

**Follow-up Strategy of the
Sixth International Conference on Adult Education
(CONFINTEA VI)**
As of April 2010



The Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) “***Living and Learning for a Viable Future: The Power of Adult Learning***” took place in Brazil in December 2009. It was attended by 1125 participants from 144 countries, with 55 ministers and deputy ministers and 16 ambassadors and permanent delegates and representatives of international agencies, non-governmental organizations and learner associations.

154 Member States had prepared reports on adult learning and education, from which regional reports were synthesized, forming the basis for recommendations adopted at five preparatory conferences. These recommendations informed the drafting of the **Belém Framework for Action**. This process also led to the first-ever *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*, launched at CONFINTEA VI.

Twelve years after the much-acclaimed “Hamburg Declaration and Agenda for the Future”, CONFINTEA VI adopted a re-focused and strengthened charter, aiming to move from rhetoric to action. The *Belém Framework for Action* inscribes adult literacy and adult education as enabling and empowering tools for hope and change. It contains proposals and recommendations to improve policy, governance, financing, participation and the quality of adult literacy, adult education and lifelong learning and emphasizes that:

- The right to adult education is an inherent part of the right to education.
- Lifelong learning is critical in addressing global educational challenges.
- Literacy has to be high on the agenda, with efforts redoubled to increase investment for adult literacy and non-formal education in refocused MDG and EFA agendas.
- Adult education has to be an integral part of sector-wide education and development plans.

Furthermore, the *Belém Framework for Action* outlines mechanisms to report on and be accountable for progress, and calls on UNESCO to coordinate and support data collection and monitoring.

In order to guide and support UNESCO in the CONFINTEA VI follow-up process, a **CONFINTEA Advisory Group** has been created, which proposes a set of guiding principles, concrete proposals for national and regional action and a common road map for the CONFINTEA VI follow-up process in order to help countries and stakeholders to operationalize and implement the commitments and recommendations of the *Belém Framework for Action*. The document is complemented by proposals for UNESCO’s coordination and active support to the CONFINTEA VI follow-up process.

The follow-up strategy is a rolling document and will be reviewed and updated periodically with the help of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group.

I. Guiding Principles for the CONFINTEA VI Follow-up Process

The CONFINTEA VI follow-up process will have to be contextualized regionally, nationally and locally, according to diverse economic, political, social and infra-structural conditions. However, several guiding principles are applicable to all contexts for the CONFINTEA VI follow-up. They will be critical in order to translate the commitments and recommendations of the *Belém Framework for Action* into concrete activities across different contexts, and/or to underpin all related activities. These are:

- Crucial role of advocacy;
- Regional approaches and strategies;
- Importance of inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial cooperation at national level;
- Importance of the involvement of all stakeholders in adult literacy and adult education, in particular civil society and learners;
- Integration of adult literacy and adult education with existing policies, development plans, in particular EFA, MDGs and UNLD;
- Pragmatic approach to initiate first steps: a focus on target groups in designing policies and programmes and allocating funding, instead of aiming for a comprehensive policy approach (which can be addressed in the longer term);
- Systematic data collection and monitoring;
- A sustained drive towards quality enhancement; and
- Building up an overall culture of lifelong learning.

II. Concrete Proposals for National and Regional Action

In line with the commitments made in the *Belém Framework for Action*, countries will take the lead in the follow-up of CONFINTEA VI. The concrete recommendations of the *Framework* are geared towards the three inter-related axes in the implementation cycle. With a view to the guiding principles outlined above, the three axes may be approached in the following way:

1. Policy Development

- ⇒ Integrating adult literacy and adult education into existing national education or lifelong learning policies and/or development plans (in particular EFA & MDGs);
- ⇒ Designing specific policies which focus on target groups (according to local context), possibly within existing frameworks, as building blocks for new comprehensive policies;
- ⇒ Developing funding schemes or financing possibilities along with new/additional policy or policy elements;

2. Improvement of Provision and Quality

- ⇒ Designing and implementing programmes which are addressed to target-groups (according to local context);
- ⇒ Developing indicators to support the policy and programme development and the monitoring and evaluation;
- ⇒ Developing systems for the recognition and assessment of learning outcomes;
- ⇒ Developing and institutionalizing training programmes for facilitators;

3. Data Collection and Documentation of Progress

- ⇒ Institutionalizing systematic data collection strategies in order to monitor, document and inform progress.

Concrete action points to be undertaken at the **national level** in order to progress on the above axes are:

- translating the *Belém Framework for Action* into the national language;
- developing a communication strategy on adult literacy and adult education (and the CONFINTEA agenda);
- presenting the *Belém Framework for Action* to parliament;
- instituting an inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial committee to streamline adult literacy and adult education, to share good practice and to assess the funds already allocated across departments and ministries;
- reviewing existing EFA and MDG plans in order to integrate adult literacy and adult education;
- setting up a national task force on adult literacy and adult education/CONFINTEA VI follow-up including all stakeholders (civil society, learners and academics) which will be in charge of designing and evaluating policy and provision;
- elaborating a funding plan;
- systematizing the recognition and validation of learning outcomes;
- replicating initiatives undertaken by members of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group in other countries;
- opening the debate on the periodicity of the next CONFINTEA VII within UNESCO Member States; and
- developing a national road map for the implementation of the *Belém Framework* which includes clear priorities, objectives, implementation steps and evaluation.

Concrete action points to be undertaken at the **regional level** are:

- organizing regional follow-up seminars and cooperation projects to exchange good practice and initiate common approaches and data collection;
- tapping into existing regional or sub-regional networks, where they exist, in order to further promote adult literacy and adult education;
- incorporating adult literacy and adult education into the forthcoming UNLD evaluation phase for 2012;
- replicating initiatives undertaken by members of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group in other regions or organizations.

III. UNESCO's Coordination and Active Support at International Level

As requested in the *Belém Framework for Action*, UNESCO will support the follow-up and monitoring at international level, and assist Member States in their national follow-up activities. All relevant UNESCO units and offices will be involved in the support of the CONFINTEA VI follow-up (Headquarters, Regional Bureaux, Cluster and Field Offices, Institutes), with the coordination of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). Based on the recommendations of the *Belém Framework* and in line with the axes to be focused at national level, UNESCO will give support in three areas:

1. Advocacy and international coordination

- Disseminating CONFINTEA VI results and documents;
- Establishing and coordinating the CONFINTEA Advisory Group;
- Developing a communication strategy to promote the *Belém Framework for Action*, respectively adult literacy and adult education and lifelong learning;
- Promoting the inclusion of adult education in national sector-wide education strategies;
- Reanimating International Adult Learners' Week and supporting the Global Learners' Network;
- Preparing the review and update of the *Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education* adopted in 1976 in Nairobi by UNESCO's General Conference;
- Facilitating South-South cooperation and sharing good practice.

2. Research and international monitoring

- Developing core indicators, benchmarks and data collection tools for adult literacy, adult education and lifelong learning to support national policy development, programme improvement and national and international monitoring; as well as subsequent pilot-testing;
- Identifying, collecting and documenting effective practice in CONFINTEA VI implementation strategies and the integration of lifelong learning perspectives in national educational systems;
- Reviewing and renewing conceptual and definitional underpinnings in adult literacy and adult education to derive common understandings (creating a glossary to clarify adult education terminology);
- Establishing a comprehensive web-based lifelong learning database;
- Undertaking research on critical aspects for wider participation and improved quality in adult literacy and adult education; the costs, financing mechanisms and new sources for adult literacy and adult education;
- Developing guidelines to assess learning outcomes;
- Undertaking regional monitoring activities;
- Preparing guidelines for national reporting and future issues of the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (every three years).

3. Capacity building and technical support

- Developing national capacities for policy planning and programme design;
- Providing opportunities to share innovative practice and experience.

IV. Road Map for the CONFINTEA VI Follow-up Process

The Road Map is the **collective calendar** of national, regional and international relevant activities and elements in the CONFINTEA VI follow-up process. It will be dynamic and evolving; upcoming events and further steps will be inserted on a continuous basis as they gradually take shape.

As of April 2010

Timeframe	Activity
May 2010	International advocacy: International Forum on lifelong learning in Shanghai
June 2010	International advocacy: „E 9 Abuja Ministerial Review Meeting“
May 2011	Regional advocacy and planning: Regional LAC meeting hosted by Mexico to discuss the follow-up of the <i>Belém Framework for Action</i>
Late spring/early summer 2011	Second meeting of the <i>CONFINTEA Advisory Group</i> , to finalize guidelines for countries to prepare first follow-up report
July/October 2011	Submission of proposals to UNESCO's General Conference for the revision and updating of the Nairobi Recommendation
By end of 2011	National monitoring: Countries to prepare and submit first follow-up report, Linking with reporting process on UNLD
2012	International monitoring: First post-CONFINTEA VI issue of the <i>Global Report on Adult Learning and Education</i> , linking with reporting process on UNLD
2013	Third meeting of the <i>CONFINTEA Advisory Group</i>
2014	National monitoring: Countries to prepare and submit second follow-up report as mid-term follow-up report of CONFINTEA VI, linking with reporting process on EFA and MDGs
2015	International monitoring: Second post-CONFINTEA VI issue of the <i>Global Report on Adult Learning and Education</i> , linking with reporting process on EFA and MDGs

In addition to the common Road Map, the **members of the CONFINTEA Advisory Group** have committed themselves to taking up specific responsibilities and tasks to support the CONFINTEA VI follow-up process. These are:

- Actively promoting the *Belém Framework for Action* and relevant issues in national, regional and international meetings;
- Sending formal letters to Education Ministers in LAC to encourage them to inform their parliaments of the commitments made at CONFINTEA VI ;
- Engaging in research projects on certain issues, such as the recognition, validation and accreditation of learning outcomes; the development of indicators; the linkage between lifelong learning and adult education; the linkage between higher education and lifelong learning; the training of trainers; the development of a glossary, good practice in the training of facilitators;
- Advocating for adult literacy and adult education on behalf of the Advisory Group vis-à-vis other cooperation agencies.