

confintea VI

Follow-up Bulletin no. 4



60 Years in Hamburg

Adult education on the move

UNESCO's key normative instrument in the field of adult education is the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education. This document was proposed during CONFINTEA III in Tokyo in 1972, and the final version was adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in Nairobi in 1976.

An expert group met in July 2012 to discuss the desirability of updating the 40-year-old document, and the outcome of their deliberations was made available for online public consultation. Many of the subsequent online comments speak of the beauty and strength of the document. However they also point out that the document is historically situated and bears the stamp of the 1970s. The context, the language and the roles of the different stakeholders have changed. The first two decades of the 21st century are very different from the 1970s, and when reading the document again, it becomes clear just how much adult education has moved on over the past 40 years. Its current position as a major component of lifelong learning needs to be reflected in the next UNESCO Recommendation on Adult Education. We are grateful for all past and future contributions to the ongoing review process, which was requested by the Belém Framework for Action, and will lead to a revised and updated recommendation.

Arne Carlsen
Director, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

1 UIL's Monitoring of and Support to the Follow-up of CONFINTEA VI

1.1 National CONFINTEA VI progress reports: recent developments

Out of 195 UNESCO Member States, more than 130 have submitted national CONFINTEA progress reports, based on UIL's reporting template which was sent out in three languages to all UNESCO National Commissions in November 2011. These reports will be used to monitor the implementation of the *Belém Framework for Action*. As shown in the reports, a large number of Member States used the reporting process as an opportunity to consult a wide range of national actors and stakeholders involved in the field of adult education, both in government and other sectors.

UIL is currently conducting the first stages of data analysis, which involves quantitative and qualitative processing of all information collected. The data on key areas identified in the *Belém Framework for Action* – policy, governance, financing, participation and quality – will provide the substance for the second issue of the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*, which is scheduled for publication in early 2013.

The submitted national progress reports are publicly available on UIL's recently launched CONFINTEA Portal.

<http://uil.unesco.org/home/programme-areas/adult-learning-and-education/confintea-portal/global-report-of-adult-learning-and-education-grale/>

1.2 In anticipation of the second issue of the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*

In comparison with the first GRALE, which was published during CONFINTEA VI in 2009, the second edition will have several distinct characteristics.

The key difference between GRALE 2009 and GRALE 2012 lies in their overall functions. The first edition aimed to provide an overview of trends, and to be a reference document and an advocacy tool. As a key instrument for monitoring the implementation of the *Belém Framework for Action*, the second edition will focus on demonstrating progress and presenting developments in the field of adult learning and education since CONFINTEA VI. The intention is also to remind governments of the commitments formulated in Belém. Conceived as a regular and systematic mechanism for collecting and disseminating data on adult education now and in the coming years, the second issue of GRALE will offer Member States the opportunity to check whether they are moving in the right direction.

All editions of GRALE from now on will have another new characteristic: each issue will not only cover the five key areas of adult learning and education, but will also highlight one particular theme. As the *Belém Framework for Action* reiterates the fundamental role literacy plays within adult learning and education, and because the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) is coming to an end in 2013, adult literacy will be the special focus for the second issue of GRALE. In addition, UIL has teamed up with the UNLD team at UNESCO Paris to collect specific information from Member States on the literacy decade's outcomes and impact.

The publication of an online version of GRALE is foreseen by early next year.

1.3 Regional Follow-up: Preparations for regional conferences

Africa

The regional CONFINTEA follow-up expert meeting for Africa, originally scheduled in September, has been postponed and is now planned to take place from 5 - 8 November 2012 in Cape Verde. Jointly organised by the Ministry of Education of Cape Verde, the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Dakar (BREDA), and UIL, the meeting will focus on selected key themes of the *Belém Framework for Action*: policy, governance, financing, participation and equity, and quality. In addition, a special thematic focus on youth has been integrated

into the programme. Aiming to assess factors that are conducive to successful policies and practices and to identify related capacity-building needs, the meeting will attempt to formulate concrete action points and mechanisms for a collaborative regional action plan. The main cooperating partners are the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Arab States

A proposal to co-organise a regional CONFINTEA follow-up meeting in the Arab States in 2013 has been submitted by UIL to the ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), possibly taking place at the premises of ISESCO in Morocco. If accepted, the meeting will provide a forum to share good practices and to build capacities for developing effective policies and good-quality programmes. With the support of the UNESCO Regional Office in Beirut, it is hoped that the meeting will increase cooperation in the region.

Caribbean

Negotiations are under way to organise a follow-up meeting for the English-speaking Caribbean countries in Jamaica, probably in March 2013. The objectives are to monitor the progress and challenges in implementing the *Belém Framework for Action*, with a particular emphasis on financing, youth and work-related learning. Co-organised by the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning, the UNESCO Office in Kingston and UIL, the meeting will aim at strengthening the networking capabilities and mutual support of countries of the sub-region.

Europe, North America and Israel

The European Commission has confirmed to partner with UIL in organising a European Regional CONFINTEA VI follow-up meeting in the second half of 2013. Lithuania, which holds the Presidency of the European Union during this period, has offered to host this event. In collaboration with the Adult Education Unit in the Directorate of Lifelong Learning and with the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, UIL is developing the programmatic focus of the meeting. The objective will be to assess progress in implementing the *Belém Framework for Action*, as well as to track the European New Agenda for Adult Learning. The event will provide the opportunity for the recently established Network of National Coordinators of Adult Learning to meet and exchange information. The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) will be a key partner in this event. Based on UNESCO's regional grouping, it will also incorporate Canada, the USA and Israel.

1.4 UIL launches the CONFINTEA Portal

In May of this year, UIL launched the online CONFINTEA Portal as a central element of the follow-up process to CONFINTEA VI. The purpose of the Portal is to disseminate up-to-date information on adult learning and education and, in particular, on the implementation of the *Belém Framework for Action*. Hence, the Portal aims to be a gateway to related information, activities and projects. As a dynamic tool that gradually enlarges its scope of data thanks to the active contributions from all stakeholders, the Portal is responding to the call for an open-access knowledge management system in support of Member States as spelled out in the *Belém Framework for Action*.

For the time being, the areas of action covered by the CONFINTEA Portal comprise follow-up activities in the five world regions: regional or sub-regional follow-up conferences, regional cooperation projects and thematic research and development projects with a regional scope. For each Member State a collection of relevant socio-economic background data, including age structure, employment situation and adult literacy data has been compiled and added to the regional overviews on follow-up activities. Areas of action also embrace specific CONFINTEA follow-up activities at a global level, which are either part of UNESCO's explicit mandate for the monitoring of the *Belém Framework for Action* or which constitute significant support elements for the coordination, monitoring, reporting and capacity building of the CONFINTEA follow-up.

<http://uil.unesco.org/home/programme-areas/adulthoodeducation/confintea-portal/>

1.5 The CONFINTEA Fellowship Programme: new cycle in October 2012

The next cycle of the CONFINTEA Fellowship Programme started in October 2012. Government officials and senior specialists in adult education from Indonesia, Malawi, Mexico, Namibia and Tanzania were selected and invited at the end of July. The CONFINTEA Fellowship Programme aims to strengthen capacities within Member States to implement the commitments of the *Belém Framework for Action*, by providing guidance for the formulation of national strategies to promote adult education within the perspective of lifelong learning. The Programme has been extended to four weeks, comprising a mix of thematic presentations by UIL colleagues, group work and individual study time, during which the fellows will benefit from the rich resources of the Institute's Documentation Centre. At the end of the programme, fellows are expected to have developed and to present a national implementation plan.

1.6 The CONFINTEA scholarship programme

Thanks to private donations, UIL is now able to offer a CONFINTEA Scholarship Programme: the Peter Jarvis CONFINTEA Scholarship, the Alexander Charters CONFINTEA Scholarship, and two Nomura Center CONFINTEA Scholarships are open to English-speaking students and fellows from all UNESCO Member States.

In July of this year, the first Alexander Charters CONFINTEA Scholarship recipient, Mr Mohammed Gul Wahidi from Afghanistan (Consultant, UNESCO Kabul) worked and shared experiences at UIL. He was accompanied by Mr Taj Ali Sabir, Director of the Curriculum Unit of the Department of Literacy, Afghan Ministry of Education. Both worked with technical support from UIL's Literacy and Basic Skills Programme on developing key elements of a draft literacy curriculum framework for the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan.

Later in the year, UIL will welcome two Nomura Center CONFINTEA scholars. Ms Bulelwa Keke from South Africa is writing her PhD thesis on teachers' continuous learning through formal and non-formal professional development programmes. Ms Sanjana Shrestha from Nepal is writing an article based on empirical research examining the impact of sustainable community libraries. For the Peter Jarvis CONFINTEA scholarship, Mr Sanjeev Roy from India was selected for designing a programme of recognition, validation and accreditation of prior learning for the National Literacy Mission of the Government of India.



Mr Taj Ali Sabir and Mr Mohammed Gul Wahidi (2nd and 3rd from left to right) with UIL staff

1.7 Glossary on youth and adult education for the Latin American Region

On the basis that there should be commonly recognised and agreed-upon understandings and operative definitions of youth and adult education, without which confusion and lack of precision will continue to hamper policy and practice in the region of Latin America, UIL agreed to develop a glossary on adult education together with



Working Team for the Glossary on adult education for the Latin American Region

the Organisation of Ibero-American States (OEI). To develop the glossary, representatives of both organisations and two experts from the region met in Asunción in March of this year. The group concluded that the glossary 1) should be an easy-to-use tool that will include around 100 of the most significant and frequently-used youth and adult education terms and concepts, and 2) should respond to the expressed needs and interests of policy-makers, programme developers, teachers and decision-takers and should be based on research conducted in the different sub-regions, each of which has its own nuanced understanding and use.

Terms will be compiled in Spanish, with translation into Portuguese. The glossary is planned to be available in both languages in November 2012.

2 Specific commitments from the Belém Framework for Action

2.1 UNESCO Guidelines on the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning launched

To fulfil one explicit mandate from the *Belém Framework for Action*, UIL, on behalf of UNESCO's Education Sector and in consultation with Member States, has developed the *UNESCO Guidelines on the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation (RVA) of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning*. The overall aim of the Guidelines is to propose principles and mechanisms that can assist Member States in developing or improving structures and procedures to recognise all forms of learning, particularly the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning.

The *UNESCO Guidelines on the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning* were successfully launched at a conference on



From left to right: Mr Alishar Umarov (UNESCO New Delhi), Ms Madhu Singh (UIL), Mr. Sanjeev Roy (NLMA), Mrs Purandeshwari (Minister of State for Education), Mr Arne Carlsen (Director UIL), Mr Jagmohan Singh Raju (DG NLMA)

'Recognising Prior Learning: A key to

Lifelong Learning' held in New Delhi, India at the end of June 2012 and organised by the National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) in partnership with UIL.

The Guidelines were sent to all Permanent Delegations and National Commissions in July and are available in English, French and Spanish on the CONFINTEA Portal.

<http://uil.unesco.org/home/programme-areas/lifelong-learning-policies-and-strategies/recognition-validation-and-accreditation-of-non-formal-and-informal-learning-rva/>

2.2 Revision of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education

The *Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education*, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in Nairobi in 1976, is the key normative instrument on adult education, providing guiding principles and a global approach for promoting and developing adult education in Member States. On several occasions, its review and update has been proposed, more recently in the *Belém Framework for Action*. The Executive Board of UNESCO adopted a plan of action to that end in late 2011. As a first step, a group of five experts from several world regions met at UIL on 10 - 11 July to explore and clarify technical and legal aspects of a potential revision, and provided key arguments for a decision to be taken later on by UNESCO's governing bodies.

While the experts acknowledged the forward-looking and emancipatory spirit of the 1976 Recommendation, which has not lost its critical substance, they also underlined the need to re-formulate substantial parts in light of the changed reality and new challenges in adult learning and education. They discussed related consequences



International expert group for the revision of the »1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education«

concerning conceptual clarity (e.g., with regard to the definition of adult education, its objectives and key areas) and updating the language. In a next step, the proposals of the expert meeting were broadly debated during an online consultation in September and will be subsequently submitted to UNESCO's Executive Board.

3 News from our Partners

3.1 ICAE Activities in support of the CONFINTEA VI Follow-up

To develop its 2012-2014 Strategic Plan the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) created five thematic Working Commissions, to follow up on the Belém commitments.

Education for All, Millennium Development Goals and CONFINTEA

The purpose of this commission is to conduct advocacy work on the right to education and lifelong learning of young people and adults in the different UN agreements and follow up on their implementation in CONFINTEA VI, EFA and MDG processes towards 2015. In addition, it intends to harmonise post-CONFINTEA VI ICAE strategies with regional partners and national members.

Climate change and education for sustainable development

Quoting the *Belém Framework for Action (BFA)* "the education of young people and adults enables individuals, especially women, to cope with multiple social, economic and political crises, and climate change", the purpose of this commission is to develop a concept of education that is responsive to the realities of climate change and helps build active citizenship for sustainable development.

Decent learning for decent work

As the *Belém Framework for Action* recognised, the current unstable economic climate requires people to adapt to new forms of work and leads them to rethink the concept of work. Thus, this working commission was created with the purpose of better defining what 'decent learning for decent work' means to ICAE and its members throughout the different regions and to develop an advocacy agenda for the right to decent learning for decent work.

In the short term, the group has two targets: revision of the 2012 Education for All Global Monitoring Report in how it relates to work and encompasses the right to learn; and revision of the concept of decent work and right to learn in the CONFINTEA follow-up.

Folkbildning and popular education

The objective of this commission is to build an understanding of *folkbildning*¹ and popular education, best practices and adult education methods, and other lifelong learning strategies. With this purpose the group intends to explore what adult education and lifelong learning means and how it is defined and understood in different parts of the world. This work will be based on the different concepts collected in the National Progress Reports 2012 for GRALE. Likewise, a comparative study on commonalities between *folkbildning* and popular education is also planned in the short term.

Gender and all forms of discrimination

Inclusive education has historically been a priority for ICAE and also constitutes one of the key recommendations of the *Belém Framework for Action* (participation, inclusion and equity). This Working Commission intends to use adult education and learning as a strategy to prevent and contest all forms of discrimination and build an understanding of the importance of addressing this issue through an intersectional approach. The Gender and Education Office of ICAE plays a vital role in this commission. It has been a strong pillar of ICAE for years.

With these five commissions, ICAE expects to strategize their ambitious plans and to follow up the *Belém Framework for Action*.

¹ Swedish *folkbildning* is the collective name for the activities conducted by the country's folk high schools and study associations in the form of courses, study circles and cultural activities. *Folkbildning* is a part of the liberal non-formal educational system.