

UIL Nexus

Vol. 5, No. 2 (April 2010)



Welcome to the new issue of UIL Nexus, the electronic newsletter of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in Hamburg. UIL Nexus appears quarterly and contains concise, up-to-date news items about UIL's work. It complements the longer-term information cycles of the UIL website (<http://www.unesco.org/uil>) and the Annual Report.

If you would like to unsubscribe from UIL Nexus, please inform us by sending an e-mail to m.elfert@unesco.org.

Contents:

1. Workshop to Evaluate the Implementation of LIFE in Africa
2. Policy Guide for the Successful Integration of African Languages and Cultures into Education
3. Linking Recognition Practices to Qualifications Frameworks: North-South Collaborative Research
4. First Meeting of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group
5. Official Launch of Adult Basic Education Programme in Botswana
6. In Brief
7. Forthcoming Meetings
Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning
8. Visitors
9. Staff Matters
10. Recent Publications

1. Workshop to Evaluate the Implementation of LIFE in Africa

The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE/2006-2015) is a major UNESCO activity designed to accelerate literacy in the 35 countries in which literacy poses a critical challenge. It contributes to the Education for All (EFA) goals, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) objectives and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Through LIFE, UNESCO provides support to 18 African countries.

The workshop held from 3-5 March 2010 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso was organised by BREDA in cooperation with UIL. It analysed and discussed the outcomes of a 2009 evaluation of LIFE implementation in 15 African LIFE countries, which had been

conducted with support from UNESCO field offices in order to better plan the actions to be taken during the coming biennium (2010-2011). Around 90 participants attended, including LIFE focal points, Directors of Literacy from 17 LIFE countries from Sub-Saharan Africa and Morocco, regional and UN organisations, key NGOs and private sector representatives. The event served to identify innovative experiences and share both the good practices and difficulties encountered during the implementation of LIFE.

The workshop revealed that LIFE has significantly contributed to strengthening national capacities for the formulation of gender-sensitive literacy policies and programmes. Some countries have developed effective advocacy and communication strategies, including initiatives spearheaded by First Ladies that mobilise political and financial support for literacy, and new ministries for literacy and non-formal education that increase the visibility of literacy in national development priorities. A further positive development has been the promotion of innovative practices such as the use of information and communication technologies (radio, mobile phones, Internet, etc.) to expand access to literacy programmes for illiterate people, particularly women and rural populations. South-South cooperation has also proven an effective means of promoting the exchange of experiences and good practices, and of establishing networks for literacy and non-formal education (NFE).

The workshop identified key challenges and recommendations to be addressed at the regional level. These comprised:

- the development of an evidence-based advocacy strategy and adequate resource allocation to support political commitment to literacy and NFE;
- an enhanced understanding of LIFE as a framework of collaborative action designed by UNESCO to assist countries in achieving EFA goals (in particular goals 3, 4 and 5);
- improved coordination of LIFE-related activities at the national and regional levels: the coordination of LIFE should be carried out by the national institutions in charge of literacy and non-formal education with the support of the national authorities, more specifically the Minister in charge of literacy and NFE;
- the development of more effective capacity-building strategies at the sub-regional and regional levels by promoting greater cooperation between the UNESCO units involved in LIFE and Capacity-building for EFA (CapEFA) projects; and
- the use of ICTs to enhance access to literacy and NFE programmes, and to improve the quality of literacy provision.

Contact: Ms Hassana Alidou (h.alidou@unesco.org)

2. Policy Guide for the Successful Integration of African Languages and Cultures into Education

From 20 to 22 January 2010, UIL and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) held a Ministerial Conference on the Integration of African Languages and Cultures into Education in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The conference was hosted by the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy of Burkina Faso. The main outcome of

the conference was a policy guide developed in collaboration with experts from all over Africa. It was designed to promote multilingual education in Africa, recognising that African languages and cultures are crucial for social cohesion at the national and regional levels and a key factor in enabling universal access to education. The guide was discussed and adopted by Ministers of Education from 20 African countries. It covers the following eight thematic areas for the development of an effective policy for multilingual and multicultural education: (1) the establishment of policy and legislative frameworks; (2) general awareness-raising and advocacy, and the development of regional networks; (3) institutional strengthening and capacity-building; (4) the development of monitoring and evaluation strategies which ensure the evaluation of learning outcomes; (5) curriculum development and training measures; (6) publishing and book policy; (7) research and pedagogical innovations; and (8) the mobilisation of financial resources. Prior to the conference in Ouagadougou, UIL worked with ADEA to develop an evidence-based advocacy policy brief in favour of the use of African languages in education to act as a background document during the meeting.

Contact: Ms Hassana Alidou (h.alidou@unesco.org) or Ms Christine Glanz (c.glanz@unesco.org)

3. Linking Recognition Practices to Qualifications Frameworks: North-South Collaborative Research

In collaboration with the Centre for Lifelong Learning Strategies (ECI) of INHolland University, the Netherlands, and in partnership with the French National Commission for UNESCO, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning held an international meeting on “Linking Recognition Practices to Qualifications Frameworks: North-South Collaborative Research” in Hamburg from 11 to 12 March 2010. Its overall aim was to arrive at a better understanding of the policy and practice issues surrounding the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning (RVA), and how these can be better integrated into qualifications frameworks in different national contexts. The meeting had two main objectives: 1) to review current practices and share examples, exploring different national and international developments; and 2) to discuss the research agenda for the future, focusing on institutional capacity-building and the establishment of a research network based on partnerships that would bring the North and South closer together.

The 30 participants included experts and officials from governmental organisations in 20 UNESCO Member States across the world regions. UIL’s Interagency Advisory Group was represented by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), the European Training Foundation (ETF), the Norwegian Institute for Adult Learning (VOX), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the French National Commission for UNESCO. The inputs and discussions made very clear that RVA and National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) are high on the political agenda and becoming a practical reality, not only in developed countries, but also in a growing number of developing and emerging economies. Such systems are developed with an eye to a future in which learning outcome-based national qualifications are expected to support

much-needed reforms in education and training and facilitate nationally standardised and transparent, internationally comparable qualifications.

While the design of NQFs varies from country to country, participants indicated a clear need to a) link NQFs to explicit lifelong learning policies that recognise more diverse forms of learning, b) improve access to learning opportunities, particularly for those target groups most need of continuing education and retraining, and c) enable stronger links between the adult learning sector and the formal education and training system.

Even though countries from North and South differ greatly in terms of their features and contexts, it was generally agreed that collaborative research would assist in clarifying: a) the ways in which RVA can be supported by learning outcomes-based NQFs; b) how non-formal and informal learning was being compared to learning in formal settings; c) what “added value” RVA could offer; and d) how RVA, in the spirit of partnership with different stakeholders, could facilitate learning access and progression. Further discussions centred on clarifying the purpose of RVA, maintaining a balance between summative and formative assessment, making assessment reliable and valid, introducing appropriate legal and institutional frameworks, linking RVA to other related issues (e.g. guidance and counselling; credit accumulation and transfer), and determining what impact RVA and NQFs were having in real terms.

The discussion on how to implement the collaborative North-South research emphasised the importance of participation, both in peer learning activities and in nationally-organised stakeholder meetings. Activities like these will help in the production of 1) a handbook for general use by stakeholders and professionals in participating countries and 2) a set of guidelines on developing and implementing RVA-NQF linkages for policy-makers.

The meeting also succeeded in strengthening further the knowledge partnerships between the various regional and international agencies, and there are plans to pursue these further in future through the production of joint reports on NQFs and RVA with an international focus.

A summary of the meeting can be found on UIL’s website at:

www.unesco.org/uil/

Contact: Ms Madhu Singh (m.singh@unesco.org)

4. First Meeting of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group

The Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) was held from 1 to 4 December 2009 in the Northern Brazilian city of Belém do Pará. Under the leadership of UNESCO and hosted by the Government of Brazil, it brought together 1,150 participants from 144 countries, among them representatives of international agencies, non-governmental organisations and learner associations, as well as over 70 ministers and deputy ministers.

Resulting from two years of regional and national mobilisation and debate among stakeholder networks, CONFINTEA VI closed with a clear public statement on adult literacy and adult education as enabling and empowering tools for hope and change. The *Belém Framework for Action* adopted by the Conference testifies to the consensus and determination of the international community to craft a new course of action for adult learning. As spelled out in the document, the Conference participants committed “to take forward, with a sense of urgency, and at an accelerated pace, the agenda of adult learning and education”.

In order to follow up on this commitment and to obtain support in providing the necessary back-up for implementing the recommendations of the *Belém Framework*, UNESCO set up an international, multi-stakeholder *CONFINTEA Advisory Group*.

The *CONFINTEA Advisory Group* is composed of representatives of Member States (CONFINTEA VI Bureau and the hosts of regional CONFINTEA VI conferences: Brazil, France, Hungary, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Tunisia, United Kingdom) and other stakeholders (agencies, multilateral organisations, civil society, learners). The main task of the Advisory Group is to support UNESCO in the overall follow-up of CONFINTEA VI by 1) contributing to the development of the CONFINTEA VI follow-up strategy and 2) participating in the implementation of concrete follow-up measures. The Group will meet once a year in order to take stock and to review, adapt and fine-tune the strategic follow-up plan.

During its first meeting, which took place at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning from 22 to 23 March 2010, the Advisory Group discussed the draft of the CONFINTEA VI follow-up strategy and proposed the following activities:

1) Member States will follow up on their commitments according to a road map of their own design. They will also monitor their progress in the different areas and present their results in a triennial report.

2) Follow-up will be undertaken at the regional level in order to help Member States share information on good practices and progress made.

3) UNESCO will a) send a questionnaire to governments asking them to list the actions they plan to take based on the *Belém Framework of Action*, b) develop a communication strategy for media, Member States and the various stakeholders which will determine how the key messages of CONFINTEA VI will be disseminated and c) start work to develop indicators and an open-access knowledge management system.

Contact: Ms Bettina Bochynek (b.bochynek@unesco.org)

5. Official Launch of Adult Basic Education Programme in Botswana

On 18 February, Botswana's Department of Out of School Education and Training (DOSET) organised a Stakeholders Conference in Gaborone to launch the Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP). From 2005 to 2009, UIL provided the government of Botswana with consultancy services for the preparation of ABEP - , which is equivalent to Standard 7 of formal education within the Botswana National Qualifications System (NQF). The collaboration has resulted in: a curriculum detailing the philosophical, conceptual and theoretical framework for the Adult Basic Education Programme;

attainment targets for each of the four core learning areas (Setswana, English, Maths and General Studies); ten key learning modules for this curriculum; and, most importantly, increased staff capacity within DOSET.

One major challenge throughout has been to coordinate activities effectively despite the increasing complexity of the work, the growing number of people involved (consultants and staff) and the need to maintain the momentum of a process that lasted more than four years. At the same time, the ABEP process – whose core aim was to introduce an innovative, outcome-based and modular adult education curriculum – has offered all those concerned invaluable opportunities to learn and grow professionally. DOSET has now finalised the production of the ABEP modules, which cover three levels starting with basic literacy and numeracy. Now, in 2010, ABEP is ready for implementation.

The conference and official launch ceremony of the programme received good coverage from national media. It was attended by around 150 regional and national DOSET representatives, members of other departments of the Ministry of Education, stakeholders from governmental and parastatal institutions, NGOs, university representatives, publishers and learners. It was officially opened by Prof. Frank Youngman, Vice Chancellor of the University of Botswana, who made special reference to UIL's role in the development of ABEP. The Director of DOSET, Mr Gadibolae, presented an overview of the programme, and the conference culminated in the unveiling of an exhibition of the ABEP modules by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Mr Mooko.

To ensure the successful implementation of ABEP, DOSET has recruited adult educators with university degrees who will gradually replace less-qualified facilitators. Continuous training and monitoring will be key to ensuring a good quality delivery of ABEP courses. Technical assistance may still be required in the area of assessment and accreditation once the Botswana NQF is operational. There is still a long way to go in order to achieve basic education for all – among others, the Naro Language Project is planning a translation of the ABEP modules Level 1 and 2 into Naro (one of the languages of the San population) – however, an important step forward has been made.

Contact: Ms Ulrike Hanemann (u.hanemann@unesco.org)

6. In Brief

Online discussion on gender equity, education and training

UIL's contribution to online discussion on gender equity, education and training
In January and February of 2010, UNESCO hosted an online discussion on gender equity, education and training to stimulate debate on the achievements made in education and training since the *Beijing Platform for Action* was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women 15 years ago. UIL contributed a special paper on *Ensuring Equitable Lifelong Learning Opportunities* to encourage a debate on the shortcomings of Education Ministries and Agencies in providing lifelong educational opportunities for girls and women.

More information: <http://communities.unesco.org/wws/beijing15>

EUR-ALPHA Literacy Network

The second meeting of the EUR-ALPHA network was held in Paris from 3 to 6 February 2010. The network comprises 17 partner organisations from 14 European countries and is being funded for a period of three years (October 2009 to September 2012) by the European Commission as part of its Lifelong Learning Programme. The overall goal of the network is to identify, generate, share and disseminate “good practices” relating to empowering approaches to literacy and numeracy. Network activities involve three working groups – the “consortium” of partner organisations, a working group for trainers and a working group for learners.

New Members of the Governing Board

From 1 January, UIL welcomes three new members and their alternates to its Board, nominated by the UNESCO Director-General: Mr Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani, Vice-President for Education, Qatar Foundation, Qatar (full member) and Mr Omar M. Al-Ansari, Vice-President for Student Affairs, Qatar University, Qatar (alternate); Ms Eeva-Inkeri Sirelius, Secretary-General of the Finnish Adult Education Association (VSY), Finland (full member) and Mr Reijo Olavi Aholainen, Counsellor of Education, Education and Science Policy Department, Ministry of Education, Finland (alternate); Mr Minxuan Zhang, Deputy Director General, Shanghai Education Commission, Shanghai Municipal Government, People’s Republic of China (full member) and Mr Han Min, Deputy Director-General, National Center for Education, Development Research, Ministry of Education, People’s Republic of China (alternate).

Global Action Week 2010

In 2010, UNESCO will again be supporting Global Action Week (GAW), which will take place from 19 to 25 April 2010. GAW is a worldwide event held annually by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a coalition of NGOs and teachers’ unions from more than 150 countries. It aims to raise awareness of the Education for All movement. The theme of this year’s GAW will be “Financing Quality Public Education: A Right for All” and it will be incorporating elements from the 1GOAL campaign, which is gaining visibility in the run-up to the FIFA World Cup.

7. Forthcoming Meetings

Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning

UIL, on behalf of UNESCO, will co-organise the Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning at the Shanghai Expo 2010, in cooperation with the Shanghai Municipal People’s Government, the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy and the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. The Forum, which is now rescheduled to take place from 19-21 May 2010 during UNESCO Week, will be one of the activities organised by UNESCO in UN Pavilion at the World Expo.

The overall aim of the Forum – which will centre on the theme “Making learning a reality throughout life for all: Progress, trends and systems of lifelong learning” – is twofold: to

reinforce the momentum for lifelong learning created by CONFINTEA VI and the Belém Framework for Action, and to share Member States' best practices for harnessing the lifelong learning discourse as a means of establishing learning systems and societies. The sub-themes include: the evolution and perspectives on lifelong learning, the transformation of teaching/learning from the perspective of lifelong learning, promoting non-formal education and informal learning for youth and adults, financing lifelong learning and building learning societies.

200 high-level specialists – comprising 100 international and 100 Chinese experts – are expected to participate in this Forum. UIL has been collaborating closely with its Chinese counterparts to facilitate preparations for the Forum.

Contact: Jin Yang (ji.yang@unesco.org)

8. Visitors

On 8 February, Ms Agatha van Ginkel from SIL International visited UIL to discuss how UIL and SIL International could work together to develop an action research manual on adult literacy in multilingual contexts.

On 3 March, UIL received a visit from Judge C.G. Weeramantry, President of the Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research (WICPER), Sri Lanka, former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice and recipient of the UNESCO Peace Education Prize 2006, and Mr Neshan Gunasekera, Managing Director of WICPER and Ms Pauline Tangjora, Southern Star Associates, New Zealand. The visit was designed to allow them to share and exchange information about their work and good practices in the field of intergenerational learning.

On 19 March, Mr Kazuaki Tani, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, visited UIL to learn more about the Institute's work and discuss common areas of interest.

From 15 to 19 March 2009, an external audit was carried out on the UIL premises by Mr Frédéric Jambois, Ms Géraldine Le Du and Mr Akrem Mouhli.

From 10 to 15 March 2010, delegates from Afghanistan – Mr. Sawar Hussaini, Mr. Abdul Rahim Nasry and Mr. Bashir Khaliqi – visited UIL to attend the seminar on *Linking Recognition Practices to Qualifications Frameworks* and hold technical meetings with UIL colleagues on LIFE and the Afghan National Qualification Framework. They also met with the UIL Director to explore opportunities for collaboration with UIL.

On 23 April 2010, four representatives of Central-American Embassies in Berlin visited UIL: Mr Napoleón Mariona and Mr Max Figueroa, Advisory Ministers to the Embassy of El Salvador; Mr Nelson Olivero, Advisory Minister to the Embassy of Guatemala; and Mr Cristobal Gómez, First Secretary, Embassy of Nicaragua. The purpose of their visit was to learn more about the work of the Institute and explore how UIL could provide technical support to and influence education policies in their countries.

9. Staff Matters

From March 1 to August 31, 2010 Nadine Feisst, in the framework of a Masters Programme for becoming an Information Manager, is doing an extensive research in the UIL Documentation Centre on assessing the impact of the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN).

UIL would like to thank the following Mr Gunnar Mahling (22 March to 30 April 2010) and Ms Natascha Gaudelli (24 March to 14 May 2010) for their contributions to UIL's work during their internship at UIL.

10. Recent Publications

International Review of Education

Volume 56, No. 1 (January 2010)

The edition includes the following articles:

Introduction – Something Has to Change / *Virman Man*

Public Funding and Budgetary Challenges to Providing Universal Access to Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa / *Edith Mukudi Omwami and Edmond J. Keller*

Designing Targeted Educational Voucher Schemes for the Poor in Developing Countries / *M. Najeeb Shafiq*

Expansion vs. Quality: Emerging Issues of For-Profit Private Education Institutions in Ethiopia / *Daniel S. Alemu*

Variations in Reading Achievement across 14 Southern African School Systems: Which Factors Matter? / *Njora Hungi and Florence W. Thuku*

Late Entry into Primary School in Developing Societies: Findings from Cross-national Household Surveys / *Yuko Nonoyama-Tarumi, Edilberto Loaiza and Patrice L. Engle*

The Right to Education for Children in Domestic Labour: Empirical Evidence from Kenya / *Ishmael I. Munene and Sara J. Ruto*

“I Have Been Given the Power to Teach. The Children Understand Me Very Well”: A Preliminary Study of the Social and Academic Impact of Deaf Teacher Training in Kenya / *Christopher Johnstone and Heidi Corce*

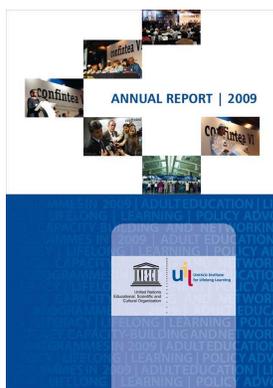


The **Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)** has just been reprinted in English with minor revisions. It has also been published in French. GRALE is the first report of its kind and draws on 154 National Reports on the state of adult learning and education submitted by UNESCO Member States, five Regional Synthesis Reports and secondary literature. Its purpose is to provide an overview of trends in adult learning and education as well as to identify key challenges. The report shows that, although many countries have implemented adult education policies, governments are not allocating enough funds for the sector to be able to deliver its full potential. Participation in adult learning remains unacceptably low. The figures for illiteracy demonstrate the scale of the problem for a high proportion of adults who have not completed primary education. GRALE also makes it very clear that equal access to adult education is still far from a reality. Published as an input to the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), the Report is designed to act both as a reference document and as an advocacy tool. Moreover, it is set to be the forerunner of a series of reports that will be produced in the wake of the recommendations made by Member States at CONFINTEA VI. GRALE will shortly be available in Spanish.

Hard copies of GRALE can be ordered from UIL Publications Department at the following e-mail address:
c.sebastiani@unesco.org

Download: <http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/grale/>

An Executive Summary of GRALE is also available for download.



Annual Report 2009
also available in French

Download: <http://www.unesco.org/uil/en/about/about.htm>

Forthcoming publications

Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-formal and Informal Learning Synthesis Report

Ed.: Madhu Singh
UIL, 2010

Why Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning Matters : Global Dialogue on the Creation of Lifelong Learning Societies

Ed.: Madhu Singh
UIL, 2010