a variety of types of political systems, whether open or repressive, the senior knowledge of citizens can be effective, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, sometimes through deliberate involvement, sometimes through conscious withdrawal.

But what is this senior citizens' knowledge? What is it that older people may (possibly) contribute to the enrichment of political discourse, to shaping opinions and judgment? An observation of the political process over decades, with the coming and going of regimes, power struggles, the administration of economic groups and the experience of external interventions can leave an individual citizen with impressions that can serve as relevant points of reference for comparisons that serve personal judgments and choices. If a citizen has been subjected to propaganda for decades, it is possible that his or her thinking has either been radically shaped by it, or the opposite, that the result has been an education in an acute, multi-angled "reading" and deciphering of propaganda messages. This experienced citizen will often have observed the use or misuse of youthful idealism for political purposes—perhaps resulting in a healthy disillusionment. It may be supposed that she or he has been witness to important events, upheavals and conflicts and retains a memory of them that can contradict what appears in official histories and nevertheless, or precisely for that reason, is worth knowing. Perhaps the person took an active part in hailing false leaders, made a wrong election choice, fell victim to the

undertow of political movements, and has had a chance to reflect on those mistakes. Recognizing mistakes, one's own or those of others, pragmatic or principle-driven, can be a mature fruit of political empiricism in the course of a life. The citizen who has experienced a great deal may also have had the opportunity to hear of better possibilities, or even to experience them. A reference to historical memory can be an important standard for judgment in the face of impending changes, can serve as a support for reforms or put a brake on the development of the new. Distinguishing appearance and reality, as difficult as it is, may be made easier by recourse to intellectual and spiritual resources the individual might have accumulated over the decades. — Having said all that, we should emphasise that the senior knowledge described here is only a possibility, not a certainty, that it cannot be calculated with assurance, and that its outcomes are not at our disposal.

### **International aspects**

The systematic reflections presented thus far appear to indicate that the approach chosen here must be regarded as international or global. It does not apply only to a single nation, to Europe or to the West, or to the scientifically- and economically-developed regions, but is wide open, potentially including all peoples and lands of the world. A particular reference to international aspects may possibly be superfluous if the treatment of the theme, proceeding immediately to the whole, already includes both national and international aspects of senior knowledge. But it is my opinion that the whole cannot be understood without proceeding through the parts inherent in the problem, which, however, in the space allotted here, can be attempted only partially and by way of allusion.

In light of the worldwide threat of war, terrorism and violence against different ethnicities, religious groups and minorities, how a life at least approaching a standard of human rights can be promoted in the community of nations and states is a burning question. In the framework of our theme, it seems appropriate to test whether the knowledge represented by old people can be globally relevant for a shift in cultures moving toward a new worldwide Enlightenment oriented to human rights. Our starting point will be techno-economic and socio-cultural change, with the resulting crucial consequences for the individual, families and communities. The demands imposed by crisis-like change are differently distributed across the world map, even though no country is exempted from the dynamic of socio-cultural change. We will speak here of countries whose life situations have changed drastically in the course of the twentieth century, and

not necessarily for the better. Radical change and the threatened loss of meaning can evoke resistance and open the way to obviously backward-oriented countermovements. In general it is assumed that old people are more strongly bound to the past than the young, and thus are the “natural” opponents of change. Independently of whether that is in fact true (something that can certainly be doubted when it is stated so generally and unconditionally), there is much to be said for addressing not only the young but also and especially the old, to enlighten them and really to draw them into an ongoing public discourse, to win them as partners for modernization. Only pursuit of the goal of integrating the generations in the wake of critical changes will be able to show the path to (permanent) reform in a convincing manner. And it will only succeed if in the process the old are also listened to and respect is accorded to what they have to say (so that one does not simply try to “educate” them). Attention does not necessarily mean acceptance. But there have been instances in which modernizers would have been more effective if they had understood how they themselves might learn something from older people and combine elements of the old and the new (as is demanded, to take only a few examples, by the ecological side-effects of change, the protection of nature in the face of tourist invasions, or retention and preservation of particular cultural technologies). The fundamental global principle of sustainability requires consideration of the perspectives of people in different stages of life. Effective participation by older people is also desirable in intercultural and international encounters. Old people can contribute as witnesses to their times and enrich cross-border communication with their experiences and viewpoints, including accounts of flight and migration. In the best case, mutual understanding can be increased in all parties participating in the cultural contact and exchange, and the sense of threat from what is strange or foreign can be diminished.

People of older generations have their own special significance in the resolution of conflicts from the past, whether intra-national or international, in which they themselves were active or passive participants, a process that requires confrontation with painful and often unbearable truths.<sup>5</sup> The participation of older persons is indispensable for determining the truth about the Holocaust, about crimes against humanity, and in the wake of civil or foreign wars.

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5/ See the recent fundamental work by Tetyana Kloubert (2014).

## Consequences for education and politics

We might well suppose that the primary and usual locus of the educative results of senior knowledge is the private space of the family. And in fact there are families that make an important intergenerational contribution to the political socialization of their members, as is evident from the greater degree of public political activity in “political” families. On the other hand, there have been “protest generations” of young people who have deliberately formulated their political ideas actually or supposedly *against* their parents’ generation, as was the case with the youth movement between 1900 and 1930 or the student movement of the so-called Sixties Generation. Without underestimating the political influence of the family space, we cannot recommend it as altogether the proper forum for the development and discussion of senior knowledge because the potential for conflict between the generations is often too great and the expressions of senior knowledge cannot be adequately and freely articulated and received. Therefore it is appropriate to turn from the private space of the family to the public sphere.

If we look at the educational opportunities for adult citizens in Germany it appears at first that every opportunity is already available to people of every age. And in fact the Community Adult Education Centres, the institutions built by the political parties, the church academies and the “universities for the third stage of life”, to mention only a few important agents of sophisticated political education, include offerings in their programs that can be useful for the further development and deepening of senior knowledge, whether in the form of specially designed senior courses or through the inclusion of seniors in offerings for a mixed-age audience. The exchange programs of the city partnerships throughout Europe promote cross-boundary encounters in which seniors take part. Partnerships between church congregations, even across confessional boundaries—for example, the partnership between a Lutheran congregation in Tübingen and the Jewish congregation in Petrosawodsk, Russia—likewise include all age groups. Honorary civic offices and service as volunteers offer a variety of opportunities for the socially-beneficial application of older persons’ knowledge and abilities. As mentors, teachers and experts, seniors perform useful advisory and constructive work abroad in projects limited to short periods of time. In these they hand on their knowledge and at the same time derive from their cooperative work abroad new, expanded impressions. ‘Intergenerative’ educational initiatives are the current trend



in the field of the study of education, and generate new concepts.<sup>6</sup> These include cross-cultural mentoring as one of the new forms of activity in intergenerational cooperation, within the national borders as well (see Pakize Schuchert-Güler, Faye Preusse and Fenja Jerichow, 2012).

The picture sketched here not only appears positive; to a great extent it truly is—with certain exceptions: for example, that it applies primarily to the highly-mobile group of so-called “young seniors”. In some respects the German model, thus summarily lauded, is definitely in need of improvement, for example with regard to the dialogical and political-historical competencies of the educators of adults. It also needs to be expanded, for example, to benefit older migrants or older persons of lower socio-economic status, or those who can no longer meet the demand for general fitness and are also not part of the group of “celebrity oldsters” whose thoughts and ideas continue to interest the media and other public forums, independently of their physical abilities.

What remains inadequate as a whole, or is largely absent from the picture, is common respect for the experiential wisdom of older persons within our political culture. Of course, older citizens have the same rights as younger ones, and they can make use of them. The demand for greater attention to senior political knowledge is not meant to imply an expansion of formal civil rights. Rather, it is about opportunities for older citizens to formulate and make public their thoughts and apply their decisional abilities on the one hand, and attention to and dialogue with them on the other. It would be desirable to have special forums in which civic knowledge can develop, something that does not happen by itself but requires skillful moderators. One of the appropriate *loci* for such communications could be—with adaptation—the “hearing” as we know it from parliamentary contexts; other forums have been developed to receive the requests of citizens in planning processes, for example, in city planning.

A public space in which such citizen-level communication forums might be cultivated would be the party-neutral local Community Adult Education Centres. Such forums must be free of charge, and the sponsors need to solve possible transportation problems for citizens whose physical movement is limited. The costs should be borne by public sources, special funds or gifts. There should be regular reports in the media on the outcome of such forums in order to awaken the interest of the broader public. The overarching purpose would be to (re)discover a relationship to aging in which seniority is respected; this does not mean surrendering

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<sup>6/</sup> A current example is the thematic number, *Intergeneratives Lernen*, in the periodical *Bildung und Erziehung* (2012).

the power to decide because the democratic principle of equality must not be disturbed. One may think, for example, of the cultivation of new forms of civic communication that are required for an exchange of ideas among the generations. It could be useful for those in public office, but in business as well, for officeholders and their predecessors in office to hold occasional discussions in which innovations could be discussed in light of old and new knowledge about goals, practices and procedures. Certainly this would demand from both sides self-possession, rhetorical skill, and tact, qualities that cannot be universally assumed and for which one would have to consciously strive for the sake of the goal envisioned. One, perhaps unexpected, example of this kind of conversation is offered by most American presidents, who normally engage in regular discussions with their predecessors in office, even across party boundaries. (On this, see the study by N. Gibbs and M. Duffy, 2012).

The thoughts offered here are intended as a tribute to the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V., DVV International) and above all to the Jubilarian we are celebrating, whose work is devoted to the high goal of activating, retaining, critically evaluating and giving continuity to knowledge beyond the borders of generation, culture and state.

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# Migration as a topic for adult education

*Adult education/further education, against a backdrop of various forms of immigration and immigration phenomena, is facing many challenges that are getting more difficult due to current armed conflicts in various parts of the world. At the beginning of this paper, the changing patterns of immigration are discussed and the resulting education requirements for the various educational sectors of adult education are formulated. An example of the latest results of a research programme to study intercultural education follows. We conclude with comments about the questions which result.*

## **On the differentiation between forms of immigration and immigration phenomena**

The population structure in Germany has changed; currently about a fifth of the population has, in a broader sense, an immigration background. However, one cannot just refer to the different immigration processes and their consequences in Germany; in addition come differentiated forms of immigration in other countries, as well as forms of transmigration (Siewers/Griese 2010), and pendulum migration, that continue to develop in new forms due to economic and cultural ties and elicit requirements for education and skills. There are two points of view to consider regarding the issue of immigration: historical and current immigration to Germany are processes in different forms, which now impose other requirements for continuing education than education and training requirements that result from different forms of immigration and forms of expatriation in other countries. These two perspectives, that is, developments due to processes of immigration to Germany and requirements of a transnational character and the resulting expatriation (Robak 2012), are relevant to further education. Thirdly, moreover, comes the distinction between educational processes which are to be used for intercultural/transcultural education for groups of people with different cultural backgrounds.

## **Challenges in relevant areas of education in the context of immigration**

If we consider the societal development and the differentiation of the immigration phenomena, it is clear that educational programmes have to address both the diverse groups with so-called immigrant backgrounds and the variety of different backgrounds. This means that adult education as a whole must become more intercultural because dealing with foreigners and with cultural differences during these times – which are of an increasingly transnational character and marked by hybridisation (Reckwitz 2006; Robak 2013) – is part of everyday life and of everyone's reality (see details in Heinemann & Robak 2012). At the moment it is particularly urgent to deal with the realisation that immigration is a constituent part of German society. Necessary social awareness processes and structural changes have been neglected, also against the background of internationalisation processes at the EU level and beyond. Even the further education sector could not fulfil these requirements adequately due to lack of funding streams; this could be seen, among other things, from the sparseness of intercultural education offers (Gieseke et al. 2005). This has now been

changing for a few years, not least because the demographic developments are seen as an economic, social and cultural threat. Politically, the Immigration Act, which came into force in 2005, is crucial for new service developments in the field of education. This means, first of all, that immigrant groups are identified as target groups to control a structured integration. Educational institutions are therefore required to offer integration courses. The area of integration is a very important sphere, but far from sufficient if one does not want to limit the meaning of interculturality to only one term. Let's look briefly at the data for behaviour in further education. We have in total a lack of meaningful data and insights into the learning behaviour in further education of people with a so-called immigrant background and over the factors that influence this behaviour. If we take the results of the Adult Education Survey (AES), it becomes clear that foreigners and Germans with an immigrant background<sup>1</sup> participate less in further education than Germans without an immigrant background. An increase in participation can be noted for all groups up to 2012, but it is obvious that this increase for foreigners and Germans with an immigrant background is smaller, and the difference in participation between them and Germans without an immigrant background – especially in further education in companies – is large (Leven et al 2013: 91). In 2012, in further education in companies, 38% of participants were Germans without an immigrant background, 22% Germans with an immigrant background and only 17% were foreigners (ibid.). From 2010 to 2012, for Germans with an immigrant background, an increase in participation of 10% was recorded; for the other two groups, only 1%. The reasons for this must be thoroughly examined. Structural factors and further education barriers as well as individual factors are identified as influencing factors on participation in further education (Öztürk 2014: 51). Currently there are new challenges: How can the refugees now fleeing from the crisis and war regions be rescued through education? There are big structural obstacles here: it is extremely difficult for institutions to apply for financing for language courses.

Overall, it is particularly the adult education centres that provide specific offers, as the adult education center statistics show (ibid.: 55). Including areas such as culture, design, professional and vocational work, all offers that are especially for foreigners are increasing. Striking is the increase in offers in the area of health education, indicating a convergence in educational interests, because this is in general an area which is growing.

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1/ There is a difference between the subdivisions first generation foreigners, first generation naturalised citizens, second-generation foreigners, second generation naturalised citizens and repatriates (Öztürk 2014:42).

It is not enough, as already stated at the beginning of the article, to only address the groups with an immigrant background. The demands of transnationalism, multicultural work contexts as well as expatriation in its various forms, also bring educational needs and requirements with them.

The following training areas are generally required to deal with demands of immigration:

1. Basic education and remedial offers; integration courses facilitate learning the language and catching up on qualifications as well as the acquisition of basic cultural skills, reading, writing or using the Internet. The latest PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) results show that the competencies differ by immigration generation, educational background and socio-economic background (Maehler & Massing & Rammstedt 2014: 148).
2. Vocational training aims toward integration into the labour market and to the obtaining of the skills and qualifications for an adequate job. It needs qualification step options that provide offers for various levels of skills. There need to be more competent professionals and structures built to examine certificates, to enable recognition and provide appropriate further education.
3. General education: Depending on which form of immigration is involved, or which job requirements, the needs vary regarding general education topics. This includes basic historical knowledge of social developments, communication skills, trust-building and relationship skills, but also personal and social education, to strengthen skills of self-reflection and deal with what is foreign.
4. Civic education is extremely relevant in order to build active and reflexive citizen participation and to implement new forms of citizenship education. This includes offers of education regarding racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and gender discrimination on the one hand, and on the other hand active forms of encounter with others, development of participation practices and the construction of a reality. Education as awareness-raising and ethical awareness of the consequences of economic globalisation would be a desirable aspect as well. Against the background of current developments regarding wars, an increase in anti-Semitism (paired with increasing misogyny), xenophobia, racism and right-wing extremism can be observed.
5. Another important sector is cross-cultural education. Recent empirical results will be presented below in brief.

## **Intercultural education – illustrative findings**

Intercultural education is an area which, through the changing legislation and funding opportunities on the one hand and education requirements and needs on the other, has received a boost in the development of its offers. Commissioned by the Agency for Adult Education in Lower Saxony, we examined the development of this area in the form of a programme analysis (Robak & Petter et al.). The concept of intercultural education is defined below: intercultural education makes offers encompassing communicative understanding, the development of self-assurance and identity, the development and affirmation of belonging to a culture, the deconstruction of cultural assignation (in the sense of pointing out differences) as well as understanding and learning of cultural practices. The aim should be to be able to participate in a culture, to learn tolerance of ambiguity and create a person who is culturally sensitive and will be able to develop this sensitivity coupled with an understanding of the practices in other cultures. This term – intercultural education – addresses all the groups in a population and is not derived from a focus on immigrants. This becomes even clearer when one factors in the concept of transcultural education: Transculture is a term described by Welsch (2005) and relates to cultural ties which don't just produce differences, but produce, in particular, commonalities. Transcultural education conceptualises a wealth of forms of approaches and forms of knowledge, offering education and skills development that responds to educational needs, which arise from changing cultures, modified forms of perception and the creation of meaning. A definition of transcultural education includes the definition of intercultural education, but also encompasses communicative and physical-emotional levels of educational processes and presents possibilities of well-being. It refines, to a high degree, perception and sensibility, promotes humanity, justice and the development and affirmation of cultural awareness (Göller 2000). Such a term does not cancel out constructions that elucidate differences, but concentrates more on a common presentation of reality and the shared world in which we live. This corresponds to the requirements of an immigration influx society that really wants to implement diversity as a principle, rather than just the concept of intercultural education, which rides on an intercultural concept that takes cultural dividing lines as the starting point. So the question of how do the patterns of offers of intercultural education develop generates the further question of whether it is possible to find the beginnings of a transcultural understanding of education.



The research design was based on the categories of Wiltrud Gieseke, among others (2005), on the study of cultural education on the one hand and on the other hand developed deductively from the programmes which were examined. Of interest were the access routes to intercultural education. A total of eight participation portals<sup>2</sup> were identified:

1. *systematic-receptive* (includes lectures, seminars, speeches, etc., on culture, art, history of art in relation to different cultures as well as Christian traditions)
2. *self-acting-creative* (including forms of offers in which one can practice something oneself and is then active, and thereby learns the practices of other cultures)
3. *understanding-communicative in the intercultural sense* (offers from this portal accord with the intercultural concept and offer, for example, topics for communicative engagement with other cultures)
4. *understanding-communicative in the transcultural sense* (offers are aimed at, among other things, perceiving and reflecting cross-cultural similarities and transcultural identities),
5. *negotiating-reflexive* (these offers are aimed at the processing of xenophobia, at democratisation and among other things at the reflexive analysis of one's own patterns of interpretation, etc.)
6. *offers specifically for immigrants*
7. *inter-religious dialogue*
8. *qualifications for staff in the subject area intercultural competence*

Reference can only be made to selected main results: number one, at 40%, is the *offers specifically for immigrants* (portal 6); this usually includes integration and German as a foreign language courses (language group). A small portion partakes in neighbourhood-orientated and personal education. Access to intercultural education here follows the premise of integration and inclusion, which is achieved over cultural techniques such as language and practices such as the creation of networks. The main part of the current educational effort is therefore specifically among groups

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<sup>2/</sup> Participation portals are accessible differentiated access routes to culture and education (Gieseke et al 2005). The portals are connected with forms of knowledge, paths of approach and learning sites (ibid.): organised learning opportunities (didactically structured activities in adult education institutions); peripheral education (offers in non-adult education institutions such as museums and socio-cultural centres); cultural practice or sectors (such as choirs); cultural experiences such as an event (e.g. cultural festivals) (ibid.; Robak & Fleige 2012). Portals are across disciplines and include the intentions of the forms of events and forms of learning.

with an immigrant background. In second place, at 32%, is the *understanding-communicative in the intercultural sense* (portal 3). Here, foreign languages dominate. Only those offers which, in addition to the linguistic aspects, make an explicit reference to culture, usually of a particular country, will be classified as intercultural education. In addition, one can add offers that include encounters, events and activities, which are enabled in a social space. In this way, at the same time, intercultural communication skills are to be acquired. So, in neighbourhood-oriented offers, discussion groups are held on the topic of living together, or the cultural customs of the respective countries are involved in language courses. In the community sphere, joint activities between the groups can be implemented; this indicates that there are efforts to link education with the commonality of life in the world we construct, both for immigrants and for all other groups. At about an equal level of performance, at 2.2% each, are the *understanding-communicative in the transcultural sense* (portal 4) and the *negotiating-reflexive* (portal 5), the portals with the smallest numbers of offers.

While the political topics can be described as diminishing, the portal for transcultural understanding is entirely new. So it captures, for example, the search for similarities in the context of hybrid identities through frames of reference like biography, memory and homeland. An example of this is a traveling exhibition that deals with the topic of homeland and immigration and, based on individual biographies, brings processes of identity formation along with it.

Overall, it should be seen as positive that this area of education has differentiated itself and integration courses are readily identifiable here as a driving force. However, an understanding of interculturality based on the unilateral integration of immigrants dominates. Immigration is thereby always very narrowly defined.

The study can be transferable and used for questions to evaluate the results for education policy issues, but also issues about the development of offers in further education institutions, for single institutions as well as for regions.

## **Outlook – subsequent research questions**

Many questions about the relationship between education and immigration are still open in the area of further education, or completely new questions continue to arise. We know far too little up to now about the further education behaviour of the various population groups, about their learning interests and their possibilities for access. A positive attitude towards immigration is not yet really noticeable in Germany. This is all the more pressing

because not only do we find ourselves in an immigration influx society, but we must now also stand by the many refugees from war zones. The goal of a real acceptance of diversity (Hauenschild & Robak & Sievers 2013), without it being constructed and designed exclusively in categories of cultural difference, seems to still be far away.

If immigration should be anchored in education as a cross-cutting theme, on the one hand training and professionalisation of further education trainers is necessary and, on the other hand, there has to be research in the organisations in order to analyse processes of development needs and planning requirements. The analysis of resentments and difficulties in dealing with alienation on the part of the majority population is gaining more relevance. But successful forms of transcultural education should also be made visible.

The increase in immigration has also meant that religions, even with their conservative tendencies in Germany, play a role. These have increased along with increasing immigration as well. How will Germany deal with it? How will the increasingly conservative influences be dealt with by society, for example in respect of gender relations, a subject that should have been solved democratically in Germany long ago?

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# Adult education centres: Places of diversity

*The Adult Education Centres<sup>1</sup> in Germany are the most versatile, most flexible and most learner-orientated education there is. And they are that – without sounding subjective – with their own clearly defined educational mission and a dedicated self-understanding. They are anchored in the community and supported by the federal Land. Since the turn of the millennium, Adult Education Centres have been presenting themselves as flexible institutions which on the one hand support standard disciplines (politics and society, culture and creative arts, health, foreign languages, vocational training, basic education and school certificates), and on the other hand are the largest provider of German courses and wide-ranging integration services, target group activities for women, men and Best Agers as well as literacy courses.*

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<sup>1/</sup> In this article “Adult Education Centre” refers to the German *Volkshochschule*

The Adult Education Centres in Germany are the most versatile, most flexible and learner-oriented educational institutions there are – maybe anywhere in the world. And they are that – without sounding subjective – with their own clearly defined educational mission and a dedicated self-understanding. If they did not exist, we would have to invent them.

However, the above-mentioned very positive attributes are both a blessing and a curse. Because Adult Education Centres are difficult to classify, they always encounter acceptance problems. Those who have not attended them cannot imagine them. Are they really different from the rest of the education system? They are anchored primarily in the municipality and only secondarily additionally funded by their federal Länder. The Adult Education Centres present regular accounting reports, and can always renegotiate the conditions with the municipal subsidy institutions and the federal Länder. In some Länder there are framework laws for continuing education. However, these laws are so open that the Adult Education Centres have a great deal of leeway in the performance of their mandate.

Adult Education Centres are the fourth pillar of the education system, however they are usually not mentioned in the same breath with schools, universities and the dual training system. Because participants must pay, something which is otherwise only accepted in the German public education system with a cringe of displeasure, and then at most only as a temporary measure, Adult Education Centres are thus exotic within the German education system.

On the other hand, their openness is the basis of their participant orientation – and hence their popularity, perky innovation and diversity. Let's take a look at Adult Education Centres: Places of Diversity.

## **The origins of diversity**

Diversity begins with the different forms of sponsorship which were agreed upon at the end of the Second World War – and after 1989 – at the federal state level. After 1945, the respective occupying powers ushered in a new realm of understanding and an arrangement with local traditions. In the American zone, Adult Education Centres were primarily established as members of civil society, i.e. as registered associations; in the British zone as part of a local authority. In the Russian zone and the GDR, Adult Education Centres were facilities supplementary to the school system, especially places to remedially obtain formal (school) certificates. After 1989, the Adult Education Centres in the new federal Länder usually developed – with a great deal of support provided by the Adult Education Associations –

as part of the municipalities or counties, also because education in the GDR was strictly the purview of the State.

A quick look back shows that today's variety in detail has an interesting history. After the Second World War, the Adult Education Centres in the West were established – at the initiative of the Western Allies – as part of the re-education programme. Thus they were usually retained, i.e. supported, by people with middle-class intellectual traditions or activists from the workers' education movement. Both groups were concerned with the post-war need to correct the shortcomings of the National Socialist education system, to enable people to think independently, to help them to deal with educational content and traditions, but also to better prepare the young citizens of the Federal Republic to participate in the labour force. It was – and still is today – about emancipation and participation, articulate citizens, the ability to live independently. Along with lectures, practical classes for dealing with shortages, whether in the field of home furnishings or food supplies, practical professional courses such as English, accounting, typewriting and shorthand came soon after. Also, in the 1950s, current political issues were raised, such as the rearmament of Germany, the type of reconstruction in the cities. People were particularly interested in international knowledge, whether the American short story, French existentialism or the Russian novel – all the education which had been frowned upon in Nazi Germany. However, to the chagrin of some in adult education centre management, interest in these “educational events” tended to decrease, while the offers of courses with “valuable content”, such as foreign languages and professional expertise, increased.

Adult Education Centres always responded to current stimuli. So they changed increasingly after the second half of the 1960s. The criticism of education by the student movement and the reckoning with the Nazi past did not spare Adult Education Centres. Above all, the members of the student movement entered the Adult Education Centres in the 1970s as departmental heads and directors and brought their critical emancipatory understanding of education with them into the institutions. When the first “guest workers” arrived in the Federal Republic, Adult Education Centres ceased to be purely for Germans. Soon there were the first German courses, but foremost, project groups that worked to provide practical help to the new fellow citizens, especially the care and support of children who had big problems in German primary and secondary schools. In the 1970s, refugees from Vietnam and Latin America arrived; after 1973 many Chileans; after 1978, Argentinians; and during the whole period, people from Central America, so that many of those with responsibility for Adult Education Centres felt committed to helping them – in the context of the Third World solidarity movement as well. Adult Education Centres were

the first educational institutions in Germany which opened themselves to internationalism, that means about 40 to 50 years ago the diversity in their international profile that is their particular strength today began to develop.

But before that, the immense readiness for education and the growth of the Western German population in the 1980s ensured that Adult Education Centres grew enormously, that clearly-structured course areas and departments were created and that, in general, staff tripled or quadrupled. Not irrelevant in this context was the advent of computers in the workplace. Adult Education Centres were in many locations the only or main provider of continuing education in the IT field. Adult Education Centres responded faster and more efficiently than the state education system to the urgent need.

### **Recent developments in the German Adult Education Centres**

In the 1990s the situation of the Adult Education Centres in Germany was quite different. The distribution of capacities after Reunification and the economic recession led to a shortage of funds in communities and federal states. Adult Education Centres had to become increasingly market oriented in order to cover fixed costs. At the same time, the Adult Education Centres had to deal with the educational needs of the resurgent women's movement. In the end, education and emancipation belonged together, and it was only a short step to the creation of special education programmes for women of all ages, especially for women who, after their time as parents, finally had time to think about their own educational needs. This included women's festivals, mostly international women's festivals, the first highlights of an emancipated international awareness of life in Germany.

After the turn of the millennium, the development of offers for seniors was on the agenda. General education was and is in high demand from *Best Ageds*, especially if it is associated with culinary arts and new experiences. In recent years, courses have also been highly popular among this group of people which explain how to use digital media. The traditional IT course for seniors has now given way to offers like "Managing a smart phone" or "Vacation planning with an iPad". People over sixty today view Adult Education Centres as their first point of contact for this education area, similar to the way that, since the late 1980s, people from all backgrounds and environments acquired remedial computer education at the Adult Education Centre.

Since the turn of the millennium, the Adult Education Centre has become clearly more European and international, which is also thanks



to new funding. Through the Grundtvig programme, professionals and students from the European Union meet to learn together and from each other, but also for the development of joint learning content and teaching materials. The effect that these programmes have for the integration of Europe should not be underestimated. I'll never forget the reports from Swabian women after attending learning meetings in Belfast or Lisbon, on the one hand stunned because of the situation regarding room, and on the other hand enthusiastic because of the people. They experienced European diversity differently there than on the beach in Benidorm. For VHS employees, the projects mean considerable extra work since applications and accounting can only be dealt with through unpaid work by incorrigible idealists; but for the participants they are an enormous asset, which applies equally to global learning, particularly in funded projects. Experiential and empathy-stimulating learning that has reduced prejudices about Africa, Asia and Latin America has only become possible in many places through federal funds that reach Adult Education Centres through DVV International. International tour groups that come from partner organisations of DVV International and visit German Adult Education Centres round off the experience.

## **How diversity takes place**

To illustrate what the situation is like in an Adult Education Centre today, how true diversity “comes across”, I would like to tell you a short story about something that took place last week in the Adult Education Centre in Ulm. A retired secondary school headmaster who, in our opinion, should have known the Adult Education Centre well from the number of cooperation projects with his pupils, had been teaching German as a Foreign Language, Level B2, for three months because he still wanted to do something during his retirement. After three months at the Ulm Centre, he turned to the German as a Foreign Language faculty management with the suggestion that the centre should more actively reach out to schools and much more actively publicise its broad portfolio among the population. “There is such a colourful life, such a stimulating and lively atmosphere in Einstein House, such a variety of people from all backgrounds and all over the world that it needs to be experienced to be believed.”

What did the retired headmaster observe that he previously could not imagine? He arrived at Einstein House of the Ulm Adult Education Centre at 8:30 in the morning and had the same experience people have in many other Adult Education Centres in large and medium cities, namely that about a quarter of all course participants attending German courses are

people with international roots. All at once, he met men and women from all types of backgrounds, who attended language as well as painting and drawing courses; at the same time he saw participants in courses from the health sector, such as yoga and back-strengthening, as well as *Best Ager*s who attend a general education academy or right next to them people who want to get back into the labour market and therefore participate in training supported by the Federal Employment Agency or the European Social Fund.

Of course the retired headmaster also met self-aware finely dressed people going to a so-called company course, namely a further training course that the Adult Education Centre tailors to the needs of a company in the region. They receive, as do other participants in vocational education and other areas, diplomas and certificates in accordance with recognised exams. Adult Education Centres are testing centres.

Between course hours or during breaks, long queues form in the cafeteria in which men and women from all over the world and from all age groups wait together and also engage in conversation with one another, including people in wheelchairs, because inclusion has always been a matter of course in Adult Education Centres. Last but not least among the diversity are the lecturers, who arrive at the centre at the start of the new lesson, and as a rule come from 15 to 20 different countries. Many Adult Education Centres today are able to obtain participants from German courses as instructors in the health, foreign language and creative sectors. Adult Education Centres have long known that many people who come to Germany today are highly qualified and are proficient in almost anything, just not in the German language.

If the retired headmaster were at the centre in the afternoon or evening, he would also see people aged between 20 and 30 who attend either the preparatory course for a high school certificate or are already sitting together in groups because at 5 pm teaching starts in night school and they are still finishing their homework together. Night school sponsored by Adult Education Centres is now the high school for people with international roots.

## **Education for All at Adult Education Centres**

At the same time, Adult Education Centres have taken on the task of teaching functional illiterates in basic education courses. Perhaps it's because of their life circumstances, but this target group is more likely to be in an Adult Education Centre than in any other educational institution because here anonymity is ensured and the long-held principle of partic-

ipant orientation ensures that lecturers at the centre actually address the educational needs of these persons. "Education for All" is the basic principle of Adult Education Centres, and so participants at the centre are used to being in a classroom next door to people with intellectual disabilities, or people learning English or how to handle money, and they sometimes regard the Centre as a second home because the courses run for many years with constantly changing content.

In the evenings and on the weekends, the very same pictures are there, supplemented by participants going to open lectures, discussions, concerts, films, festivals and readings. Adult Education Centres pulsate seven days a week, usually until late at night because they are innovative when it comes to opening new time slots: whether evening or daytime courses, weekend or holiday seminars, field trips or educational tours. Even self-organised civic engagement groups use the centre as a learning, working and meeting place. At this point I will not go into the comprehensive services for children and young people in all areas of learning.

Over nearly seventy years, Adult Education Centres have gone through phases of growth and scarcity, and have actively managed and jointly designed restructuring, new conceptualisation and development, and have become centres of diversity and places of empowerment for all. Innovations have not only been introduced, but have also been consolidated. They are THE educational institutions of the host country Germany. Today's strong performance of Adult Education Centres is expressed, for example, in the fact that 40 percent of all integration course tests take place at Adult Education Centres – the result of the developments described here.

Adult Education Centres have, in accordance with their founding history, preserved their spirit of freedom and emancipation, their authenticity. And so far they have survived as islands of positive work. Long live diversity!

## The Millennium Development Goals in education work – The contribution of the adult education centre Bonn

*For a number of years, the Adult Education Centre Bonn<sup>1</sup> has been concerned about and focused on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This has taken place, in many cases, through crosscutting issues which enable local and regional references to be made visible. The framework, the main points, the cooperation partners and the types of offers are presented below. The article concludes with an assessment and a look at possible future topics.*

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<sup>1/</sup> In this article "Adult Education Centre" refers to the German *Volkshochschule*

Many development cooperation actors are located in Bonn. In addition to the relevant ministries, there are a variety of organisations that are active in the national and international context of development cooperation. Over 150 national and international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), 20 UN secretariats and, in addition, scientific organisations focused on development cooperation. Most of the actors present themselves with their own programmes, which in many cases are directed only at a specialist audience.

In order to make this broad network of stakeholders, the variety of interesting cooperation partners and the challenges, known and accessible to the general public, the Adult Education Centre decided in 2010 to organise, each semester, events which focus on the immediate or broader context of the MDGs and are targeted at the general public. The series, which was presented in the programme booklet and was advertised with an additional flyer, usually encompassed 15 to 20 events per semester.

Specifically, we have so far dealt with the following topics: energy, nutrition, health, water, waste and refuse, raw materials, urban development, sustainability and biodiversity.

The starting point of the conceptual considerations was the desire to anchor all aspects of the topics at the local, regional, national and international level, and thus to carry the picture forward from the local to the international. It should be made clear that, for example, energy and refuse problems must be solved on our doorstep, but that simultaneously it requires us to look beyond national borders in order to properly classify the resources, distribution and requirements for action in a global context. So when the issue of energy was presented referring to the solar roof-panels of the city of Bonn, one had to not forget to look at national challenges (such as the development of smart grids) and large innovation projects (such as Desertec).

When it came to water, for example, the locally-based water supply and flood control were as much in focus as issues of water management in Bonn's twin city La Paz, or potential conflicts associated with water use and hydropower around the Nile.

The issues of waste and garbage were treated historically ("2000 years of waste in Bonn"), and explored locally by a visit to the waste treatment facility, embedded in future scenarios ("Urban Mining"), in its consequences for Southern Italy ("refuse, Mafia and billions") as well as outlined for Africa and South America. A presentation by the German Aerospace Centre and a fact-finding visit to the Fraunhofer Institute for High-Frequency Physics and Radar Technology was devoted to the problem of space debris. Local facilities reported on the non-terrestrial aspects of the subject.

The focus on health dealt with, among other issues, the question of health care for individuals, with medical innovations, as well as the ethical and legal aspects associated with some research questions, with the range of responsibilities of WHO-ECEH (World Health Organisation, European Centre for Environment and Health) through visiting its Regional Office in Bonn, with the opportunities and risks of nano-medicine, and with medical tourism.

Regarding the topic of nutrition for the world, a major focus was on Africa ("African smallholders: imported hunger", "Modern agriculture in Africa", "Empty nets on the Cape Coast" (another sister city of Bonn), "Land grab in Ethiopia"; "European butter on Africa's dairy markets"), on local priorities ("Sugar industry in the Bonn area") and on global challenges ("World nutrition through biodiversity", "Does meat consumption change the climate?").

Not all the topics in the series can be presented in detail; what was clear, however, was that the individual in her/his capacity as a consumer and local actor is as responsible as in her/his political commitments, not only to act locally, but also to always embed local action in global contexts and from that, conceivably, to obtain options for taking action.

## **The cooperation network**

Two key issues per year with a total of 30 to 40 events require a good cooperation network. In cooperation with the Office of International and Global Sustainability of the City of Bonn and the Bonn Network for Development, which has set itself the goal of making the development goals of the United Nations known in Bonn, it was possible to use funds targeted for public relations from the EU project: "Networking in Europe: Local Governments meet the MDGs". Ideas for the various key issues came from around 50 initiatives and organisations in the network, from other cooperation partners and from the Department of Political Science and International Affairs acting as coordinator of the series. Professors from the University of Bonn wrote papers for the series: "University in City Hall", and made presentations in other formats. The University of Bonn/Rhein-Sieg took part as a partner. Local actors such as the Department of Environmental Protection, the City Department of Public Works with its various areas of activity, the national and international NGOs, the press conference on science, the Association for International Cooperation, the German Institute for Development Policy, Welthungerhilfe, the German-African Centre, the Bonn-La Paz Association, the Institute for Ancient American Studies, the University of Bonn, environmental organisations, the

secretariats of the United Nations, federal agencies (such as the Federal Office for Disaster Relief and the Federal Insurance Office), the community service agency for missionary work and ecumenism, the Goethe Institute, the Global Crop Diversity Trust, the BION network (BION = biodiversity in Bonn) and many others.

## **The event formats**

Apart from the classic lecture events, plenty of room was always provided for discussion; field trips were undertaken to places near and far (visits to food factories, water works, field trips into nature), company visits (waste incineration plant), film screenings (followed by discussions), information visits to federal administrative agencies (Federal Office for Disaster Relief) as well as to the United Nations and other public institutions. In collaboration with the Deutsches Museum Bonn, panel discussions were held on some key issues (e.g. energy, waste and refuse, etc.). A special event introduced in this context was the art installation *Rotraum*, which dealt with flotsam from the Rhine.

## **Public relations work**

The series was publicised through the programme booklet of the Adult Education Centre and on the Internet. A flyer especially created for each topic in focus was also distributed through the cooperation network. Media coverage by the local press was also helpful.

## **Resonance**

The response to the series of events was consistently good. Some events were regularly overbooked due to the lack of available space; others, for one reason or another, may have been able to receive more encouragement. The field trips and visits were very well received in most cases. Overall, many of the visitors appreciated the character of the series, which didn't let important issues stand there "alone", but gave people the opportunity to deepen their interest in a subject for three months. The advantages of a series are obvious: the interwoven nature of the local with the international is revealed in the truest sense of the word; participants learn about institutions and agencies that are situated locally; networking between the actors is encouraged; their visibility in the city is made clear

and so the profile of Bonn as the city of German development cooperation and of the UN in Germany is reinforced. The international character of the city means that new paths were forged: for example, some lectures were offered in English and, in general, were well received. “The River Nile – Its Important Role for Africa”, in collaboration with community service agency for missionary work and ecumenism and the Goethe Institute, had a very good response from the public.

## **What happens next?**

The Adult Education Centre has been considering for several months how the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) can be integrated as topics into the educational work. The SDGs are currently being negotiated, and their focus will be more on the common responsibility of all people in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Even here, however, cross-sectional formats will certainly be selected which will allow reference to the fields of interest important for local and regional educational work. In addition to that, the Adult Education Centre Bonn is also planning to expand its discourse platform so that the local experience is passed on to others and relevant networking processes can be initiated. This entails two objectives: a) to obtain incentives for continuing education work and, b) to make it clear that many of the issues that have been raised in the series of events require consistent and sustainable local action in order to be able to (continue to) meet the global challenges. The task of education in this context is also to take away people’s sense of powerlessness and to encourage them to see their own exemplary conduct as a fundamental building block to addressing the problems. Anyone who has dealt with waste recycling will see the recycling problems in some countries in Africa with different eyes and will, hopefully, be active in the manner she or he deems most appropriate. Whoever has seen with their own eyes how water is purified or how it is converted into energy will better understand what can happen in North Africa if neighbouring countries don’t solve the problems associated with the Nile peacefully. Here again, knowledge can be followed by action.

## **DVV International**

In exchanges with colleagues from DVV International – whether in Morocco or Belarus (to name just two examples) – it was also increasingly clear that these issues are spreading quickly in other countries as well, although they are certainly not being included everywhere in practical educational



work. To present such a series in foreign locations (or through visits here in Bonn) creates an incentive for our partners to also take up such issues and to make them operational. On the other hand, it further demonstrates that MDGs, SDGs and all related questions can no longer be solved only nationally. Local awareness, national discussion forums and rapid global solutions are needed for many of the topic areas – a challenge that can be provided by a small but important component in local educational work. This applies to Morocco as well as to Germany. Thus DVV International is simultaneously involved in an interesting and unique network for the realisation of a global portal aiming to innovatively network local educational action with our multitudinous international partners around the world.

## Professionalisation through recognition and reflection. Examples and considerations from an Austrian perspective

*This article examines professionalisation strategies for staff in adult education in Austria. Starting from a brief analysis of the staff structure in Austrian adult education, the successful model of the Austrian Academy of Continuing Education (Weiterbildungsakademie) is discussed. This model is supported by the adult education sector, and impacts a number of public sector measures. Professionalisation also requires measures in the adult education institutions, such as models of teaching reflection, which have been introduced. We want to see a good combination of institutional responsibility and an implementation of lesson reflection with models of classroom observation by colleagues. The paper concludes with a plea for professionalisation carried out in a cooperative way, in the sense of modern governance that includes governing bodies as well as stakeholders, the institutions of adult education as civil society organisations as well as practitioners in adult education.*

In Austrian adult education, which can look back on more than 120 years of history and a fee basis development of institutions, most of the trainers work part-time on a fee basis. As regards professionalisation, this presents major challenges for the institutions and providers of adult education.

Professionalisation in Austria is mainly understood as improving the quality of adult education through qualified staff who act in a professional manner. Professional action requires professional structures and, as such, in the understanding of the practice of adult education, this is primarily seen as an area in which people are employed. Professional behaviour means that the competent and thoughtful carrying out of adult education usually presupposes “training” (cf. Gruber 2008: 2). Professional behaviour requires good management, but should not be reduced to just that. Organisational activity is ideally pedagogically and, through adult education, justified and documented.

Professionalisation strategies are built on the staff working in adult education, the structure of which will now be briefly described.

### **On the staff structure of Austrian adult education**

For the entire Austrian adult education sector, which is estimated to comprise about 2,000 organisations (cf. ÖIBF 2004: 4), there are no statistics regarding the number of employees and the structure in which they operate. Data are available only for a part of the non-formal sector of adult education, namely for those adult education associations which are represented by the “Austrian Conference on Adult Education” (KEBÖ). These associations do, however, make up a significant portion of adult education; according to the Adult Education Survey 2011/12, about a quarter of all participation in non-formal adult education is covered by the adult education institutions (cf. Statistik Austria 2013: 84).

There are ten active Austria-wide associations represented in KEBÖ, of which the Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres (Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen), is the largest measured by demand (number of participants). After the association come the mainly vocational institutions of the social partners, namely employers, employees and the agricultural sector.

The KEBÖ statistics for 2013 indicate a total of approximately 90,000 staff members, of whom approximately 6% are employed full-time, around 64% are part-time on a fee basis and fewer than 30% are voluntary. As the following table shows, the part-time activities are mostly cases carried out by the teaching staff (= educators).

**Table 1: Types of employment in the Conference of Adult Education Austria (2013)**

Total employees	90,293	share of all employees	of whom teaching	teachers in%
Full-time employees	5,969	6.61%	2,037	34.13%
Part-time employees	57,446	63.62%	42,638	74.22%
Volunteers	26,878	29.77%	4,956	18.44%

Source: *KEBÖ Statistik 2013, own calculations.*

Of the total of 90,293 employees, 59,699 people are employed as lecturers, teachers and seminar leaders, coming to 66.12 percent of the total. In addition, accompanying and advisory activities are becoming increasingly important: educational and career guidance, learning counselling and coaching.

Although the number of volunteers shows a slight downward trend, they should never be underestimated. In many organisations, the organisational and administrative backbone is formed by volunteers. But the extent of voluntary work also reflects the profile (structure and design of the offers) and the area of activity of that organisation. Those organisations which are geographically located in urban areas or in medium-sized or larger communities focus on the range of courses and have a very small number of volunteers in the operational area (0.6% for Adult Education Centres; no volunteers at business and labour vocational institutions). Associations with a high proportion of single and special courses and with a focus on smaller communities and rural areas have higher proportions of activities with volunteers – 16% for agricultural training institutions, more than 40% for educational training institutions, and up to 65% in Catholic adult education.

The high proportion of volunteers in adult education is as much of a challenge for professionalisation as is the high proportion of part-time workers and freelancers, namely how to integrate them into organisational structures and how to professionalise.

A contribution toward professionalisation in Austrian adult education and its diverse structures is the *Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich – wba* (Continuing Education Academy) which is very practical and which validates knowledge and competencies of those active in adult education.

## Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich (wba)

The *wba* is a validation system for the qualification and recognition of adult educators in the four activity areas of teaching, education management, counselling and librarianship. The *wba* is not a provider of continuing education, but merely an accreditation body based on a standardised curriculum which describes the skills required in professional adult education.

The *wba* is supported by the *Kooperatives System der österreichischen Erwachsenenbildung* (Cooperative System of Austrian Adult Education), to which adult education associations and the Federal Institute for Adult Education belong, the latter being a subordinate agency of the Department of Adult Education in the Ministry of Education.

Skills are accredited on two levels, with a certificate, which includes 60 ECTS and a diploma with 60 ECTS as well. The curriculum for the certificate includes seven competency areas with detailed skills, as the following table shows:

**Table 2: Competency areas at the Weiterbildungsakademie**

1. <i>Theoretical Education Competence</i> Foundations of Education Adult Education/Andragogy Society and Education	5. <i>Competence in Librarianship and Information Management</i> Public Libraries and their Social Significance Fundamentals of Information Management Librarianship and Information Management
2. <i>Didactic Competence</i> Fundamentals of Teaching Teaching in Adult Education Working with Groups	6. <i>Social Competence</i> Communication in Theory and Practice Leading Conversations Rhetoric Feedback Conflict management in theory and practice
3. <i>Management Skills (for education)</i> Fundamentals of Education Management Education Management	7. <i>Personnel Competence</i> Strength and Weakness Analysis Analysis and Reflection on own Actions and Behaviour
4. <i>Counselling Competence</i> Fundamentals of Counselling Counselling	

Source: *wba* Certificate: Certified Adult Educationalist. [http://wba.or.at/login/downloads/Curriculum\\_wba-Zertifikat.pdf](http://wba.or.at/login/downloads/Curriculum_wba-Zertifikat.pdf) (22 December 2014).

The competence recognition process begins with positioning and ends with a certification workshop in which feedback on the skills acquired is given from the group of participants of the certification workshop. The

diploma includes a specialisation in the four areas of teaching, management, counselling, and information and library science. It concludes with a colloquium and also offers a link to the tertiary sector with a university course in adult education/further training. All the certificates are audited by a separate accreditation group in which both people from the practice of adult education and from the science of adult education are represented. Prerequisites for admission to the *wba* include, among other things, 500 hours' practical experience in adult education for the certificate and 900 hours for the diploma. The mandatory internship can either be completed at an institution for adult education or at organisations or departments whose "models clearly indicate adult educational contexts, or that are active in continuing education in companies and public institutions" (Curriculum for the *wba* Certificate: 28). Facilities must respect "ethical and democratic rights". And: the "propagation of esotericism and other forms of service with esoteric content does not count as adult educational activity within the meaning of the *wba*" (loc. cit.).

### **Governance in adult education and the importance of the *wba***

An increase in the governance of adult education by the public sector can be seen. This happens in those areas of offers in which the foundations are laid for further learning (as in basic education) and in the acquisition of educational qualifications in second-chance education: compulsory education certificates, higher education entrance examination (*Berufsreifeprüfung*) (cf. Bisovsky 2013). Free programmes for basic education and compulsory education certificates have been developed. On the basis of Austria-wide curricula, and from programme planning documents, treaties for the implementation of these programmes were made between the nine federal states and the federal government. The financing of the implementation is carried out with 50% from federal funds and 50% from the funds of the respective federal states. The providers are accredited at the federal level, and at the federal state level a decision is made as to which providers can realise measures. In the programme planning documents for both programmes, there are cross-references to the *wba* and to their accredited skills and qualifications.

A second example is Ö-Cert, which evaluates the quality characteristics of adult education organisations. This certification system is to ensure that financial support for individuals, e.g. Education Vouchers from one county are recognised in another, so that students can therefore also study in other counties with educational support without bureaucratic hurdles and education providers do not have to be accredited in all counties.

Ö-Cert accreditation includes, in addition to other criteria, the pedagogical skills in an organisation, which can also be obtained by a certificate from the *wba*.

The *wba* is not only represented in basic education and with the Ö-Cert quality seal, but also in educational counselling and in the labour market policy activities for the unemployed, since in both areas the qualifications for counsellors and for teachers endorsed by the *wba* are recognised. Thus a model of accreditation of competencies developed in the adult education sector also has an effect on those parts of adult education which are regulated by the Government.

In order to continuously improve teaching in adult education and allow “successful learning”, various models of reflection on teaching are implemented. The reflection on teaching in the Viennese Adult Education Centres engages the Adult Education Centre organisation in reflection on successful teaching, while peer review models build on the idea that continuous quality improvement can be achieved through classroom visits by peers.

## **Improving teaching through reflection**

The centrepiece of the reflection on teaching model of the Viennese Adult Education Centres is the building of “reflective competence” both in the Adult Education Centre institution itself – that is by those responsible for the programme and programme planners – as well as by the teachers. The aim is to question one’s own actions and to see the reflection on teaching as an “element of development” (Brugger 2014: 4f.). Teachers were trained to be observers who attended lessons by teachers of the Vienna Adult Education Centres and paid special attention to the interactions of teachers with learners and the methods used. Also, the framework was monitored, as well as the premises where the lessons took place. The observations were not made according to didactic field competence; it was made certain that the lessons observers attended were in those subjects that were not their own. Teaching observers and teachers then co-authored a conversation protocol that was subsequently sent to the responsible programme planners at the Adult Education Centres. This conversation protocol formed the basis for development discussions, which could include recommendations for both the training of teachers or form the basis for the planning of train-the-trainer events for the Adult Education Centres.

In addition to the approximately 2,000 classroom observations which were already carried out from 2012 to 2014, more than 600 teachers were asked about their understanding of “successful teaching”. This revealed

that the views of the majority of instructors who responded shared their opinion of a “successful lesson” with the Viennese Adult Education Centres (Jütte 2014). In contrast to the model of teaching inspection in England, which is aimed at supervising teaching staff, the Viennese model is oriented on the development of the teachers (Gewessler/O’Leary 2014). As part of a project funded by the European Commission, a model of classroom visits by peers has been adapted in which language instructors were trained through the exchange of experiences between two teachers who are “on the same level”. Professionalisation is to be promoted through a mutual exchange of visits and subsequent feedback (Feigl 2014: 18). In the Austrian Adult Education Centres, a kind of regular monthly meeting of the language trainers has developed (Teissier de Wanner 2014).

With models of classroom observation and reflection on teaching, the concept of professionalisation and quality development is interpreted more broadly than called for in the Action Plan on Adult Education of the European Commission, where attention is paid to improving the teaching of adult learning. The career development of staff working in adult education, especially teachers, is also a central focus. The overall quality of providers is as important a point as the quality of teaching, and defining under what conditions and in what premises these are held (European Commission 2006: 7 f.).

## Summary and outlook

With the curriculum of the *wba*, a common understanding of the professional profile of an adult educator in Austria has been developed that provides a substantive basis for a better understanding of adult education. With the *wba* as an accreditation body for skills and qualifications of persons who are involved in adult education, a modern instrument exists that can accredit formal learning as well as non-formal and informally acquired skills.

The establishment of the *wba* is an appropriate measure, also and especially for people who are volunteers in adult education, in order to make their skills visible, to acquire additional skills and finally to certify their adult education skills.

With the integration of the certificates, which can be acquired through the *wba*, it is possible to bring the teaching skills to the fore in the regulated systems of adult education.

The *wba* has also brought about the offer of seminars and training courses in the organisations of adult education, which relate to the curriculum of the training academy and can also be accredited by it. Thus,



the abilities for access are improved for adult educators and especially for teachers who are active in several organisations and institutions.

The part-time range of services for people who work in adult education has expanded.

The *wba* has had an effect on professionalisation because standards have been set which allow for connections to federal measures. The professionalisation is driven by the sector itself and supported by the “cooperative system”.

Measures for the professionalisation of adult education need to be supplemented by the providers of adult education. Models of reflection on “successful teaching” are appropriate for that. Such models should allow for both access to the organisation that needs to reflect on their own actions as an organisation and in their planning and design, as well as how teachers need to reflect on their teaching. Peer reflection models suggest themselves as being able to deepen the didactic level in particular, at which mutual classroom visits and reflections take place.

However, the limitations of this professionalisation should be mentioned; they are revealed where there is no structuring of the sector and no coherent system of adult education. In those places it will therefore be necessary to continue to work on the system of adult education and to establish a human adult education system, visible to everyone, which has a high degree of permeability between both the formal part of the education system and the non-formal, and between organisations and institutions of adult education.

In the end, professionalisation of adult education requires cooperative interaction between the adult education sector and its institutions and organisations with the public sector. Modern governance involves concerted action by all stakeholders, the public authorities, various stakeholders as well as the non-governmental civil society sector and those active in adult education.

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## More questions than answers: Diverse and complex challenges for adult education in history and reconciliation projects

*The present article aims to review the work of the DVV International History Network through a catalogue of crucial questions that were generated in oral history and reconciliation projects done in different regions such as Central Asia, the Southern Caucasus, South-Eastern Europe, etc. They are clustered along thematic lines with a focus on burning issues dealing with the recent or more distant past addressed through interactive adult education methods and approaches. The article reveals the complexity and inner relations between the topics on which the Network focuses its adult education activities. Dealing with the past and reconciliation processes impact crucial aspects of our common existence.*

## Why birds have different colours

*Once upon a time all the birds in the world competed for a chieftaincy. The requirement was to fly from Bafodea to the end of the world and back before all the other competitors. Bafodea was struck by famine. So when they set out most of the birds were distracted by the different kinds of food they came across in their flight.*

*No sooner did they take off than the vultures came across a carcass. They crowded around it and started to eat while the other birds continued on their journey. Some miles away, the hens too came across some rice. Like the vultures they came together and started to peck the rice and forget all about the competition.*

*The others continued with the flight and soon came across some wild fruit, which attracted the "Kodo-Kodos". They stayed behind eating the fruit while the others continued the flight. The "Koma" bird which is normally very slow, slower than all the other birds, was the first to reach the end of the world. At the end of the competition the "Koma" won the first prize, that is a gift of many beautiful clothes. On his return journey he gave some of the clothes to the other birds leaving the best ones for himself.*

*This is why all birds have beautiful feathers but the "Koma" is the most beautiful and the king of the birds.*

**(Hinzen et. al., 1987: 156)**

From 1984 to 1987 Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen headed the project office of the "Fachstelle für Internationale Zusammenarbeit", as DVV International was called back then, in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Together with the People's Educational Association of Sierra Leone (PEA) he published a book entitled "Fishing in the Rivers of Sierra Leone: Oral Literature", which is a collection of oral tradition, consisting of songs, dances, poems, fairy tales and fables that were mainly written down and preserved in this book for the first time. It was the aim of the editors to show the rich variety of stories coming from many different ethnic groups and cultures living in the country. The book is an intercultural learning tool for formal, non-formal and informal settings of learning in the West African country:

"We learn as we live, while we are children, young people, and adults. Learning is not confined to the classroom alone, it can take place anywhere. This is true for intellectual learning as well as for training in arts and crafts. Moral values and social norms, beliefs and codes have to be transmitted from one generation to the next, whether modified or not.

Informal learning settings are relevant and might be dominant even today when more formalised and specialised institutions have partly taken over. Whilst we guard ourselves against romanticising the past of Sierra Leoneans' ethnic groups, we, as adult educators and development workers, see a lot in our past that could be used as a foundation to orient and to foster developments for both the present and the future" (Hinzen et. al. 1987: 13).

These steps have been carefully followed to the present day by DVV International and its History Network: We put the human in the centre of our interest. We believe that history should also be history from below, a history of the people for the people. We believe it is important for a healthy and functioning society that the past, present and future live together in peaceful cooperation. We work with the past to learn for a better future. We, that is a group of adult educators from all over Europe, the former Soviet Union and beyond, combining adult education and dealing with the past, the so-called DVV International History Network.

In the present article, we wish to review questions arising from the projects we have implemented so far by compiling a catalogue of crucial questions that were generated and/or stumbled over during the projects. Some of these questions may be very general; others are closely connected to a specific context. In history work, we value the importance of asking the burning questions, thus following the French anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss who said that "the scientist is not a person who gives the right answers, he's one who asks the right questions" (Lévi-Strauss: 1964). We have learned in the last few years that this is true also for the projects we have implemented within the History Network; the projects brought up questions that help to shape our work in such a way that these and our next projects will be more and more meaningful and successful:

### **Germany – after the Shoah and World War II**

Did my parents/grandparents commit a crime during the Nazi regime?

How can we make sure that it will never happen again?

How can we ever have better relations with the Jews after the Shoah?

How can we reconcile with our neighbours after having brought so much harm to them?

How do we deal with former Nazi criminals: with millions of collaborators?

Is there such a thing as collective guilt? Are the whole German people somehow guilty?

Is the Holocaust a single event in history not comparable to any other?  
Does trans-generational guilt exist?  
How do we then classify the Red Terror in the Soviet Union?  
How should 'normality' look for a country that has committed the Holocaust?

## **Uzbekistan – Identity and nation-building processes after the end of the Soviet Union**

Who are we? Who is 'we'?  
Are the Uzbeks an ancient historical tribe/nation or an artificial construction?  
Is there an Uzbek identity? What should it look like? Who decides what it looks like?  
What are our (new) national symbols, idols and heroes?  
What is the relation between citizenship and ethnicity? What does "Uzbek citizen" mean? How do we deal with the multiethnic situation in the country when forming a national Uzbek state?  
Where is our place in the family of nations? What is our role in the region?  
In which direction do we want to orient ourselves? Where are our role models? (The West? Russia? ... ?)  
How do we deal with religion after having been part of a secular union?  
How do we want to deal with the Soviet past?  
What form of government would we like to have?

## **Georgia/Armenia – Dealing with the Soviet Era and Stalinism**

Don't the victims deserve justice in the end?  
Was it a Russian/Soviet occupation, or were we part of a process we (co-) determined ourselves?  
How do we deal with the legacy of Soviet times? Should we talk about the Soviet times or better silence them?  
How can we come to a sophisticated analysis of the Soviet past, one which is able to incorporate shades of grey and as well as black and white?  
Can the old heroes also be the new ones? Was Stalin one of the most important Georgians or a criminal dictator?  
How to deal with people who were part of the old regime? Who have committed crimes then, and especially if they are occupying the highest (government) positions now?  
How to explain to our young generation what has happened?  
Where is our place? Are we European? Are we Asian? Are we Caucasian?

What should our relations be with Russia?  
Which existing historical links of our past we can tie in with?  
Do we want to close the books or keep them open?

## **Armenia and Turkey – Rapprochement after the Armenian genocide**

Why did the genocide happen? Was it really genocide or war-related massacres?  
How can we guarantee it will never happen again?  
First comes justice and then comes reconciliation?  
Is there such a thing as historical truth?  
Is there such a thing as collective guilt? Are all Turks guilty? Does trans-generational guilt exist?  
What should a first step towards rapprochement look like?  
Will they claim reparations from us? Will they take back their ancestral land?  
Shall we open the border or not? Is rapprochement for economic reasons legitimate?  
How did we live together before the genocide? How can we live together in the future?  
What should a modern Turkey look like? What is the relation of Modern Turkey with its founder Mustafa Kemal and Kemalism?  
Is Turkey a multi-religious and multi-ethnic country or are we all Turks?  
Is Turkey Europe? Do we want to be a member of the EU or are we a regional super-power which does not want to be part of another superior political entity?  
How can we ever escape our current political, economic and geo-strategic isolation? (Armenia)  
How many concessions can we make without betraying our ancestors?  
What will happen to Armenia if Turkey suddenly acknowledges the genocide? What does a Modern Armenia look like if it does not base its identity, politics and economy on the genocide paradigm?  
How can we move forward (towards rapprochement) without solving the Karabakh conflict; or how do we solve the Karabakh conflict?  
How can we move forward (towards rapprochement) if we are being dominated by Russia, which has no interest in solving our conflicts?  
How can we move forward (towards rapprochement) without risking a revolution/coup d'état from some "conservative" circles in our society?



## **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia – Teaching history after the breakdown of regimes and civil war**

What do we want to remember for the future?

How to approach burning issues from the recent past in a divided society?

How to integrate the voices that are not being heard?

How to create a common and safe space for dialogue?

How to teach history in a divided society?

How to foster greater understanding, remove stereotypes and reduce conflict?

How can history teaching contribute to reconciliation and rebuilding trust in divided societies?

What tools can bring more understanding than just interpreting history?

How can personal stories (oral history) contribute to a better understanding of the past?

Is a joint history textbook for the SEE (Southeast Europe) region possible?

How to step beyond making just resource books (including documents from the different countries) and create a common approach and methodology of teaching and learning together?

If we cluster the above-mentioned questions, we come to the following thematic groups:

### **Questions about guilt and justice**

These are questions with a moral intention, asking about the guilt of individuals and about the collective guilt of larger groups (e.g. peoples). A question about guilt is also a question about justice, and can be a question about justice related to crimes. It asks if individuals or groups who have committed a certain crime have been or should be punished justly, or if they have been or should be punished at all. It also has a psychological and social health component: If a son/daughter wants to know if his/her father has committed a crime, the answer (also no answer or silence) has a big impact on the well-being and the identity of the inquirer. Some marginal groups may also ask why they are treated so unjustly by a superior entity or another group. In this respect, questions of justice are related to questions of diversity. Sometimes these questions expect an answer about the historical truth of a certain past event. The inquirer then wants to know *what really happened*. Some of these questions simply cannot be answered.

## Questions dealing with identity issues

Questions dealing with identity issues can concern the identities of states, governments, ethnic, religious and other large groups, but also the identity of individuals. These two levels are often interlinked: an identity crisis of a newly-established state (e.g.) can also lead to an identity crisis of its population and/or some individual citizens. Questions of identity all ask in different ways *Who are we?* or *Who am I?* The identity questions are closely connected with the questions on diversity; these two groups could also be merged.

## Questions raising issues of diversity

As mentioned above, these questions are in fact also identity questions: If you ask about (e.g.) different ethnic or religious groups living together, you are also questioning the character of the state, land or supranational entity they are living in. But these questions also have an ethical and political or even ideological component: If you (e.g.) question a political approach which tries to equalise and/or neglect ethnic differences, the answer to such a question will be a normative one. Your answer will (e.g.) depend on your ideology and conviction. Questions about diversity are also questions concerning justice.

## Questions about reconciliation/rapprochement/peaceful coexistence/cooperation

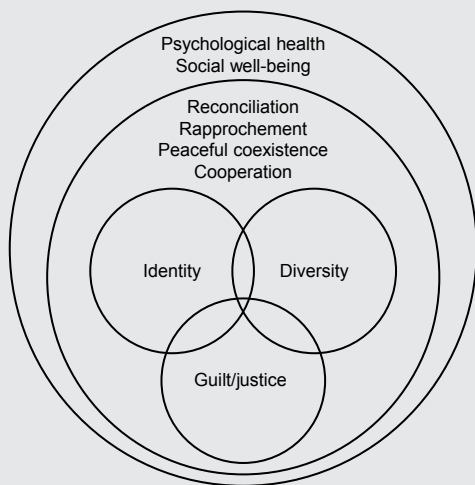
Most of these questions have in common that they come from the ideal state of living together peacefully. Only very few ignore the fact that peaceful coexistence is better than confrontation. Some are very sceptical about whether it will be possible to live together in peace, but nevertheless they have 'peace' as an overarching concept in mind. *How can we overcome conflicts?* is mostly the direction of these questions. But often also aspects of guilt and justice are touched upon: one may (e.g.) ask how it will ever be possible to reconcile after genocide has been committed by one conflict party towards the other.

## Questions about psychological health and overall and social well-being

Here, often a very private or individual concern is addressed: People may be oppressed. People may be traumatised by war, conflict or unjust living conditions. They may be injured and looking for help and/or be neglected by society and/or their government. Somehow these questions are among the most crucial ones because all other processes and aspects brought up by the above-mentioned clusters of questions depend on the willingness and ability of the individual to act. No reconciliation, no justice, no healthy identity or respect-based peaceful living together can be reached without the individual acting for these values. That is why the empowerment and struggle for the psychological health and overall and social well-being of the individual and the groups he or she belongs to are so important.

The following diagram visualises the interconnectivity of the thematic groups of questions (Fig.1). It is easy to see that all the clusters are strongly interdependent.

**Fig.1 Thematic questions diagram**



Along with the questions related to content, there are overarching questions that reveal the perceptions, interpretation and understanding of the explored events from the past (questions concerning the historical narra-

tive) and other questions that are focused on the methodology or how to approach and deal with the past.

### **Overarching questions concerning the historical narrative**

These questions ask about the interpretation, classification and contemporary utilisation of certain historical events, epochs and/or phenomena. For example: Was the Soviet Union Russian imperialism? or was it a transnational ideological movement in which many different ethnic groups participated? This is a question that illustrates very well how differently one and the same epoch can be interpreted. The reasons for preferring one or the other interpretation are often of a political nature, and may have a direct impact on the identity of a state, country, ethnic group, etc. To stick with the example mentioned above: Choosing one or other interpretation can considerably influence (e.g.) a country's policy towards Russia. Certainly these questions also belong to the guilt and justice cluster. If a certain past is accepted in the official narrative as a time of terror against a certain group (or individuals), then the repressed group (hopefully) experiences justice and atonement in the country which adopted this national narrative.

An interpretation of the past can most certainly foster reconciliation and conflict resolution, or the opposite: make it impossible.

### **Overarching questions concerning HOW to approach and deal with all these questions**

This aspect has a methodology and is based on the values and tools of adult education, the spirit of solidarity with all members of the society, empowering and giving voice to the disadvantaged. Here we ask questions starting with "how": How to approach the issue?; How can processing the past contribute to reconcile and heal divided societies, to bring peace? How to reveal and teach sensitive and silenced issues? How can dealing with the past empower societies for change? How to learn from what has happened in the past, thus bringing understanding and creating possibilities for a better future? The HOW questions are very important in situations where the WHAT questions are still too controversial. They can serve as a first step towards uniting people who have different perceptions of past events. The HOW questions are focused on creating a safe space for dialogue in the present, thus searching together for possible answers to the questions raised above.

We said in the beginning, quoting Claude Lévi-Strauss, that we are not going to answer these questions. We are sticking to that idea. But we need also to confess that we try to provide answers to these questions through the projects that we undertake. These answers are not final answers with a full-stop at the end; on the contrary, they open up spaces for learning, discourse and joint action.

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As you can see, the projects we undertake are a bit like the Koma bird in the fable at the beginning of this article: The Koma bird wins the competition because it was imperturbably following its long-term goal (to the furthest end of the world), and does not allow itself to be distracted (like the other birds). The Koma is by nature a very SLOW bird, slower than the other birds. So is the DVV International History Network. The processes we want to bring forward are so complex and multi-layered – as you can see from the catalogue of questions above – that we are working on them slowly and carefully. In addition, they demand from us and our participants enormous POWER OF ENDURANCE, quite comparable to the endurance of the bird in the story.

And there is one more thing that the Koma from Sierra Leone and the DVV International History Network have in common; this is the idea of SHARING. As the bird shares some of his colourful feathers with its fellows (and in this way brings colours into the world of the birds), we try to share wherever we can. This is the only way we can bring together the vast energies of adult education, dealing with the past and reconciliation processes, and form an effective synergetic energy that will provoke thought and change in the biographies of the people and organisations involved and contribute to bringing peace and understanding in a larger context.

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# Traditional concepts for Māori and Pacific adult education and lifelong learning

*This paper discusses traditional Māori and Pacific concepts of adult education against the background of values and philosophies observed in the work of Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen. Through his practices and services in the field of adult education (AE) and lifelong learning (LLL), he has inspired and helped us to stay rooted in our contexts, source our traditions and adapt them for global exposure and reference.*

## Introduction

This paper discusses traditional Māori<sup>1</sup> and Pacific peoples' learning concepts of ako (learn and detach), poto (skilful), 'ilo (knowing), 'ofa (unconditional love), fatongia (reciprocation) and their motivations.

We discuss these concepts to show the fit and alignment of Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen's perceived premise that context, authenticity and in-situation learning and delivery are important and that application of AE and LLL in context will be different in the Pacific than it would for other places in the world.

## A dedication through the concept of 'dasein'

For Māori and Pacific peoples, learning was purposeful and aimed at the acquisition of skills and knowledge to perform inherited roles which were dictated by the collective to which that person belonged, a social unit known as the kainga (extended family). In thinking about a dedication to Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen, a significant figure in the field of adult education, Heidegger's 'dasein' (Dreyfus 1991) is the concept that comes to mind. In the ideological crisis post First World War, philosophers sought new methods to lend certainty to a disintegrating civilization. Edmund Husserl argued against disconnectedness, rejecting the belief that objects or subjects exist independently. He also argued that people can only be certain about how things appear in their consciousness, and to arrive at any certainty, anything outside immediate experience must always be treated with caution (Eagleton 1983).

Husserl's student Heidegger expanded this argument, claiming that we cannot separate ourselves as subjects learning about objects because consciousness does not exist on its own. If one is conscious, one must be conscious of something (object), therefore subject and object are always part of the whole (Eagleton 1983; Dreyfus 1991). In applying Heidegger's perspective to a learner, then, time and space are the essence. That is, their world is here, now and it is everywhere. They are totally immersed within it, and after all, how could they be anywhere 'else'? Heidegger articulated this entrenchment in context and reality with 'dasein', which is a 'being-in-the-world' or the meaning of 'being' (Steiner 1978).

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1/ Māori are also regarded as people from the Pacific belonging to the Polynesian grouping. However, colonisation by the English has made their experience vastly different to that experienced by many other Pacific people (Vaiolleti, Morrison, Rees, 2003)

Merleau-Ponty later suggested that, while Heidegger was right, like Husserl, he focused on consciousness and tended to ignore the role of the body in 'being in the world,' in sensing the environment, participating in relationships, belonging and communication (Dreyfus 1991). Merleau-Ponty's position is closer to the philosophy which we have come to admire about Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen's approach to AE and LLL, an approach that the Māori call 'he kanohi kītea'. This means that it is important that he is physically seen and actively participating in communities, bringing and consciously employing skills of awareness, advocacy, socially and justice-driven policy and strategies amongst LLL and AE partners.

Through a lifetime of dedicated services globally, Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen has lived in Africa, various parts of Europe, taken a strong interest in the development of AE and LLL in Central Asia, and has forged a vital relationship between DVV International and ASPBAE (Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education), spanning almost four decades. He remains closely connected to ASPBAE and the Asia Pacific region, spending his pre-retirement years in the region where he started much of his substantive work on adult education. In 2010, he established the DVV International Regional Office for South and South East Asia in Vientiane, Laos, and lived in the country. Phenomenology is about understanding a phenomenon from the view of those experiencing that phenomenon, and what better way to understand it than to "be there", living with the people experiencing the phenomena.

We salute Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen's philosophy, drive, sense of justice, humility and wisdom from which organisations like ASPBAE and IMPAECT<sup>\*2</sup> (in New Zealand and Tonga) have come to benefit. His actions and approach reflect concepts and worldviews that are important for the Māori and Pacific peoples discussed in this paper.

## Worldviews

In 2014, there is still a very distinct practice of Māori values which gains its source from their own early stories of creation, originating in Polynesia. Both the Māori world and the Pacific world is cyclic and holistic. It links each person to every living thing and embraces cultural concepts e.g. whakapapa (genealogy), which forms the foundations of whānau/fanau

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2/ Indigenous Māori and Pacific Adult Education Charitable Trust, the NGO to which the authors belong. IMPAECT\* is an active member of ASPBAE.



(family) well-being (Morrison and Vaoleti 2008). These are their realities, their 'dasein'.

Kainga (extended whānau/fanau/family) forms the basic social unit in which relationships enable learning to occur and to solidify a spiritual and an economic base towards collective well-being. Whakapapa, or genealogical links, extend to include relationships to ancestral domains and spiritual beings. This is also a feature of a Pacific view of relationships, which has intergenerational accountability (Vaoleti, 2011). There is a sense of spiritual interconnectedness with the land, rivers and seas ensuring a caretaker role (kaitiakitanga), which seeks to preserve and treat resources in a sustainable way. That spiritual interconnectedness acknowledges the importance of a spiritual world from which one seeks guidance and in some cases explanations of events.

Many other values underpin and are integral to Māori/Polynesian thinking. For example aroha/ofa, which carries one meaning of unconditional generosity; tapu being the regulatory order of Māori society; rangatiratanga and mana or chieftainship which is an integral part of collective leadership responsibilities. Intrinsic to Māori and Pacific societies is their ritualistic nature, accountability to the past as well as the future, collective orientation and emphasis on processes as much as on outcomes. Cultural practices (tikanga) occur more intensely in the traditional setting of the marae (meeting places, a cultural and spiritual focus for a Māori tribe or subtribe), but also permeate through many fora and institutions throughout Aotearoa, albeit with tribal variations.

## **Ako**

Ako can be education, an education system or the act of learning itself. Typical of Pacific concepts, it is the context that determines most meanings. In practical cases, ako is to learn and to teach. Vaoleti and Vaoleti (2003) explain 'ako' as both a process and a vision, and as a concept, which underpins the learning experience. Ako is an overriding principle encompassing early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and adult education. Ako is driven by cultural, spiritual as well as collective concepts, motivations and aspirations involving training, learning by osmosis, doing, observing, practicing, reflecting, consulting and visioning and hope (Thaman 1988; Vaoleti 2011). Learning in Pacific and Māori communities was stratified. Higher knowledge was taught through wānanga, which relied on memory and communing with the spirit world. Selected learners were removed from their daily activities to enter and create a sacred space to maximise the learning opportunity, which took place throughout

the night and day. This selection was dependent on the family's role in the community.

Tiatia (1998) talks about Pacific societies expecting everyone to know and perform their role. Traditionally skills and knowledge for roles were taught between generations by way of non-formal, informal and formal interactions including apprenticeship. As a set of learning processes, Ako then has a vital role to assist Māori and Pacific to advance their learning opportunities in conjunction with instilling cultural values in order to maintain cultures, worldviews and continuity of their societies.

Success in terms of traditional education for Māori and Pacific societies is reliant upon these concepts interrelating and informing the other within the holistic framework, which is grounded in Pacific epistemological frameworks.

## **‘Ilo**

‘Ilo refers both to knowing and knowledge itself (Thaman 1988). It can mean to recognise, to discover, to know, to experience and to understand. ‘Ilo as knowledge comes in many forms and Tongans often distinguish between types of knowing and knowledge which are more for technical purposes in order to identify, classify, multiply, restrict or whatever may be necessary to maintain the economic wellness of a collective.

There was also the knowledge that is passed on from adults to young people, which may be restrictive, spiritual knowledge for maintaining symbiotic relationships, including the spirit world (Vaiotei 2011). ‘Ilo can also be the spiritual, moral or even ethical knowledge that guides the application of skills and knowledge (poto) referred to above and mentioned below.

## **Poto**

In pre-contact times, ‘poto’ simply meant clever or skilful. Both ‘ako’ and ‘‘ilo’ are necessary and integral elements necessary for achieving poto (Taufe’ulungaki 2004). To be poto is to be able to use ‘ilo in ways that are beneficial to one’s extended family as well as to the larger group with which one identifies (Thaman 1998).

To be poto not only implies achievement in education, but also the ability to carry out cultural roles in the community. Poto may then be seen as the ultimate goal of learning in the Tongan sense, a type of learning that is integrated in its aims and is holistic in its achievements (ibid).

**‘Ofa** (Tongan)/**aroha** (Māori)/**aloha** (Hawaiian)/**alofa** (Samoan)

Most Pacific peoples (including the Māoris) attribute their behaviour and the actions of others’ actions to the spiritual and supernatural properties of ‘ofa. ‘Ofa, which has many variations as above, stands for love, compassion, kindness, sympathy, empathy and generosity. Pacific peoples aspire to virtues such as anga ‘ofa (a loving nature), anga faka’apa’apa (respect for others, reverent disposition), fakama’uma’u (restraint), mamahi’i me’a (zealousness in a good cause to the point of pain), tauhi vaha’a (maintaining good relationship, being eager to mend relationships) and loto (to be humbly willing, deferential, but keenly committed) as they see that those are qualities of ‘ofa (Kavaliku 1977).

‘Ofa then is often identified as signalling states of being that are associated with people who know what to do and whose actions are for the benefit of everyone, particularly the weaker in a kainga, or community (Thaman 1988). ‘Ofa has been displayed by Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen constantly. At a sectoral level, he used a privileged position to share the intellectual, technical and resource wealth of the industrial economies to bring hope to the weaker members of the world community. At a personal level, he advocated for representation that was inclusive and diverse at all levels, and consequently a number of nominees from the Asia South Pacific region were admitted to the International Hall of Fame for Adult and Community Education.

## **Fatongia**

The ultimate goal of ako for Pacific people is to live harmoniously in a sustainable relationship with others, the environment and their God/s (Vaiotei 2011). Fatongia is one’s role, duty or obligation to family and community to ensure the above is achieved. This is aligned with the claims by Tia-tia (1998) that Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands and Niuean societies are founded on the basic assumption that everyone knows and performs his/her role especially towards the weaker members of the family or community, and ako prepares the learners to carryout fatongia competently. As seen above, roles are still influenced by belief in the supernatural, which is culturally specific to contexts, time and space.

Tauhi vaa, mentioned above, is the maintenance of a symbolic space between individuals, groups and even with God/s (or other supernatural beings). They are vital for harmony and good relationships within the Pacific, and this type of learning is taught principally by AE or LLL. Through AE and LLL, individuals learn who they are, and how they are related to others

and the fatongia that they need to perform to families, church and fonua (country) in order to keep those relationships in good stead.

### **A traditional model for Māori and Pacific adult education**

If ako is for achieving harmonious living in a sustainable way with others, the environment (and God/s) then, central to Māori and Pacific concerns, is control and accountability towards their communities, this being the proof that ako has been achieved. It is in the realisation of the beneficial application of ako to service that benefits the community. In this case it is one's community that decides if a learner's education has been a success.

Because of the complexity of modern living, ako includes all informal, non-formal and formal education. In Māori and Pacific communities, there is ongoing teaching by way of formal means for technical and scientific purposes as well as influential adults and family members so that they will continue to practise and perpetuate cultural norms according to their own codes and expectations.

To crystallise the narratives contained in this paper is to create a lifelong learning model for Māori and Pacific peoples which has at its heart these important cultural imperatives (see Figure 1). These are: service for the well-being of the community; learning for the well-being of the soul and the spirit and physical well-being; ensuring the strength of identity which is grounded in the whenua/fonua or land; the realisation of the potential force which is yet to be tapped but is focussed and alert to future possibilities. Above all, it is aspirational while advocating for cultural perpetuation without forgetting about knowledge required for day-to-day living.

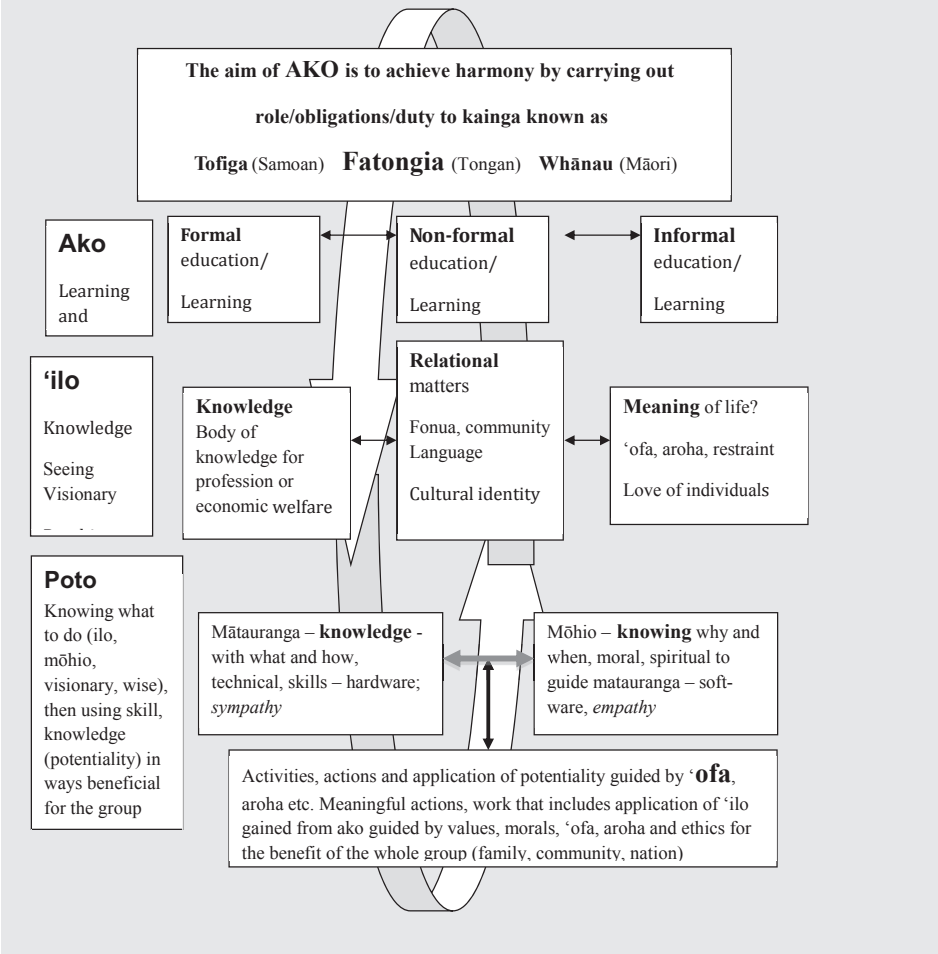
### **Conclusion**

For the majority of the world population, their 'dasein' is where they are, in terms of time and space. Māori and Pacific peoples developed AE and LLL according to their needs and did not put the needs of the future generation at risk. This has been responsible for a sustainable existence with their environment, both tangible and intangible.

Given the tensions, exploitations and other crises we are currently experiencing, perhaps we need to learn more from the indigenous wisdoms and those demonstrated by authentic leaders in different fields of education, including LLL and AE. Certainly Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen's work and philosophy has demonstrated that these are possible. His 'dasein' has touched us and given us confidence to apply our own LLL and AE con-

cepts in the South Pacific with our unique needs and diverse realities. His retirement will bring an end to a global chapter in the book of LLL and AE, but his legacy driven by 'ofa/aroha will live on in the hearts of many.

Figure 1: Lifelong learning model for Māori and Pacific peoples



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# Adult education and development

## DVV International – 45 Years – and going stronger than ever

*The article summarises the origins and development of DVV International, the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV). It started 45 years ago with a few annual training courses for African and Latin American adult educators, and has now become a global partner of adult learning organisations and associations worldwide, based on the principles of professional expertise, solidarity, respectful partnership and identification with the needs of the poor. It is a donor organisation with a clear professional background and commitment to advocacy efforts to secure the political recognition of adult learning as vital for the construction of equitable and democratic societies in our One World.*



This year the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association – DVV International (“the Institute”) completes 45 years of action. It is no small accomplishment for any organisation remotely related to adult learning and non-formal education to stay active for so long, and to keep on growing and taking on new challenges in spite of the fact that adult education is not a main priority of its sponsors or a major item on national or international policy-making agendas.

## Beginnings

It was actually right after the Second World War that the German *Volks-hochschulen* became interested in exchange and cooperation with institutions and colleagues abroad. In addition to reconciling Germany and German adult education institutions with potential partners in the neighbouring European countries, the newly-founded *German Adult Education Association* (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband – DVV) extended its attention beyond the European borders to the countries of Africa and Asia which were in the process of freeing themselves from colonial domination. Plans emerged around this time to organise a training course for adult educators from developing countries. With strategic vision, Helmuth Dolff, the director of DVV from 1956 until his death in 1983, realised that the German *Volkshochschulen* had the potential to make a positive contribution to development assistance. He succeeded in convincing the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to tap this potential and establish the DVV as a partner of the Federal Republic in the provision of development assistance. The Ministry, which itself had just been created in November 1961, agreed to finance the implementation of separate training programmes for African and Latin American adult educators in recognition of the fact that, in a post-colonial context, adult education was a vital factor for progress towards autonomy. In the beginning, these training courses were held at selected German *Heimvolkshochschulen* (Göhrde, Rendsburg). Annual courses were organised from 1963 until 1974. In hindsight, the wisdom to hold them in Germany and present a model of community adult education, which was hardly transferable to the countries of origin of the students, can be questioned. But the courses certainly helped to sow the seeds for emerging adult education initiatives in Africa and Latin America, and to form the leadership to carry and further these initiatives.

## **From training courses to a global range of cooperation projects**

It quickly became clear that professional exchange and training programmes alone would not suffice to develop reliable structures of adult education in the developing regions of the world, and that stable, long-term support would also be required. When it came to putting into practice what they had learned, so as to shape the education systems in their own countries, the graduates of training courses in Göhrde, Rendsburg or San José – where a similar course had been established for Latin American adult educators – naturally looked to the DVV as a competent partner. Again it was Helmuth Dolff who took the initiative to turn requests for assistance into projects. Step by step, he obtained financial support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The growing scope of work demanded the establishment of a separate work unit at DVV's central office, from where the Institute started in 1969.

### **Africa**

Project work began in several African countries, Zaire, Sudan, Somalia, the People's Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone. Support focussed on integral approaches to initial and in-service training for adult educators, income-oriented projects, measures geared to the acquisition of practical know-how, strengthening community participation, basic education beyond literacy training, health education and the promotion of local languages and cultures. National and regional projects in many other African countries followed, and Africa remains the region which receives the largest share of the Institute's funds and support.

### **Latin America**

Latin America followed suit. Costa Rica was the first country to receive support from DVV for its Instituto Centroamericano de Extensión de la Cultura (ICECU), which produced educational radio programmes in Spanish and various Mayan languages and published a Farmer's Almanac, thus providing broad access to basic education and general knowledge while preserving and promoting traditional culture in the entire Central American region. In the seventies, DVV's commitment was extended to Colombia, and one by one Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Guatemala and other countries were included in a Latin American network of cooperation projects which encompasses the entire region.

## **Asia**

First contacts to the Asian region date back to 1964, when Helmuth Dolff participated in an initiative that led to the founding of the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) which was to become a reliable partner for DVV International's Asian cooperation initiatives, and is so to this day. Work with ASPBAE led to contacts and bilateral cooperation ventures with numerous Asian partners that extend all over the South East Asian and Pacific region.

Other steps in the expansion of the Institute's work came with the initiation of cooperation activities in the Central Asian region. Another regional project emerged, covering Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In more recent years, the Institute developed cooperation initiatives in the Mediterranean region and the Near East, through cooperation projects in Morocco, Palestine and Jordan, not forgetting its partners in Israel with whom the Institute has cooperated for many years bilaterally and through the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

## **Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe**

A major turning point for the Institute's work was the fall of the Berlin wall and the collapse of the Socialist systems in Central and Eastern Europe. It was followed by an unprecedented rise in challenges facing society in general. Adult education was a point in case. It had a vital social role to play, but lacked resources and was not yet adequately anchored in the legal structures of the Central and Eastern European countries. To ensure the success of social transition there, the Institute felt it to be expedient as well as necessary to channel aid into adult education as one of the priority elements for social change, helping it to redefine its structures and obtain both private and public recognition. It was not difficult for the Institute to initiate cooperation activities. Even during the time of the Cold War and the Iron Curtain, DVV had over the years established and maintained contacts and regular technical exchange with institutions and adult educators within the framework of long-standing bilateral cultural treaties between the Federal Republic of Germany and the various countries of Central and Eastern Europe, within the restrictive limits that the former times permitted. Starting from there, the Institute has succeeded in constructing an enduring partnership network that encompasses the entire range of Central, Eastern and South Eastern European countries.

## **Publications**

The history of DVV International's world-wide cooperation activities is also the history of 81 editions of "Adult Education and Development", a magazine that appears in three language editions, English, French and Spanish, and is distributed free of charge to institutions and individual readers who mostly reside in countries of the South. With each issue, it provides between 200 and 300 pages of editorial pages for reflections, description and analysis of practice from the South and documents and information which are relevant for their lobbying and planning, such as background papers, policy documents or political declarations arising out of the major international conferences. Additionally, the Institute also documents topical as well as region and country-focused documents on issues that concern the conditions, background, action and perspectives of adult education practice. They are printed in a series entitled "International Perspectives in Adult Education" (IPE). 70 titles have been produced so far. The Institute also provides background material and reflections for German *Volkshochschulen* that provide global learning opportunities and help create an awareness of the need for development cooperation and understanding of the challenges that face us all in this One World.

## **Financial development**

Over the years, DVV International was able to grow and strengthen its position as an important non-governmental partner of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in all matters of non-formal education. When the Institute was first established, it had to operate on an annual budget of only 1.8 million German Marks (which today amounts to approximately 900,000 Euros). Since then, the funding volume has steadily risen. By 1974, it had already reached 4.4 million Marks (around 2.2 million Euros). By 1979, it had climbed to 5.5 million Marks, and in 1984 to 8.3 million. After 20 years, in 1989, the Institute was able to provide funding of 9.4 million Marks, and its annual budget rose to 15.5 million Euros in 2013, including funds provided by other national ministries and agencies as well as the European Union. Beginning with just a few cooperation initiatives, it has grown to become a fully-fledged donor with a broad range of partner institutions and operating worldwide.

## Not just a donor organisation

There are a few elements in the Institute's orientation which differ from the majority of other donor agencies. It has never ceased to be a professional institution with a clear identification with the field of adult learning and further education. Reflecting needs and realities in its partner countries, the Institute has always worked with an open concept of adult education which is subject to the respective social conditions in each of them and comprises formal as well as non-formal and informal learning. Remedial primary education is as much a work field as teacher training or the planning processes of an indigenous village population for the creation of a bee-keeping cooperative.

The Institute's work is based on an unequivocal social orientation and a clear identification with the interests and needs of the poor and marginalised strata of the population in its partner countries. It addresses marginal groups, slum dwellers, working class quarters, indigenous groups, peasants, the unemployed or people threatened by unemployment and social exclusion, youth without work and life perspectives or women whose capacities are not recognised and who are oppressed and relegated to backward positions and invisibility.

Another characteristic of the Institute's work is that it is not restricted to education and training alone but looks further at the goal and purpose of this education and training, and follows an integral methodology. The Institute does not focus on support measures with narrow time and content definitions. Rather, it accompanies development processes of its partners which themselves change their rhythm and content in the course of time as they progress. It normally engages in sustained and reliable long-term partnerships.

This is only possible to the degree that the Institute's funders are prepared to go along with such an approach. It could not be pursued, e.g., with any of the actions of the European Commission, which are strongly product-oriented and restricted to supporting projects that are narrowly defined in terms of goals, range of activities and time. The Institute is fortunate in that its major donor, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, has for many years allowed the Institute to follow its own approach.

However the times have changed and ministries and other donors insist more and more on transparency, close definition of goals and actions, detailed planning, logical frameworks, intensive monitoring processes, frequent evaluations and the observation of quality assurance mechanisms. Necessary as these management instruments may be, they take up

a large portion of the scarce project resources, both in finance and time, and do not easily harmonise with an approach that focuses on respect for the needs and priorities of partners who should remain the owners of their own projects. It will not be an easy task for the Institute to observe the formal requirements, whilst remaining true to its own principles of cooperation in partnership.

## **Advocacy work**

As a professional organisation concerned with the development of adult education programmes, the Institute could not but involve itself in advocacy work in the interest of creating, securing and defending favourable conditions for its field of work.

This is why DVV was a partner in the creation of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE) and has always supported both the Council and its regional associations, the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), the Latin American Council for Youth and Adult Education *Consejo de Educación de Jovenes y Adultos de América Latina* (CEAAL), the African Association for Literacy and Adult Association (AALAE) and several of its succeeding Associations, the Latin American women's Education Network *Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres* (REPEM), as well as others on a smaller scale. DVV was a founding member of the European Bureau for Adult Education, which was to become the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), the largest professional association of its kind in Europe. DVV International professionals have always served as board members and vice-presidents of EAEA and have assisted numerous country associations, in particular in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, to join EAEA, find partners for cross-border projects, and contribute to the political debate on the European and global levels.

Through its Institute, DVV has been an active partner in political dialogue with national ministries, with the European Commission, and in particular with its Directorate General for Education and Culture. On the global scene, DVV International cooperated intensively with UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong learning (UIL) in the planning and monitoring processes of the various CONFINTEAs (*Conférences Internationales sur l'Éducation des Adultes*) and in the accompaniment of the Global Campaign for Education "Education for All", always endeavouring to secure a place for non-formal and adult education in the list of priorities that the countries undertook to achieve. It is because of its character as a professional organisation that DVV International's council, together with that of its regional partners, was

sought to underpin the processes that led to and accompanied these campaigns. Heribert Hinzen, in particular, was asked for, and generously provided, his vast experience, expertise and commitment in all manners of global lobbying for our professional field.

## **Concluding remarks**

Naturally, having myself worked with the Institute for so many years, I take its goals and objectives and the way it operates for granted. But the more I learned about the work of other agencies and organisations, the more I was able to appreciate its peculiarities and perhaps even its singularity. It basically rests on the fact that its international cooperation work is solidly anchored in its professional field, and that it promotes this field not only as regards the situation and needs in its own country, but reaches out to those of its partners in Europe and the entire world. It addresses both the advancement of the theoretical base of its discipline and at the same time assists its application in practical projects. It is not tied within the confines of its own interests, but can see and advance those of others with whom, nevertheless, it is united in its zeal to contribute its grain of sand to the global effort to make this world a better place to live in.

It took people such as Helmut Dolff and Jakob Horn to create this department for international solidarity action throughout the world. They were people with a grasp of the need for global cooperation, and who used propitious moments to secure the necessary institutional, financial and professional basis for transforming their vision into action, people who thereby laid the lasting foundation for the Institute's continued operation and the expansion of its compass and services. During his entire professional life, ever since 1977, Heribert Hinzen has been a decisive part of it, as Desk Officer, Vice-Director and Director of its central offices as well as directing country and regional projects. In all these capacities he has helped to allow it to grow, to shape its vision, to extend its professional weight, to secure the ties to national and global funding agencies, so indispensable for its capacity to act, and to build an ever-wider network of partners and friends. I believe that there is quite a bit to be grateful for.

## Development: global-local – a critical view

*The term development is often controversial and discredited, tarnished by a shared history of cultural and economic colonisation persisting in new forms. Meanwhile, 'globalisation' is accelerating and penetrates further, carrying new traps and temptations. Without active, capable local partners, global-led commitment and action for development commonly fails. We are not good at connecting the two levels so that the local shares the driving seat. Migration and longevity, global warming and the growth of cities create new social and ecological problems; sustainability is a new imperative. There are small successes but larger failures. Meanwhile the place of education and of lifelong learning in development remains fragile and confused.*



## Development and the old-new colonial legacy

Heribert Hinzen and I have worked together for 35 years, attempting to nurture local development: in Germany, in Europe more widely including the old 'Eastern Europe', and globally through international governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs and (I)NGOs). In particular we have worked in and with Asian and Pacific countries through a South-North partnership led by ASPBAE (the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education) and DVV International (the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, DVV). DVV International plays a vital part in supporting ASPBAE, now in its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, among the world's oldest and most influential network associations for adult and basic education and lifelong learning. ASPBAE derives strength from its ability to straddle often rigid but artificial boundaries between different kinds of development workers and learners. It crosses public sector-civil society divides at all levels from the local community, village or commune to the global.

Our thoughts have developed through this work, with many articles in DVV International's widely disseminated trilingual journal *Adult Education and Development* and other DVV International publications. As an Anglophone, I often assist as rapporteur and proceedings editor for DVV International-instigated meetings. As critical citizens of formerly warring European colonial States, we share a passion for lifelong and life-wide learning, socio-economic development, social justice and participatory democracy. From my earliest contact with DVV International in the 1970s, I have liked its capacity to work South-North as much as North-South, facilitating South-South development, without insisting on a local German overlord to manage the money and enforce DVV International views. Trust-based partnerships helped the growth of vigorous local and regional networks, projects and programmes in which both and all partners learn, and learn to change. The German Adult Education Association has gained from penetration by non-European visitors and experiences mediated by DVV International. I know more at first hand of the steady support provided by this wealthy Northern country via its adult education NGO to 'the South'.

## Can we learn to manage better with great uncertainty?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will soon be succeeded by a new cycle of Sustainable Development Goals, with Education for All (EFA) rolling into a new cycle of global development planning and politics. We

find the context for 'development' meanwhile transformed in many ways, some good, some terrible. Short-termism has become a chronic curse of Western-style democracies, some over-influenced by mass print, broadcast and electronic media driven to sell rather than to enlighten or inform. An invisible global web of power-brokers is woven through all sectors of business, financial and political society, denying democratic transparency and destroying faith in democratic process. Change for the better is instead sought on the streets; but then creating a stable governance and development process is even harder. We do not know how far the social media will become the new educator and medium for constructive participatory action. Nor do we know how far it will replace traditional forms of schooling and adult education. This new world of development appears to carry seeds of 'old colonialism' for which no constructive and sustainable alternative has been found.

### **Connecting globalisation with local commitment and action**

An evident certainty is that big systems consistently fail. Leaders in faux democracies are not good at assessing achievement and telling the truth. The cost and scale of failure, and of unanticipated, unintended, often serious consequences, is overlooked or ignored. 'Global' means big complex forces, events, political planning and decisions, some with five to twenty year time horizons, many very short. Global transformation triggered by modern computer-driven global financial transactions may take micro-seconds. We lack the human capacity to act for development at any such pace. Instead we try to manage complexity by using common criteria, rules and processes that deny diversity, the very lifeblood of human and larger ecosystems.

A further change since DVV International and ASPBAE started collaborating is that the new religion of neo-liberalism grew up in the eighties and has triumphed almost universally. The wisdom of the market and the virtue of competitive acquisition are a paradigm challenged only by a minority of public intellectuals and more seriously by militant Islam. The development community tries to accommodate and work with or within this triumphant paradigm, but it affronts and negates what 'sustainable human development' values rest on. Neo-liberalism echoes long-disproven trickledown theories of early modernisation. This new fin-de-siècle and 21<sup>st</sup> century world needs to discard much: not of what we believe and value, but of how we go about doing things.

## New socio-ecological challenges – the sustainability imperative

Pragmatically, we may choose not to engage in direct opposition with the forces of neoliberalism. It has wealth in the billions and armies of lobbyists, lawyers and financial operators. We may ignore scholars and public intellectuals locked within that paradigm. But we have in any event to recognise that new socio-ecological challenges and climate perils threaten to cancel out all the achievements and efforts both of competitive global exploitation and of balanced sustainable development. In a different way than Marx wrongly predicted, contradictory seeds of destruction in this new era may prove his point now, two centuries later.

An obvious example is provided by global warming and the power of lobbying on behalf of those with an interest in denying that climate change exists, or is man-made. The resulting delay in taking action is a triumph for these interests. This leads to short-termism, which greatly enhances the cost and damage to the whole global community. The clock is inexorable; the cost to future generations spirals with each delay. It is a contest which ends with everyone losing. Education is seen less as a solution for addressing causes and learning sustainable new ways of living, and more as a way to build innovative and competitive 'knowledge economies'. Science applied to mainly technological, smart manufacturing and medical innovation consumes resources for R&D (research and development) that is also required by essential moral and social knowledge – that is understanding and wisdom.

### What are the new challenges?

One way of responding to this question is to say that it is a *failure of governance* to manage ourselves in new times. We cannot manage complex causality. Our tendency is to manage complexity by (a) standardising solutions and measures, thus ignoring the diversity of people and context. Understanding and working with local diversities is however essential for success. Secondly (b), we divide and compartmentalise life and tasks into units and departments with responsibility for problems which no one can solve alone.

Another less obvious and tangible difficulty is the failure to recognise in its full and profound sense the meaning and power of *culture*: people's ways of knowing, seeing and doing. This includes traditional locally-embedded and contextualised understanding and wisdom. Allied to this, we trust new science-based knowledge executed as policy with the use of new technical capabilities to manipulate large data sets, thinking

that these enable policies to be implemented successfully. This however ignores all we know about motivation, and denies the basis of active participatory democracy. People need to take part in deciding the future they want to achieve, in understanding the requirements for this, and in committing to doing what is necessary. Often called *empowerment*, this creates energy and frees up initiative to make things happen. People may then be able to work together locally (horizontally); and to be part of an informed system of governance from street and village community through to the global councils of the United Nations and other bodies (vertically). Even without neo-colonial and classist attitudes, modern management practices this 'democratic two-way street', turning civil society organisations into bureaucracies and universities into Fordist production lines.

Another way of answering 'What are these new challenges?' is by reference to the real events and problems that require good governance to manage and resolve. Climate change is the most massive and stark, yet easiest to put aside because it is gradual, cumulative in the long term, and leaves it to future generations to solve or suffer. Meanwhile we focus on immediate worries that affect the next election. So far the drowning of small island communities affects only tiny numbers of remote people – an example of the highly disadvantaged whom development especially addresses. Other extreme weather events are explained as short-term cycle accidents. Ever since global warming came to be recognised, belief in the mythical working of the market – to produce the best possible development outcome and to achieve the greatest good of the greatest number – has dominated global narrative and popular media. Note the exhaustion of non-renewable resources; and new realisation and action by some governments of the need to control water and food supplies. We thus realise that neo-colonialism is alive and well; *Britannia rule the waves* becomes ownership of food-producing land and control of fresh water by China and others.

More immediately, the economic sphere has been preoccupied with the global financial crisis and contraction of growth. The 'solution', austerity, addresses symptoms of debt rather than causes. 'Causes' are an affront to free-market liberalism. Behind the inequalities of austerity we see wealth-poverty gaps widening within and between societies. This creates new forms of slavery, bondage and people-trafficking that set civilised development back years and even centuries. The result is evident: poverty in the countryside and on the streets of many towns and cities in many countries. New technology as well as the political economy of the market contributes to chronic high un- and under-employment, especially youth unemployment and labour casualisation. This generates social alienation,

unrest and the rapid growth of the security and penitentiary industries. Reduced health and life expectancy as well as security worries follow.

## **Migration and other global challenges**

An explosive dimension of the interwoven problems for development and its unavoidably political context is migration within and between nations. The world's urban population now exceeds the rural; mega-cities and metro-city regions are growing inexorably. Many new environmental, social and logistical problems follow. Most of these can be successfully addressed only by long-term multi-sector planning and investment, and by committed local participatory as well as global and national political action. Commitment implies understanding, believing and knowing what to do. Here adult education, lifelong learning and new orders of development should meet up.

Migration with its both welcome and undesired economic impact, and the revival of inward-facing nationalism, xenophobia, sexism, racism and other divisive beliefs, is prominent among the consequences of neo-colonialism and market elevation over human development values. When there is no place for shared planning and investment for the future (no role for a strong state and other agents of government), the weakest are neglected. Then new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be even less successful than hard-fought MDGs. Again, education might be seen as the way to help people know what is in their shared long-term interest, whatever vote-buying politicians and circulation-hungry media tell them. The locale for such useful applied learning should be the street corner, village river bank, market square, pub or coffee house, as well as social media, not only the private clubs and dinner meetings of the elite, or the canteens and exercise yards of prisons.

Migration may be the most prominent problem today from the new global economic order, with public opinion fuelled by instant broadcast and new social media. Demographic change is however more than this. It includes longevity, an ever-growing 'third age' urban and metropolitan population, and related issues: the falling proportion of 'working age'; loneliness and isolation in the 'post-migratory society'; child protection and care in a world where women work away from the family; and neighbourhood fractures with the break-up of old communities and new 'different' neighbours. Faith-based loyalties bringing 'globalism' into the street and village.

Space precludes more than this sampling of the new socio-economic challenges to the development of globalism. Let us conclude by returning to the role of adult educators and adult education.

### **Conclusion: What part do education and lifelong learning play?**

ASPBAE and DVV International are dedicated to improving the quality of life of poor people at the heart of development. This has informed Heribert Hinzen's life of endeavour, and defined our collaboration over the decades. It means universalising access to adult education, advancing the case and ultimately the practice of lifelong learning by all, throughout life and in all settings. Some in the education for development network of (I)NGOs inhabiting the Big Tent movement led by UNESCO Co-Chairs in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon, are scholarship-based gradualist reformers; others are radical activists. Their common ground is lifelong learning for the purpose of meeting needs. It includes classroom study for young and older, and adult learners' 'discourse learning for leisure', especially for the ranks of the retired and perhaps lonely. This meets a social need addressed in a great adult education tradition, along with learning for other social, economic and political purposes. It means learning for some end beyond itself. And it is seen as essential to strong sustained development. It assumes civil society to be essential.

This paper is called a critical review. What makes it 'critical'? Here are three pointers.

(1) Much of the precious volunteered and low-paid endeavour of civil society workers in globally networked bodies like ASPBAE goes into lobbying, representing, and policy-influencing. Cost and benefit are invisible, but even travel-light lobbying NGOs, especially (I)NGOs, need time and funds for communication and travel. Like it or not, many conferences, seminars and planning events need attending to influence effectively, and NGO income, however gained, is precarious. Another precious finite resource is time. (I)NGO leaders, like modern political leaders, easily lose touch with the grassroots realities which development is for. It may be tempting to generalise, deny uniqueness and diversity, and become irrelevant. In this way, managing in the global setting can threaten the local, weakening the capacity to connect and empower the local within global policy-making.

(2) This task of managing scarce resources amplifies the need to be clear about the most pressing, fast-changing priority learning needs in diverse development contexts. Educators need intelligence, strength and courage to facilitate while leading: not to romanticise whatever ‘the client’ (the village, neighbourhood or community) says; able to argue from a base of moral and sustainable purpose with both ‘the local’ and ‘the global’; perhaps irritate and lose friends in the process. An example of moral failure would be treating short-term technical/vocational education/training (VET) goals that government and communities want for immediate economic purpose as the *only* kind of adult education. Strong leadership precludes retreating into the company and special language of fellow development educators. It means living in that specialised world while being of the difficult ‘real world’ in all its vicious intransigence.

(3) Adult educators occupying so many roles and beset by so many urgent tasks have two chronic challenges. One is to understand how communities and organisations as well as individuals learn; and to foster this as well as individual learning (whether in the classroom, via the Internet, on the job or in community action). The rich rhetoric of learning cities, etc., often lacks practical meaning; or it means just enabling more individuals there to learn as if alone.

The second is to cease using the words *education and learning* interchangeably. If we want to argue for more resources for *adult education* – VET, civic education, skill updating, access to formal accredited study – let us say *education*. This requires certain human and other resources; argue for those. If we mean *learning*, let us understand and support how local people and peoples do learn, and show their learning in changed behaviour. By saying *learning* (lifelong and life-wide) when we mean *education*, we deny the case for finance: If we all learn everywhere all the time, why demand resources? By confusing the two, we also lose the real force of learning for regeneration and renewal that civil society and our organisations need to govern well and survive in an exciting but hazardous century.

Criticism without constructive purpose can be nihilistic. DVV International under Heribert Hinzen’s leadership has been a force for long-sighted development that tries to keep local communities in the driving seat. There is every reason to believe that this will continue, so long as clear thinking, a moral compass and constructive optimism continue to pervade its work and that of partners like ASPBAE.

## Reclaiming public spheres: Challenges facing adult education in the next decade

*In the course of his long professional journey, Heribert Hinzen encouraged many civil society actors around the world to strengthen their capacities to promote lifelong learning such that the voices of excluded citizens can reclaim public spheres. It is in this spirit that Heribert's call for our collective engagement to ensure that lifelong learning for all remains at the centre of post-2015 development agenda is crucial.*



“It should be clear that opportunities and time for bottom-up debates are running out very quickly. The EFA (Education for All) follow-up might already take place at the beginning of 2015 in Korea. Thus a clear strategy is needed. One such could be ‘Lifelong Learning For All’ – with related goals for the diversity of specific education sectors and needs of the people. This should focus on youth and adults and move to national targets and indicators for implementation and measuring of achievements.” (Hinzen 2013)

Over the past forty years of his professional life as an adult educator, as a professional leader and as a champion of lifelong learning for all, Heribert Hinzen has promoted, supported and advocated a hugely significant contribution to empowering adults and civil society. PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) and many of my colleagues in India and South Asia have been greatly inspired by Heribert’s unwavering commitment for lifelong learning for all. The relevance of that commitment is even more crucial as we advance to this rather contentious next period of humanity.

## **Learning from life, for life**

In various aspects of human endeavour, learning from life is critical for survival and advancement. Therefore, let us examine the relationship between civil society, adult learning and transformation.

Firstly, impetus for citizens’ action arises from their own immediate conditions. In response to those conditions, people get together and take some action. This action requires further reflection and learning. This is where structured opportunities for adult learning can hasten and enable the process of collective action. Civil society action for transformation requires sustained nurturing from adult learning. Workers’ organisations in the informal sector of the economy have felt that structured learning opportunities are rather limited. Women’s groups have also felt relatively deprived of systematic adult learning opportunities. These are pointers to our recognition of the significance of adult learning provisions for civil society action for transformation.

Secondly, initiatives of adult learning for civil society take a variety of forms. Much of it is informal sharing of deep insights and generational experiences. It also includes exchange through exposure and study tours where a group of citizens visit another group to learn about ideas which they can use in their own context. Often, structured learning opportunities through workshops, camps and conferences are also important occasions for adult learning. The variety and diversity of provisions needed to enrich civil society actions are related to the vast variety and diversity of civil

society formations and actions in a given society. Such a diversity of adult learning provisions is possible since practitioners of adult learning focus upon multitudes of approaches to support adult learning.

Clearly, multiple forms of adult learning opportunities and processes are utilised by citizens in pursuit of their common action. It can also be noticed that an important input in strengthening citizens' initiatives is to build and enhance their capacities for learning. This does not require enormous resources or complex institutions and interventions. What is needed is a simple process of gaining confidence in one's own ability to learn and to teach. Mutual learning among citizens and their associations becomes the hallmark of citizens' action and that requires nurturing of capacities (Tandon 1998).

### **Learning to construct knowledge**

While much attention is paid to formal academic and research institutions as sites for knowledge production, it is generally lost sight of that knowledge is also produced in the practice of civil society, its movements and aspirations. Adults learn to construct knowledge as they learn to address daily challenges of life and living. Knowledge so constructed has relevance beyond the personal, and has meaning for public spheres.

The essential base of knowledge in civil society is life itself. In pursuit of various activities of daily living, in managing the family, community, the land, forest, water, in looking after the health and hunger of one's own family, in producing and consuming goods and services – life creates a vast series of experiences. Thus *life itself becomes the base for understanding social reality* and becomes the source of knowledge in civil society.

Another important base of knowledge has been *intergenerational*. Civil society operates through a network of informal arrangements, many of which pass through generations within families, communities and social groups. This tradition across generations becomes the basis for regularly refining, sharpening and improving our understanding and knowledge of different aspects of human endeavour (Tandon 1994).

### **Learning citizenship**

"The time for 'making the case' is now. The current context of crises has posed big questions about the conventional wisdom of societal development in the North and in the South. This is the time vigorously and boldly to make the case for youth and adult education to be made a part of

national and global policy regimes. This is the time to engage with those who are trying to evolve new forms of global governance. This is the time for adult education to come out of the ghetto and be on the main street!" (Tandon 2013)

The future of humanity depends deeply on collective learning to become ethical global citizens. Learning citizenship is the practice of becoming informed, active and engaged citizens. The challenge of exclusion of certain citizens, their voices and world-views needs to be overcome if peaceful, prosperous and harmonious communities of diversity and plurality are to cohabit on this planet.

Lifelong learning is the vision for such a future, and adult education provides the means to achieve the same.

The historical project of constructing nation-states relied on constructing a singular political authority, which then conferred on its inhabitants a singular political identity (for example, I am an Indian). The administrative authority of a state (including a democratic state) is necessarily distinct from the normative and moral authority of a nation. Nation implies shared values, symbols, rituals, norms and ideas. In contemporary contexts, human beings *may* cohabit several nations (in the sense of systems and shared values), while they may inhabit only one state.

The resolution to this dilemma is to redefine the public sphere where citizenship is practiced. The exclusive reliance on state-provided space as public sphere tends to overlook the reality of civic spaces where public engagements, debates and dialogues are being carried out. Thus, dialogue, discussion, deliberation and debate among strangers in tea and coffee shops, bus stands and *chaupals* (village gathering places) help to share different points-of-view and generate agreements on some.

In its original formulation in Ancient Greece, citizens were expected to formulate laws and rules, as well as participate in their implementation. If rules and laws relate to a wider public space (including that offered by the state as well as beyond it), then citizenship entails co-constructing, with other citizens, rules and laws that govern such public spaces, and to participate in them. In this sense, the concept of citizenship is able to include those public spaces where other identities become active and meaningful. Thus community programmes, kinship gatherings, professional conclaves, religious congregations, etc, all become part of those plural public spheres where citizens update their civic responsibilities.

In doing so, citizenship is also learnt in practice. Citizenship education in high schools teaches kids civics – how political authority is organised, and how citizens should exercise their formal rights and duties. Citizenship learning becomes an experiential practical methodology as people learn to act as citizens in multiple public spheres.

## Conclusion

In sum, therefore, affairs of the public good need to be reclaimed in new public spheres. The state and its spaces provide some significant opportunities for expression of active citizenship. In addition, multiple civic spaces need to be constructed and utilised as public spheres for the practice, and learning, of active citizenship. It is in this sense that reclaiming public spheres in the realm of the citizen becomes imperative. It then presents a citizen-centric view of citizenship. Lifelong learning is the practice of learning citizenship in public spheres.

In the course of his long professional journey, Heribert encouraged us, and many other civil society actors around the world (in Europe, Africa, Asia, everywhere), to strengthen their capacities to promote lifelong learning such that the voices of excluded citizens can reclaim public spheres. By so doing, ordinary citizens, especially women and youth around the world can have a say in determining directions for a sustainable and peaceful future for all humanity. It is in this spirit that Heribert makes the call for our collective engagement to ensure that lifelong learning for all remains at the centre of post-2015 development agenda.

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# Representing the Golden Triangle: The legacy and mission of Heribert Hinzen in the making of modern adult learning and education in Hungary (1996–2006)

*Heribert Hinzen has become a legendary missionary of adult learning and education in Hungary because of the remarkable decade he spent trying to change and develop Hungarian adult learning and education while the country was on its way to accession and full membership of the European Union.*

## **Promoting the modernisation of Hungarian adult education: Bringing Hungary closer to the newly forming European Union**

When Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen arrived at his new post in Budapest, Hungary, to lead and manage the project office of DVV International, he had a challenging task and, at the same time, a remarkable situational advantage based on the work of his predecessor, Jakob Horn, who had established the work and mission of the project office very well through his five-year mandate for the period 1991-1996 and created an essential partnership and connection both with governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions starting to become active in the field of adult education and training right after the first free elections in Hungary in 1990.

Heribert Hinzen was able to build on the achievements and efforts of Dr. Horn and, moreover, shift the work of the project office into top gear for various reasons. The era of his vice-directorship in Bonn from 1991-1995 experienced the development of adult learning and education slowly directed into central policy actions of the emerging European Union with some hard lobbying work by EAEA (the European Association for the Education of Adults) to make use of the Maastricht Treaty, which underlined the development of quality education and training, together with the development of access and equal opportunities, partnership-based actions in the Member States and, also, in countries having entered the accession process with the EU. The mid-1990s provided a rather peaceful social and economic climate for the use and development of adult education for various purposes.

Heribert Hinzen believed that European integration would be an advantage for the development of new democracies in the former Socialist world, which needed serious attention and help in the process of modernisation and development of their education and training, including adult education. Coming to Budapest was a matter of will, enthusiasm and professional interest towards a particular kind of work, to provide help and assistance in changing Hungary's adult education and training into a more open, learner-centred quality system in order to become better able to provide efficient and effective services for its users and for the broad public.

Heribert Hinzen started his work in 1996 at a very interesting time in Central and Eastern Europe, both in international, regional and in local terms. UNESCO was just preparing for CONFITEA V (International Conference on Adult Education) in Hamburg for 1997, and the European Union, more precisely its Commission, published its White Paper on Education to call attention to issues like basic skills, social exclusion and

second-chance schooling. 1996 was marked by lifelong learning, a period during which the same European Commission tried to get Member States to discuss the ways of practices and opportunities for raising participation and better performance in learning and in other respected education-oriented activities. Simultaneously, a lot of educational and training reforms were introduced in most countries of Central-Eastern Europe. Hungary was on its way to reform and develop its system of education and training.

The aim of Heribert Hinzen was to develop a golden triangle for adult education in Hungary. First, he continued with the building of dialogue between institutions and organisations of adult education and training from formal, to non-formal and informal sectors to exchange ideas and plans for future work and to transfer knowledge on good practices. Secondly, he initiated partnership-based analytical surveys and research in strong co-operation with distinguished departments and institutes of particular universities from all over the country which had become places for the professional development of adult education, and of adult educators with multidisciplinary orientation. The third dimension of development work was educational, namely, Heribert Hinzen established fruitful connections with a number of universities where he gave lectures to students in adult education with a special focus on the internationalisation of adult education – trends and issues.

The improvement of partnerships in adult education needed time and continuous struggles to collect and share ideas and practices in adult education and training in urban and rural communities alike. The networking moved beyond connections with the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge (TIT) and with the Hungarian Folk High School Society (MNT), and enabled the project office of DVV International to generate a living network of organisations and institutions engaged in the education and training of adults within project work, joint events of conferencing and dialogue so as to understand and reflect on current trends challenging the practice of teaching and of learning with adults.

While in Budapest, Heribert Hinzen brought together almost all the actors in Hungarian adult education and training, cultural development and civil society groups to critically respond to major points around the key issues connected with lifelong learning, the learning society and those of CONFINTEA V. This orientation gave way to the internationalisation of Hungarian adult education and, accordingly, opened new links towards several partners in adult education in Germany and several of its states. The impact of CONFINTEA V on Hungarian adult education was very serious.

Heribert Hinzen and the Project Office were a key source of information for a few enthusiastic scholars and their young colleagues to collect

reliable information on the preparatory work, participation in CONFINTEA V and its follow-up actions as well.

### **The Golden Triangle of development work in Hungarian adult education:**

#### **a) The building of dialogue, co-operation and networking**

Heribert Hinzen arrived from a country which had been reunited after decades of division between East and West. German Reunification taught Hungarians to recognise the importance of open and democratic societies and of free, but responsible citizens working on the improvement of their communities with critical thinking and active participation in community affairs. Hungarian society had also gone through challenging times, and Heribert Hinzen tried to bring some of his German experience in the development of adult education to his Hungarian colleagues, either professionals, educators or trainers in the field, or analytical scholars trying to understand and research the disciplinary relations of teaching and learning of adults.

However, the building of co-operation did not go easily and efficiently all the time since different political, social and professional approaches had fragmented the community of adult educators soon after 1990 and made regular co-operation amongst Hungarian representatives of adult education and training somehow difficult and rather casual. And yet, Heribert Hinzen provided a neutral platform where the Hungarian community of adult education could experience a new voice and a practical approach, one in which responsible action and productive engagement were the priority of a mind-set which required mutual understanding and respect. A culture of co-operation and networking was established during the active work of Heribert Hinzen and his strong commitment to turn adult education and training towards a modern European community with attention to quality orientations and effectiveness through learning by doing and sharing. The many conferences, seminars and project work helped to generate more trust and sensitivity towards others, upon which a practice of dialogue and partnership was built and developed. The 'Hinzen way' of moving this issue along was a combination of national co-operation and international networking in some distinguished European and other international fora so as to understand the drivers of change in regional, European and international adult education. Heribert Hinzen demonstrated rather effectively and in convincing ways that Hungarian adult educators would need further professional development in areas of key competen-



cies such as in methodologies referring to research, education/training and to development work. Heribert Hinzen provided a variety of examples of German and other international approaches and practices through various publications and through the introduction of two series of books, one called Adult Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning and the other International Adult Education and Co-operation. Those publications helped to get research work improved as well.

#### b) Research and analytical work

The second element of the Golden Triangle was based on an on-going analysis and reflection upon some major issues and trends around the modernisation of Hungarian adult education and training. Not only European trends and the impact of other international trends, but also the improvement of the multidisciplinary environment required that researchers of adult education and training in Hungary participate in a growing number of national, regional, European and other international projects and surveys to research particular aspects of adult learning and education. Although this work became very diverse, Heribert Hinzen made serious attempts to get those few researchers together to disseminate their analytical work to each other and to the professional community in the process of professionalization of adult education in the second half of the decade before the millennium.

Heribert Hinzen was very active during his stay in Hungary in openly demonstrating the need to follow international publications dealing with adult learning and education and for having to reflect on varied thoughts regarding either the individual or the community. Therefore he tried to channel particular reflections into conferences, seminars and publications so as to generate dialogue, discussion and debate, all promoting an organic route of development which could support increased participation and performance of adult learners.

#### c) Educational activities

It was always very important for Heribert Hinzen to share his thoughts and experience on adult learning and education with teaching staff as well as with their students who were studying the theory and practice of adult education in Hungarian universities. Having opened education, research and development towards adult learning and education, which is referred to as *andragogy*, Heribert Hinzen established good relations with the Lóránd Eötvös University in Budapest, the University of Debrecen and the Univer-

sity of Pécs in the form of co-operation – for example guest lecturing on current issues around adult education policies in Europe and in the world. Likewise, Heribert Hinzen pushed those universities to expand partnership in particular research as well. One example of joint research together with universities was the planning and realisation of a map of adult education in Hungary, referring to the exploration of providers from 1996 to 1998.

Heribert Hinzen has always been an advocate of promoting collaborative actions with young lecturers and researchers, and therefore it is not at all surprising that he entered into dialogue with the junior members of the teaching staff in those above-mentioned universities and urged young scholars to get on the move and explore the practice of adult education work in other EU Member States, first of all in Germany, Austria and other neighbouring countries in Central-Eastern Europe. This issue reflects Heribert Hinzen's insistence on the active use of foreign languages in teaching future generations of adult educators in higher education institutions. He also underlined the necessity to provide enough resources for the quality development of adult education work at universities. Heribert Hinzen, together with his colleagues working in the Budapest project office, promoted the publication of two series of books which aimed to help lecturers and professors in order to integrate them into reading materials for students trying to discover the world of education and training with a much wider scope.

The development of quality education for future adult educators needed serious efforts in the improvement of education and training methodologies, curricula and the exchange of good practices from all over Europe. Heribert Hinzen used the project office in Budapest for the dissemination of appropriate practices and urged the establishment of exchange programmes between universities and colleges in Europe through the use of funds available from the European Commission. The adult education programme of the EU and the preparations for the Grundtvig Programme gave way to local and regional co-operations and the exchange of teaching staff.

The educational orientation of Heribert Hinzen was backed by his own personal goals to promote the disciplinary orientations and exchanges in adult learning and education on the one hand, and to provide professional development for adult educators on the other. The second half of the 1990s opened up new dimensions for partnership and professional development in the field of education and, consequently, DVV International impressed upon educators the need to improve their teaching skills and knowledge via specific training and other programmes of knowledge transfer between countries in Europe and in the Central-Eastern Europe region. Heribert Hinzen provided a good example of how to combine 'be-

ing' and 'staying' European with special attention to certain principles in adult education and, at the same time, to recognise the need for analytical approaches in national, regional constructions for institutional and organisational modernisation with a scientific approach.

This kind of multifocal view, combined with action orientation, was somehow new in Hungary, however it really inspired a young generation of scholars engaged in adult education to develop connections and improve their knowledge through action-research and participatory analysis of adult learners in various contexts, from labour to leisure and from community to individual learning. Heribert Hinzen has always warned those young scholars to not forget about an inter-generational aspect of adult education, and he himself underlined the necessity of exchanging teaching, educational developments and biography research.

### **A European mind with sensitive approaches to the local and regional**

Heribert Hinzen brought something new and something challenging to Hungarian adult education. It was a combination of the spirit of curiosity, enthusiasm and humanism with quality as a central aspect. From Heribert Hinzen, Hungarians were able to learn something about efficient planning, concentrated actions and analytical, structured thinking, which came through his lectures and keynote speeches in conferences, seminars and other intellectually challenging events. It was necessary for Heribert Hinzen that people should make use of adult learning and education to improve their societies, economies and citizenry with critical thinking, participation and mutual exchanges of thoughts based on the active use of foreign languages, which DVV International has always promoted since its establishment.

Heribert Hinzen urged his colleagues in Hungary to publish their reflections in an active way and, accordingly, he generated new and integrative platforms for this purpose with the two series of books from the project office, to establish a Hungarian version of the publications of DVV International back in Bonn, Germany. We assume that this orientation helped to firmly establish a scientific orientation and analytical approach for several Hungarian scholars who, by the mid-1990s, were able to take on a quality-centred way of looking at the practice of adult education, combining it with new theoretical analysis and also with international examples, thus embedding it into comparative structures. This kind of scientifically led adult education opened new dimensions for research work being integrated with some new trends in European and international adult education that more and more Hungarian practitioners and scholars

could experience through growing project work and exchanges throughout Europe and beyond.

At the same time, one must also note that Heribert Hinzen was not only energetic and enthusiastic to be part of the development of adult education, he himself tried his best to make use of the advantages of the era that helped open society to be improved at a challenging time for a newly emerging democratic society and its country. Meanwhile, Heribert Hinzen was thinking and has always thought in broader terms: it was more a region and wider contexts he always investigated, trying to understand a problem and its particularities. That is what his documented written reflections and all achievements are in their reality.

### **In the promotion of a strong Folk High School system**

Recalling the many activities of Heribert Hinzen during his stay in Hungary in between 1996 and 1999, one of the most important elements is the improvement of and advocacy work for the Folk High School movement. While in Hungary, Heribert Hinzen paid particular attention to the problems of and challenges to that movement, not only in the formal structures of Folk High Schools, but by recognising the particular rural difficulties and challenges of a country slowly changing from a closed to an open society. Therefore, a very significant and sensitive approach was focused on the activities, movements and developments of the growing Folk High School community and, also, the improvement of management and leadership skills of Folk High School leaders via exchange programmes and multilateral projects through the involvement of German Folk High School groups. It was also an important mission of the project office to document each and all essential programmes of those schools trying to help adult learners and their communities in order to develop their lifelong learning competencies.

### **Conclusion**

When one tries to understand the role and mission of an adult educator, the only thing he or she has to do is look into the eyes of the people who could be helped to change their own lives through learning in adulthood regardless of the problems and serious challenges they usually have to face in everyday life. Heribert Hinzen is one of those advocates of adult education who have inspired a community of adult educators in Europe, more precisely those in Central-Eastern Europe, to keep on going with the mission of opening up adult learning to all adults regardless of age, sex,

status or position. The legacy of Heribert Hinzen is strong and ever-lasting because he has kept his partnership with Hungary alive, even after the end of his directorship in Budapest in 1999.

## Adult education in Poland: an attempt to outline a few main threads

*Through the prism of the changes that have taken place in recent years, the author undertakes a reflection on adult education in Poland. This article explores issues such as public responsibility for adult learning, the level of adult Poles' educational activity and skills, the state of the curriculum offers and the professionalisation of adult educators. Current transformations and changes occurring in the area of adult education are not satisfactory; nevertheless they are the proof of transformations and system dynamics, consistent with the trends and tendencies observable globally. Because an unceasing task remains in this context, there is a need to catch up with the standards of these countries, which – in the light of international comparative research, such as IALS, PISA and PIAAC – offer more favourable conditions for learning, and achieve better results in various fields.*

DVV International had its representation office in Poland from 1991-2009. In retrospect, it is impossible not to notice that its substantive, organisational and financial support for Polish adult education coincided with two of the probably most important historical moments in the recent history of the country. First, DVV International accompanied a giant effort by Polish adult education in the initial phase of political change, when the democratisation of the national structures and life, and the introduction of the free market economy, forced profound transformations on the adult education institutions. The Polish educational landscape completely changed in the face of the withdrawal of state subsidies for adult education. There was an urgent need to restructure the organisations and institutions, to qualify adult educators and for the development of new offers, related to the demands of the rapidly changing social and economic reality. Citizens were losing their jobs in large numbers. The rift between their qualifications and the challenges of the modernising work environment necessitated an immediate reaction from the adult education institutions and public entities responsible for creating favourable conditions for learning in adulthood. They were not prepared to fulfil these tasks. Another turning point occurred in 2004, when Poland became a member of the European Union. That change was neither rapid nor surprising; after all, preparation for entry into the EU structures lasted for years. Nevertheless, adult education faced another extraordinary challenge. This time it was about fighting the fear and concerns which integration brought to large parts of society (e.g. the acquisition of land by foreigners, worries by farmers confronted with the necessity of adjusting their production to EU standards and facing competition), but it was also about intensification of civic and intercultural education, about a broad openness to dialogue with other cultures.

I am not going to analyze DVV International's activities and contribution to the development of Polish adult education after 1989, but I will try to answer the question: What does adult education in Poland look like five years after the closing of the DVV International Office in Warsaw?

### **Adult education as a public task**

Education is an area of social life which is much stronger and more deeply rooted in the history, tradition, customs and culture of the nation than other fields (e.g. politics or economics). Adult education in Poland has a long and glorious tradition. It went its own specific way, different from other systems of adult education. It did not create, for example, institutions comparable to the German popular universities (community adult education centres), which impress with a well-developed infrastructure,

very rich curricula, and several hundreds of thousands of people using it year after year. Demands such as those consistently articulated by the German educational communities for decades (for example: 'It is the duty of public funding to take over that task' (DVV 2011: 57)) appear very rarely in Poland, and have not yet inspired a wider public debate or concrete actions from policymakers. Adult education is – as well as other sectors of the education system – heavily dominated by neoliberal education policy which owes its shape to the market economy, assuming that education is not a common good, but a commodity like everything else on the market. According to this maxim, every state intervention in education impairs the market's ability to ensure its better quality. As a result, the state, under market pressure, limits the scope of its constitutional responsibility, withdraws from protectiveness and condones violent polarisation of the economic status of residents (Potulicka 2012: 119). Adult education in Poland is a great example of a neoliberal approach to education. Public entities are engaged primarily in education for adults (schools where one can obtain school-leaving certificates, second-chance education) and short-term courses for the unemployed; sometimes local governments provide grants for the realisation of specific educational tasks or allocate resources from European funds for the training of people with the lowest qualifications. It's generally believed that everyone is responsible for his/her situation and his/her actions. Everyone is an entrepreneur managing his own life (Potulicka 2012: 102). Freedom – in a liberal perspective – gives every citizen the right to choose and achieve his/her goals. Freedom, which is above democracy, leads to the extension of the private sphere at the cost of the public sphere.

## **Adults' learning activities and skills**

Statistics show the extent to which citizens enjoy their freedom to learn in the neoliberal world. According to estimates from Eurostat, in 2011, 4.5% of Poles aged 25-64 participated in continuing education. Poland ranks below the average of the EU Member States, which is 8.9%, and well below countries such as Denmark (32.3%), Sweden (25%), Finland (23.8%) and the Netherlands (16.7 %). Only Bulgaria (1.2%), Romania (1.6%), Greece (2.4%), Hungary (2.7%) and Slovakia (3.9%) (UIL 2013: 111) have lower rates than Poland. On the other hand, studies carried out by the Central Statistical Office indicate that in Poland there is still a traditional model of educational activity, in which learning coincides mainly with the stage of life preceding the beginning of a professional career and starting a family. The participation rate in formal and non-formal education has not



changed over the last decade. Between 2003 and 2012 it went, for people aged 25-64, from 5.6% to 6.5% (compared to the EU-27 average of 10.4%) (IBE 2014: 35-36). The results of other studies also provide alarming data, for example, readership research indicates little interest in reading, including for college graduates. 56% of Poles do not read books at all, and 46% do not even read the shortest texts or papers. In a month, only 54% read texts longer than three pages. According to the report, non-readers are people with primary and vocational education, country dwellers, unemployed, pensioners and those receiving an annuity. People who read are those with higher education (but only 75% of that population), big-city dwellers, pupils and students, highly qualified specialists and managers, private entrepreneurs and the well-off (Biblioteka Narodowa i TNS OBOP 2011). The above data provides an insight into the social divisions and reflects the phenomenon of the long-term persistence of the low level of real income and consumption in specific social groups. A study conducted in 2011, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), has provided data on Poles' basic skills necessary for functioning in the modern world, forming the basis for the acquisition of new skills (reading comprehension and mathematical reasoning). The average skills level of Poles aged 16-65 is below the average of the 22 OECD countries participating in the survey. In the field of reading comprehension and mathematical skills, better results were obtained by, among others, Czechs, Slovaks and Germans. Only the French, the Spanish and Italians scored lower than Poles, and on the mathematical test – also the Americans and the Irish. Poles' results in the part of the PIAAC survey concerning the use of information and communication technologies were significantly lower than the OECD average (IBE 2014: 37-40). Adult education has – in the face of these data – the task to get the social groups which traditionally do not attend courses and persons with distinct deficits in educational levels, to take up what is on offer. So far there have been no ideas proposed as to how to carry out this task.

### **The shape of the education that is on offer**

Participation in adult education is determined by financial wealth and citizens' education. Even though the labour market situation of people with higher education is getting more complicated, Poles still pin hopes on higher education diplomas, but optimism is fading. In 2002, 92% of the respondents indicated that it is easier for educated people to have a career; in 2013 only 80% were of the same opinion (IBE 2014: 11). Students (and their families) are willing to make significant sacrifices in order

to achieve the status of a person with higher education. Also, educated people learn actively, especially the younger ones, who spare no effort to raise or extend their professional qualifications and improve their chances on the labour market. With the increasing popularity of higher education, in order to retain one's position in the labour market, it becomes increasingly important to improve one's qualifications and gain new competencies – lifelong learning. College graduates can choose from a whole range of diverse courses, usually organised by small private companies. Courses are expensive, but enable people to obtain niche competencies in a short time. Universities also offer a wide range of postgraduate courses for graduates.

The shift in the activities of organisations and social associations with a long educational tradition, such as The Universal Education Society (Towarzystwo Wiedzy Powszechnej), became clear in recent years. The number of the association's branches was reduced by more than half from 1990-2014, but the ones that fought off competition have built up a strong market position in the meantime. Most of them, apart from the traditional course activities, run schools at different levels, including higher education institutions. Positive changes can be observed in the structure of course offers in these institutions. Until recently, it was fully dominated by vocational content and foreign language courses; now there are more and more courses in general education, cultural education, civic education or in personality development on offer. Among the latter, at the forefront are interpersonal communication courses, assertiveness courses, emotional management courses, time management training, self-presentation courses, etc. Also, parenting courses, neglected for years, is coming back as an educational offer. The education institutions for seniors have experienced the biggest boom over the last few years. They are a response to the growing public demand for older people's education. It is hard to count newly established universities of the third age and characterise their organisational and curricular structure. Some of them are associated, some of them work within universities and colleges, whilst others have a legal status (associations, foundations, companies). All of them hold lectures, seminars and workshops in the fields most popular with the elderly community: health, cultural, computer and language education. Lectures in philosophy, history and civics are present in the curricula of almost all institutions for seniors.

The multitude of topics that currently appear in the practice of adult education prove both its growing understanding of the educational needs of society, and the growing public awareness of the necessity of lifelong learning, and the benefits of education for individuals. However, there are also 'the great absent themes' in Polish adult education. Among them there are primary education and adult literacy. The matter of functional illit-

eracy is still a social taboo. Poland is one of those European countries that have not yet examined the scale of the problem, although the results of international comparative studies (IALS, PISA, PIAAC) may be worrisome. Adult education institutions do not offer reading and writing courses. Theoretically, this skill can be developed or improved in schools for adults, but those are intended for people who do not have school certificates. It should be noted with a high degree of probability that people with evident deficits in reading and writing, however, have a certificate of completion of – at least – primary school. In Poland, the number of primary schools for adults is systematically and clearly declining. The opposite tendency concerns grammar schools (lower secondary schools) for adults. Their increase has been observed since the school year 2007-2008.

Since the beginning of the political changes up to the 2001-2002 school year, we can see a clear decrease in the number of pupils in primary schools. In subsequent years, the number of pupils in primary schools for adults was unchanged, to increase almost threefold in 2010-2011. The number of students in grammar schools for adults increased almost fourfold between 2000-2001 and 2010-2011.

As the experience of other countries shows, one cannot rely on numbers. Possession of the certificate of completion of primary school, grammar school or higher education does not prove that its owner is proficient enough in writing to manage the demands of the world of work and everyday life, and achieve – on the basis of their reading and writing competencies – further personal, professional and social development. At most, low attendance in primary schools for adults may indicate that compulsory education was enforced. It does not say much about the quality of school education or the depth of graduates' immersion in the culture of writing.

## **Professionalisation of adult educators**

During all the years of DVV International's activity in Poland, professionalisation in adult education was one of its priorities. Projects aimed at the in-service training of teachers of adults and other specialists working in adult education establishments were run in cooperation with organisations and associations, as well as on the academic plane. The first cyclical publications, such as *Edukacja Dorosłych (Adult Education)* or *Rocznik Andragogiczny (Andragogy Yearbook)*, which had been published in Poland in the early 1990s, addressed the issue of professionalisation in adult education, especially through the dissemination of Western European good practices. Both journals have been published continuously for twenty years, and are currently an important source of knowledge and a

vibrant platform for the exchange of andragogic ideas. With regard to the status of the adult educator and his/her profession in general, there have been no significant changes. The causes of arising stagnation should be sought in, inter alia, the lack of any laws related to adult learning. Although educators have repeatedly attempted to create a modern legislative basis for the function of adult education, neoliberal education policy precludes the realisation of such an initiative. After all, the provision of such an act would then be followed by the appropriate commitment (including a financial one) of public entities. There is still a lack of regulations regarding teaching licenses allowing individuals to teach adults, and no national system of qualification and in-service training for adult education specialists. Very often, people employed in this field are not prepared to work with adults at all. In general, the situation does not favour the flowering of adult education in the academic pedagogical fields of study. Taking a pragmatic approach to the situation on the labour market, students are much more interested in getting a licence to practice the profession of kindergarten teachers than having knowledge about adult education, which does not promise a fast career, matching their education profile. This situation seems to be absurd in the light of demographic changes, and especially the inevitable aging of societies. It is partly due to public policy, which prioritises support for and the spread of preschool education. The impressive increase in the number of pre-primary education establishments over the last few years (by 26% over the period 2006-2012), and pre-primary points or pre-primary education groups, (in the school year 2008-2009 – 209; 2012 – 1,752, a sevenfold increase) (IBE 2014: 42) shows how much depends on the incentives coming from the policy side. The progress achieved in the area of childcare provokes reflection on the possibilities of awakening the potential of adults through appropriate political impulses for the development of the adult education sector. Currently its importance is only emphasised in a small number of documents, including The National Development Strategy and the Strategy for Development of Lifelong Learning. However, the government's verbal declarations do not go hand in hand with concrete actions. As regards the professionalisation of adult educators, Polish pedagogy has many concepts. Some of them were developed thanks to the participation of Polish researchers in European projects, such as 'Teaching Adult Educators in Continuing and Higher Education' (TEACH), others in research carried out in the research centers. It is hard to catch the significant differences in reflection on adult education between 'old' and 'new' European Union Member States. Currently, knowledge reaches everywhere at a rapid pace. The disproportions can be seen more clearly in educational practice, entangled as it is in cultural, political, social and economic contexts.

## Closing remarks

It is true to say that it is people who spark changes. However, the nature of this publication animates reflection on the contribution made by individuals to the changes that are occurring in the surrounding world. Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen's commitment to the development of adult education in Poland was beyond the scope of the ordinary duties of a person acting as a director of an institution. For several years, Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen lectured and ran seminars on Comparative Adult Education at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He shared the experiences which he gained while working in an international context, and stimulated their sensitivity to global problems of the world and curiosity about adult education as an area of professional activity and as a scientific discipline. In the Polish andragogical world, he is known for his publications which have been published in Polish and numerous papers presented at national conferences. Prof.(H) Dr. Hinzen initiated a number of research projects in which he participated together with Polish scientists, including – unique on a European scale – a project analyzing the shape of the adult education curriculum offer at the universities in Central and Eastern Europe (Hinzen, Przybylska: 2004). His inspirations live on. This is not the time to say goodbye, although there is always time for words of gratitude.

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## Financing lifelong learning – Let's think about the four S's

*Adult education is shockingly under-funded in most countries – and the resources that are available are often ineffectively spent. With aid declining, adult education activists need to focus on winning the case one country at a time for renewed attention and priority to adult education in national budgets. We should be working to increase the four S's in respect of adult education budgets:*

- increasing the share of the budget going to adult education,*
- increasing the size of the national budget overall,*
- increasing the sensitivity of the adult education budget, and*
- increasing the scrutiny of budgets.*

Adult education is shockingly under-funded in most countries – and the resources that are available are often ineffectively spent. This is true even in countries with low levels of literacy amongst young women, where the case for investment in basic adult education is utterly compelling. In low-income countries, aid money has been a big part of the problem rather than offering a solution, with almost no education aid earmarked for adults. Despite occasional references to lifelong learning in the key post-2015 documents, it does not look as if we are about to enter an era where adult education will become a priority investment for international donors. In this context, adult education activists need to focus on winning the case one country at a time for renewed attention and priority in national budgets. I believe we should be working to increase the four S's in respect of adult education budgets:

- increasing the *share* of the budget going to adult education,
- increasing the *size* of the national budget overall,
- increasing the *sensitivity* of the adult education budget, and
- increasing the *scrutiny* of the adult education budget.

### **Increasing the *share* of the budget going to adult education**

There has been a lot of attention in international fora about the need for governments to dedicate 20% of their national budgets to education, and if more governments moved closer to this benchmark there would be more funds in the pot from which adult education might benefit. This must still be an important reference point for adult education campaigners – alongside the call for 6% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to be spent on education.

Much less attention has been paid to what share of the education budget should go to adult education. The International Benchmarks on Adult Literacy<sup>1</sup> argued for 3% of national education budgets to be earmarked for adult literacy, and civil society campaigners at CONFITEA (International Conference on Adult Education) in Belém argued for a binding minimum target of 6% of education budgets being earmarked for adult education overall. This target was agreed to by government ministers from Asia in their pre-conference and by many delegates in Belém, but failed to be accepted in the final Belém framework.

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1/ Writing the Wrongs, International Benchmarks in Adult Literacy, GCE 2005



There are dangers, of course, to focusing only on the share of the *education* budget – as adult education might rightly form part of the budget of many ministries, including health, rural development, agriculture, community development, enterprise or business, as well as that for women, etc. There are challenges in tracking such allocations, but it can certainly be fruitful to advocate for adult education allocations across diverse ministries and then to make the case for better coordination or pooling of budgets.

## **Increasing the overall size of government budgets**

There are problems with fighting for a greater share of a budget – as we can end up fighting against our allies or being played off against one another. Should more money go to adult education or early childhood education; should it go to health or to social protection, to energy or social housing? One way to avoid these battles and to find common ground with a broad movement of progressive forces is to focus our attention on the size of the government budget overall. In too many countries, the size of the government budget overall is much smaller than it could or should be. In these cases, simple steps to increase the size of the budget can massively increase the domestic resources available for all progressive causes.

### **Increasing tax-to-GDP ratios**

In “Capital in the Twenty-First Century”, Thomas Piketty observes that countries with a low (e.g. 10%) tax-to-GDP ratio can only function as “regalian states” (financing “police, courts, army, foreign affairs, general administration, etc.”). Today, rich countries have higher tax-to-GDP ratios, and this is normalised at over 30% (for example: U.S. 30%, UK 40%, Germany 45%, France 50% and Sweden 55%) enabling a social state to emerge that takes responsibility for universal education, health, pensions and social protection, etc. – and where reasonable budgets for adult education are thus realistic. The emerging economies – Turkey, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico all have ratios around 20% to 30%. The lower-income countries with some of the biggest development challenges have ratios of 10% to 20%, with some shocking outliers of failing states such as Afghanistan, Haiti and Nigeria with ratios of under 10%. Unless we take action to expand the tax base in many countries, it will be difficult for governments to invest in adult education. But how do you increase the tax base?

## Ending harmful tax incentives

One simple way to dramatically increase tax revenues is to stop giving away unnecessary tax incentives and holidays to multi-national companies. ActionAid estimates that \$138 billion<sup>2</sup> annually is given away unnecessarily in harmful tax incentives to multinational companies by developing countries. These are incentives given to attract investment, but in most cases the incentives are a long way down the list of factors that induce a company to invest in a particular country. Companies will do what they can to push for a tax break, but not receiving a tax break is very rarely a deal-breaker for them. Yet in much of sub-Saharan Africa, these tax exemptions can amount to the equivalent of 5% of GDP. If these incentives were stopped, you could fill the global financing gap on education within three months – and adult education could be realistically placed on the agenda again. In a similar way, governments also lose valuable revenue by selling natural resource concessions for much less than their true value. The Education For All Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR)<sup>3</sup> notes “The Democratic Republic of the Congo incurred losses of US\$1.36 billion from its deals with five mining companies between 2010 and 2012. This is the same amount as allocated to the education sector over two years between 2010 and 2011”.

## Challenging aggressive tax avoidance

Another key way to increase tax revenue is to challenge aggressive tax avoidance. ActionAid’s report “Sweet Nothings”<sup>4</sup> on Associated British Foods in Zambia showed that aggressive tax avoidance by just one company deprived the Zambian Government of funding that could have provided primary education for 48,000 children. In another exposé, “Calling Time”<sup>5</sup> ActionAid showed that a woman selling beer outside the largest SAB Miller brewery in Ghana paid more tax than the entire brewery, and in fact paid more tax than the entire company did, not only in Ghana but across the whole of Africa. In Tanzania, the Global Campaign for Education “A Taxing Business” report<sup>6</sup> observed that the amount lost to tax

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2/ cf. <http://www.actionaid.org/2013/07/tax-incentives-cost-138-billion>

3/ cf. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002270/227092E.pdf>

4/ cf. [http://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/sweet\\_nothings.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/sweet_nothings.pdf)

5/ cf. [https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/doc\\_lib/calling\\_time\\_on\\_tax\\_avoidance.pdf](https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/doc_lib/calling_time_on_tax_avoidance.pdf)

6/ cf. [http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/GCE\\_A%20TAXING%20BUSINESS.pdf](http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/GCE_A%20TAXING%20BUSINESS.pdf)

dodging by big companies could pay for the training of all Tanzania's untrained primary school teachers, as well as training and salaries for more than 70,000 additional teachers and building 97,000 new classrooms and ensuring every primary school-aged child has a reading and mathematics text book. When we see potential increases in education budgets on this scale, the case for investment in adult education can be reopened.

### Exposing mis-invoicing

One way of avoiding tax is by “mis-invoicing”<sup>7</sup>. A recent study commissioned by the Danish trade minister showed that “more than \$60bn has been illegally moved in and out of Uganda, Ghana, Mozambique, Kenya and Tanzania over 10 years, with most of it passing through tax havens”. Mis-invoicing basically means that importers pretend to pay more for goods than they actually pay, and the extra money is slipped into offshore bank accounts: “In one notable case an American company invoiced for plastic buckets at \$972 each”<sup>8</sup>. It is through scams like this that much more money floods out of Africa than arrives in aid – depriving governments of the revenue needed to invest in everything from health to social protection, from early childhood education to women's literacy.

### Increasing revenue-raising capacity

All of these practices could be challenged if developing country governments had stronger revenue authorities with technical expertise to strengthen tax systems, close tax loopholes and combat corporate tax avoidance. This would be one of the best and most sustainable uses of aid. One study quoted by EFA GMR showed that for every \$1 spent in aid spent to support tax systems, \$350 in tax revenue was raised. Unfortunately, under 0.1% of aid is presently spent on supporting tax systems<sup>9</sup>. Adult education activists should add their voice to the call for more aid to be spent on strengthening tax systems – because this will be a more sustainable source of potential funding in the long term.

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7/ cf. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/11/african-invoice-fraud-tax-havens-development>

8/ cf. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/11/african-invoice-fraud-tax-havens-development>

9/ cf. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002270/227092E.pdf>

## Pursuing more expansionary macro-economic policies

There are of course many other ways to expand or shrink the size of the overall budget of a government. For many years, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) has promoted policies of severe austerity as a condition attached to loans, holding down overall government spending based on arguments that are increasingly challenged, including within the IMF itself. The public sector wage bills caps once imposed by the IMF are no longer in place, but wider macro-economic policy prescriptions<sup>10</sup> continue to hold down spending on education in many countries. More expansionary macro-economic policies can sometimes help countries break out of the cycle of under-development, especially if spending is well invested in education, more or less guaranteeing long-term economic growth. It is an adult education challenge for all of us to become para-economists to be able to understand this big financing picture so we can contest ideologically-driven austerity programmes!

## Increasing the *sensitivity* of the budget to policy priorities

If we only focus on the headline figures of overall spending on adult education, we can easily miss important details of what happens to the money that is allocated.

In countries that are challenged by basic literacy levels which need to be greatly improved, it is important to ensure that this area is given priority. But too often we win the case for short-term investments premised on the idea that an adult literacy campaign can be a quick win. Most research shows that short-term campaigns are ineffective and that the real challenge is continuing investment over years, building a professional cadre of adult educators, a coherent system of provision and ongoing opportunities for learners. If budget allocations are not sensitive to what is known to work, then we can end up undermining our own cause.

In other countries, adult education provision can be “captured” by the middle class urban population – with courses matching their interests more than the interests of the unemployed or those living on a minimum wage. It is therefore helpful to look at whether investments are sensitive to the needs of those in low income deciles – or to the needs of other groups who face discrimination or disadvantage within society. Adult education

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<sup>10/</sup> cf. <http://www.actionaid.org/publications/confronting-contradictions>

budgets ought to be sensitive to a redistributive agenda, given the powerful equalising potential of education.

### **Increasing the scrutiny of the budget**

Perhaps most important of all is that we need to ensure that there is independent scrutiny of budgets. If people are not confident that budgets allocated will be properly spent, it is hard to advocate for more resources. This is an area where civil society players can play a key role, demystifying budgets and documenting how they are supposed to be spent on different sectors and at different levels, from national to provincial, to district, to school levels. Once it is clear how the budget is supposed to be spent and who is supposed to be making decisions about it at different points, we can track whether this is happening in practice.

There are many positive examples of national and local budget tracking<sup>11</sup>, of community audit groups tracking government budgets and exposing misuse of resources. Indeed, this can become a powerful project for adult basic education groups – giving opportunities for practical application of numeracy and literacy skills. This can be an excellent entry point for community organising, building people's confidence and helping them to hold their governments to account more broadly. In helping people to work on collective projects to scrutinise government budgets and associated policies, we are genuinely building and embedding lifelong learning.

### **Conclusion**

Adult education has been the poor cousin of other social spending areas for many decades. If we are to reverse this, then we need to look at the big picture, making the case for social states that are adequately resourced to deliver on the promise of lifelong learning. We will win some victories by arguing for a greater share of the pie, but we will win greater victories by arguing for bigger pies! However big the pie, we need to ensure it is allocated with sensitivity to enhancing equity – because otherwise the elite will eat as much as they can and leave crumbs for

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<sup>11</sup>/cf. <http://internationalbudget.org/budget-analysis/sectors-issues-demographic/education/> and [http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Making\\_the\\_Budget\\_Work\\_for\\_Education.pdf](http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Making_the_Budget_Work_for_Education.pdf)

others. To guard against this, we need to increase our capacity to engage in budget debates and to scrutinise what happens in practice on the ground. There is an urgent need for transformation in adult education financing, and the solution lies in increasing all four S's of the budget – share, size, sensitivity and scrutiny!

## Gender, literacy and skills: Through a different lens A case study from India

*Using the illustrative example of a women's literacy and skills programme in rural North India, this paper argues for the reconceptualisation of such programmes; a framework that builds on the knowledge, skills and opportunities available to women, and recognises that literacy and other technical skills are not isolated from the larger social and economic context: they are embedded in various power relations. The transformative potential of education can also be realised by realigning conventional gender norms related to women's work. This process must continue beyond teaching 'non-typical' skills, assisting learners in negotiating various ideological and systemic challenges across sites – from the family to governments at different levels – and by creating an enabling policy environment.*

## Introduction

Most adult literacy programmes, whether run by governments or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), tend to combine vocational skill training with literacy teaching and learning. Such programmes are believed to be more effective and attractive for participants. The results, however, are patchy at best. Some argue that this is because of the misplaced assumptions that inform such programmes. For instance, it is assumed that non-literate adults 'lack' skills. Therefore programmes teach externally-determined skills that are allegedly marketable and enhance employability. However, recent studies (Nirantar 2007; Rogers 2014) point out that non-literate adults or those with low levels of education come to programmes with rich skill sets that are unrecognised and undervalued. Another assumption – that participants will easily be able to use the skills learnt (literacy and vocational) on completing such programmes – is not borne out in practice. The ground reality is complicated, and several ideological and systemic factors prevent smooth transitions from training to application. And thirdly, there are ideological assumptions about what skills are 'appropriate' for women, who make up a majority of adult learners. For instance, jam and pickle making, stitching and tailoring or beauty courses are popular choices for women's skill-training programmes. These skills accommodate and reinforce women's traditional gender roles (and income may or may not be enhanced), and the transformative potential of literacy in challenging gender and other social norms takes a backseat. This paper, through an example based in rural North India, presents an example that seeks to challenge these assumptions.

## Context

### Introducing the project

In 2010, Sahjani Shiksha Kendra (SSK hereafter)<sup>1</sup>, a community-based organisation working on empowering rural women through literacy and education, based in Lalitpur district in the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh,

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1/ Sahjani Shiksha Kendra was initiated in 2001 as a field programme of Nirantar. It is a gender and education resource organisation based in Delhi and presently works in 200 villages, primarily with women from socially and economically-disadvantaged communities. SSK was registered as an independent community-based organisation in 2013. <http://www.nirantar.net/index.php/page/view/52>



initiated a project: the Dalit Women's Livelihood Initiative<sup>2</sup> that sought to link its literacy intervention with the issue of the Right to Work.

The project aimed at enhancing Dalit women's<sup>3</sup> access to entitlements, guaranteed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (hereafter MGNREGA)<sup>4</sup> and pilot innovative interventions within the scheme that challenged gender norms related to women and work. MGNREGA – landmark social security legislation passed by the Indian Parliament in 2005 – legally guarantees poor rural households 100 days of unskilled wage employment every year, and thus seeks to ensure food security to the poorest and most marginalised.

## Rationale

To what extent have poor and disadvantaged women, the core constituency of this apparently progressive legislation, been able to access the entitlements that are due to them? Not surprisingly, the answer to this draws a mixed picture and a huge gap between stated intent and the ground reality. The project was developed to bridge some of these gaps: low female participation, difficulties in following complicated procedures, inability to demand accountability and gender and caste-related discrimination.

The project focused on Dalit women, as the community's socio-economic position with regard to various development parameters, including literacy, is well below those of other communities. Further, though the Indian Constitution bans discrimination against Dalits, it continues to be practised in various explicit and implicit ways. Thus despite the guarantees, female participation in MGNREGA was a low 15% in Uttar Pradesh and according to the baseline survey done at the start of the project, 87% of Dalit women surveyed got less than 25 days of work. The survey also found that due to caste-based prejudices, the only work made available to Dalit women was low-end manual work: crèche work or serving drinking

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2/ Dalit Women's Livelihood Initiative was a collaborative project between Gender at Work and four NGOs based in Uttar Pradesh (of which SSK was one). Supported by UN Women, the project ran between 2010 and 2013.

3/ Dalit is a term used for those communities that are at the lowest end of India's caste hierarchy. The official term is Scheduled Caste, but 'Dalit', which means 'broken people' is the term preferred by the community.

4/ The Act has some important gender-just provisions – for example, one-third of the workers employed must be women, each work-site must provide facilities like a crèche, provision of water and shade for workers to rest. For further information on MGNREGA see: <http://www.nrega.nic.in>

water were denied to them.<sup>5</sup> Women, and certainly Dalit women, do not have access to jobs which require technical skills (like that of a worksite supervisor), due to deep-rooted gender-based prejudices.

Low awareness regarding the provisions of the Act, particularly amongst women from marginalised groups, was another problem.<sup>6</sup> As with most schemes, this one too requires complicated procedures and considerable paperwork, and low literacy levels get in the way of accessing the entitlements guaranteed. For example, in order to get work under the scheme, a formal application has to be made in writing, wages are paid through bank accounts, which workers must first open and then become familiar with managing.

## **The project framework**

The gaps outlined above point to the power dynamics that get in the way of realising entitlements related to the right to work, as well as the interconnectedness between different axes of power – gender, caste and literacy. This understanding informed the project framework, which was organised around three domains of action: realising entitlements through literacy and skill training; building ‘voice’ through the skills of critical thinking, awareness about rights; building spaces for collective action and to demand accountability by enabling access to information as well as developing skills in planning and negotiation and participation in forums of governance.

The specific aim of the pilot initiative was to train Dalit women as worksite supervisors (referred to as Mates locally and used hereafter), a job unavailable to women. This, it was hoped, would challenge entrenched stereotypes regarding women’s work and increase Dalit women’s access to technical positions within MGNREGA.

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5/ 53% of the women surveyed either dug or carried mud, only 1% of Dalit women surveyed got jobs to serve water and only 1% of women were employed in semi-skilled jobs.

6/ 81% of the women surveyed did not know about the number of days of work they were entitled to under the Act, and 88% did not know that a third of the jobs were meant for women. As MGNREGA stipulates that people actually have to make a demand for work in order for it to be provided, this makes awareness about various provisions of the Act extremely important for the realisation of entitlements.

## Storming a male bastion: training Dalit women as worksite supervisors (mates)

### ***Breaking deeply-held beliefs***

“The Pradhan (elected village headman), officials, family members, everybody said: the Mate’s job is a technical one. Women won’t be able to measure. They are emotional and don’t have a head for numbers. They won’t be able to manage the labour: after all, they are men from her village. Dalit women can only dig. Even I thought I would not be able to learn.”

**Haribai, trained Mate**

A Mate’s job was considered unsuitable for women because women were not supposed to have innate abilities required to tackle technicalities and numbers, and certainly not Dalit women, who are considered only good for manual work. Secondly, in a society that is segregated on gender lines, and where women are predominantly meant to be subservient to men, undertaking the job of a supervisor challenged several fundamental gender norms. Thirdly, notions about gender roles were held not only by men but also internalised by women, and these beliefs impact one’s ability to learn – an important consideration for a literacy programme.

In order to confront these notions of what Dalit women could or could not do, the SSK staff started by building critical awareness across multiple sites: convincing women that they can learn technical skills and aspire to become Mates, engaging with their families to agree to let them attend the training, speaking to the local administration to persuade them to support the programme, and holding public meetings to convince the community at large that this was indeed a valid undertaking.

### ***Designing the curriculum***

“I thought: How difficult can developing a skills training programme be? But when it becomes linked to changing firmly-held beliefs about gender roles, and combined with teaching technical skills to women with low literacy levels, the challenge is immense.”

**Meena, curriculum development team**

Most skills training programmes rely on didactic methods, like lectures, demonstrations and printed resource material. The curriculum development team in the project, which included local teachers, facilitators and

external resource persons, knew that this would not work with women with limited education and low confidence in their ‘technical’ abilities. The modules needed to be interactive, to combine teaching of skills with critical discussions on issues of caste and gender, to build confidence and to provide information in a contextualised manner.

The Mates were required to perform tasks like maintaining ‘muster rolls’ (attendance registers) and calculating the quantum of work done by each worker, which required fairly advanced literacy and numeracy skills. Ingenious ways of undertaking these tasks which built on what the women already knew and their traditional ways of measuring and calculating, were incorporated into the curriculum. The use of ‘real material’ from the trainees’ environment was another significant element, as was the use of calculators.

### ***The learning and training process***

“Women stayed up all night talking about their keenness and apprehension to enter this male bastion, practising measuring length and volume using rope, bamboo rods and finally the measuring tape, and using their mobile phones to do calculations. When they demonstrated their skills in the field, with the entire village watching, the excitement and nervous tension was palpable, that their mistakes would be ‘caught’ – but this was a turning point in the programme.”

#### **From the diary of a Trainer**

The curriculum was used to train an initial group of 34 women from organisations across five districts of Uttar Pradesh. A substantial part of the training involved women practising in the field what they had learnt. This component was critical in establishing the women in their new roles within the community, and in validating their methods of fulfilling their job requirements. As the trainees were newly-literate Dalit women (or with low formal educational qualifications), they were constantly rebuked and challenged, and the trainers had to rebut these. The methods that the women used to measure, for instance, were not the standard ways. That these methods would yield correct answers was important to establish them in a public way. Government engineers and officials were strategically brought in as trainers and advisors, and in the process were converted from being naysayers to advocates of the programme.

### ***Challenges: establishing the mates***

“Haribai, Panbai and Sona left the training armed with confidence and new skills. They went to the Pradhan asking to be appointed. Of course, he hadn’t seen them being trained. SSK members intervened and after a rigorous quiz on measurement rules, the do’s and don’ts of a Mate’s job – he grudgingly agreed. It was celebration time at SSK. But short-lived, as problems surfaced soon enough. Panbai and Sona stopped coming to work. Their husbands had taken over instead. A meeting was quickly called. The women asked the team to help them renegotiate with their husbands. Their husbands had their concerns – taunts from other men, fear about their wives being harassed and about how difficult it was to be ‘supervised’ by their wives. We are constantly sorting out problems, on and off the worksites.”

**From a SSK report**

The real challenges emerged when the training concluded. In several villages, caste dynamics were evident, where the Pradhan belonged to a different caste or where powerful upper-caste groups actively lobbied to keep the women out. Some Pradhans appointed the women Mates once, but then were quick to revert back to appointing men. In some instances, there was a backlash from men who felt their jobs were being taken away. Clearly, entrenched gender norms were not removed by training programmes alone, and constant inputs were required that went beyond the classroom. Pradhans, family members and government officials had to be convinced over and over again to give women a chance: this was not just training – women wanted to work.

Besides supporting women Mates in the field, an advocacy strategy for fresh policy guidelines was put in place. The five partner organisations took the results from the project, which included the findings of an endline survey,<sup>7</sup> and advocated for a supportive policy framework that would actively ensure that women are hired to fill the semi-skilled jobs within MGNREGA, and for the government to promote the training of women Mates on a large scale. While there was some response from the government, clear guidelines never got formulated and it has required constant effort to convince a changing local administration. SSK continues to work

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<sup>7</sup> The module was used to train 130 Dalit women Mates across the five districts. These stories of change were shared in the state capital, Lucknow, with other NGOs and the Rural Development Ministry. Compared to the figures at the start of the project, where only 1% of the women surveyed had held semi-skilled jobs, the figure at the close of the project was 20%.

with the women and has even set up a forum of the women Mates, who meet regularly to discuss problems, and strategise on how to deal with them. However the systemic changes required to make this an irreversible transformation are yet to come about.

## Concluding observations

The paper began by pointing to some of the problems in the approach to literacy and skill development programmes. What lessons can we draw from this experience? Though far from perfect, looking for solutions from within the environment can help to provide a fresh perspective on what skills to develop. The skills identified did not seek to enhance incomes through employment or income-generating projects, but focused instead on accessing entitlements. Incomes were enhanced by improving access to wage employment, and under better working conditions but more importantly, the project addressed the issue of women's right to work.<sup>8</sup> The second point raised was to consider and build on women's existing knowledge. In this context, systematically developing their existing methods of calculating and measuring actually enabled women to take on these complex tasks. What is of concern, then, is not only getting women to join programmes, but about how 'non-literate' learners are taught within literacy and skills development programmes in ways that build on their skills, rather than point to deficits.

The paper highlights the transformative potential of teaching gender non-stereotypical skills as well as the challenges in this process. The paper shows that teaching *skills* needs to be followed or combined with ensuring the use of these skills in real contexts, which entails transforming institutions at different levels. Literacy and skills are not neutral, but embedded in power-laden gender and social relations, present in multiple sites in our lives. What women can learn and whether or not they can use the skills learnt often depends less on women's mastery over the skills and more on the gender and social relations within which they are embedded. For a programme to be transformative and empowering for women, it must involve the perspectives, skills and pedagogies required to navigate the complexities of women's lived realities in totality.

And lastly a comment on policy frameworks – do they support and enable different possibilities? In this case, the guidelines to employ women

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8/ At the end of the project period, 57% of the women surveyed got between 51 and 75 days of work, as compared to 2% at the start, and whereas 87% got fewer than 25 workdays this figure had fallen to 6%.

Mates were not fully implemented. The Post-2015 agenda, disappointingly, has marginalised the issue of women's literacy and adult learning. However, skills development is high on the agenda. In the context of the informal sector, where most skills are being generated and where large sections of women have rudimentary levels of literacy, a singular focus on skills in the absence of a holistic learning environment will exclude large numbers of women.

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# Committed to lifelong learning

# Heribert Hinzen – Biographical notes

Heribert Hinzen was born on 8 November 1947 in Mettmann, Germany. After studying human and social sciences at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne, he earned his PhD from the University of Heidelberg with a dissertation on comparative education entitled *Adult Education and Development in Tanzania*.

His first contacts to the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV) date back to 1974. In 1975, he wrote a report for the journal *Adult Education and Development*, and in 1976 he organised a study tour for Indian adult educators to adult education institutions in Germany.

He joined DVV International full time in 1977, and became Deputy Director in 1978, while additionally coordinating projects in Africa and Asia.

His first assignment abroad for DVV International was as Director of the country office in Freetown, Sierra Leone, from 1983 to 1987. He later became Director of the country office in Budapest, Hungary, from 1995 to 1999, and from 2009 to 2015 Regional Director in Vientiane, Laos, for South and Southeast Asia.

1990–1995 was his first period as Director of DVV International, with a high level of new opportunities after the fall of the Berlin Wall. A second period followed from 1999 – 2009, again with great challenges in an ever-growing globalised world.

UNESCO has been an important partner throughout his career. He was a member of a number of committees, such as the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group, the UN Literacy Decade Expert Group, the EFA Global Monitoring Board and the German National Commission of UNESCO.

Additionally, he served in senior roles as Vice President for major professional civil society associations, such as the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

His interest in cooperation with Universities has been a guiding principle throughout his career, and led him to follow invitations to numerous Universities in more than twenty countries. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Pécs, and he holds the title of Honorary Professor at the University of Lasi and Bucharest in Romania, as well as at Pécs in Hungary.

# Heribert Hinzen – Bibliographical notes

Heribert Hinzen has written, edited and published numerous articles, books and journals throughout his career.

The most outstanding was his contribution to the publications of DVV International. He was editor of the international journal *Adult Education and Development* for more than thirty years, and now serves on its editorial board. He was founding editor of the publication series *International Perspectives in Adult Education*.

His full bibliography for 1971-2015 covers several hundred titles on adult education, cooperation and development, and includes volumes such as:

- Education for Liberation and Development. The Tanzanian Experience. (ed. with Volkhard Hundsdoerfer), 1979
- Erwachsenenbildung in der Dritten Welt. (ed. with Wolfgang Leumer), 1982
- Fishing in rivers of Sierra Leone. Oral literature. (ed. with Frederick Bobor James, Jim Martin Sorie, Sheikh Ahmed Tejan Tamu), 1987
- Giving and taking. Involved in Sierra Leonean adult education, 1987
- Ungarische und deutsche Erwachsenenbildung. Europäische Partnerschaft und internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2000
- Adult Education in a United Europe – Abundance, Diversity, Experience. (ed. with Ewa Przybylska, Monika Staszewicz), 2005
- Knowing More, Doing Better – Challenges for CONFINTEA VI from monitoring EFA in non-formal youth and adult education. (ed. with Chris Duke), 2008
- Adult Education in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. System Development and Support Models Towards Lifelong Learning. (ed. with Joachim H. Knoll), 2012
- Lifelong Learning and Governance. From Programming to Action – Selected Experiences from Asia and Europe. (ed. with Joachim H. Knoll), 2014
- At the Sunset of MDG and EFA: Lifelong Learning, National Development and the Future. (ed. with Chris Duke), 2014

He serves on the boards of several professional journals such as *Andragogy and Cultural Theory*, *Asia Pacific Education Review* and *Bildung und Erziehung*.



*Heribert Hinzen (back row left) at a works outing with colleagues of the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV), End of 1970s*



*Heribert Hinzen (back row) with colleagues from DVV International, Regional Directors Meeting, Bonn, 2014*



*Heribert Hinzen (second from left) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual ASPBAE Region III Conference, Manila, 1978*



*Heribert Hinzen (second from left) at the ceremony of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASPBAE, singing John Lennon's "Imagine" with colleagues from ASPBAE, Manila, 2014*

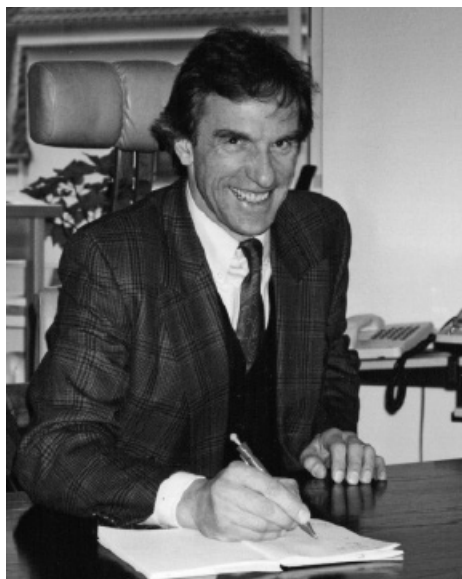


*Heribert Hinzen with Gudetta Mammo, Director General of Non-formal Education, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia, 1980s*



*Heribert Hinzen as Visiting Professor at the University of Sierra Leone, Graduation Ceremony for students, 1984*





*Heribert Hinzen as Director of DVV International, Headquarters, Bonn, 1990s*



*Heribert Hinzen (middle) at the Lifelong Learning conference in Skopje, with Rita Süßmuth, President of DVV (left)*



*Heribert Hinzen at a Baci Ceremony with Vice-Minister Somchit Inthamit, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR*



*Heribert Hinzen (front row) at the University Network Meeting in Vang Vieng, Lao PDR, 2014*





*Heribert Hinzen (back row, right) with the Editorial Board Members of DVV International's journal Adult Education and Development, Hamburg, 2015*



*Heribert Hinzen and his wife Sigrid Hinzen at the UNESCO Learning Cities Conference, Beijing, 2013*



# List of authors



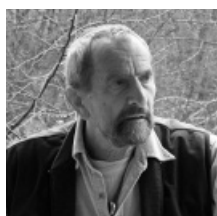
**David Archer** is Head of Programme Development with ActionAid, having been Head of Education for many years. In the 1980s, David worked on literacy programmes across Latin America and in the 1990s he developed the Reflect approach to adult learning and social change. Since the late 1990s David has worked with ActionAid on human rights-based approaches to development. He manages the Right to Education project and is a board member of the Global Campaign for Education and the Global Partnership for Education.

*david.archer@actionaid.org / [www.actionaid.org](http://www.actionaid.org) / [www.right-to-education.org](http://www.right-to-education.org) / [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org) / [www.globalpartnership.org](http://www.globalpartnership.org)*



**Gerhard Bisovsky, Dr.**, studied economics, political science and ethnology. He served from 1984-1993 on the educational staff of the Vienna Adult Education Association, and was on parental leave in 1994-1995. He was the Director of the Vienna Adult Education Centre in Meidling from 1996-2012, Head Project Manager of the “Educational Counselling in Vienna” network from 2008-2012, and since 2012, Secretary General of the Austrian Association of Adult Education. Currently (2014-2016) he is the Chairman of the Conference of Adult Education Austria (KEBÖ). He is also a Member of the Board of the European Association for Adult Education and of EUCIS-LLL.

*gerhard.bisovsky@vhs.or.at / [www.vhs.or.at](http://www.vhs.or.at)*



**Chris Duke, Prof.**, is a UK-born Anglo-Australian Cambridge historian and sociologist. He has been working in higher education (HE) since 1961 as a professor and senior administrator in the UK and at universities in Australia and New Zealand. He is a life member and former Secretary-General of ASPBAE, ICAE, UALL UK as well as former founding Secretary-General and CEO of PASCAL International Observatory. Chris Duke is a participatory action researcher in adult education (AE) for development and has widely published in AE, HE policy, management, organisation behaviour and lifelong learning. He is the father of five (one deceased), has nine grandchildren and is a keen Anglo-French gardener.

*chris.duke@rmit.edu.au / <http://pascalobservatory.org/pascalnow>*



**Regina Egetenmeyer**, Prof. Dr., University Professor of Adult Education/Continuing Education at the Julius-Maximilians University of Würzburg. Since 2014 also Visiting Professor at the International Institute for Adult and Lifelong Education in New Delhi, India. Research interests: international comparative adult education research, academic professionalisation, science and practice relationalisation, informal learning, international educational mobility. Editor of Study Guides in Adult Education. Participation in the Network 3 “Professionalisation in Adult Education” of the ASEM Hub for Lifelong Learning. Member of the editorial board of the journal *Adult Education*, a quarterly for theory and practice. Member of scientific boards of various international publications with respect to adult education/training. [regina.egetenmeyer@uni-wuerzburg.de](mailto:regina.egetenmeyer@uni-wuerzburg.de) / [www.uni-wuerzburg.de](http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de)



**Dagmar Engels**, Dr., has been Head of Ulm School of Adult Education since 1991. She is the Deputy Chairperson of the Baden-Württemberg and the German Adult Education Association, as well as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of DVV International. She studied History, Politics, German, Ethnology and Bengali in Freiburg and London, and completed her examinations as a secondary school teacher in Freiburg. At the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, Dagmar Engels received her MA in Area Studies South Asia and also received her PhD. Her book *Beyond Purdah? Women in Bengal, 1890-1930* was published by OUP Delhi in hardcover and paperback. [engels@vh-ulm.de](mailto:engels@vh-ulm.de) / [www.vh-ulm.de](http://www.vh-ulm.de)



**Martha Friedenthal-Haase**, Dipl.-Pol., Ph. D., rer. soc. habil., Professor Emerita of Adult Education of Friedrich Schiller University of Jena. She studied social and political sciences at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Heidelberg and the London School of Economics. Her fields of research and publication are history and philosophy of education and political thought. Since 2004 she has been a member of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame. She now lives as an independent scholar and writer in Brookline, MA, USA. [mfrieden@bu.edu](mailto:mfrieden@bu.edu)



**Malini Ghose, M.A.**, has worked in the field of education and women's rights for over 20 years. She has done so in various capacities – as a grassroots practitioner, trainer, material and curriculum developer, researcher and activist. She is a founding member of Nirantar, New Delhi, and is presently on the board of ICAE.

*malini.ghose@gmail.com*



**Jose Roberto 'Robbie' Guevara, PhD**, is a committed popular educator with extensive experience in education for sustainable development, environmental education and global citizenship education in the Asia and South Pacific regions. Robbie is an Associate Professor in International Development at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. He is the President of the Asia-South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and Vice President (Asia-Pacific) of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE). Robbie was inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame in October 2012.

*robbie.aspbae@gmail.com / www.aspbae.org*



**Per Paludan Hansen, MSc**, has been active in the field of adult education for 20 years. He is Chairman of the board of the Danish Adult Education Association (DAEA) and General Secretary of LOF, a nationwide study association for adults in Denmark. Since 2008, Per Hansen has been a member of the executive board of EAEA, and President since 2013.

*pph@lof.dk*



**Timothy D. Ireland, Prof.**, is associate professor in Adult Education at the Federal University of Paraíba, in João Pessoa (Brazil). In 2004 he was seconded to the Ministry of Education where he was national director of youth and adult education from 2004 to 2007 and then to UNESCO from 2008 to 2011 where he was at the focal point for CONFINTEA VI in Brazil. He is currently the coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in Youth and Adult Education.

*ireland.timothy@gmail.com*



**Vanya Ivanova** has been part of the DVV International History Network for more than 10 years, as a project manager and trainer of the History Project in the Balkans, then spreading the learning and experience in other countries outside SEE. In 2009-2010, Vanya was part of the team of the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement project and since then has been working to further the ideas of the network, among other professional engagements.

*vanya.ivanova@oral-history.net*



**Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan** is the Secretary General of the Asia Pacific Association of Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), the largest membership-based organisation of civil society, professional associations, and coalitions in the Asia Pacific region and is Vice Chair of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). She has contributed years of service to the field of adult and continuing education, and has an extensive record of working in different capacities for a variety of Asian NGOs. As Secretary General, she has led ASPBAE since 1995 as a regional association which works through more than 200 member organisations, active in around 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific. Her service has been recognised by the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame, where she has been a member since 2008. Maria currently serves as a civil society representative in the EFA Steering Committee.

*maria.aspbae@gmail.com / www.aspbae.org*



**Matthias Klingenberg** studied Political Sciences and Contemporary History at the University of Heidelberg. He specialised in development theories and the history of the German Democratic Republic. For over ten years he has been working in the education and development sector for different German organisations. For almost a decade, he has been an active part of the DVV International History Network and has been involved in history projects in Central Asia, the Caucasus and beyond. Currently he is the Regional Director of DVV International for the Caucasus and Turkey.

*klingenberg@dvv-international.ge / www.dvv-international.ge*



**Joachim H. Knoll**, Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. (FU), studied history of ideas, history, German literature and economics at the Universities of Erlangen and Munich. His long-term research interests are international and comparative adult education; media protection for minors; new entertainment and educational technologies; and intellectual history of the 19th century (liberalism and biographical research). He has been Editor or Associate Editor of the International Yearbook of Adult Education (1967 to 1998), *Bildung und Erziehung*, *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* (Journal of Religious and Cultural Studies), *Chung Cheng Studies in Education*. He has been awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz (Federal Cross of Merit) 1st class and the Silver Cross of Merit of the German Red Cross. He is an Honorary Member of the German UNESCO Commission, Member of the Hall of Fame of International and Continuing Adult Education, and he is Honorary Chairman of Bildungswerk e.V. (German and European Education Policy Association). Festschriften were presented to him on his 50th and 65th birthdays.

*joko.knoll@t-online.de*



**Catherine Lido**, Dr., is a Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow's Urban Big Data Centre. She works with Prof Mike Osborne, in their School of Education, assessing the city's learning access and metrics, working with large data and multi-media data sources. She is a member of the Research and Teaching Group in Social Justice, Place & Lifelong Education, and acts as a visiting lecturer for the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Her PhD from the University of Sussex (2004) is in Social Psychology, and has since researched and published widely in the field of widening participation in education.

*catherine.lido@glasgow.ac.uk / www.ubdc.ac.uk*



**Sandra L. Morrison**, Prof., is the Associate Dean at the School of Māori and Pacific Development, University of Waikato. Her research is focussed on indigenous concepts, sustainable development and adult education. She was President of ASPBAE, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education from 2004-2008, and was inducted into the International Adult and Community Education Hall of Fame, University of Oklahoma in 2009.

*samorr@waikato.ac.nz*





**Balázs Németh**, PhD, is a researcher on European adult and lifelong learning policy development and comparative adult education. He is an associate professor and reader in Adult Learning and Education at the University of Pécs. He is also a founding member of the Hungarian Universities Lifelong Learning Network (MELLearn) and represents the University of Pécs in the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) and in the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). Further research topics of his are: Politics and Adult Education; Comparative Adult Education; History of Modern European Adult Education from 1850 to 2000.  
*nemeth.balazs@feek.pte.hu / www.feek.pte.hu*



**Michael Osborne**, Prof., is Professor of Adult and Lifelong Learning at the University of Glasgow and Director of the Research and Teaching Group (RTG) in Social Justice, Place and Lifelong Education (SJPLE) within the School of Education. He leads some 30 core and associated academics within SJPLE, including staff from the Academic Development Unit and the Centre for Open Studies with a focus on the effects of education on patterns of social inclusion, the enrichment of social environment, the development of social capital and global justice.  
*michael.osborne@glasgow.ac.uk / www.ubdc.ac.uk*



**Katarina Popovic**, PhD, is Secretary General of ICAE – International Council for Adult Education and Associate Professor at the Department for Andragogy, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and visiting professor for adult education and lifelong learning at several European universities. She was Vice President of EAEA, President of the Serbian Adult Education Society and coordinator of Serbian and regional projects of the German DVV International. She is Editor in Chief of the journal *Andragogical Studies*.  
*sec.general@icae.org.uy / www.icae2.org*





**Ewa Przybylska**, Prof. Dr., headed the the Coordination Office of Polish-German Cooperation in the field of adult education at the Polish-German border from 1993-1997. From 1998-2009 she served as head of the Warsaw Office of DVV International, which supported adult education in Poland and (since 2001 the Regional Office for Central and East Europe) integration of the member countries of Central and Eastern Europe with the countries of Western Europe. Currently she serves as Head of the Department of Adult Education at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

*evaprzyb@umk.pl / [www.pedagogika.umk.pl](http://www.pedagogika.umk.pl)*



**Jost Reischmann**, Prof. (em.) Dr., was Chair of Andragogy at Bamberg University in Germany (1993-2008). He is Vice-president of the International Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE). In 1999 he was nominated and inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame and was a member of its Board of Directors from 2006-2012. In 1998 he received the 'President's Award for Innovative Leadership', and in 2006 the 'Outstanding Service Award' from the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. He has been a speaker and keynote speaker at International conferences in many countries. About 200 academic publications in German and English. Consultant and Trainer in Adult and Continuing Education and Human Resources Development with numerous organisations.

*jost.reischmann@uni-bamberg.de / <http://jost.reischmannfam.de/>*



**Steffi Robak**, Prof. Dr., is a professor of adult education and diversity education at Leibniz University in Hanover. At the Institute for Vocational Education and Adult Education, she focuses on intercultural education and international education research in areas such as education management and professionalisation in adult education, learning culture research and learning culture developments in businesses and transnational personnel development.

*steffi.robak@ifbe.uni-hannover.de / [www.uni-hannover.de](http://www.uni-hannover.de)*



**Ernst Dieter Rossmann, Dr.**, has a Diploma Certificate in Psychology and a Doctorate of Sports Science. He was a member of the scientific staff at the college of social pedagogy in Hamburg and lecturer at the Sports Institute of the University of Hamburg. He acted as community politician and Deputy for Culture in Elmshorn, and from 1987 to 1998 he was Member of the State Parliament of Schleswig-Holstein State Parliament Vice President and Party Group Vice Chairman. Since 1998, Dr. Ernst Dieter Rossmann has been a member of the German Bundestag, chairman of the Committee on Education, Research and Technology Assessment, as well as Member of the Party Group Executive Board of the SPD.

*kell.rossmann@t-online.de / <http://edr-pi.de/>*



**Margarete Sachs-Israel**, D.E.A and D.E.S.S in psychology (Paris), and B.A. in Liberal Arts (New York State), is an educationist and has long-standing knowledge and international experience in basic education, youth and adult literacy as well as in educational planning. She holds two post-graduate degrees in psychology. She has held various positions at UNESCO since 1989, including the position of Head of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) Coordination Unit and Team Leader of the Education Research and Foresight Programme at UNESCO Bangkok. Presently, she is the focal point for the post-2015 education agenda in the EFA and Global Agenda Coordination Team at UNESCO Paris.

*m.sachs-israel@unesco.org/ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/>*



**Shinil Kim, Prof.**, studied at Seoul National University (SNU) and the University of Pittsburgh. He is one of the leading advocates and architects of lifelong learning in Korea and in East Asia. He has taught for most of his professional career at SNU, where he is now Professor Emeritus, and is also Chair Professor at the Graduate School of Baekseok University. In 2006, he was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education. In this position, he enhanced the visibility of adult education and lifelong learning in his country and internationally.

*kshini@snu.ac.kr*



**Michael Samlowski**, Dr., majored in English and German Philology before specialising in comparative education studies with a particular focus on Latin American Adult Education. In 1981, he joined DVV International and served as director of a country project in Colombia. He then moved on to headquarters as desk officer for DVV International's Latin American projects, and from 1997 to 2008 served as its vice director. From 1998 until 2004, he exercised a vice presidency of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). After his retirement in 2008, he never lost contact with DVV International and the developments in its field of action.

*samlowski@gmail.com*



**Ingrid Schöll**, Dr. Phil., has been the Director of the Adult Education Centre Bonn since 2004. She has published extensively in the areas of marketing, organisational development and quality management. Ms Schöll works with and undertakes training activities in numerous expert panels and technical conferences of the DIE (German Institute for Adult Education). She is an advisory council and jury member of the Grimme Institute, Marl, a member of the editorial board of the Hesse Blätter für Volksbildung, as well as a lecturer and consultant for DVV International.

*dr.ingrid.schoell@bonn.de / www.vhs-bonn.de*



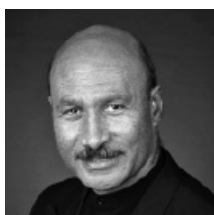
**Rajesh Tandon**, Dr., IIT, IIM, is an internationally-acclaimed leader and practitioner of participatory research and development, founded the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in 1982, a voluntary organisation providing support to grassroots initiatives in South Asia, and continues to be its Chief Functionary. He has recently been appointed Co-Chair of the prestigious UNESCO Chair on Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education.

*rajesh.tandon@pria.org / www.pria.org*



**Alan Tuckett**, Prof. Dr., was elected President of the International Council for Adult Education in 2011. Early in his career he helped create the national literacy campaign in the UK, worked as a Principal in Brighton and London and led the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education from 1988-2011. He started Adult Learners' Week in the UK in 1992, which spread to more than 50 countries. He is a visiting professor in lifelong learning at the universities of Leicester and Nottingham and in Delhi, and has honorary doctorates from eight universities. His book *Seriously Useless Learning* was published by NIACE in 2014.

*alan.tuckett@gmail.com*



**Timote M. Vaoleti**, Dr., is the Chairperson of IMPAECT\* (New Zealand and Tonga) and a member of the ASPBAE Executive Council. A teacher educator at the University of Waikato, he has led national curriculum development for Pacific school curricula. His research areas are in ESD, pedagogies, research methodologies and epistemologies. In 2012, Timote was inducted into the International Hall of Fame for Adult and Community Education, University of Oklahoma, USA.

*vaoleti@waikato.ac.nz*



**Shirley Walters**, Prof. (em), is Professor Emeritus of adult and continuing education at the University of the Western Cape and founding director of the Division for Lifelong Learning. She was chair of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) from 2004-2010; she is a member of the Ministerial Transformation of Public Higher Education Oversight Committee. She has been a scholar-activist in the field of adult education both nationally and internationally over many years, during which time she has had the pleasure of working together with Heribert Hinzen.

*ferris@iafrica.com / www.universityofwesterncape/dll.ac.za*



**Bruce Wilson**, Prof., is Director of the European Union Centre at RMIT University. He is responsible for academic studies on the European Union, encouraging mobility for staff and students, and for building partnerships between Australian universities and organisations and their European counterparts. He also leads a major project on comparative regional policy in Europe, Australia and Asia, looking at interventions to promote innovative economic development that improves the living and working conditions of people in metropolitan and rural city regions. He was a founding co-Director of the Pascal International Observatory.

*bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au / [www.rmit.edu.au/eucentre](http://www.rmit.edu.au/eucentre)*



**Jin Yang**, Dr., is Director-General of the Central Institute for Vocational and Technical Education (CIVTE) of the Ministry of Education of China. From 2008 to 2014, he served as a senior programme specialist at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and facilitated the development of an international network of learning cities/regions, and managed UIL's programme on lifelong learning policies and strategies. Before joining UIL in 2008, Dr. Yang was Deputy Director-General of the Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education of China.

*yj1@moe.edu.cn*

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# The three illiterate men –

## A short story from Sierra Leone<sup>1</sup>

Three illiterate men were asked to go and learn how to read and write. The men only stayed away for three days and returned, assuming that they had become literate. The Chief then asked for three men to guard his gates. The three men who were assumed to be literate took up the post. One day, a man called Pa Kay gathered many good things to send to the Chief. When Pa Kay reached the first gate, the man at the gate asked him to stop and promise that whatever he got from the Chief would be shared with him before he would be allowed to pass through. Pa Kay agreed and promised to give the gateman twenty. The man at the gate never asked what the twenty meant, but allowed Pa Kay to pass with his signature on a piece of paper. The same thing happened at the other two gates, and Pa Kay continued to promise to give twenty to the other guards.

When the Chief saw Pa Kay, he was so pleased that he decided to give him plenty of gold, diamonds and money. But Pa Kay refused to take any reward but asked that he should be given a hundred lashes of the cane. The Chief was very much surprised at this; but Pa Kay insisted on getting the lashes. The Chief then called his messenger to bring the cane and asked Pa Kay to lie on the floor. After he was given forty lashes, Pa Kay ordered the man with the cane to stop. He then asked the Chief to invite his first gates-man. When the Chief asked why, Pa Kay explained that he had an agreement with him. The Chief called for the gate keeper and when he came Pa Kay ordered the cane-man to give him twenty lashes. The keeper wanted to refuse, but Pa Kay took out the agreement paper and showed it to him. The Chief then ordered the cane-man to thrash the keeper giving him twenty strokes of the cane. The second and third gate-keeper were called and the same punishment was given to them. After the whole exercise, the three men decided to go and do actual learning.

The moral behind this short story is that to pretend to know when one doesn't know is dangerous.

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<sup>1/</sup> This story has been taken from: Heribert Hinzen et al. (ed.) (1987): *Fishing in Rivers of Sierra Leone. Oral Literature*. Freetown: People's Educational Association of Sierra Leone.

DVV International  
Obere Wilhelmstraße 32  
53225 Bonn  
Germany

Tel.: +49 (0)228 97569-0  
Fax: +49 (0)228 97569-55  
[info@dvv-international.de](mailto:info@dvv-international.de)  
[www.dvv-international.de](http://www.dvv-international.de)

