

# Annual Report 2007



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning

ING · PROGRAMMES IN 2006 · ADULT EDUCATION  
LITERACY · LIFELONG LEARNING · POLICY ADVOCACY, CAPACITY-BUILDING AND NETWORKING  
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This foreword is a form of closure for me personally as my term as chairperson of the UIL Governing Board runs out at the end of 2007.

I joined the Board twelve years ago, before the landmark CONFINTEA V world conference on adult learning that took place in Hamburg in 1997. That conference declared adult learning "a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility." On this exultant note it was expected that the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), as it then was, would ride the wave of CONFINTEA to achieve even greater things. Instead, the Institute found itself facing the cold threat of closure. Early in 2000 the German authorities announced that, following a ruling by their audit court, the institutional grant to UIE would have to be totally withdrawn, albeit in steps over a period of five years. This brought about a long and very complicated process to renegotiate the status of UIE, which thankfully was finally accomplished in 2006 and 2007 with the closing of the foundation which ran UIE from 1952, and the setting up of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) as an international institute of UNESCO under a host country agreement between UNESCO and the Federal Republic of Germany. The City of Hamburg, the home of UIL, has remained in all seasons a vital supporter of the Institute.

The remarkable thing is that throughout all this uncertainty and difficulty, with all its highs and lows – and there were many lows – the Institute continued fulfilling its mandate concerning literacy, adult and non-formal learning, and lifelong learning. The faithfulness and determination of the staff, the funding of steadfast partners such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Governments of Germany and Norway, and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the political support of a vast network of adult educators and their governments, and the acumen of the Governing Board, all together kept things going, and actually growing, if not flourishing. Perhaps, on reflection, the most important factor has been the leadership skills of the Director, Adama Ouane, who has managed complex, heavy responsibilities, and risks during this time. So much has been achieved in the past decade, with meagre resources, that UIL is now widely, and rightly, respected for its work in research, programme and policy development, and capacity development. Accordingly UNESCO Headquarters has recently delegated further responsibilities for literacy and non-formal education to UIL, in particular the coordination of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). Please do read more about UIL's diverse accomplishments in this Annual Report, since I do not have the space even to summarise them.

And now CONFINTEA VI is on the horizon, scheduled for 2009 in Brazil.

I am just elated and proud to have been associated, in a small way, with the remarkable rescue and revival of such an important and effective international body, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. Long may it live, and learn!

Justin Ellis  
Chairperson, Governing Board

**“UIL strives for the promotion of learning as a basic human right, especially for the underprivileged and marginalised adults in the world.”**

The year 2007 was a historic year for the Institute as it was the founding year of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). This grew out of the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), which had operated from its Hamburg location for 55 years.

The signing of the host country agreement by the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and the Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier on 21 February 2007 marked the beginning of a new era in the Institute's history and closed a long period of transition that began in 2000. The change in status from a foundation under German law to a fully-fledged UNESCO Institute was also reflected in the amendment to the name of the Institute in 2006.

Once again we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the partners and friends of the Institute who contributed to this achievement: the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, the Deputy Director-General, Marcio Barbosa, and the Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education, Qian Tang. We are deeply grateful to the German Government, in particular to Rolf-Dieter Schnelle, Director of Culture and Education at the German Foreign Office, and to the authorities of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, especially to Senator Jörg Dräger, the Minister for Science and Research, and Roland Salchow, State Secretary of Science and Research, for their long-standing support to the old UIE and their renewed commitment to the new UIL.

We extend our thanks to colleagues and partners at UNESCO Headquarters and in the regional bureaus and cluster and country offices for their excellent cooperation and collegiality. Since the responsibility for adult literacy, non-formal education and LIFE was transferred to UIL as part of the reform of the Education Sector, the Institute has expanded and renewed its cooperation with field offices, and has greatly benefited from this. The longstanding cooperation with regional bureaus has reached new dimensions, and joint initiatives with sister institutes have increased.

We would like to express our profound gratitude to the Member States and organisations which supported the Institute in 2007: the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Royal Government of Norway, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) of the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) and The World Bank, the European Union, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the Government of Canada, the Government of the French Community of Belgium and Wallonia, the French National Commission for UNESCO, the Government of

Finland, the Government of Japan, the Government of China, and the Government of the Republic of Korea.

We would like to thank in particular Mr. Justin Ellis, Chairperson of the Governing Board, who has served the board in various capacities with unique wisdom and commitment for 13 years – very important years in the history of the Institute, from the preparations for the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) to the founding of a new Institute that stands on solid foundations. Mr. Ellis' term on the Board has now come to an end. We wish him all good fortune and hope for many more opportunities to work together in the future.

Under the chair of Justin Ellis, the new Governing Board of UIL met for the first time in May 2007. The Board approved UIL's Mid Term Strategy inspired by 34 C/4 and the biennial programme of the Institute featuring in 34 C/5. UIL's programme is structured according to four specific goals, and activities will be grouped in relevant programme clusters as follows:

The Lifelong Learning cluster covers key programmes such as the research, capacity-building and networking (creation of an observatory) on recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal, informal and experiential Learning, a policy dialogue on lifelong learning organised in cooperation with partners to promote lifelong learning policies, and exploratory and demonstration studies on synergies between formal and non-formal approaches.

The Literacy cluster embraces all activities related to literacy, mainly to adult literacy. One of the priorities of this cluster is the coordination of UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), which includes a series of activities to give technical support to the 35 LIFE countries and promote South-South and triangular cooperation with the North. The focus will be on programme content and delivery, training of trainers, monitoring and evaluation, and other determinants of quality. This initiative is aimed at the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups and gender justice. A major multi-country international study on the impact of literacy will be launched.

Programme activities in the area of adult learning and non-formal education are grouped in the Adult Education and Non-formal Education cluster and focus predominantly on the preparation of the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), which will take place in 2009, and on alternative learning modes and non-formal provision of post-primary education and training. The International Adult Learners Week movement and a programme on prison education are also part of this cluster.

The Africa cluster covers UIL's programmes in support of capacity-building in literacy, non-formal education, and adult and lifelong learning in the region. It will concentrate on ways in which UIL can service African Member States within the In-

stitute's areas of competence. It features also the longstanding cooperation with ADEA.

The Annual Report 2007 is structured along these lines. The fourth chapter of the Annual Report constitutes a reflection on UIL's learning outcomes with regard to UIL's strategic goals and working areas, with a focus on benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation, and recognition of prior learning.

In the context of UIL's work in the field of lifelong learning (LLL), the Institute is continuing its research in the area of recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal, informal and experiential learning (RVA). This programme, which is being carried out in cooperation with the French National Commission for UNESCO, is another high priority for UIL. Building on the outcomes of the international survey covering 45 countries and the analytical synthesis on effective policies and practices, assessment tools used and conducive factors, new efforts are being made to create an observatory, to promote policies and to strengthen capacity, especially in developing countries. In this context, an international seminar was organised in Paris in June on "Recognition of Experiential Learning: Prospects for its Development in African Countries". A core team of resource persons and competent lead resource centres was set up to steer action in Africa. Furthermore, UIL collaborated in a joint venture with the Mauritian Qualifications Authority (MQA) in launching a pilot project on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for adults with limited basic education. This will be used as a springboard to build a team of resource persons to provide technical backstopping to certain countries on request.

In the context of UIL's efforts to institutionalise lifelong learning in Member States, the Institute provided technical support to the Uruguayan Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in integrating a LLL perspective into the ongoing education debate, and it advised on the drafting of relevant educational legislation. A large advocacy and public opinion campaign was conducted with the media to promote LLL to the public in preparation for a national debate on this topic.

In cooperation with partners in the Republic of Korea, UIL organised a second international policy dialogue for the promotion of lifelong learning. The event focused on "Building Effective Partnerships for Lifelong Learning", recognising that a key element in ensuring lifelong learning is to develop and sustain partnerships. Policy recommendations that emerged from the meeting aimed at enhancing the concept of lifelong learning and the integration of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

As in previous years, literacy was one of UIL's main areas of work in 2007, especially the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), which is an initiative coordinated by UIL in the context of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD). LIFE

targets 35 countries worldwide with literacy rates below 50 per cent and populations containing more than 10 million illiterate adults. Presently 85 per cent of the world's population without literacy competencies live in these countries, the majority being women. While country-ownership is the key principle for LIFE at national level, South-South cooperation is a core element of LIFE strategy at international level. In 2007, UIL jointly organised several national meetings to launch LIFE and research-based training to enhance capacities in LIFE countries. A series of sub-regional meetings has been started to allow for exchange between LIFE countries in the areas of policies, innovative practices, costs and management. Two of these were held in 2007: in Bamako (Mali) for the West African LIFE countries, and in Marrakech (Morocco) for the Arab LIFE countries. Other meetings in the African and Asian regions will follow in early 2008.

In November, UIL held a "North-South Exchange on Family Literacy". One major objective of that meeting was to show by means of evidence and innovative practices that the concept of intergenerational learning is relevant also in the countries of the South, and could be further explored by LIFE countries. It is a useful building bloc for lifelong learning and a glue that cements together early childhood education, basic education and adult education.

Another focus of UIL's work was the organisation of the African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy, which is part of a series of high-level regional conferences on literacy held in the context of the "Global Campaign", a UNESCO initiative within the framework of Education for All (EFA), and more particularly of UNLD and LIFE. The conference for the African region, which was held in Bamako from 10 to 12 September, was convened under the responsibility of UIL, in cooperation with many partners. Nearly 500 participants, consisting of an array of stakeholders including education ministers, finance ministers, First Ladies, NGOs, scholars and private providers, shared views and made recommendations on policies, funding, partnership based on prior research evidence, and analysis of proven practices. As a result of the meeting, concrete recommendations were put forward for actions to be undertaken by African governments, UNESCO and its partners, service providers and other partners. The official "Appeal of Bamako" begs all African women and men to commit themselves to making non-formal education a reality as a fundamental human right exercised by all and for all. Concrete follow-up measures and bold policy decisions have been made already in several countries, implicitly referring to the outcomes of the conference.

In order to increase its knowledge base in anticipation of CONFINTEA VI, but also as UNESCO's focal point for literacy, UIL is currently expanding its research activities in the field of literacy. In 2007, the Institute started a project to map adult literacy research worldwide since the year 2000.

Another main area of UIL's work in 2007 was the preparation of the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), which will be hosted by Brazil in May 2009. Two meetings of the international consultative group for CONFINTEA VI were held in 2007. The group plans and monitors the preparation process for the conference, which is being coordinated by UIL. An overall concept and format were suggested, and main signposts were outlined. Broad consultation was called for, with concentration on three to four thematic fields. A web consultation process was launched to finalise the motto and logo of the conference. On the content side, the emphasis was placed on the anticipated results of the conference. Several proposals were made with regard to the nature, scope and depth of the final document that would embody the recommendations and course of action emanating from the conference. The format for the national reports focusing on the situation of adult learning and education was discussed and agreed upon, and a grid and guidelines were prepared. An outline was drawn up for the report on the state of adult education in the world. A meeting on indicators, benchmarks and standards for adult education was also organised to contribute to the content of CONFINTEA VI. This set out the foundations, and spelt out key benchmarks for monitoring, reporting and accountability in relation to the following issues:

- 1) participation in adult learning and education,
- 2) financing, and
- 3) learning outcomes.

This year's International Adult Learners Week, which took place in September in Manchester, UK, co-hosted by UIL and NIACE, represented a step on the road to CONFINTEA VI, with the overall goal of reviewing the past and planning for the future of the global advocacy network. Community participation and learners' empowerment and involvement were the main features of this year's celebration. Lessons were drawn from the multi-stakeholder assessment carried out, and recommendations were drafted, to be brought to the attention of participants at CONFINTEA VI.

In 2008, a series of regional preparatory meetings for CONFINTEA VI will be held, as well as thematic meetings. An international conference on prison education will be hosted by the French Community of Belgium and Wallonia – prison education is one of UIL's areas of work that emanated from CONFINTEA V.

UIL's work on NFE concentrated on the synergies between formal and non-formal education, especially in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention and alternative forms of learning. A vast range of innovation was identified, and a wide network was established to link up with empowering pedagogical approaches and gender mainstreaming. Some other areas covered by this theme were community-based and participatory approaches, and the development of in-built monitoring and evaluation systems. Inclusion, social cohesion and meeting the learn-

ing needs of special groups (indigenous people, linguistic minorities, prison inmates, etc.) were also investigated under the rubric of NFE, as well as advocacy for incorporating such approaches into sector-wide policies.

Apart from the major Bamako Literacy Conference referred to under the relevant cluster above, UIL carried out many other activities in Africa in 2007: UIL continued to act as consultant on the development of an Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP) in Botswana, for example, advising on the drafting of all three levels in key subject areas, two of which were pre-tested, and further expanding capacity in the Department of NFE by extending its activities to the Media, Research and Evaluation Unit.

In addition to UNESCO/UIL-led programmes, other joint activities were carried out with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) and in cooperation with the Abuja and Bangkok offices. A sub-regional workshop was held for the African region on capacity-building for community-based approaches to literacy and non-formal education, jointly organised by UIL and ISESCO.

Strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of the LIFE initiative were discussed during a workshop held in July. Mass literacy campaigns were the theme of a workshop held in Nigeria in September.

The work on the textbook series *African Perspectives on Adult Learning* (APAL) continues. The purpose of the series – which is a cooperation between the Department of Adult Education of the University of Botswana, dvv international and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning – is to provide accessible textbooks for students in Africa studying adult education, designed by African scholars to reflect African perspectives and universal values and meeting international standards and expectations. Five titles have been published so far, and two further titles (on the History and Management of Adult Education in Africa respectively) are currently being finalised. A similar series is being designed for universities using French and Portuguese: editorial teams of scholars with thorough knowledge and acknowledged expertise have been formed to work on relevant textbooks drawn from the series developed in English, which they are adapting rather than translating directly. One outcome of APAL is its contribution to exploring African perspectives in and for adult education. This will be further deepened and disseminated through the CONFINTEA VI preparation process. A regional conference on this topic will be organised within the African consultation for CONFINTEA. UIL continues to cooperate with the Working Group on Non-formal Education (WGNFE) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). While the working relationship remains very close, UIL's role has shifted from that of coordinating agency to technical adviser.

In cooperation with a number of partners, UIL also launched a new initiative on the synergies between formal and non-formal education approaches in HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa.

While Africa remains the priority region for UIL, the Institute also expanded its activities in the Asian region in 2007, especially in the context of LIFE. Apart from the policy dialogue organised in South Korea, capacity-building workshops and consultancies were carried out in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and a training workshop on Mother Tongue/Bilingual Literacy Programmes was held in June 2007 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, organised by UNESCO Bangkok's Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) in cooperation with UNESCO Dhaka and UIL. As a follow-up to that workshop, further inter-regional workshops are envisaged for capacity-building and exchange of experience on curriculum design and materials development, learning materials production and advocacy.

In order to promote evidence-based decision-making in the field of mother tongue-based bilingual education, UIL is currently working on a research report and an advocacy document that focus on Africa. These publications are being prepared in collaboration with ADEA and a team of experts.

ALADIN, the global network of about 100 documentation centres on adult learning, which is coordinated by UIL, has strong support in India. ALADIN-India is currently playing a key role in building capacities for adult educators by developing and promoting PALDIN, a participatory learning package. The 31 units of PALDIN developed to date cover general issues around adult learning and literacy, but have a particular focus on information management in an adult learning set-up. PALDIN was pilot tested between July and November 2007 and is now being revised following a review meeting in December 2007. Once PALDIN is finalised, it will be freely available and may be adapted to regional needs.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight some interesting volumes that UIL published in 2007. *Measuring the Right to Education*, co-published with Schulthess publishers and the Interdisciplinary Institute for Ethics and Human Rights in Fribourg, Switzerland, presents a methodology for observation and analysis of educational systems, using a methodological grid covering relevance, coherence, effectiveness and real exercise of rights in relation to the four As, namely Acceptability, Adaptability, Accessibility and Availability.

*Beating the Drums for Attention*, which is available in English, French and German, is the final product of the EU-funded International Adult Learners Week in Europe (IntALWinE) network. This is an analytical review of advocacy and innovative strategies for motivating and celebrating learners' merits and achievement.

*Gemeinsam in der Sprache baden: Family Literacy. Internationale Konzepte zur familienorientierten Schriftsprachförderung*, co-published with the Klett publishing house, is the first book that has appeared in German on the concept of family literacy. It contains descriptions and analysis of family literacy programmes worldwide as well as a chapter on the German pilot project FLY, which was launched in Hamburg in 2004 in cooperation with UIL.

*Developing Programmes for Adult Learners in Africa* is part of the textbook series African Perspectives on Adult Learning (APAL).

*Literacy, Knowledge and Development: South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People* is a product of cooperation between UIL and the Mexican National Institute for Adult Education (INEA/CONEVYT). The volume is the result of the "South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People", a conference that took place in Mexico City in 2005. The meeting laid the groundwork for expanding coverage and involving more countries in a broad South-South policy dialogue on quality education for adults and young people.

Last but not least, UIL published a special issue of its *International Review of Education* on "Quality Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects".

With CONFINTEA VI taking place just eighteen months from now, the year 2008 will largely be devoted to the preparations for that important conference, which may make a significant difference to the recognition of adult learning. Another priority area will continue to be the LIFE initiative. As in the past, UIL will strive for the promotion of learning as a basic human right, especially for the underprivileged and marginalised adults in the world.

Adama Ouane  
Director, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

The year 2007 stands out as a very special one for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). It was the year in which UIL rose, phoenix-like from the ashes of its predecessor, the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), which had been dissolved in 2006 as a foundation under German law. In February 2007, the Director-General of UNESCO and the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany signed in Berlin the new host country agreement for UIL, which now became a full institute of UNESCO. At the same time a new agreement was signed with the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, which renewed its long-standing and generous support for the Institute.

While 2007 was a year of re-birth, it was also one of continuity. The wisdom and expertise accumulated by UIE over many decades could now be put to good use by the new Institute. As UNESCO's specialized institute for literacy, non-formal education, adult and lifelong learning, UIL has the benefit of a rich stock of experiences in its fields of expertise and is linked to established networks with a wide range of experts and institutions in all world regions. Consequently, in 2007, as part of a wider reform and re-structuring process of the Education sector, UNESCO transferred to UIL further programme responsibilities including the coordination of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), created to reinforce the United Nations Literacy Decade. In addition to the adult education activities already transferred to the former UIE, the overall responsibility for non-formal education (NFE) activities was also handed over to UIL.

All of this has given the Institute enormous challenges. Its new and increased responsibilities and further commitment to quality and results have brought the need to seek new ways of doing business and finding appropriate financial resources, and the pressures on the Director and staff have increased commensurately. However, UIL can be congratulated on having met these challenges most effectively, as the report on 2007 shows.

Key signposts for the future are provided by the two central planning instruments adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO last October. First, in UNESCO's new Medium-Term Strategy for the coming six years (2008 – 2013) it is stated as a strategic objective that UNESCO will contribute to enabling all learners to achieve quality education at all levels, through formal and non-formal approaches, and assist Member States in building respective capacities. Furthermore, UNESCO's programme and budget for the coming biennium (2008-2009) gives priority to the goal of fostering quality education for all at all levels and in both formal and non-formal education throughout life, with particular emphasis on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

In the few months that I have been in office, I have begun to assess the overall situation of the Education Sector and noted both the potential of the Education Institutes and the ways in which their input and overall contribution to improving the performance of the Sector and the quality of its activities could be maximised. EFA and EFA-related matters will remain high on our agenda, the reform drive will be pushed further and institutes' roles clarified and strengthened. A culture of evaluation and results, communication and management will be promoted in a transparent and cordial working environment. UIL is well equipped and qualified to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it in the areas of research, capacity-building and networking in order to serve Member States and its various partners, and this will enable it to address the key neglected goals of EFA, namely adult literacy, NFE, youth and adult education and training. The forthcoming Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), the implementation of the LIFE initiative and advocacy and capacity-building for lifelong learning are areas in which UIL will consistently be able to realize its full potential and raise UNESCO's flag. Indeed, the preparation of CONFINTEA VI will play a decisive role here.

Within the framework of these priorities UIL will pursue its own strategic goals, building on the foundations already laid through its programme activities. UNESCO and its Member States look to UIL to fulfil its commitments and play its part in achieving the above-mentioned goals.

I am confident that UIL will meet the said challenges with the skill, commitment and vision that have characterized it throughout its history. I would like to wish its Director and the staff all success in this endeavour.

Nicholas Burnett  
Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

### INTERREGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Implementation and coordination of the UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) targeting 35 countries worldwide with high illiteracy rates.

Preparation for the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI).

UIL is coordinating the development of international benchmarks on adult education.

International Adult Learners Week, a transnational advocacy framework for promoting literacy and lifelong learning, links 35 learning festivals around the globe.

ALADIN, the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network, links 100 libraries and documentation centres in the field of adult education worldwide.

UIL is conducting an international survey on the recognition, validation and accreditation of prior learning.

UIL has started an initiative to map literacy research worldwide.

UIL is involved in activities promoting mother tongue/bilingual education.

UIL is involved in the Regional Conferences in Support of Global Literacy.

UIL organised a North-South Exchange on Family Literacy, and promotes intergenerational learning and innovative pedagogical approaches worldwide.

UIL is cooperating with the Google "Literacy Project"

The *International Review of Education*, a well-established peer-reviewed journal on both formal and non-formal education, is read by educational researchers and professionals worldwide.

### LATIN AMERICA

**Regional:**  
Seven-country studies on literacy in multilingual contexts.

**Brazil:**  
UIL is part of a Latin American network on prison education. UIL closely cooperates with the Brazilian government in the context of the preparations for CONFINTEA VI.

**Uruguay:**  
UIL supports lifelong learning policies in Uruguay.

**Haiti:**  
Launch of the LIFE initiative.



## EUROPE

### Regional:

UIL coordinated the European Adult Learners Week network (IntALWinE).  
UIL has coordinated a European project on family literacy (QualiFLY) and still coordinates a European project on "Literacy and Life Skills in Prison."

### Germany:

UIL is a cooperating partner of the "Frankfurt Book Fair Literacy Campaign".  
UIL collaborates in the FLY family literacy pilot project.  
UIL is a leading member of the German Coordination Group for the UN Literacy Decade and is a member of the Northern German network for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

## ASIA

### Regional:

LIFE-and literacy related activities in Bangladesh and Pakistan.  
International Policy Dialogue on Lifelong Learning for Adults in Busan, Republic of Korea.  
UIL is a member of the "Positive Learning Working Group", a network for adult educators and HIV/AIDS-preventive education practitioners.

### India:

The UIL network ALADIN supports capacity-building of adult educators in India.

## AFRICA

### Regional:

UIL organised the African Regional Conference on Global Literacy in Bamako, Mali.  
UIL works closely with the Working Group on Non-formal Education (WGNFE) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).  
LIFE-related activities in Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.  
UIL promotes Recognition of Experiential Learning in African countries. More than 20 studies have been conducted on literacy policies and strategies in Africa.  
UIL has launched an exploratory study on synergies between formal and non-formal education approaches to support HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa.  
The textbook series *African Perspectives on Adult Learning* is being published jointly with dvv international, the University of Botswana and Pearson Education South Africa.  
Capacity-building project on reinforcing national capacities to evaluate non-formal education and literacy programmes for young people and adults (Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia and Uganda).

### Botswana:

A comprehensive new Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP) is being developed.

### Senegal:

Involvement in the project "Strengthening of capacities of personnel in literacy and NFE in Senegal".

### Arab States:

LIFE and literacy-related activities in Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Qatar and Yemen.

### Signing of the Host Country Agreement for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

On 21 February 2007 the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and the Federal Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, signed in Berlin the Host Country Agreement for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). This signing gave a new legal status to the Institute, which was established in Germany in 1951 and is the oldest institution of the United Nations in Germany. Previously called the UNESCO Institute for Education, it adopted its present name in 2006.

The change in the Institute's legal status, transforming it from a foundation under German civil law into a fully-fledged international UNESCO Institute, is thereby concluded. The Host Country Agreement was negotiated between the German Government, UNESCO and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, where the Institute has been based since 1951. The City provides the Institute with the historic Albert Ballin villa in the Feldbrunnenstrasse as its premises.

UIL will continue to engage in research, training, publication and documentation in its areas of expertise – literacy, non-formal education and adult education – as core components of lifelong learning. It will also continue to support UNESCO priority programmes. Along with the change of status, UNESCO transferred responsibility to UIL for its work in the field of literacy and non-formal education, as well as for adult learning, a responsibility transferred to UIE in the 1990s. UIL has been assigned the coordination of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE).



On 21 February 2007, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and the Federal Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, signed in Berlin the Host Country Agreement for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

### First Meeting of UIL's Governing Board

From 21 to 24 May 2007 the Governing Board of UIL met for the first time after the creation of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, which legally took effect in February 2007 when the Host Country Agreement for the Institute was signed between the German Government and UNESCO. The Board is composed of members from all world regions. Its main function is to advise the Director-General of UNESCO on all relevant matters concerning the UIL programme and budget.



#### UIL's Governing Board Meeting 2007:

Front row (from left to right): Jean-Marie Ahlin Byll-Cataria; Kyung-He Sung; Suzy Halimi; Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar; Jürgen Lüthje; Marja Einig-Heidenhof (German Foreign Ministry); Anders Falk  
Back row (from left to right): Hamad Ali Al-Sulaiti; Cristovam Buarque; Adama Ouane (Director UIL); Alexander Sannikov (UNESCO Headquarters); Ana Luiza Machado (UNESCO Headquarters); Justin Ellis; Roland Bernecker (German National Commission for UNESCO); Tiedao Zhang

From its base in Hamburg, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) works in close collaboration with the Paris Headquarters of UNESCO, the four UNESCO Regional Bureaus, the field offices of the Organisation and its six sister institutes:

- the International Bureau of Education (IBE) in Geneva;
- the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris;
- the International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) in Bonn;
- the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies (IITE) in Moscow;
- the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC), located in Caracas; and the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity-building (IICBA) in Africa, situated in Addis Ababa.
- UIL also works closely with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in Montreal.

As its general steering body, UIL has a Governing Board consisting of 12 members appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO who meet annually to review the Institute's work and plan future policy. The Board is made up of education specialists from different regions of the world. The Institute is headed by a Director also appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO. Among the 30 or so members of its workforce are education and social scientists, researchers, publications staff

and librarians as well as administrative, secretarial and technical personnel. UIL will be audited every year by the general external auditor appointed by UNESCO. The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg provides the Institute with a house that is protected as a historic monument. The premises are close to the University of Hamburg, with which UIL enjoys an increasingly strong partnership.

The broad agenda of UIL is inspired by UNESCO's strategic goals reflected in its Medium Term Strategy. Its more specific objectives and activities are formulated in the light of resolutions made by the biennial General Conference of UNESCO and the annual meetings of its Governing Board. UIL's projects also arise from other sources, in particular from United Nations and world conferences and commitments, and from the Institute's formal and informal links with decision-makers, researchers and practitioners in education around the globe. Two external evaluations – one carried out in 2001 and another in 2005 – as well as the reform of the UNESCO Education Sector and the change of status of the Institute from a German foundation to a full-fledged international body, have also helped shape the programmes and modalities of operation of the Institute. UIL's priority issues and activities are reflected in its Medium-Term Strategy.



The staff of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning with the Director-General of UNESCO, 22 February 2007

## PROGRAMMES IN 2007 ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION:

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### UIL ON ITS WAY TOWARDS CONFINTEA VI

UIL's activities in adult learning and education throughout the year were heavily geared towards planning and preparing for the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI). When the Member States of UNESCO called upon the Secretariat to convene another world meeting within the CONFINTEA framework, the Director-General assigned the task of coordinating the process to UIL, the UNESCO Institute specialising in adult learning. In May of this year, a definite decision on the host country was finally taken. At the spring session of UNESCO's Executive Board, the Director-General of UNESCO accepted the proposal put by Brazil and announced that CONFINTEA VI would be hosted by Brazil in May 2009.

The central role of UIL in the CONFINTEA series of meetings dates back to the mid-1990s, when UNESCO transferred its adult education programme to the former UIE and entrusted the Institute with organising the Fifth CONFINTEA, which was hosted by the German Government in Hamburg in 1997.

Two years of mobilisation, negotiation and planning ensued, during which time the Institute was dedicated to preparing for the conference, including its five regional preparatory meetings. In the aftermath of CONFINTEA V, the Institute's research and advocacy projects in adult learning and education continued to be informed by the follow-up recommendations from the conference. The coordination of two special support and mobilisation networks, which originated at CONFINTEA V, is still central to UIL's current activities. These are the Adult Learning and Documentation Network (ALADIN) and International Adult Learners Week (IALW).



Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, Hamburg, Germany, 1997

The CONFINTEA meetings have never been seen as one-off events but rather as key elements within a continuous movement of advocacy and policy dialogue, culminating every twelve years in a global conference and generating a set of collectively agreed policy guidelines. CONFINTEA, which is the

acronym of its French name ("Conférence internationale sur l'éducation des adultes"), has become a common denominator, signifying a holistic and empowering approach to adult learning and education as part of lifelong learning, which impacts on all areas of life.

This is the context in which UIL embarked on the planning phase for CONFINTEA VI in 2007. Given the widespread neglect of adult learning and education in current national and international education and development agendas, the CONFINTEA VI process is a most welcome and much needed opportunity to highlight the significance of adult learning and education.

CONFINTEA VI will be a UNESCO-led intergovernmental conference, with the participation of other UN agencies, multi- and bi-lateral development organisations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and learners. Throughout the year, UIL received many expressions of interest in contributing to the CONFINTEA VI process, particularly from civil society organisations and learners. Many partners strongly insisted a broad consultation should be carried out within the short time frame available.

These voices pointed to one of the vital challenges facing UIL in the CONFINTEA VI process, namely maintaining a balance between the legitimate claims of all stakeholders and their desire for appropriate involvement on the one hand, and on the other, the formal requirements and decision-making processes of UNESCO, with all their implications for time management and scheduling. From the experience of the preparations for CONFINTEA VI during 2007, it is clear that this fundamental tension will accompany the process right up to the world conference in 2009 – and possibly beyond.

Against this complex background, the planning and preparatory work for CONFINTEA VI during the year focused on three major areas: mobilisation of support, advocacy and conceptual clarification; the launch of the formal preparatory procedure; and a review of special areas.

### ***Mobilisation of Support, Advocacy and Conceptual Clarification for CONFINTEA VI***

At the beginning of 2007, UIL set up the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group as an advisory committee to shape evolving conceptual and pragmatic issues. The group members were selected so as to ensure gender and geographical balance, and to represent major stakeholders and partners. The latter include adult learning and education experts from UNESCO Member States, sister agencies from the UN system, multi- and bi-lateral development organisations, regional and international non-governmental organisations, academia, relevant UNESCO offices at Headquarters and in the regions, and the CONFINTEA VI host country.

UIL convened two meetings of the group in 2007. The first meeting, which formally established the Group, was kindly hosted by the Danish Government in the legendary People's Folk High School in Elsinore. The Group then came together for a second meeting at the premises of UIL in Hamburg in November. While a few additional experts joined the second meeting, a constant membership in this central advisory committee is foreseen.

**“In the context of CONFITEA VI, UIL will produce a Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE), which will incorporate all related research findings”.**

At the first meeting, the Consultative Group critically appraised the conceptual approach presented by UIL and engaged in a fruitful debate on the overall direction which CONFITEA VI should take, as well as on the steps needed to achieve it. The meeting helped elucidate the overall approach and objectives of CONFITEA VI. Owing to the range of members' areas of work and constituencies, there were varying views regarding the thematic issues which CONFITEA VI should include. However, a consensus of all Group members emerged as to the overall approach and aims. They agreed that CONFITEA VI would have three major goals: (1) to renew the momentum and highlight the importance of adult learning and education as critical for lifelong learning; (2) to bring about the long-neglected integration of adult learning and education into the current international education and development agendas (EFA, MDGs, UNLD, DESD); and (3) to ensure implementation of the relevant recommendations and agreements, that is, to move from rhetoric to action.

In addition to this important conceptual outcome, the meeting confirmed the central elements in the CONFITEA VI preparatory process, in particular the national reports and regional assessments. It underlined the need to take stock of developments in adult learning and education, to provide evidence of the benefits of adult learning and education, and to develop the required monitoring and support tools for genuine changes and improvements.

Following the Consultative Group meeting, UIL reinforced its mobilisation and advocacy activities for CONFITEA VI. An information leaflet in three languages was designed, and the global public information distribution process was launched. In order to secure broad partnership and a shared ownership of the process leading to the Conference itself, the Director-General sent out two sets of letters. One was addressed to the heads of all UN agencies as a formal invitation to join the CONFITEA VI process. The second was to invite UNESCO Member States (via the National Commissions) to prepare their national reports. Both letters were sent in the autumn. A comprehensive prospective CONFITEA VI budget was drawn up by UIL and submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat and to technical and

financial partners for funding and support. UIL used the 34<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO to continue its advocacy and mobilisation through informal meetings with representatives of Member States and colleagues from Headquarters.

At the end of November, the second meeting of the Consultative Group was used to take stock of the steps carried out in the CONFITEA VI process since the first meeting, and to discuss the concrete contributions of Group members and their institutions to that process. The meeting focused particularly on the briefing of host countries for the preparatory regional conferences, and on the finalisation of UIL's guidelines to Member States for the preparation of national reports.

The meeting also reviewed and gave important feedback on the nature and outline of the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE), which UIL is to produce through the broad consultative assessment and accountability process put in place to prepare CONFITEA VI. The GRALE will incorporate all CONFITEA VI-related research findings, from the results of national reports, to analysis of previous research studies and specifically commissioned research.

#### ***Launch of the Formal CONFITEA VI Preparatory Procedure***

Kenya had already indicated its general interest in hosting the African regional preparatory conference at the first meeting of the Consultative Group. The Kenyan delegation then publicly announced its proposal during 34<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO, and it was confirmed during the November meeting of the Consultative Group that Kenya would host the conference in August 2008.

An official proposal for holding the preparatory conference for the Latin American and Caribbean Region was submitted to UNESCO by the Government of Mexico. It was eventually decided that this should be combined with the Regional Global Literacy Conference and that Mexico should be asked to host this enlarged conference in September 2008.

Regarding the Asia and Pacific Region, a range of discussions resulted in South Korea considering a proposal to host the CONFITEA VI regional preparatory conference in November 2008.

From the Pan-European Region, two countries submitted an official proposal to UNESCO: France and Hungary. The geographic balance provided the decisive argument: Hungary, a Central European country, would host the preparatory conference towards the end of 2008, while France was offered a special role in the preparation of the theme of literacy for CONFITEA VI.

The negotiations on the host country for the Arab Region preparatory conference had not reached a conclusion by the end

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of the year. Under these circumstances the conference for that region is expected to be held at the beginning of 2009. While UIL was pressing ahead with broad discussion and consultation on the regional conferences, it also initiated the development of a set of adult learning and education benchmarks as one of the central support tools to help implement the CONFINTEA VI follow-up. A workshop was organised at UIL in July. This brought together adult learning and education experts from different regions with experience in benchmarking. The workshop was designed to kick off a participatory process of reflection and exchange, at the end of which a set of internationally acceptable draft benchmarks would be available to incorporate into CONFINTEA VI. After being refined and agreed during the global conference, these benchmarks would constitute an important outcome of CONFINTEA VI, providing the possibility of setting concrete targets which could be used to hold stakeholders to account and measure progress.

### Regional Preparatory Conferences for CONFINTEA VI

Africa	Kenya	August 2008
Latin America	Mexico	September 2008
Asia and Pacific	South Korea	November 2008
Europe	Hungary	December 2008
Arab Region	not yet decided	Beginning of 2009

The workshop served to clarify the notion of benchmarks, distinguishing them conceptually from indicators and standards, and elucidating the different categories of benchmarks. While the idea of adult learning and education benchmarks was very welcome and deemed important, discussions during the workshop demonstrated how difficult they would be to produce. They would need to be realistic and feasible yet at the same time ambitious and future-oriented. Furthermore, they would have to be internationally agreed. Contrary to the original plan, it was not possible to come up with an initial set of benchmarks during the workshop. However, three major areas in which benchmarks would be important were identified: financing, participation and learning outcomes. Policies and monitoring and evaluation methods related to these areas were discussed.

Against this background, and given the heavy burden of questionnaires and tasks that countries were faced with, the guidelines for the production of national reports on the state of adult learning focused on a few selected indicators in the three key areas mentioned. At the same time, the final guidelines needed to be comprehensive in order to reflect the diversity, complexity and scope of adult learning and to allow for stocktaking over the long period of time that had elapsed since the previous CONFINTEA. The first draft of the guidelines was extensively revised following critical examination by the Consultative Group in November. Since the guidelines would be

addressed to UNESCO National Commissions, concerns were raised that NGOs, development partners and private providers at national level might be excluded from the preparation of national reports, especially as the deadline for submission to UIL would not leave much time for national consultation. The need to involve them and to reflect their voices in the process of shared reporting was therefore appropriately stressed in the introduction to the guidelines and in the covering letter. The guidelines were dispatched to all Member States through the appropriate channels, and the deadline for final reports was set at the end of March 2008 (later extended to the end of April 2008), in accordance with the rules governing such submissions.

### Review of Special CONFINTEA VI Areas

With the overall planning and preparation for CONFINTEA VI absorbing considerable resources at UIL in 2007, a comprehensive exploration of specific CONFINTEA VI-related themes was not possible. Nevertheless, two thematic areas were addressed. One was the review of the global situation of prison education in preparation for an international conference in 2008, and as input to CONFINTEA VI. The prison education project was pursued throughout the year under a special agreement with the Government of the French Community of Belgium. Fifteen thematic working groups are gathering legislations, experiences and research results and preparing reports with regard to specific aspects of prison education. In preparation of the International Conference on Prison Education, which



**First Meeting of the Consultative Committee for CONFINTEA VI, Elsinore, Denmark, March 2007**

**Front row (from left to right): Abdel Moneim Osman (UNESCO Beyrouth); Cooper Dawson (UNICEF); Hjrdis Dalsgaard (Denmark); Lavinia Gasperini (FAO).**

**Middle row: Einar Steensnaes (Norway); Joyce Kebathi (Kenya); Vladimir Gasskov (ILO); Adama Ouane (UIL); Madhu Singh (UIL); Irene Holse (Denmark); Clinton Robinson (UNESCO HQ); Laura-Maria Rinta (UIL)**

**Upper row: Ki-Seok Kim (Republic of Korea); Heribert Hinzen (dvv international); Jean-Marie Byll-Cataria (SDC); Abrar Hasan (OECD); Paul Blanger (ICAE); Bettina Bochynek (UIL); Arne Carlsen (Denmark); Ann Therese Ndong Jatta (UNESCO HQ); Nils-Georg Lundberg (Denmark); Werner Mauch (UIL)**

will take place from 20 to 24 October 2008 in Brussels, regional preparatory conferences will be organized. An international survey will examine prison education in approximately hundred countries. These preparations are being carried out in consultation with the regional and sub-regional UNESCO offices, Ministries, National Commissions for UNESCO, non-governmental organizations, universities and intergovernmental agencies.

The second thematic activity undertaken by UIL during the year in relation to CONFITEA VI was the celebration of International Adult Learners Week at the initiative of the UK National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE), which was hosted by the British Government in Manchester in September. In keeping with the tradition of the International ALW, coordinators of learning festivals from all world regions participated in the international meeting. At the invitation of NIACE and UIL, many of them were accompanied by an adult learner. Although a few selected adult learners had taken part in previous International ALW meetings in Cape Town and Oslo, the Manchester meeting was the first genuine international gathering of adult learners from Africa, Asia/Pacific and Europe as participants.

The learners also had the chance to confer among themselves in a separate workshop, the main aim being to come up with draft points for an International Adult Learners Charter to be presented during CONFITEA VI. In parallel, the international festival coordinators and practitioners from the UK reviewed lessons learnt and ideas for the future of the International ALW movement, the findings of which are to be presented during CONFITEA VI.



**International Learners at the International Adult Learners Week in Manchester**

### **PALDIN – ALADIN-India supports the Capacity-Building of Adult Educators**

ALADIN, the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network, is a global network of about 100 documentation centres on adult learning. India was the first ALADIN member that successfully set up its own national ALADIN network, connecting 47 documentation centres and institutes on adult learning and literacy in the country. Members of ALADIN-India have met annually since 2005 in New Delhi.

Since 2006 ALADIN-India has been developing a comprehensive learning package for adult educators called "Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking (PALDIN)". The 31 units of the course cover general issues around adult learning and literacy, but the innovative element of the course is that it also includes units about information management in an adult learning set-up, such as creating a literate environment, process documentation, networking, information and communication technologies and basic library management.

Based on the discussions during a national workshop in March, PALDIN was pilot tested between July and November 2007 by students of the Adult Education Department at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi and by a group of thirty learners drawn from different adult learning organisations in India.

In December 2007, 55 learners, course writers and international experts met in New Delhi to gather feedback on the pilot training. The possibility of simplifying the course for grassroots level workers was discussed as well as the opportunity to transfer PALDIN to other LIFE countries, such as Nepal and Bangladesh. Once PALDIN is finalised, it will be openly accessible and can be adapted to regional needs for the capacity building of staff working in adult learning and literacy institutions.

Please visit the PALDIN website for more information and full-text access to the units:

<http://www.unesco.org/education/aladin/paldin/>

Literacy is a fundamental human right which is still denied to about 774 million adults worldwide, as measured by conventional methods. Some 64 per cent of them are women. Direct measurement of literacy skills would significantly increase the global estimate. Illiteracy rates are highest in the countries with the greatest poverty. As a basic tool for making informed decisions and participating fully in the development of society, literacy is a foundation of basic education and contributes to reducing poverty. Despite this, literacy is receiving minimal political – and thus financial – attention and remains a global challenge.

Literacy continued to be one of the key areas of UIL's work, which is part of UNESCO's mandate to work towards the Education for All (EFA) goals. UIL's vision is to achieve EFA Goal 4 (to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults) on the basis of a broad concept of literacy within a perspective of lifelong learning. UIL's main goal for 2007 was to promote literacy as a central component of quality EFA and a foundation for lifelong learning. Among UIL's aims in support of this goal were:

- to provide technical support to Member States and partners in policy formulation, programme delivery, training and monitoring and evaluation;
- to build national and institutional capacity
- to coordinate the implementation of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE);
- to contribute to the implementation of the goals of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD);
- to provide technical support to the Global Campaign for Literacy and coordinate in particular the Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy in Africa; and
- to conduct research and disseminate innovative approaches to literacy.

Coordinating the implementation of LIFE, one of UNESCO's three core initiatives to accelerate action towards achieving EFA goals, has been one of UIL's priorities. LIFE is a key strategic framework for the implementation of the UNLD (2003-2012), which is supported and led by UNESCO. The main objectives of LIFE, as a ten-year (2006-2015) global framework of collaborative action for enhancing and improving national literacy efforts, are to reinforce national and international commitments to literacy (advocacy), to strengthen capacities for the articulation of sustainable policies and programme delivery (capacity-building), and to enhance countries' innovative initiatives and practices in providing literacy learning opportunities (innovation).

Through LIFE, which was officially launched during UNESCO's 33rd General Conference in October 2005, UNESCO had decided to focus its efforts on 35 countries which were selected because they have more than 50 per cent of illiteracy and/or more than 10 million persons without literacy competencies.

Eighteen of these countries are in Africa, six in the Arab Region, nine in Asia and the Pacific, and two in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the two years that passed since its launch, LIFE has been largely and more comprehensively implemented in a first group of eleven countries (Bangladesh, Egypt, Haiti, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sudan and Yemen). Preparations had started with three regional meetings in Islamabad, Niamey and Sana'a in March 2006. In July 2006, the overall coordination and responsibility for LIFE was transferred from UNESCO Headquarters to UIL in the context of the reform of UNESCO's Education Sector.

The Institute has developed a strategy for coordination and implementation of LIFE which is based on a two-pronged approach: On the one hand UIL is undertaking the macro-coordination of LIFE as a framework for action by creating coordination structures and networks which actively involve all stakeholders and strengthen ownership of regional and national LIFE processes. On the other hand, the Institute is providing and triggering tailor-made and demand-driven technical support to LIFE countries and helping to monitor the implementation of extra-budgetary-funded LIFE projects within the Capacity-building for EFA Programme.

In an intensive workshop in June 2007, UIL has refined – and in a way simplified – its strategy for implementing LIFE on the basis of lessons learned from the first-round experiences. It mirrors an attempt to find more realistic, operational and flexible approaches to LIFE as a process which should be country-led and country-specific and which should be embedded in national policies and strategies. Rather than a project or programme, LIFE is meant to be a mechanism for technical support services to Member States and facilitation by UNESCO in the areas of policy, advocacy, partnerships, capacity and innovations. While country-ownership is the key principle for LIFE at national level, South-South cooperation is a core element of the LIFE strategy at regional and international levels. The refined LIFE implementation strategy led to the review of the LIFE Vision and Strategy Paper, which was published in its 3rd edition by UIL in September (in English and French), distributed to LIFE countries and also translated to Arabic and Portuguese afterwards.

UIL has developed improved guidelines for the LIFE Situation Analysis with the aim to carry out an in-depth analysis of the current literacy situation at the country-level in order to determine which adjustments and amendments have to be made, which priorities to be set, which gaps to be filled, which capacities to be further developed, and which support to be organised in order to accelerate literacy efforts and make a real difference on existing literacy rates. After the completion of a LIFE Country Profile – a preliminary stock take carried out in 2005/2006 – most of the eleven first-round LIFE countries have conducted needs assessment studies finalizing them between January and October 2007. Several of them have been

presented, discussed and validated in national workshops or conferences with stakeholder involvement in order to come up with recommendations for country action plans, such as in Haiti, Nigeria, Senegal and Yemen. Bangladesh had decided to publish a compilation of effective literacy practices in the country and disseminate this broadly, because a needs assessment had been conducted already in the framework of EFA. UIL has provided technical assistance to individual countries of the first group which carried out needs assessment studies by using extra-budgetary funds.

The improved guidelines on Situation Analysis foresee that this should be shaped as a participatory process that also allows for further strengthening capacities for designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating effective literacy policies and programmes; building strong and sustainable networks and facilitating partnerships at the local and national levels; and raising public awareness about the importance of literacy for personal and national development (“making a case for literacy”). In addition to providing the basis for the development of a LIFE Country Support Plan, the Situation Analysis can be used in a number of other ways such as a preparatory step for and streamline into the country’s UNESS process; as an advocacy and communication tool in order to raise awareness and strengthen commitment for literacy (country literacy dossiers); and as a baseline information and indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of progress that LIFE is able to achieve. The Situation Analysis will feed into ongoing EFA and UNLD mid-term evaluations. Furthermore, it will also inform the CONFITEA VI process.

Monitoring and evaluation is seen as critical to the success of LIFE. Transparency regarding progress – or the lack of it – and regarding its causes, is needed in order to take proper and timely measures. Therefore, UIL convened a workshop on monitoring and evaluation in Hamburg from 9 to 11 July 2007, bringing together experts and focal points from LIFE countries, from relevant UNESCO Institutes, and from various organisations in developing and industrialized countries. The participants first reported on existing monitoring and evaluation practices and cultures in their own countries and organisations. Based on these experiences, and on the difficulties they encounter, the discussions then shifted towards a forward looking assessment of what is feasible. With the objectives of LIFE as one guiding principle, and an efforts-results-impact scheme as another, a coherent framework was developed within which exemplary questions are contained to assess advances in terms of the commitment to literacy, the literacy policies, the capacity, and innovation. LIFE countries are invited to use this framework and the exemplary questions in their annual LIFE reports, which will feed into the mid-term evaluation of LIFE in 2011, and the final evaluation in 2015. The overarching adage is that the monitoring and evaluation of LIFE should be aligned with existing practices, and should not generate an extra administrative burden on top of other evaluation processes. Indeed, the workshop was organised back to back with a meeting on

indicators, benchmarks and standards for the CONFITEA VI, in order to harmonize the two strands of work.

It is also envisaged that the monitoring and evaluation of the LIFE activities will feed into the UNLD mid-decade review in 2008. UIL is participating in the UNLD Expert Group convened by the UNLD Unit at UNESCO Headquarters to provide technical assistance to the UNLD mid-decade review strategy.

In the context of the General Conference, UNESCO’s Literacy Portal was launched, which provides basic information on LIFE and the main activities carried out within the framework of this initiative. At the same time, UIL is building a database on effective practice and research in literacy and numeracy, and in this way fulfilling its mandate to make available and accessible existing knowledge on the topic to Member States – policy-makers, academics and practitioners. Within the Literacy Portal a community of practice will be created for LIFE focal points and activists in order to communicate directly with each other, to exchange experiences and provide an effective platform for South-South cooperation.

LIFE is closely linked with UNESCO’s other two EFA core initiatives, the UNAIDS Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS (EDUCAIDS) and the Initiative on Teacher Training in Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA). While exploring the synergies with EDUCAIDS and TTISSA, a presentation on LIFE was made in a side-meeting in the context of the 34th General Conference held in Paris. More than one hundred participants from Member States as well as colleagues from UNESCO’s Education Sector attended that meeting. In addition to the presentation and a video-clip, UIL had also prepared a two-page leaflet with basic information on LIFE. In response to a great interest in LIFE, UIL stressed the need for targeted action to involve non-LIFE countries and for solidarity among countries to benefit from the outputs of LIFE. Furthermore, UIL is promoting the view that LIFE countries should not wait for “their turn” within the phased scheme that UNESCO had established for the 35 LIFE countries in order to optimize limited financial and technical capacities for support. For example, UIL is providing assistance to Mauritania, Papua New Guinea and Nepal to implement Situation Analysis processes in preparation for LIFE.

In terms of technical assistance, UIL has supported first-round LIFE countries within the framework of the extra-budgetary-funded LIFE projects of the Capacity-building for EFA Programme in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt and Senegal. UIL carried out two missions to Bangladesh to provide technical assistance in the areas of “advocacy for literacy” and “creating literate environments” within the LIFE project entitled “Strengthening Capacity of GO/NGO Managers and Policy-makers for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation including use of Research in Literacy and Pilot Literacy/Skills Training for Empowering Rural Illiterate Girls and Women”. In this context, the UIL team helped to analyse, refine and monitor the advocacy-

related and promotion of literate environment-related activities. As a result, Community Learning Centres operating in rural areas were able to improve their reading and writing competitions and attract more villagers to literacy and reading activities. Through a national workshop expertise of around 70 high profile policy-makers, development partners, media and civil society was built on Advocacy for Adult Literacy. UIL's technical support to Pakistan's LIFE project entitled "Capacity-building for Improving Quality and Scope of Literacy Programmes in Pakistan" resulted in the training of around 40 senior and middle level literacy managers and the refinement of the National Literacy Curriculum which had been drafted by national experts under the supervision of the Ministry's Curriculum Wing. In Egypt UIL provided technical support to a workshop and conference in Cairo in May on literacy, adult education and non-formal education under the title "Towards an Innovative Vision of Adult Education in Egypt" organised in the context of the LIFE project "Capacity-building to Enhance Policy Development, Institutional Change, and Programme Delivery in Literacy and Non-Formal Education in Egypt". Around 100 representatives of the Adult Education Authority from national and states levels were trained in these two events. UIL also contributed to the improvement of the Senegalese Basic Education Curriculum in the context of the LIFE project entitled "Strengthening of Capacities of the Literacy and Non-Formal Education Personnel in Senegal" by conducting a workshop in Saly, Senegal, in May and by inviting the Director of the Curriculum Department to UIL in July.

Together with BRENDA and UNESCO Bamako Office, UIL organised a sub-regional meeting of LIFE countries in francophone Africa in March. 73 representatives from Mali, Niger and Senegal met in Bamako, Mali – including members of LIFE Technical Committees, literacy experts, bilateral and multilateral stakeholders, – in order to exchange experiences and further develop their capacities in the areas of the mobilization of partnerships, the performance of the national administration, and innovative approaches to literacy. This helped them to implement related preparatory activities in the framework of LIFE.



In January, UIL also participated with technical inputs in the launch of LIFE in Haiti and Sudan. In both cases national workshops with major stakeholders were organised by the national authorities and the UNESCO offices in order to review the national literacy challenge and discuss relevant literacy policies and strategies. Furthermore, UIL was invited to a meeting of literacy experts of the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) and the Group of Eight (G8) held in Sana'a, Yemen, which was used to inform about the UNLD and LIFE and to strengthen networks.

UIL provided technical support to the implementation of the four (out of the series of six) Regional Conferences in Support of Global Literacy that are organised by UNESCO in 2007:

- a) For the Arab Region from 12 to 14 March in Doha, Qatar
- b) for East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific from 30 July to 1 August in Beijing, China
- c) for Africa from 10 to 12 September in Bamako, Mali and
- d) for South, South-West and Central Asia from 29 to 30 November in Delhi, India.

These conferences are part of a major drive to promote literacy at national, regional and international levels as a priority EFA goal and foundation of lifelong learning. They build on and follow up the work started at the White House Conference on Global Literacy in September 2006, hosted by Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States of America and Honorary Ambassador for the UNLD. The ultimate aim of the initiative is to assist countries in addressing their literacy challenges and to make a real and measurable impact in the life of their populations, with the aim of contributing towards sustainable human development and poverty eradication.

The African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy was organised by the UNESCO Education Sector under the direct responsibility of the UIL, the Regional Bureau for Education in Africa (BRENDA), the Division of United Nations Priorities, the Division of Basic Education and the Bamako Cluster Office. Literacy is a very important issue in Africa. 18 African countries have a literacy rate of less than 50 per cent or a population of more than 10 million without literacy competencies. In the framework of EFA and, in particular the UNLD and LIFE, a new momentum was created to put literacy higher on the policy and development agendas. Apart from the Government of Mali as the host, key partners and sponsors were the Education Programme Development Fund of the EFA Fast Track Initiative and The World Bank, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, United States Agency for International Development, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Microsoft Africa, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Government of Norway and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The African Regional Conference was a very special event with regard to the political weight of the participants: The President of the host country Mali, the Director-General of UNESCO and the Prime Minister of Mali attended the conference. The First Lady of Mali hosted African First Ladies or their representatives from 21 countries. 48 Ministers of Education, Planning or Finance and the same number of Directors of education participated in the meeting.

Further participants involved representatives of multilateral and bilateral agencies and a huge number of experts in the field of literacy and education, i.e. coordinators of EFA, regional institutions and organisations, universities, foundations, corporations, non-governmental organisations and associations, researchers, programme managers, practitioners and teachers.



**Global Conference on Literacy in Africa, Bamako, Mali, September 2007**

The African First Ladies called for a renewed commitment for literacy and committed themselves to be part of the political leadership for its implementation. The strong messages have already found a very favourable resonance in Africa and beyond. For instance, the new cabinets in Mali and Benin included a Ministry in charge of Literacy and National Languages as integral part of Basic Education. The President of Mali has announced a sharp increase in the budget for literacy. In Burkina Faso, a task force has been set up by the First Lady and the President to follow up with concrete measures the recommendation of the Bamako Conference. The African Ministers have expressed their commitment and determined that literacy should be integrated in all development programmes. Regional, national and international literacy mechanisms for exchange should be established to disseminate and exchange the best methodological practices within non-formal education. Finally, the Ministers highlighted the need of close and diverse cooperation of all stakeholders. The General Report on "Visions and Good Practices" resulting from the conference has formulated concrete recommendations for actions not only to be undertaken by African Governments, but also by UNESCO, service providers and other partners. The official "Appeal of Bamako" pleads all African women and men to com-

mit themselves to making non-formal education a reality as a fundamental human right exercised by all and for all. A selection of effective adult literacy and numeracy programmes in Africa presented at the conference can be accessed through UIL's website or UNESCO's LitPortal (<http://www.unesco.org/uil/literacyprogrammes/>).

Although UIL's focus is on developing countries, the Institute remains concerned about literacy in Europe, which has always been one of its working areas. UIL has good networks among literacy stakeholders in Europe. In its host country Germany, UIL is one of the coordinating members of a German network for literacy and basic education. As every year, UIL was involved in celebrations on the occasion of International Literacy Day, together with German partners, that were held in Berlin.

UIL is one of the cooperating partners of the "Frankfurt Book Fair Literacy Campaign/LitCam", a new initiative of the world's largest book fair, which has been created and launched by the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2006 under the patronage of the Indian novelist Shashi Tharoor in the context of a new theme, "Education for the Future", which has been established as a priority of the Book Fair. This year's LitCam event took place on 9 October in Frankfurt. Literacy and basic education projects from several countries were presented. The programme also included presentations by learners and an exhibition of various international organisations working in the field of literacy and basic education.

The LitCam initiative has created new partnerships for literacy and has helped to raise awareness for the issue among new target groups, i.e. publishers, media people and the broad public. It is also a platform for new and innovative initiatives in the field such as Google's Literacy Website "The Literacy Project", which is available in English, Spanish and German and will soon be available in French ([www.google.com/literacy](http://www.google.com/literacy)).

UIL has continued its activities in the area of family literacy. Since family literacy programmes are among the best practice literacy programmes presented at the Regional Conferences that are being held in the context of the Global Campaign for Literacy, the interest and demand for this concept seem to rise. However, family literacy programmes are not yet common. Although they are attractive as they target both adults and children as well as communities and bridge formal and non-formal education, funding is not easy to find as family literacy falls between categories and often requires higher financial investments than regular adult literacy programmes.

The FLY pilot project in Hamburg, which had been initiated by UIL and the State Institute for Teacher Training of the Hamburg Ministry for Education and which is supported by the "Bundesländer Commission of Educational Research" in the framework of the model programme "Promotion of children and young people with migrant backgrounds", has now entered its fourth

year. In the meantime, 30 schools are involved in the project that started with 8 schools and one kindergarten in socially disadvantaged districts of Hamburg, which still build the core of the project. The FLY project, which had been strongly inspired by the family literacy demonstration programmes carried out by the British Basic Skills Agency, has developed more and more its own profile, which consists of producing multilingual and intercultural materials such as a multilingual CD with songs sung partly by the parents from the family literacy programme; little multilingual story books based on stories that the parents have written to family photos, and story sacks.

**“Literacy is receiving minimal political – and thus financial – attention and remains a global challenge.”**

The European Learning Partnership “QualiFLY” (Quality in Family Literacy), supported by the European Union under the Socrates/Grundtvig 2 programme, ended in autumn 2007. The activities of the project included exchanging experiences and best practices in various areas related to family literacy such as teacher training; strategies of involving parents; monitoring and evaluation of family literacy programmes; and intercultural education. The project aimed at improving the quality of the family literacy provisions of the partners; creating a core group of tutors in each partner country; disseminating best practice materials and information for stakeholders through the project’s website ([www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/QualiFLY)); and raising awareness for the family literacy approach. Core partners of the project were institutions from Bulgaria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta and Turkey. Other countries involved in the project were Canada, Israel (Palestinian Communities), South Africa and the United Kingdom. The project has led to the production of new materials, such as a DVD on how to work with story sacks (Malta), which is being used as a training tool, and a compilation of activities to be used in family literacy programmes (Germany). It has also stimulated changes and modifications in the partners’s programme. As an example, Malta and Turkey have started early childhood programmes (whereas before the starting age was 6). Turkey has modularized some of their programmes.

In the context of these initiatives, UIL co-published with the Ernst Klett Sprachen publishing house the book *Gemeinsam in der Sprache baden*, which represents the first book on family literacy in German language. The book includes a chapter on the FLY project but also covers projects from England, Malta, Turkey and South Africa as well the HIPPPY approach and other German initiatives.

### North-South Exchange on Family Literacy

In November 2007, 20 family literacy experts, including practitioners and researchers, came together at UIL for a “North-South Exchange on Family Literacy”, which was organised and funded by UIL. One of the objectives of the meeting was to show that the concept of intergenerational learning is universal and not only limited to the North, even if it is less institutionalized in the South. The participants of the meeting agreed upon the following statement:

- Family literacy is an approach to learning that focuses on intergenerational interactions within family and community which promote the development of literacy and life skills.
- Family literacy celebrates and builds on existing skills and knowledge, and encourages participants to identify issues they face within their families and communities and to act upon them.
- Family literacy has proved to be an effective approach to promoting literacy and encouraging adults and children to become lifelong learners. It bridges formal and non-formal education and informal learning.
- There is growing evidence of its benefits from a range of countries and settings around the world, and for empowering families from diverse cultural and language backgrounds.
- Depending on local circumstances and aims, these benefits can include improvements in parents’ and children’s language, literacy and other skills, and in parents’ ability to help their children. Other benefits may include (for parents) progression to further study, employment, and more positive child-rearing practices; and (for parents and children) enhanced self-confidence, relationships in the family, status of women and girls, and life chances.
- Culturally appropriate research and evaluation are central to the development of effective family literacy policy and programmes.
- Family literacy is essential to building a culture of lifelong learning. It should be an integral part of education policy and requires comprehensive and long-term public investment.



Photo: Roy Reed, The Family Literacy Project, South Africa

Building on the QualiFLY project, the Institute organised the “North-South Exchange on Family Literacy”, which brought together 20 researchers and practitioners of family literacy programmes from all world regions. One of the major objectives of the meeting was to show that the concept of inter-generational learning is universal, even if less institutionalized and often more community-oriented in the South. Another objective of this initiative is to build capacities in family and intergenerational literacy programmes, especially for LIFE countries. For this purpose, a follow-up meeting will be held in 2008 or 2009 with a focus on LIFE countries. The three-day meeting covered the following themes: Multilingualism, best practices, community-oriented programmes, teacher training and research. The added value of family literacy programmes was explored, and a statement was adopted that reflects the view of all participants that family literacy is an effective approach to promote literacy worldwide and should be an integral part of education policy. As a follow-up, an African Family Literacy Action Group (AFLAG) has been created. A report of the meeting will be published in early 2008, containing descriptions of all invited programmes.

#### Example LIFE South-South cooperation in the Arab Region

One of UNESCO's guiding principles, the South-South cooperation, is also part of the LIFE implementation strategy. In the Arab Region, LIFE has generated several examples of close cooperation between Arab LIFE countries and the Arab and Asian Region. As two of the first phase countries, Egypt and Yemen have coordinated their activities. Yemen has benefited from the Egyptian experience with the LIFE needs assessment study. UNESCO Rabat is providing assistance to Mauritania in order to carry out the situation analysis and to develop a LIFE country support strategy. In this way, the national authorities for literacy and NFE of Morocco and Mauritania have also developed closer working relationships. The Asian experiences with community-based literacy work and literacy linked with income generating activities are inspiring the extra-budgetary-funded LIFE projects in Egypt and Morocco. Study visits to Thailand and technical support from UNESCO Bangkok are some concrete examples of the Arab-Asian cooperation under the umbrella of LIFE.



Literacy and income generating programme in Morocco

Within the Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnership on “Literacy and Life Skills in Prison” which is coordinated by UIL and consists of partners from Germany, Greece and Romania, two more meetings took place during the first project year (until July). In February the Greek partner organisation ARSIS prepared a programme in Thessaloniki, which included a public conference with local stakeholders in charge of prisons and active in education in prisons. The second meeting was prepared by the Romanian partner organisations ARED and CRED in Bucharest in May and consisted mainly in site visits to local prisons. A joint website, also coordinated by UIL, was launched in summer (<http://www.unesco.org/uil/literacyinprison/>). After the approval of UIL's project proposal for the second year, which plans three other meetings between October 2007 to July 2008, project partners convened again in Thessaloniki, Greece. The main focus of this meeting was on assessment, monitoring and evaluation of literacy and life skills in prison.

Mother-tongue and bilingual education remains another area of interest of the Institute, which will gain momentum in 2008, the International Year of Languages. The UIL, the UNESCO Bangkok's Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) and



Interregional workshop on mother tongue and bilingual education programmes in Asia, Africa and Latin America, Dhaka, Bangladesh June 2007

UNESCO Dhaka (Bangladesh) undertook a first South-South cooperation project covering the three regions Asia, Africa and Latin America in order to promote mother tongue based bilingual literacy programmes and improve their quality. A training workshop with Asian, African and Latin American experts as well as Asian government representatives took place from 18 to 22 June 2007 in Dhaka. The participants from Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) shared their experiences with their pilot projects in using mother tongue based bilingual literacy programmes to benefit learners in ethnolinguistic minority communities. Contrary to Africa and Latin America, the languages used in the Asian basic education systems are indigenous languages of wider communication, to which, however, many minorities do not have access. In Africa,

strong mother tongue and bilingual education programmes have been developed especially in the non-formal education sector in order to balance the dominance of English or French which are official languages but only mastered by a small minority. As a result of the anti-authoritarian political movements, Latin America can look back on many years of experience with intercultural bilingual education in the formal and non-formal education sectors. Thus, the South-South exchange has been an excellent learning experience which will be continued with activities that were mutually agreed upon.

### Example LIFE Project Bangladesh

Bangladesh belongs to the LIFE countries that have requested from UIL technical support in the frame of the extra budgetary-funded LIFE project within the “Capacity-Building for EFA 2006-2007 Programme”. UNESCO Dhaka had selected four local NGOs as implementing partners for advocacy for literacy and the creation of literate environments. One of the concrete activities that included UIL’s technical input was the organisation of reading and writing competitions in the communities with a focus on women. These competitions were carried out in the context of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) playing an important role in sustaining a literate environment in the rural area. The female contestants have to qualify first at CLC level, before they participate in a public event where a jury – composed by school teachers, journalists and other members of the village – evaluates their performance in reading and writing against a list of given criteria. Each candidate is expected to read aloud two paragraphs from a story in front of the public. For the writing competition, the contestants are given twenty minutes to write a short essay on one out of five possible themes. This provides an excellent opportunity to generate interest in the community in reading and writing. It encourages villagers not only to enrol in literacy courses but also to use the newly acquired skills in everyday life. Another activity supported technically by UIL was a National Advocacy Workshop on adult literacy with the main purpose of building expertise on advocacy for adult literacy among policy makers, development partners, media and civil society. After key presentations that included international experiences on advocacy in adult literacy, participants discussed policy issues, how to plan advocacy embedded in development activities, and how to strengthen advocacy capacity of GO and NGOs through cooperation and network. The workshop came up with concrete recommendations to advocacy that will be complemented by advocacy strategies at the local level.



Reading competition in rural Bangladesh

Lifelong learning is a key to building the knowledge societies of the 21st century. Rapid, profound and multi-faceted societal and economic changes make it necessary to shift from merely educational policies to integrated lifelong and life-wide learning policies, including policies aimed at democratic citizenship, social inclusion, employability, personal development and intercultural understanding. It is crucial to emphasise the life-wide dimension of lifelong learning.

However, it is one thing to put forward a grand vision and even to go further and create a policy framework for it, but another to implement it. As a key to building knowledge societies, lifelong learning has to face the challenge of creating learning spaces and institutional arrangements in society and the political system, in order to secure access to flexible learning for all, including institutional learning, as well as developing frameworks, structures, contents and methods. These are huge challenges for institutions and for decision-makers at the political level.

**“Lifelong learning, including recognition of non-formal and informal learning, provides an opportunity to increase manifestations of cultural diversity and personal development, especially the expression of individual and collective aspirations and choices.”**

Integrated lifelong learning policies need to take into consideration the new skills, knowledge and competencies that are needed to face the changes in the context of expanding knowledge and information societies and the changes in the world of work. These new skills can be acquired by formal as well as informal learning. For unskilled or semi-skilled adults, participation in continuing education is crucial, in order to bridge skills gaps by building on competencies acquired through non-formal learning, increase informal learning opportunities, modularise learning, and adapt learning to personal needs. Measures also need to be developed to provide wider access by breaking down the individual learning barriers that may have resulted from negative learning experiences in the past. Improved skills recognition systems are crucial as a means of facilitating lifelong learning and helping individuals to maintain their ability to compete in the labour market.

In addition to new skills and competencies, learning in all settings should aim to achieve the goals of critical citizenship, social inclusion, personal development, health and leisure. The values and goals of democracy, justice, human dignity and gender justice should define the purpose and content of lifelong learning. UIL puts great emphasis on literacy and learning that concentrate on concrete experiences in which citizens participate in various forms of deliberative and collective activity as a precondition for the fulfilment of basic learning needs. It is also anxious to see that lifelong learning is accessible to all, not only to those who are already used to making use of the

educational opportunities on offer. Lifelong learning, including recognition of non-formal and informal learning, provides an opportunity to increase manifestations of cultural diversity and personal development, especially the expression of individual and collective aspirations and choices.

### ***Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-formal and Informal Learning and Experience***

Currently, the Institute is involved in an international policy-driven research initiative on recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning and experience. As part of its activities to establish an observatory of models and international best practice, UIL is focusing on the African region. It supports Member States in developing qualification and recognition systems and designing educational programmes that integrate non-formal and informal learning into their certification and qualifications systems.

In addition, UIL contributed to the exchange of national experiences through an international seminar supported by a



**UIL is establishing an observatory of models and international best practice, focusing on the African region**

range of partners and organised by the French National Commission for UNESCO in Paris in June 2007. The representatives of a variety of countries identified formal and informal mechanisms for recognition of experiential learning – some formal and others less formal. In some countries like Mauritius and Namibia there are qualification frameworks that allow for the integration of education and training. Such frameworks are also used as mechanisms for establishing equivalence between knowledge from different sites of practice, particularly in the domain of work, and for creating pathways for people with different experiences, such as ex-combatants and resettlement programmes for farmers. In Kenya there are centres of excellence which allow for recognition of experiential learning. In Uganda, the vocational qualifications framework allows for the profiling of vocational skills, the assessment of those skills, and the development of training modules for particular occupations. In Nigeria, there is no formal framework but the National Business and Education Board has a mechanism for

the recognition of experiential learning. South Africa uses internships and learnerships as mechanisms for recognition of experiential learning. Gambia is new to the issue and is using the National Training Authority as a mechanism for recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

As can be seen from these examples, there are several mechanisms – some new and some more established, and those that are established work in cooperation with professional bodies. The shape and form of recognition of experiential learning is complex, and we need to learn through regional cooperation, from pilot projects and from international best practices. Quality assurance remains a challenge. The purpose of recognition of experiential learning must be clear: we need to bear in mind that it is not just about certification but also about valuing the

worth of what people know, and the competencies that they possess. While the recognition of experiential learning can be used effectively to ensure access, we need to be careful not to create a gulf between academic ways of knowing and practical ways of knowing. The process of recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning must be useful, relevant and fulfilling for the person going through it – it should not just be about providing credentials. Finding ways of recognising and updating the skills acquired in the informal economy still remains the biggest challenge in African countries.

Growing qualification requirements should not lead to social exclusion. Enabling less qualified adults and young people to engage in lifelong learning is of particular importance. National programmes for the education of adults and young people

#### Examples of how countries recognise the learning outcomes of education and training through equivalency programmes

In Mexico the local states have committed to recognising the outcomes of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET). The trend there is towards a more formalised system of assessment and certification of informal and non-formal learning, where formal criteria have been adopted to ensure their equivalence with formal systems of learning. Outcomes of informal and non-formal learning can thus be equated with learning outcomes in the formal sub-system. This approach blurs the traditional division between the various forms of learning while simultaneously correcting the frequent connotations of second-class status that are associated with mainly informal and non-formal learning. Other mechanisms in place for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning are the centralised tests used throughout Mexico. About 600,000 tests in 45 different fields of study are processed annually. These tests are diagnostic and evaluate the candidate's grasp of what he or she is expected to know. Successful completion of a test allows for the continuation of studies at the next higher level. Yet another mechanism is accreditation, which enables the validation of learning programmes and the providers.

All Adult Basic Education and Training programmes in South Africa are integrated into both the National Qualifications Framework and a lifelong learning paradigm, which allows for certification of equivalence, vertical and horizontal access, and accreditation through various quality assurance mechanisms. Integral to this process is also an outcomes-based education that prescribes unit standards with outcomes by which learners measure their performance and thereby demonstrate their competence. While in theory ABET providers have the freedom to design their own learning programmes, and educators and teachers may use their own expertise in designing assessment methods, in practice this approach leaves many educators floundering when trying to cope with both the design of a learning programme and having to develop their own learner support materials. Problems are experienced at the "chalk face", especially when teachers find themselves unable to cope with the outcomes-based approach, which requires them to interpret and use the unit standards as a guide in developing a working curriculum.

In Brazil there is close collaboration between the "Literate Brazil" and the "Making Schooling" (Fazendo Escola) programmes, which aim at citizens who have not had access to or the chance to complete primary education at the "proper" school age. In Guatemala, the literacy programmes which CONALFA coordinates, have "accelerated education" curricula, which allow students to take the first six years of primary education in only four years. The first stage is equivalent to the first grade of primary school; the second stage, to second and third grades; the third stage, to fourth and fifth grades; and the fourth stage is equivalent to sixth grade. Study certificates and sixth-grade diplomas certified by CONALFA are shaped by qualifications frameworks and established under acts of relevant ministries.

In Angola the first level of certification follows an assessment of competency in reading, writing and arithmetic. One of the purposes of certification is to allow and facilitate continuation of learning at the next higher level. Thus certification at the first level is seen not as a certificated outcome per se but as a window of opportunity leading into the world of literacy. Validation of non-formal education takes on added importance because schools do not reach everyone.

*From "Literacy, Knowledge and Development: South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Adults and Young People"*

*(Edited by Madhu Singh and Luz Mar'a Castro Mussot). Hamburg: UIL and Mexico City: INEA, 2007.*

increasingly aim to recognise the learning outcomes of education and training through equivalency schemes.

### **Establishing Pathways from Basic Learning to Higher Levels**

In the context of country sector strategies for poverty eradication and progression towards knowledge-based societies, many African governments are confronted with a lack of appropriate frameworks for comprehensive capacity-building in post-primary education (PPE). Post-primary education and training is a priority in many African countries. UIL is interested in PPE as a possible pathway for further and continuing learning for those who have acquired primary-level and basic education through literacy, adult basic education, non-formal education and other alternative modalities.

As part of the activities of the Working Group on Non-formal Education (WGNFE) of ADEA to promote an integrated and holistic vision for education in Africa, UIL commissioned four studies for the ADEA Biennial 2008, which will focus on post-primary education in Africa. Through the country case studies and cross-national studies, WGNFE aims to reveal and demonstrate the role of non-formal education within the context of post-primary education and training as a whole, for example by illuminating its fragmentation, un-connectedness and incomplete coverage of the age group on the one hand, and the challenges of developing policy frameworks for articulation and building synergies between formal and non-formal education on the other.

In addition to these four studies, UIL is contributing to the ADEA PPE Biennial through papers on (1) "Recognition of experiential and prior non-formal and informal learning in Africa: a key to post-primary education and lifelong learning for all"; and (2) "Informal sector training and enterprise education as a learning pathway in post-primary education for youth to learn from work as a way to enhance their livelihoods." This describes the learning organisation of non-formal education, in which teaching methods are participatory, learning is experiential, and funding is self-sufficient.

### **Strategies for Promoting Lifelong Learning**

As a nodal agency on lifelong learning, UIL collaborates closely with international organisations in implementing lifelong learning strategies in Member States and advocates their inclusion in EFA country plans and agendas. Knowledge partnerships are essential, as developments in policy and practice in this area require constant updating and sharing. UIL has supported in particular the OECD programme "Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning" (RNFIL) and the launching of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013), which brings together the four formerly separate programmes of formal school education ("Comenius"),

higher education ("Erasmus"), vocational training ("Leonardo da Vinci") and non-formal adult education ("Grundtvig").

Through policy dialogue, UIL provides the space for policy-makers, researchers and practitioners to consider educational reforms from a lifelong learning perspective. In 2006, UIL organised an international policy dialogue on "Challenges in Implementing Lifelong Learning for Adults". As a follow-up to this meeting, another international policy dialogue was held from 2 to 6 September 2007, focusing on "Building Effective Partnerships for Lifelong Learning", in Changwon, South Korea. The event was organised by UIL and the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). It was held during the Annual National Lifelong Learning Festival in Korea with support from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD), the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU), the Korean National Open University (KNOU), and the Korean Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET). Aside from these national bodies, a key partner was the local government of Changwon.



**Policy Dialogue on Lifelong Learning in the Republic of Korea, September 2007**

The participants in the meeting recognised that a key element in ensuring lifelong learning is developing and maintaining partnerships. UIL and KEDI invited 38 key stakeholders from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, and over a hundred policy-makers, researchers and practitioners joined the policy dialogue. The following issues were covered:

- 1) Lifelong learning policies: conditions, potentials and challenges;
- 2) Networks among lifelong learning institutions;
- 3) Partnerships in facilitating lifelong learning to create learning environments;
- 4) Synergies between formal and non-formal education;
- 5) Partnerships between open university and regional society; and
- 6) Partnerships for building successful lifelong learning systems.

The following recommendations emerged from the meeting: The concept of lifelong learning should be concretised and elaborated;

- The lifelong learning discourse should be linked to other educational discourses;
- There is a need for advocacy for a lifelong learning framework as well as a legislative and administrative framework;
- Formal, non-formal and informal learning should be integrated;
- Good practices in lifelong learning policies should be shared.

UIL also offers technical support to Member States wishing to integrate lifelong learning into their policies. In this context, UIL followed up a request from the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in Uruguay to assist in drafting a new education law based on the principles of lifelong learning. UIL undertook a mission in March 2007 to discuss different approaches to non-formal education and lifelong learning, to gain first-hand insights into the specific context of the ongoing Uruguayan education reform, and to identify concrete needs for support and cooperation. UIL also had the opportunity to advocate for lifelong learning and to disseminate related conceptual frameworks and required stepping stones to government stakeholders, representatives of NGOs, academia and the broader public through national TV and radio programmes. In November, UIL was invited again by the MEC to contribute to a National and Regional Meeting of Non-Formal Educators with the participation of delegations from several MERCOSUR countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay). This was another opportunity to advocate for lifelong learning policies and to extend UIL's support activities to other countries in Latin America, particularly in the context of preparations for CONFINTEA VI.

### ***Contribution of Lifelong Learning to Education for Sustainable Development***

Lifelong learning not only facilitates skills recognition and qualification reforms but also brings about fundamental changes in teaching and learning environments as well as the teaching and learning process itself. In 2008 – in the context of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014, DESD) – UIL will conduct studies and prepare a South-South Policy Forum, in order to provide an opportunity to discuss the diverse approaches to Education for Sustainable Development from a lifelong learning perspective.



Developing literacy skills in prison in Uruguay

Africa is a priority for UIL, in compliance with the priorities set out by UNESCO. How to reflect this in actual programmes, is the mandate of the Africa cluster at UIL. This cluster brings together the work of all the programme clusters in providing targeted services to Africa. Promoting and institutionalizing lifelong learning in Africa through policy dialogue and research-based advocacy focusing on recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal, informal and experiential learning (RVA) is one key activity of the cluster. It is also concerned with capacity-building in all other areas of competence of UIL, namely literacy with a focus on Education for All (EFA), the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), various dimensions of adult learning and training within the broader context of CONFINTEA, non-formal education and alternative approaches to EFA, and articulation between formal and non-formal education. Reinforcing capacities in policy formulation, programme delivery, training of trainers, monitoring and evaluation, and consolidation of regional and sub-regional strategies, were the main areas of work, and were consolidated through networking.

The Institute cooperates with many partners in the region. One of UIL's long-standing partners is the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). This year, the coordination of the ADEA Working Group on Non-formal Education (ADEA WGNFE) was transferred from UIL to the Association for the Promotion of Non-formal Education (Association pour la Promotion de l'Education non Formelle, APENF) based in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. This transfer to Africa is in line with ADEA's policy of moving the base of planning and implementation of activities to Africa. UIL, as one of its founding organisations and a technical partner, will continue to work closely with the WGNFE and support its activities. ADEA WGNFE has revisited its mission and strategic objectives in order to align with ADEA's new strategic plans and the needs of old and new NFE stakeholders in Africa. The partnerships and advocacy for NFE built up through ADEA Biennials and WGNFE meetings over the last ten years were reinforced through collaboration in the African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy organised this year. The next step is to keep up the momentum by organising inter-country dialogues and partnerships for literacy within Africa and with other regions, with the aim of inducing national governments to introduce stronger policies for literacy, to increase financial commitment and to improve the capacities of the facilitators and managers of literacy programmes.

The Institute's research on RVA has a capacity-building focus on Africa. Finding ways of recognising and updating the skills acquired in the informal economy is an urgent task in African countries. This sector is the biggest sector of the economy and is characterised by informal learning and apprenticeships. Communication is mainly done in African languages, which are not much promoted by the formal education sector.

Another priority area is literacy. Although African literacy rates have doubled in the last two decades, they are still the lowest in the world. Africa has the largest number of countries with a literacy rate below 50 per cent. The lower the literacy rate, the greater is the gap between the literacy skills of women and men. Eighteen of the 35 countries that are part of the LIFE initiative are in sub-Saharan Africa.

**“Promoting and institutionalizing lifelong learning in Africa through policy dialogue and research-based advocacy focusing on recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal, informal and experiential learning (RVA) is one key activity of the cluster.”**

Literacy is a prerequisite for the empowerment of women, environmental protection and sustainable development. It is a requirement for economic and social development. For these reasons, literacy is one of the objectives of the Second Decade for Education of the African Union. An important factor in raising literacy rates in the region will be an increase in the budget for literacy. Some countries, such as Burkina Faso, Senegal, Namibia and South Africa, have increased their literacy budget considerably. But in the majority of countries, only a very small part of the education budget is invested in literacy (less than 1 per cent). This situation has to change, as investing in primary education alone is not sufficient to improve the human resources of any country. Primary education in Africa is unsatisfactory as it does not reach all children, and since only 5 per cent of primary school students reach the minimum level of primary school competencies, it is not able to provide children with sustainable literacy skills.

The main activity in the area of literacy in 2007 was the African Regional Conference on Global Literacy held in Mali in September (see the chapter on literacy). One of the main objectives of that conference was to show African stakeholders and policy-makers that adult education is not in competition with primary education and needs special attention.

UIL has extended its network in the area of family literacy – until now focused on Europe – to Africa. Four African projects were invited to the “North-South Exchange on Family Literacy” in 2007. One of the results of the meeting was the creation of an African Family Literacy Action Group, and UIL is currently working on a publication on family literacy in Africa, in cooperation with the Family Literacy Project in South Africa and dvn international.

In the context of cooperation between UNESCO and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) related to LIFE in Africa, another sub-regional workshop was held on community-based approaches to literacy and non-formal education in Senegal in July, with the participation

of 23 representatives from governments and NGOs in Senegal, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

In 2007, UIL continued its services provided to and funded by the Government of Botswana on the development of an outcomes-based modular Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP) in Botswana which is equivalent to Standard 7 and takes literacy as its foundation level. This consultancy started in 2005 and consists of a series of intensive workshops jointly carried out by the Botswana Department of Non-formal Education (DNFE) and an international team coordinated by UIL. The drafting of learning materials for the three levels in the four key areas (Setswana, Maths, English and General Studies) was at the centre of the activities, which included the pre-testing and improvement of the level 2 and 3 modules as well as the design of a learning performance assessment system. In October, UIL presented the second mid-term report on progress made towards the development, testing and editing of key learning modules for the ABEP curriculum. Due to the increasing complexity of the work, UIL decided to expand the time spent by its team in Botswana and to diversify activities. The innovative approach chosen provided a great opportunity for learning and professional growth for everybody involved. Since one of the main objectives of the work is the development of the DNFE's own capacities in curriculum and material development, an extension of the consultancy until June 2008 was approved by the authorities in Botswana. This will allow UIL to dedicate sufficient time to building further capacities within the local team and to assist in the development of a coherent implementation strategy for the future ABEP Programme.

All these activities are further described in the previous chapters of this report.

In 2007, UIL launched an initiative on exploring synergies between formal and non-formal education in support of HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa.

UIL's recent work in the field of mother tongue and bilingual education also focused on Africa. In 2007, UIL and UNESCO Bangkok initiated an interregional exchange between African, Asian and Latin American experts on mother tongue-based education.

In 2008, UIL will focus on strengthening capacities in the design and delivery of literacy, non-formal and adult education programmes in Africa, with the following lines of action:

- 1) Interacting and communicating with the African Union (AU) and NEPAD
- 2) Introducing LLL indicators into AU activities
- 3) Strengthening capacities for the analysis of NFE policies and strategies by policy-makers in Africa
- 4) Informing regional policy platforms with research-based evidence on language in education
- 5) Enhancing and increasing commitment, visibility and political and financial support for literacy achievements in Africa
- 6) Coordinating and monitoring actions to follow-up the Bamako Conference
- 7) Integrating family literacy approaches into literacy programmes
- 8) Establishing a research network on LLL in Africa and supporting researchers
- 9) Strengthening capacities to train adult educators in Africa by providing textbooks oriented to African needs and perspectives



Briefly, the overall vision of UIL is an open learning world in which the right to learn throughout life is exercised and enjoyed by everybody. UIL operates with this in view, chiefly through policy-driven research, capacity-building, networking, publications and technical services. The core motivation for undertaking research is therefore to understand how learning processes can be organised effectively, and to share this understanding with the wider public. In what follows, a number of UIL activities are described, with a particular emphasis on learning outcomes. How do specific programmes lead in practice to learning outcomes? What role can these play in the further development of educational practice and research, and how can they be made available and used effectively? In the following descriptions of the key features of four selected activities, special attention is given to the lessons that can be drawn from them. These selected activities illustrate UIL's work in its four key areas, namely literacy, non-formal education, adult learning and education, and lifelong learning.

The first example, concerning capacity-building for monitoring and evaluation of literacy programmes, shows how research on learning outcomes leads to identification of new challenges, thus creating new research demand. From research and advocacy on literacy undertaken by UIL and others, it is evident that the absence of reliable, timely data on levels of literacy among given populations, and lack of information on the availability, types and quality of literacy programmes at national level, pose a major problem for the strategic planning and efficient implementation of literacy programmes.

Thus, the need to strengthen national and international efforts to achieve literacy for all is closely linked to the need to improve literacy monitoring, evaluation and assessment. More reliable data and information on literacy are needed in order to monitor and assess the current literacy programmes in given countries and to develop appropriate interventions in both policy-making and programme design.

What is required is timely, reliable and meaningful information on the status of literacy among populations, on the uses and impact of literacy, and on the availability, performance and effectiveness of literacy programmes. Benchmarks for literacy are needed to enable policy-makers to develop appropriate policy frameworks.

Three major challenges can be identified from national and international experience of developing and using monitoring, evaluation and literacy assessment methodologies for populations in a wide range of different circumstances:

The first challenge is to design new ways of measuring literacy that focus on different levels of competence and the applied use of skills in everyday life, rather than simply counting those attending school or literacy programmes. The crude distinction between literate and illiterate is not sufficient to

determine whether people have the level of skill necessary to address problems as diverse as reading simple signs and newspapers or writing a letter.

There are good initiatives in this area from which we can learn, such as the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the development of International Benchmarks for Adult Literacy by Action Aid International and the Global Campaign for Education, and the National Adult Literacy Survey conducted and analysed in Kenya in 2006-2007.

The second challenge concerns documentation and analysis of processes and results at all administrative levels of literacy programmes. This is not limited to literacy alone. For decentralisation procedures to work effectively, there is a need for an "evaluation culture" that values evaluation and uses evaluation results. Reducing the time-gap in the flow of information through administrative hierarchies, and building capacities to analyse the progress of literacy programmes critically at lower levels, are essential to meet this challenge.

The third challenge concerns the need to communicate results in different ways to different target audiences. For high-level decision-makers, the main findings need to be presented in a concise and concrete manner with clear recommendations on future directions. For the wider group of literacy programme planners and providers in government and the civil society, an advocacy tool kit with evidence of what works and what does not work will be of use in reflecting on activities. Last but not least, feedback, or rather participatory evaluation, is needed at the local level with facilitators and programme participants in order to improve programmes. UIL plans to introduce and pilot appropriate "Literacy Dossiers" in a few LIFE countries next year.

The second activity, from the area of non-formal education, and specifically from HIV prevention education, highlights the potential of synergy effects by linking different educational sub-sectors through partnerships and effective cooperation. In an effort to demonstrate the critical role of non-formal education (NFE) in addressing the HIV pandemic, UIL undertook a series of activities over a number of years to collect and document HIV prevention practices in the non-formal education sector. From the results, four things became clear: 1) participatory and community-based approaches are crucial to successful prevention strategies, 2) a gender perspective needs to be clearly articulated, 3) stigma and discrimination need to be addressed, and 4) there is a need to involve people living with HIV (PLWH) in all phases of HIV prevention education work. With respect to NFE, it was evident that despite the existence of a wealth of different activities and valuable experiences (e.g. projects with young adults, or literacy for HIV-positive women), the contribution of NFE remained largely unrecognised and therefore undervalued. In addition, these experiences not only showed the potential of non-formal approaches for HIV

prevention, but also helped to reinforce the prevention work undertaken in the formal school sector.

Against this background, UIL launched an initiative to explore synergies between formal and non-formal education approaches in support of HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa. Examples from 12 African countries in the West, South and East African sub-regions were presented and discussed, with a focus on the interface between formal and non-formal education approaches.

**“What is required is timely, reliable and meaningful information on the status of literacy among populations, on the uses and impact of literacy, and on the availability, performance and effectiveness of literacy programmes.”**

A set of key areas for synergy between formal and non-formal approaches in HIV prevention emerged from this initiative, and the following recommendations were put forward on how to improve that synergy systematically, addressing key elements of organised learning such as target groups, training of trainers, infrastructure, methodology, and material and content development. Different target groups can be reached through better cooperation between formal and non-formal education providers, and formal education staff can obtain valuable information from community members with specific backgrounds (e.g. PLWH) and can take advantage of community activities. Training of teachers and facilitators should be promoted through closer contact among universities and between them and other training institutions, in order to incorporate NFE approaches, and NFE activities should be accredited by responsible bodies. Depending on the context, stakeholders should be encouraged to bring together school teachers and NFE facilitators in training activities and other forums. Educational venues, infrastructure and support material can be used for formal and non-formal activities: sharing and multi-purpose use of schools should be encouraged, links between schools and NFE providers should be institutionalised, and more infrastructure should be provided for integrated services. School library services can be used by wider audiences through coordination, and community facilities can be used by schools. A variety of materials can be used for a broad range of learning processes, both formal and informal, and exchanges should therefore be promoted through closer cooperation between stakeholders. The understanding and use of a range of formal and non-formal methods to facilitate learning and to assess programmes should be encouraged, as well as systematic reciprocal learning. NFE approaches can be effectively integrated into school curricula (e.g. peer education approaches).

The third sample activity was undertaken in the area of adult learning and education and shows how activities are embedded in larger contexts of international educational discourse.

The aim of the “CONFINTEA benchmarks” project, launched in the context of preparing CONFINTEA VI (see the relevant chapter in this report) was to specify concrete targets in the area of adult learning. The low level of implementation of the CONFINTEA V recommendations was clearly criticised in the mid-term review meeting in Bangkok. Among the reasons suggested were the lack of appropriate instruments to monitor and assess progress within the adult education field, and the scarcity of valid data from the field in many parts of the world. Against this background, UIL launched a process of developing benchmarks and corresponding indicators for adult learning and education. The objectives of this process included developing a set of internationally applicable benchmarks for adult learning, supporting the preparations for CONFINTEA VI, in particular country reporting, and making available appropriate instruments for measuring progress, for advocacy and for raising the level of commitment to adult education and learning. Within a wider context, these benchmarks were also intended to stimulate international cooperation in order to achieve concrete objectives in the further development of adult education and learning worldwide and to strengthen the development and application of a broad concept of adult education and learning for improved learning practices for a wide range of learners, including especially disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

A participatory process of developing benchmarks was begun, involving stakeholders from UNESCO, the governments of Member States, the civil society and universities, and so far the following lessons and suggestions for future steps have been identified.

First, it is important to understand that benchmarking is a highly political process. This can already be seen at national and international levels, where benchmarks have proved to be both important catalysts for change and advocacy tools for achieving concrete goals. While benchmarks need not necessarily be used as fully binding targets, but may be elements of a larger perspective, they can help to communicate government policy effectively. This point was made by the civil society as well, and was one of the key issues discussed in a virtual seminar on benchmarks organised by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE): how, it was asked, would benchmarks respond to real needs at field level and be developed in consultation with all the stakeholders in adult education?

Secondly, the importance of valid data for benchmarking cannot be over-emphasised: adequate evidence-based research is needed to support the benchmarks. Since data collection and production are not yet undertaken at the same level in all countries, one aim should be to build capacities in this area. In many countries there are already different sources from which data could be culled, e.g. national statistics such as censuses, reports and similar surveys, but these data need further in-depth analysis at country level.

Thirdly, the implementation of adult education and learning varies in different regions and countries, and this needs to be taken into consideration when the topics for benchmarks and indicators are chosen and drafted. Benchmarks should take account of the heterogeneity of the contexts as well as being compatible with existing initiatives and norms.

Lastly, the experience of other benchmarking processes shows that it is crucial to be concise. Three topics have therefore been chosen for further investigation by UIL and possible development into benchmarks and corresponding indicators. These are: (1) participation in adult learning and education, (2) financing, and (3) learning outcomes. This list is not exhaustive but it is a start and covers areas that should be universally relevant. Many countries already have data on these three areas, so that the work need not start from scratch.

The next step will be to see what is actually happening at country level and how capacities can be enhanced in this area. Information is being gathered through the CONFINTEA VI national reporting which has begun, and from analysis of a few pilot countries in greater depth. The results of the benchmark process will be taken to the Regional Preparatory Meetings and to the CONFINTEA VI conference itself and will help the adult education and learning field in the future to monitor implementation and progress more effectively at national, regional and international level.

The fourth and final example shows how learning achievements themselves are converted into a rich resource for further learning and thereby help to institutionalise lifelong learning. This is possible by following a strategy that is simple in principle – but not at all simplistic in its practical application: the systematic, transparent recognition of prior learning (RPL). RPL is increasingly regarded by industrialised and developing countries alike as a particularly important alternative pathway, providing access to formal education and training. It is considered an effective means of redressing inequalities and making societies more inclusive. For a better understanding of their potential and to promote broader application of RPL practices at country level, UIL has undertaken a series of activities in cooperation with the French National Commission for UNESCO in recent years.

In its development and execution, RPL generally builds on the following principles:

- 1) learning occurs in diverse educational settings – formal, non-formal and informal;
- 2) learning is measured against the specific learning outcomes required for a particular qualification; and
- 3) credits are awarded for such learning if it meets the requirements of the qualification in question.

More and more countries are seeing the benefits of recognising learning outcomes regardless of where and how they have

been acquired. RPL is helpful in facilitating entrance into formal systems of further education or training, and in enhancing learners' options in the labour market. By creating awareness in society of the value of non-formal and informal learning, it can also be one of the factors motivating individuals to continue learning beyond formal education. Various ways of integrating experiential and prior non-formal and informal learning into existing qualifications frameworks have emerged. In these, the certification of prior learning generally takes three forms:

- 1) certificates equivalent to certificates from the formal education system;
- 2) certificates not equivalent to certificates from the formal education system; and
- 3) no certificates but so-called "portfolios" and individual skills assessments.

The potential of RPL for broader use in the African context was explored during the year, following a survey of RPL practices in 45 European countries undertaken previously: how was RPL applied in practice at country level, and what exemplary developments could be identified? It became evident that RPL was instrumental in mitigating the effects of selection at various levels in vocational, secondary and higher education.

The case of Norway is instructive, showing that RPL was introduced after a trial phase in selected institutions to broaden access to higher education, especially for younger adults without sufficient formal education. After 16 university colleges and one university had piloted a scheme of admitting students on the basis of clearly defined non-formal and informal learning outcomes, the legal framework regulating access to universities and university colleges was changed. Finally, the relevant legislation was amended to allow adults above 25 years of age to have their non-formal and informal learning assessed in order to gain admission to specific courses.

In South Africa, RPL is used to broaden the social base of universities and to promote access to higher education for non-traditional students and adults. The University of the Western Cape (UWC) has introduced RPL as a strategy to provide access to higher education for learners from outside the formal education system. Its Portfolio Development Course is a non-formal education programme through which learners are helped to present their informal and non-formal learning in order to gain access to the University's formal courses. The course extends over a period of nine weeks, during which the students attend five workshop sessions along with individual meetings with an advisor. As a negotiated response that honours both the institution and the student alike it presents a genuine synergy between non-formal, informal and formal education by mediating the experiential learning of the individual.

In Mauritius, RPL is linked to helping unemployed workers, especially from the sugar industry, to find work in the country's tourism industry. In order to develop a national approach to

RPL and to validate and recognise experiential learning, the Mauritius Qualification Authority (MQA) has devised an institutional framework for validation involving facilitators, advisors and assessors. In the Mauritian context, the facilitator is registered and appointed by the MQA and, after conducting a pre-assessment, communicates to the learner the different options that can be offered to him/her. RPL assessors then review the applicant's portfolio and compare the evidence provided with the performance criteria. A judgement is made about whether the applicant wholly or partially meets the requirements. The assessors check that the evidence submitted conforms to the following RPL principles: validity (is the evidence relevant?); sufficiency (is there enough evidence?); authenticity (is the evidence a true reflection of the candidate?); and currency (is the evidence provided reliable within the context?).

In Namibia, RPL is being piloted by one of its renowned open and distance learning colleges to facilitate access to its distance education certificate courses, and alternative courses in primary and secondary education. The Namibian College for Open Learning (NAMCOL) has developed a policy framework to provide guidelines for the use of RPL to enable learners to gain entry to courses offered by the College, or exemption from some course requirements, and to ensure that consistent practices and standards are applied. Candidates seeking assessment of prior learning for access to NAMCOL courses must be at least 23 years of age and have at least 5 years of relevant work experience. Candidates below the age of 23 years may be considered on merit. Credit will only be awarded for learning gained from experience, not for the experience as such. Candidates seeking RPL must liaise with the Area Coordinator in their respective region and/or the Distance Education Coordinator at the College in the case of professional courses.

Reforms to create easy exit and entry systems and improve accessibility and flexibility, and mechanisms to expand the accreditation of prior learning would be of value in all African countries. However, in the absence of appropriate legal frameworks, the appropriate human resources to undertake such broad responsibilities, and the lack of financial support, such developments are absent in most African countries or are at best in the early stages.

What has been learnt from these experiences can be applied at various levels and in many different contexts. These involve a wide range of people, not just UIL and its staff but also the international community, including Member States, partner institutions, UN agencies and, last but not least, individuals. Together, we are working to implement the right to education and learning for all, with a focus on disadvantaged and marginalised groups, in accordance with the current UNESCO programme and budget for UIL. Consequently, the work ahead will build on the efforts described above and will help to achieve this goal, by improving capacities for policy formulation and programme delivery in Member States, especially in LIFE countries and in Africa, by making available relevant programmes for a variety of marginalised groups, by enhancing commitment to adult learning and education worldwide, and by improving capacities to recognise, accredit and validate achievements in different forms of learning, including non-formal and informal learning. The UIL Annual Report for 2008 will report further on the results.

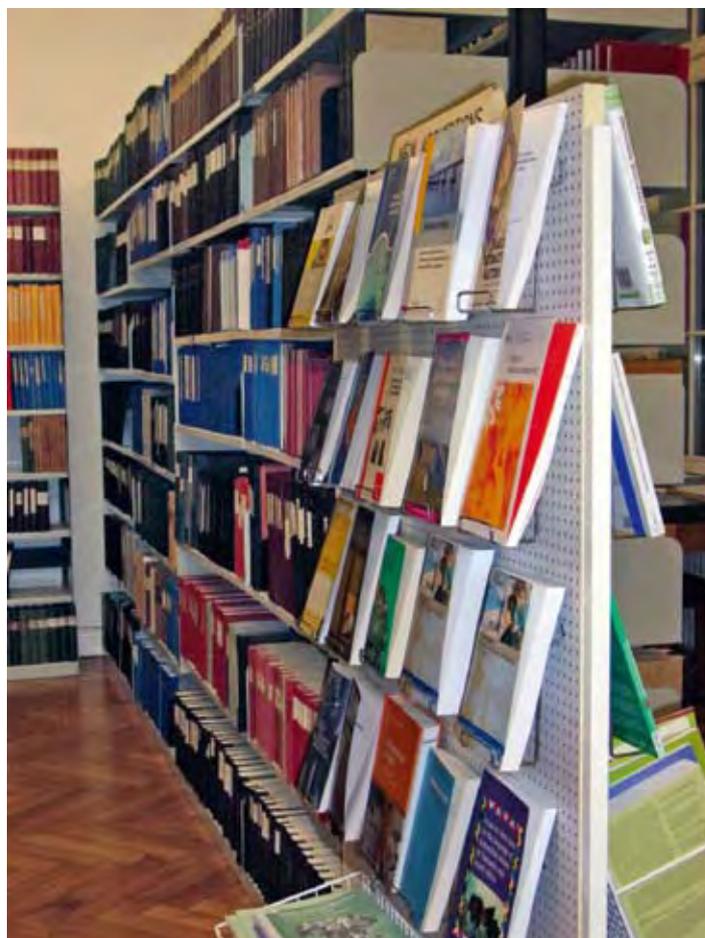


The heart of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning is its Documentation Centre and Library. For a research centre, this department is indispensable as it provides the basis for research activities. Moreover, it is the task of the Institute not only to carry out research, capacity-building and networking activities, but also to document existing developments, research, practice and trends in its areas of expertise. With currently more than 61,500 international books, documents and items of non-print media along with over 180 periodicals in the areas of adult education, lifelong learning and literacy, the UIL Documentation Centre and Library holds one of the most comprehensive collections of this kind worldwide. Particular emphasis is on acquiring material from the countries of the South and on collecting non-published material. A significant part of the holdings consists of a unique and ever-growing special collection of more than 7,100 sample learning materials used in adult literacy, post-literacy and out-of-school education from more than 120 countries in over 160 languages.

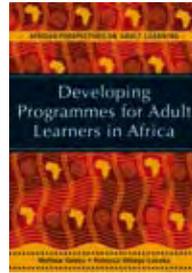
The collection includes textbooks, but also videos, games, pictures and about 800 posters. One outcome of the special collection has been a literacy poster exhibition called „World of Words“, showing 50 posters from all regions of the world and giving a comprehensive insight into the functions, ideologies and forms of aesthetic expression encountered in posters used for literacy work.

As a service provider, the UIL Documentation Centre and Library responds to research needs and gives assistance to in-house researchers, UIL project consultants, walk-in users and UNESCO Member States in line with UIL's areas of expertise. In this respect relevant bibliographical information will be gathered and disseminated, tailor-made thematic bibliographical lists will be compiled and database searches will be carried out on demand serving local and international requests in a professional and timely manner.

The New Acquisitions List and the Bibliography on Lifelong Learning – regularly published for over 30 years and currently distributed to more than 900 institutions and individuals worldwide – are also available online. A major current objective is to find ways of making its collection accessible to the widest audience possible. Since 2006 it has been possible to download the full text of UNESCO and UIE/UIL publications by clicking on a link available under the relevant entry in the online catalogue. During 2007 all available UIE/UIL publications that were not yet accessible full text have been digitalized. Building the information management capacities of national and international information professionals is another objective and every year several students are trained in internships lasting from one to six months. The UIL Documentation Centre and Library is open to the general public and its services are increasingly used via e-mail, its website and its online catalogues.



The Publications Department of UIL continued to provide an important service to policy makers, researchers and practitioners by issuing a range of studies, reports, research findings and other information material related to the Institute's areas of work. Following the Institute's change of status to a fully-fledged UNESCO institute and the new role assigned to it as the main institute concerned with adult literacy, the publications have commensurately reflected the new emphasis on this field. In connection with the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) and for the occasion of the African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy, held in Bamako, Mali, in September (see Africa and Literacy Clusters), a new edition of the LIFE Vision and Strategy Paper was issued in English and French. In addition a series of „best practice“ examples and other supporting documents were issued for the Bamako conference. Work continued on the series *African Perspectives on Adult Learning*, published in collaboration with Pearson South Africa, the University of Botswana and the divv international. The latest book in the series, *Developing Programmes for Adult Learners in Africa*, by Mathew Gboku and Nothogo Lekoko, was published in July. Two further titles, dealing with the history of adult education and the management of adult education programmes in Africa, are still in preparation. Response to the series so far indicates that it is filling an important gap by providing for the first time a series of Africa-centred books on adult education. The ninth meeting of the series Editorial Board, held in Maputo, Mozambique, in June, discussed the extension of the series to francophone and lusophone Africa, the response to a call for proposals for a new title on Models and Approaches in Adult Education in Africa, and the plan to hold a special writers' workshop in connection with the management title.

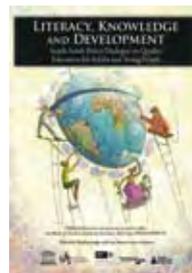


**Developing Programmes for Adult Learners in Africa**

by Mathew Gboku, Nthogo Lekoko  
UIL and Pearson Education South Africa,  
2007 ISBN -978-92-820-1120-1

This book critically analyses the principles, theories and models of adult learning programs in the African context. It promotes

an approach to programme development that makes African ways of thinking and learning, beliefs and value systems integral aspects of the planning process. The chapters provide an introduction to programme development and address the following issues: approaches to programme development; the planning process; identifying and assessing learning needs; determining goals, objectives and content; identifying and selecting materials; advocacy and marketing; participation in development; implementation; and evaluation.



**Literacy, Knowledge and Development**

Edited by Madhu Singh and Luz Mar'a Castro Mussot, co-published with the Mexican National Institute for Adult Education, 2007 (also available in Spanish)  
ISBN 978-92-820-1151-5

The publication contains the results of the conference „South-South Policy Dialogue on Quality Education for Young People and Adults“, which took place in Mexico City in 2005. The conference provided a forum for developing countries to exchange experiences and examples of successful practice and to discuss relevant problems. The contributions present a wide range of practical approaches in this field.



**Gemeinsam in der Sprache baden: Family Literacy**

Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH,  
Stuttgart 2007  
in cooperation with LI and UIL  
ISBN 978-3-12-555111-4

This volume is the first publication on family literacy in Germany. It presents an overview of important family literacy or related activities in Europe and other parts of the world and illuminates the Hamburg family literacy pilot project FLY along with other related activities in Germany. The book contains articles on family literacy from England (Greg Books, Peter Hannon, Viv Bird), Malta (Juan Camilleri, Sandro Spiteri), Turkey (Sevda Bekman), South Africa (Snoeks Desmond) and the internationally renowned HIPPPY project, which is originally from Israel (Miriam Westheimer).



**Gemeinsam in der Sprache baden:  
Family Literacy / Materialhelft**

Aus der Praxis – für die Praxis  
Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH, Stuttgart 2007  
in cooperation with LI and UIL  
ISBN 978-3-12-555112-1

This exercise book is an outcome of the family literacy project FLY, which has been initiated in 2004 by the State Institute for Teacher Training in Hamburg in cooperation with UIL. It contains 50 tried and tested master copies for reading, writing, speaking and listening, inspirations for phonological exercises and documents that support the self-evaluation of family literacy work.



**Making a Difference: Effective Practices  
in Literacy in Africa**

UIL, 2007 (also available in French)

This collection of effective practices in Africa was put together in preparation for the African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy „Renewing Literacy to Face African and international challenges“, which was held from 10-12 September in Bamako, Mali. Three best practices are presented on the following themes: Family Literacy and Intergenerational Learning; Literacy and the Promotion of Health and HIV Prevention; Literacy for Empowerment and Economic Self-Sufficiency; Languages in Literacy and Basic Education and Literacy and ICTs.



**Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE):  
Vision and Strategy Paper (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)**

(also available in Arabic, French and Portuguese)

Literacy is a prerequisite for most forms of learning, whatever the age group. However, an estimated 774 million adults, a clear majority of whom are women, lack this important skill, and approximately 80 million school-age children are neither in school nor learning to read and write. UNESCO was given the responsibility to coordinate and promote the United Nations Literacy Decade, which was launched in New York in 2003. To meet the challenge, UNESCO has created a ten-year framework of collaborative action – the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) targeting the 35 countries where 85 per cent of the world's population deprived of literacy competencies live today. The aim is to build literacy programmes grounded on proven success stories and best practices. While UNESCO will provide an overall framework of action, LIFE will be country-led, respond to country-specific needs and priorities and strengthen national capacities. This LIFE Vision and Strategy Paper, developed with the support of international UNESCO partners, gives detailed information about the purpose of the Initiative and the action that needs to be taken to increase literacy efforts in those 35 countries. The third edition of the LIFE booklet has been prepared by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in consultation with key partners.



**Literacy Matters  
Making the Connections: Why  
Literacy Matters for HIV Prevention**

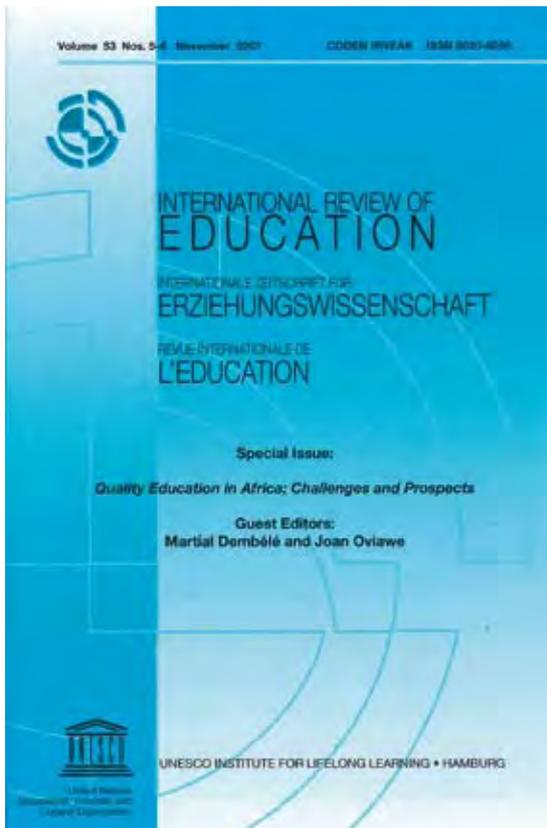
UIL, 2007 (also available in French)

This publication is the first of a series entitled „Literacy Matters“ launched by UIL to highlight key issues of literacy. This series will be used to make the results of the Institute's research accessible and to serve as an advocacy tool.

As UNESCO has decided to focus on health for this year's international Literacy Year, the first issue of „Literacy Matters“ deals with one of the key health issues in the world today, the prevention of HIV. This issue, which looks at the relationship between literacy and HIV prevention education, is the result of the Institute's work on examining the contribution of non-formal education (NFE) to HIV prevention, carried out in collaboration with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

**INFORMATION MATERIAL**

UIL Nexus, Vol. 2 (2007)  
Nos. 1 to 4, Nos. 2 and 4 also in German translation  
Annual Report 2006, also in French translation



The *International Review of Education (IRE)* is the longest-running journal on comparative education in the world. It is a double-blind, peer reviewed journal, edited by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and published and distributed by Springer Science and Business Media. The journal is run with the advice of an international Editorial Board and a panel of Consulting Editors, both drawn from educational specialists and academics from around the world. *IRE* serves institutes of education, teacher-training institutions and ministries as well as non-governmental organisations and individuals in all regions of the globe. It is an international forum providing analysis and information on policy issues, educational trends and learning innovations. Each issue contains an editorial introduction, articles on a wide variety of topics, and usually a book review section. As befitting the international character of *IRE*, articles are published in English, French or German, with abstracts in those languages as well as in Spanish and Russian. Each annual volume consists of six issues, and frequently two issues appear as a unit, forming a double issue. In addition to the regular general issues, there are special issues, guest-edited by distinguished educationists and devoted to particular themes of contemporary relevance in the educational field. Certain special issues are drawn from the selected proceedings of a conference. While *IRE* maintains an objectivity and rigour of an academic periodical, much of its content reflects the areas of focus of UIL and UNESCO. Such issues as educational development, adult basic education and learning throughout life are important concerns of the journal. In addition, while entertaining submissions from all over the world;

*IRE* makes particular efforts to encourage participation from scholars and researchers in developing countries.

The volume for 2007 consisted of three regular single issues, followed by a special double issue on *Quality Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects*, guest-edited by Martial Dembélé and Joan Oviawe.

The move to a purely on-line submissions system has led to an increase in the number of unsolicited submissions to the journal overall, currently estimated at around 90 a year. The change has had no negative impact on the broad regional distribution of articles submitted.

The demand for individual print subscriptions continues to decline. This trend, experienced by the majority of academic journals, has been more than compensated for by a surge in the number of consortia subscriptions and articles purchased online for download in 2007.

**Published in 2007**

- International Review of Education* 53/1, January 2007
- International Review of Education* 53/2, March 2007
- International Review of Education* 53/3, May 2007
- International Review of Education* 53/4, July 2007
- International Review of Education* 53/5-6, November 2007

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**BUDGET**

in USD

**ESTIMATED 2007****ESTIMATED 2008****1. INCOME****UNESCO**

Financial allocation	1,095,000	1,250,000
Regular programmes	600,000	100,000
Extra-budgetary programmes	290,000	280,000

**Voluntary contributions**

Programmes	2,275,000	2,550,000
Reserves Programme Funds	2,030,000	1,700,000
City-State of Hamburg (premises)	275,000	275,000

**Other income**

	255,000	75,000
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**TOTAL**

	<b>6,820,000</b>	<b>6,230,000</b>
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**2. EXPENDITURES**

Governing Board and Standing Committee	85,000	90,000
Direct programme costs	4,047,000	5,055,000
Premises	275,000	275,000
Staff costs	1,085,000	1,085,000
General Administration	140,000	100,000

**TOTAL**

	<b>5,632,000</b>	<b>6,605,000</b>
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**Major financial sponsors:**

Botswana, the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) of the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI), the European Union, Finland, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany, Government of the French Community of Belgium and Wallonia, Microsoft, Nigeria, Norway, Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), USAID and the World Bank.

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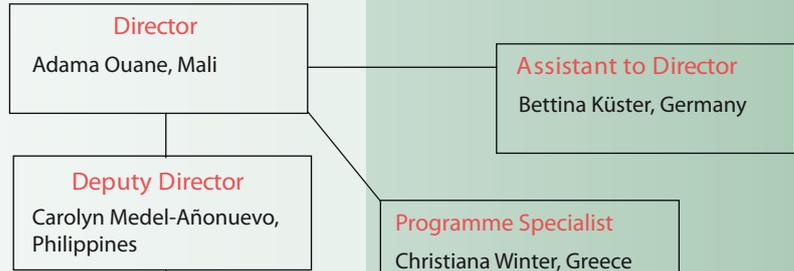
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Christopher McIntosh, United Kingdom

## SEMINARS AND MEETINGS 2007

8–9 January	Hamburg, Germany	ADEA Working Group on Non-formal Education (WGNFE) Core Team Meeting **
9–11 January	Hamburg, Germany	ALADIN Task Force Meeting
29–30 January	Khartoum, Sudan	LIFE Launching Workshop **
5–15 February	Gaborone, Botswana	11th Workshop on the Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP)
6–9 February	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	ADEA WGNFE Strategic Planning Meeting
12–13 February	New Delhi, India	National Conference on Approaching Inclusive Growth Through Skills Development **
19–22 February	Hamburg, Germany	5th Meeting of the QualiFLY Project **
21–23 February	Thessaloniki, Greece	2nd Meeting of Learning Partnership on Literacy and Life Skills in Prison **
1–2 March	Elsinore, Denmark	First Meeting of the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group
12–14 March	Doha, Qatar	Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy: Literacy Challenges in the Arab Region: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches *
19–23 March	Montevideo, Uruguay	Technical Mission to support the Development of Lifelong Learning Policies
26–30 March	Bamako, Mali	Sub-regional Meeting of LIFE countries in Francophone Africa on pedagogical approaches to literacy **
2–6 April	Segou, Mali	West Africa Meeting on Interface of NFE and FE in HIV Prevention **
16–26 April	Gaborone, Botswana	12th Workshop on ABEP **
28 April–2 May	Capetown, South Africa	Southern Africa Meeting on Interface of NFE and FE in HIV Prevention **
5–11 May	Dhaka, Bangladesh	LIFE Project Bangladesh, preparation of national event on advocacy and creation of literate environments **
18 May	Hamburg, Germany	52nd Session of the IRE Editorial Board
21–24 May	Hamburg, Germany	1st Session of the UIL Standing Committee and Governing Board
22–25 May	Istanbul, Turkey	Concluding Meeting of the QualiFLY Project **
30 May–1 June	Bucharest, Romania	3rd Meeting of Learning Partnership on Literacy and Life Skills in Prison **
4–5 June	Hamburg, Germany	Eurosocial Seminar on Literacy in Prisons in Latin America and the Caribbean **
11–15 June	Maputo, Mozambique	Meeting of Editorial Board of APAL Series **
18–22 June	Dhaka, Bangladesh	International Workshop on Improving Quality of Mother Tongue/Bilingual Literacy Programmes **
25–27 June	Paris, France	Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-formal and Informal Learning and Experience – Focus Africa **
9–10 July	Hamburg, Germany	Workshop on Developing a LIFE Monitoring and Evaluating Strategy
11–13 July	Hamburg, Germany	First Meeting of the CONFINTEA VI Benchmarks Team
23–27 July	Dakar, Senegal	First Workshop UIL/ISESCO on Capacity-building for Literacy and NFE in Africa
6–10 August	Gaborone, Botswana	13th Workshop on ABEP **
2–7 September	Changwon, South Korea	International Policy Dialogue on Lifelong Learning **
10–12 September	Bamako, Mali	African Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy: Renewing Literacy to face African and International Challenges **
20–22 September	Manchester, UK	International Adult Learners Week **
25–28 September	Abuja, Nigeria	Nigeria Workshop on Mass Literacy Campaigns **
4–5 October	Brussels, Belgium	Scientific Committee for the International Conference on Education in Prison **
8 October–2 November	Gaborone, Botswana	14th Workshop on ABEP **
9 October	Frankfurt, Germany	Frankfurt Book Fair Literacy Campaign *
9–12 October	Thessaloniki, Greece	4th Meeting of Learning Partnership on Literacy and Life Skills in Prison **
24–26 October	Hamburg, Germany	German Annual Literacy Conference *
25 October	Paris, France	UIL Standing Committee
5–7 November	Hamburg, Germany	North-South Exchange on Family Literacy
15–16 November	Montevideo, Uruguay	First National and Regional (MERCOSUR) Education Forum of Non-Formal Educators **
21–23 November	Hamburg, Germany	Second Meeting of the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group
22–23 November	Hamburg, Germany	Second Conference of the North German Partnership in Support of the DESD *
29–30 November	New Delhi, India	Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy: Addressing the Literacy Challenge in South, South-West and Central Asia: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches *
3–6 December	Marrakech, Morocco	Regional Meeting of Arab LIFE Countries **

(\*) UIL is co-organiser or/and provided technical support and/or input

(\*\*)UIL is organiser in cooperation with different partners