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**July to August 2013**

## UIL Co-hosts the First International Conference on Learning Cities

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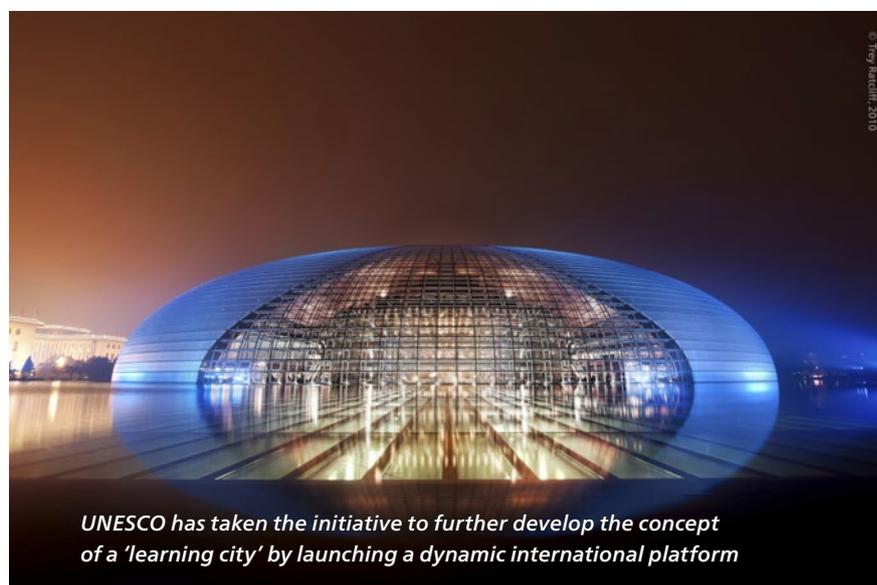
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UIL Nexus is the electronic newsletter of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in Hamburg. UIL Nexus appears quarterly and contains concise, up-to-date news items about UIL's work.

To receive the newsletter on a regular basis please subscribe to it at <http://uil.unesco.org>



*UNESCO has taken the initiative to further develop the concept of a 'learning city' by launching a dynamic international platform*

Since 2008, the majority of the world's population lives in cities. By 2030, the proportion is likely to exceed 60 per cent. As cities expand, municipal governments face challenges associated with social inclusion, new technologies, the knowledge economy, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability.

In response, a growing number of cities are developing strategies that allow their citizens – young and old – to learn new skills and competencies throughout life, thereby transforming their cities into 'learning cities'. UNESCO has taken the initiative to further develop the concept of a 'learning city' by launching a dynamic

international platform that will allow cities to exchange ideas and good practices on how to build learning cities.

With the support of the Ministry of Education of China and the Municipal Government of Beijing, UNESCO has organised the first International Conference for Learning Cities, which will take place in Beijing, China, from 21–23 October 2013. The Conference will be hosted by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), the National Commission of China for UNESCO and the Beijing Municipal Education Commission.

The theme of the Conference is: *Lifelong learning for all: Inclusion, prosperity and sustainability in cities.*

## EDITORIAL

UIL has changed the format of NEXUS. From this issue onwards the newsletter will focus only on a selection of topics. Thus you will receive more in-depth information about our Institute's most important current and forthcoming activities. If you wish to be informed about all UIL activities, please refer to our website at [uil.unesco.org](http://uil.unesco.org).

### Building a Network of Learning Cities

Today, a majority of the world's population lives in cities. By 2030, this proportion is projected to rise to 60%. Urban communities, therefore, play an ever greater role in national and global development. Thanks to globalization, technological advances and the growth of knowledge-based economies, development hinges more than ever on well educated and empowered citizens. In recognition of this, many cities have embraced the concept and practice of lifelong learning. These cities and urban regions are known as learning cities. With this trend in mind, UIL co-hosted the first International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing from 21 to 23 October. More than five hundred mayors, city education executives and experts from more than 100 countries discussed ways to make cities more responsive to the learning needs of citizens. The conference concluded with a call by delegates for UNESCO to establish a global network of learning cities.

The aim of this network will be to mobilise cities and demonstrate how to use resources effectively in every sector to develop and enrich citizens' potential for personal growth, to foster equality and social justice, to maintain social cohesion, and to ensure sustainable prosperity. It will also contribute to UNESCO's work in

strengthening partnerships with cities and local governments.

**Arne Carlsen,**  
Director UIL



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Conference  
on Learning Cities  
Beijing - 2013

It will address the following three sub-themes

- Making a case for building a learning city;
- The building blocks of a learning city;
- The major strategies for building a learning city.

Participants will gain a better understanding of how lifelong learning contributes to socio-economic development; some effective elements and consider successful strategies for developing learning cities.

The Conference will be opened by Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and will be attended by approximately 500 participants, including xx city mayors, official delegations from xx cities in xx countries, as well as representatives of international organisations, non-governmental organizations, private sector partners, and experts in the field of lifelong learning, urbanization and sustainable development.

The Conference will conclude with the adoption of the *Beijing Declaration on Learning Cities*, containing commitments by city mayors and municipal education executives to:

1. Strengthen individual empowerment and social cohesion;
2. Enhance economic development and cultural prosperity;
3. Promote sustainable development;

4. Promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
5. Re-vitalise learning in families and communities;
6. Facilitate learning for and in the workplace;
7. Extend the use of modern learning technologies;
8. Enhance quality and excellence in learning;
9. Nurture a culture of learning throughout life;
10. Heighten political will and commitment;
11. Improve governance and participation of all stakeholders;
12. Boost resource mobilisation and utilisation.

The Declaration will also call on UNESCO to establish an international network of learning cities. This network will work to promote policy dialogue among member cities, to develop instruments to monitor and evaluate members' progress, and to award 'UNESCO Learning City' status to those cities and regions that demonstrate exceptional achievement. The Conference will also adopt the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, a set of action points against which progress towards implementing lifelong learning for all in many of the world's urban communities may be measured.

For more information and updates on the International Platform for learning Cities (IPLC) please visit UIL's website at

[uil.unesco.org](http://uil.unesco.org)

# UIL publishes its second Global Report on Adult Learning and Education

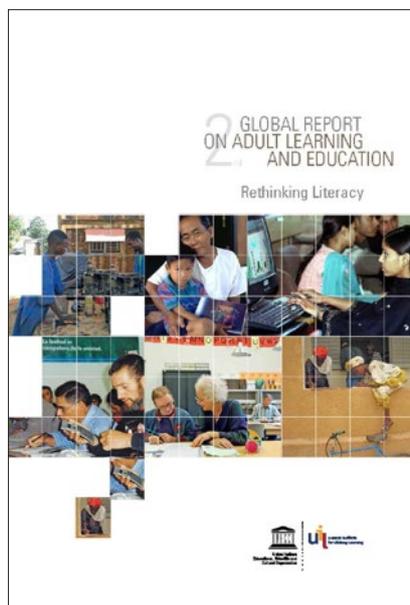


*The core messages of the Belém Framework for Action have found their way into national policy debates*

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) recently published its second Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE). The first GRALE was published in December 2009 to inform the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI). The outcome document of that conference, the Belém Framework for Action, which was adopted by 144 UNESCO Member States, stipulated that UIL should conduct “a monitoring process at the global level to take stock and report periodically on progress in adult learning and education”.

The current report is the result of that monitoring process for the period 2010–2012. Drawing on data gathered from 141 countries, it reviews progress in implementing the Belém Framework for Action and presents insights from all world regions. It adopts a global perspective, describing the commonalities and differences of Member States as they work to improve their adult education sectors. It is available in English, French and Spanish.

The subtitle and thematic focus of this second report is Rethinking Literacy. Three years after the Belém Framework for Action, the Report shows that, despite considerable progress in increasing the global numbers of literate people, many millions are still excluded from learning opportunities. Underlying this challenge is a conceptual prob-



lem: there is no common global understanding of how to approach literacy. Many countries still favour quick “illiteracy eradication” campaigns, and most continue to use traditional methods (population censuses, household surveys, number of years of formal schooling) to estimate literacy rates. This reflects a tendency to approach literacy as a dichotomy, classifying people as either literate or illiterate. However, there is also some indication of a growing awareness of these limitations; and of a growing understanding, as envisaged in the Belém Framework, that literacy is a continuum, a process that a learner engages in throughout life and in all areas of their life.

The Report also highlights three major challenges in relation to adult education policy and practice. First, although lifelong learning is emerging as a broadly accepted paradigm, many adult education policies still fail to address the wider benefits of learning. Second, many policies do not recognise the growing role

played by civil society organizations (non-governmental organisations) as providers of adult learning. As a result, in many countries their work is not closely coordinated with that of government providers. Third, in most countries adult education suffers from a shortage of resources and a lack of systematic monitoring. More creative thinking and research will be necessary to mobilise funds – across all sectors and from all partners – and to generate better data on participation and results.

The most important messages that emerge from the second GRALE are that

- the lens of lifelong and life-wide learning (learning at all times and in all domains of life) offers the most promising perspective for addressing the literacy challenge;
- there is a need to overcome the narrow interpretation of lifelong learning as either formal initial education or continuous learning for employment; and
- several of the core messages of the Belém Framework for Action have found their way into national policy debates and reform processes.

## Sharing Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices: UNESCO's LitBase



LitBase, UNESCO's Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database, is an online platform which responds to UNESCO Member States' demand for evidence that can inform and improve their literacy policies, strategies and practices. Launched in spring 2010, LitBase has developed into a comprehensive database in English and French with more than 130 case studies of successful literacy programmes from 80 countries.

In each entry, LitBase provides information on the country background and context in which the literacy programme was started, its main goals, strategies of its implementation, key pedagogical and management aspects, its impact, challenges, lessons learned and how the sustainability of the programme is ensured.

A particular focus is on innovative features, such as the use of mobile phones to build literacy skills, or the formation of multi-stakeholder partnerships to link literacy learning with the broader community development. Another emphasis is on how successful programmes have creatively addressed particular

challenges such as literacy learning in multilingual contexts or reaching out to women and other disadvantaged groups. From what works – and even from what did not work – important lessons can be drawn to improve literacy provision in Member States. In this regard, LitBase is a rich and easily accessible source of experience for a broad audience.

Currently, LitBase is visited by more than 7,500 users each month. It provides researchers, practitioners and the interested public with reliable information on trends and practices in literacy education. Researchers participating in UIL's scholarship and fellowship programmes have made intensive use of LitBase to inform project proposals they developed for their countries. References to LitBase case studies in scholarly publications also demonstrate the use of the database as a source of information for academic writers. Journalists have used LitBase information on UNESCO Literacy Prize-winning programmes to write articles, e.g. in the context of International Literacy Day. LitBase also furthers the

exchange between researchers and policy-makers on the one hand and practitioners on the other by way of the contact address given at the end of each programme description so that users of the platform may engage directly with providers of literacy programmes.

With the aim of boosting the potential of LitBase, UIL has started to compile case studies with specific thematic foci. The first publication of this series – Literacy Programmes with a focus on women to reduce gender disparities – supported an international literacy conference in India in July 2013 and was then made publicly available on the occasion of International Literacy Day in September 2013. The collection presents 22 successful programmes directly targeting women in 18 countries in Africa, the Arab Region, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and Europe and North America. Many of these programmes also inspired a research study entitled Literacy and Women's Empowerment: Stories of Success and Inspiration, which was recently published by UIL.

As new case studies are added to the database on a regular basis, these are announced on the UIL website, through thematically related mailings lists, and through social media channels. Particular attention is drawn to those literacy programmes that are awarded the annual UNESCO Literacy Prizes.

UIL has developed a multi-pronged strategy to identify interesting practices for new case studies. Through LitBase itself literacy providers are called upon to submit their information along a set of guidelines to enable UIL to develop the case study and publish it online. However, we also need your help to identify successful literacy and numeracy programme from different regions. This will help LitBase to further develop and grow to the level of service that Member States need to advance their literacy efforts.

Please visit UIL's LitBase to learn more about the newly uploaded programmes at

[www.unesco.org/uil/litbase](http://www.unesco.org/uil/litbase)

## UIL CONFINTEA Scholarships Support Knowledge Exchange



*Ms Maggie Guria, Training Officer in the National Literacy and Awareness Secretariat at the Ministry of Education of Papua New Guinea*

In August 2013, Mr Robert Jjuuko from Uganda (Researcher, The Uganda Adult Education Network) and Mr Carlos Vargas Tamez from Mexico (Lecturer, Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao) spent four weeks to conduct in-depth research at the UIL Documentation Centre and Library. Their stay was supported by the UIL CONFINTEA Scholarship Programme, based on the private donations of the Nomura Center for Lifelong Integrated Education in Japan and Professor Peter Jarvis with his publisher Taylor & Francis.

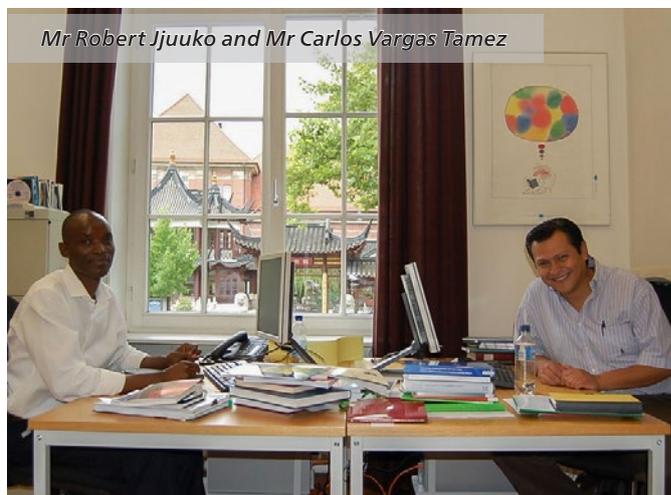
During their stay at UIL, Robert prepared the draft for a journal article on adult literacy financing mechanisms in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Carlos analysed prominent international initiatives, programmes and policies in lifelong learning in preparation for a document for the Basque Government that will identify avenues for the design and implementation of a

lifelong learning policy for the Basque Country.

In September 2013, Ms Maggie Guria, a Training Officer in the National Literacy and Awareness Secretariat at the Ministry of Education of Papua New Guinea, spent four weeks at the UIL

Documentation Centre and Library conducting research. Her stay was supported by the UIL CONFINTEA Scholarship Programme, based on the private donation of the Nomura Center for Lifelong Integrated Education in Japan.

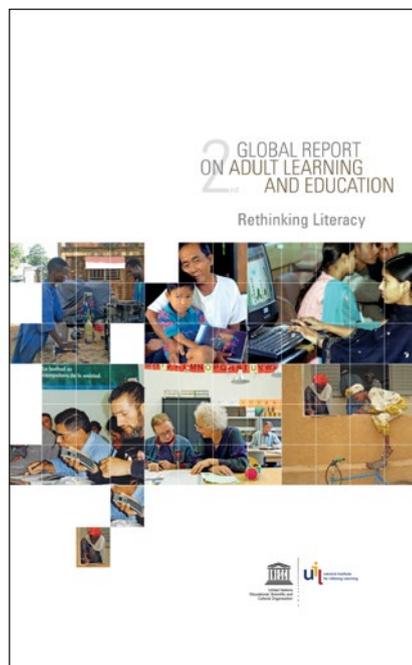
During her stay at UIL, Maggie received technical support from UIL's Literacy and Basic Skills Programme in advancing the development of a national Adult Basic Education Programme (ABEP) for Papua New Guinea. This work was begun in 2011 with the support of UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education for All (CAP EFA) Programme.



*Mr Robert Jjuuko and Mr Carlos Vargas Tamez*

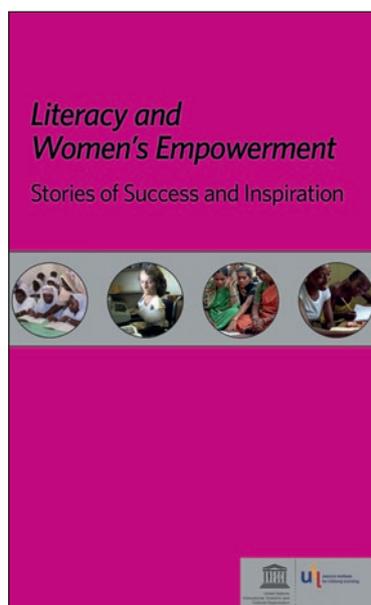
# New Publications

## Second Global Report on Adult Learning and Education



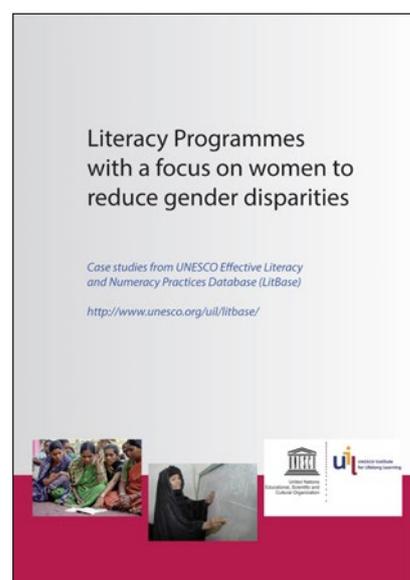
Drawing on data received from 141 countries, most in the form of a quantitative reporting template, the report reviews progress in implementing the Belém Framework for Action. It focuses on the five key themes identified in Belém – policy, governance, financing, participation and quality – and examines in particular detail the transversal theme of adult literacy.

## Literacy and Women's Empowerment: Stories of Success and Inspiration



The study describes promising approaches to developing literacy and learning for women, who are the majority of the world's non-literate adults. Key success factors are identified to outline concrete recommendations on how to achieve literacy and empowerment of women, thus making it a valuable resource for policy makers, programme providers and facilitators in the field of lifelong learning.

## Literacy Programmes with a focus on women to reduce gender disparities



The collection covers 22 successful programmes directly targeting women in 18 countries in Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, Europe and North America. These case studies are also accessible at the UNESCO Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database LitBase.

## Staff Matters

UIL would like to thank the following interns during the third quarter of 2013

- ↪ Mr Rouven Adomat (Germany, 1 July to 20 September)
- ↪ Mr Alexander Rapis (USA, 1 July to 6 September)
- ↪ Mr Moataz Said (Egypt, 1 July to 31 August)
- ↪ Mr David Agnew (Ireland, 1 July to 30 August)
- ↪ Mr Alexander Strobl (Austria, 1 July to 16 August)
- ↪ Ms Duy Thuy Trang Ngyuen (Viet Nam, 1 July to 9 August)
- ↪ Ms Jenna Hawkins (UK, 22 July to 31 August)
- ↪ Ms Lingwei Shao (China, 12 August to 20 September)
- ↪ Ms Ruth Zannis (UK, 15 August to 27 September)