

## History and achievements

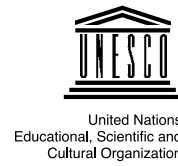
The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning was established as UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg in 1951/52. In 1972, after the publication of the Faure Report *Learning to Be*, lifelong education became the focus of the Institute's work. In the following years, UIE carried out foundational studies on lifelong education and its implications for educational reform. In the 1980s, the Institute became a leading centre for post-literacy and continuing education. Since CONFINTEA V, the Institute has been tracking the recent paradigm shift in thinking from adult education to adult learning and working out its implications for peace, democracy and sustainable development. Over the last five decades, the Institute has made major contributions to the development of adult education worldwide in the framework of lifelong learning. It serves more than 190 countries, with an average of 500 education specialists from all sectors taking part each year in its activities. In 2006, the Institute was renamed the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

## Documentation Centre and Library

The UIL Documentation Centre and Library boasts the most comprehensive collection of its kind in the world, holding over 61,500 books and documents along with 190 periodicals. It also features more than 7,100 sample learning materials used in adult literacy, post-literacy and out-of-school education from 120 countries in over 160 languages. The Documentation Centre also coordinates the Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN), connecting some 100 specialized documentation centres around the world.

## Publications

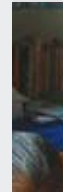
UIL issues a broad spectrum of studies, reports and informational material on lifelong learning, adult education, and literacy. Since its inception, the Institute has published the longest-running international journal on the comparative theory and practice of formal and non-formal education, the *International Review of Education*, which is available to academic libraries around the world. It also publishes the textbook series *African Perspectives on Adult Learning* (APAL) and CONFINTEA follow-up documents.



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# Making the case for lifelong learning

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The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) is a non-profit, policy-driven, international research, training, information, documentation and publishing centre of UNESCO. One of six educational institutes of UNESCO, UIL promotes lifelong learning policy and practice with a focus on adult and continuing education, especially literacy and non-formal education and alternative learning opportunities for marginalized and disadvantaged groups. UIL's activities are geared towards achieving the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) along with the objectives of the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) series, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), and the UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). UIL answers to the concerns of Member States, giving priority to Africa, Least Developed Countries and E-9 countries. UIL provides technical support to Member States, including consulting services and programme monitoring and evaluation. UIL enhances literacy and non-formal education, and adult and lifelong learning through advocacy and networking, research and capacity-building.

## Organisation

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning works in close cooperation with UNESCO Headquarters, the regional, cluster and field offices of UNESCO as well as its sister Institutes. Its Governing Board, which meets annually to review work performed and plan future policy, consists of 12 educationists recruited worldwide and appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO, as is its Director. Among the 30 members of its workforce are education and social science researchers, librarians and publications staff along with administrative, secretarial and technical personnel. The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg provides the Institute with a villa registered as an historic monument on premises close to the University of Hamburg, with which the Institute enjoys an increasingly strong partnership.

## Literacy

UIL focuses on five strategic areas of action to achieve the objective of furthering literacy as a foundation for lifelong learning:

- the coordination of LIFE;
- advocacy for literacy;
- research on literacy policy and practice;
- capacity-building for the achievement of EFA (especially Dakar Goal 4 – achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy – and Goal 3 – ensuring equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes for young people and adults) in Member States; and
- effective monitoring and evaluation systems.

As UNESCO's resource centre for literacy and non-formal education, UIL's mandate is to provide innovative and state-of-the-art evidence and information on effective policy and programmes. For this purpose, UIL has established a database that provides examples of effective literacy and numeracy programmes worldwide. UIL coordinates the interactive platform LIFEline as an online resource and network which facilitates the exchange of experiences among the 35 countries participating in LIFE.



*The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) is UNESCO's support mechanism to promote national processes and capacities that help to improve and expand literacy activities and increase participation with the aim of raising literacy rates in the 35 countries that account for 85 per cent of the world's non-literate population.*

## Lifelong learning

This is the basic principle underlying the work of UIL. Concretely, this means promoting lifelong learning in educational systems in all regions of the world, insisting on a lifelong learning perspective in the EFA agenda and supporting policy formulation for sustainable and gender-just learning societies. To this aim, the Institute monitors the development of lifelong learning policies and legislation, collects information on lifelong learning and carries out research with different partners to demonstrate the complexity and types of intervention necessary to fully realize the potential of learning throughout the whole of life. UIL is involved in numerous research programmes on this topic, including the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning.



*CONFINTEA VI continues a series of global UNESCO meetings on adult education and learning which have been held every 12 years since 1949. CONFINTEA V (1997, Hamburg) was considered a landmark event, as it established a holistic understanding of adult learning and education within the perspective of lifelong learning («The Hamburg Declaration»).*



## Africa

A major focus of UIL's work is to strengthen capacities of governments and civil society in literacy, non-formal education and adult education in the African region with the aim of integrating lifelong learning into national education sectors. In particular, UIL is concerned with promoting the use of African languages in building literate environments and lifelong learning and improving the evidence base for adult literacy and non-formal education programmes. UIL collaborates with governments, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector to ensure improved delivery of adult basic education services. For many years UIL has been working closely with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), especially with the ADEA Working Group on Non-Formal Education. Furthermore, it is currently cooperating with BREDA, IICBA and ADEA to support the African Union's Second Decade of Education.



# Key areas of work