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# Adult education centres as a key to development – challenges and success factors

Maja Avramovska / Esther Hirsch / Beate Schmidt-Behlau (Editors)

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The reports, studies and materials published in this series aim to further the development of theory and practice in adult education. We hope that by providing access to information and a channel for communication and exchange, the series will serve to increase knowledge, deepen insights and improve cooperation in adult education at international level.

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# Adult education centres
# as a key to development –
# challenges and success factors

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# Editorial

The present volume will be published for the *Adult Education Centres as a Key to Development – Responsibilities, Structures and Benefits* conference organised by DVV for the autumn of 2017 in Georgia. The publication is intended as supplementary reading for the participants of the conference, but is also aimed at a wider international specialist audience. The contributions provide an insight into the theory and practice of the worldwide work of DVV International and its partners, and also look at the history and work of the *Volkshochschulen* in Germany.

Building and improving structures has gained importance around the world, especially when it comes to tackling global challenges such as overcoming poverty, confronting mass unemployment and implementing human rights for education.

Adult education centres, as carriers of such structures, are local learning places that are accessible for a broad sector of the population. They take into account the needs of different groups of people and at the same time can respond flexibly to the complex, constantly changing local, national, but also global framework conditions. Correspondingly multifaceted and diverse are the public images of the learning centres with regard to learning environments, methods, concepts and structures in the different regions.

This is also reflected in the different names for the centres: in Asia it is mainly "Community learning centres", in the Caucasus region "Adult education centres", in Japan *Kominkan* or in Germany the *Volkshochschulen* (VHS). Despite the many different approaches and orientations, they all have at least one goal in common: the conviction that lifelong learning for all people is an important contribution to the improvement of their living conditions.

The present volume provides an insight into this multifaceted aspect of the learning centres, and asks questions about responsibilities and financing models, as well as sheds light on the legal framework conditions and their implementation. It underlines the important role that adult education centres have as a supporting social structure in the implementation of the objectives of Agenda 2030, in particular the right to inclusive and equitable quality education required under Goal 4. The topic is addressed from a number of differing perspectives; one can find the presentation of successful practice as well as the analysis of the implementation of laws or the discussion of research results.

Uwe Gartenschlaeger's introductory text brings order to the tasks and the role of the adult education centres as necessary structures and spaces for lifelong learning in the global processes of adult education, and links them to the important stages in the development of adult education.

In the first topic block, "Adult eduction centres – diverse challenges, diverse answers", big differences are visible between the centres in Morocco and Georgia. In Morocco, for example, adult education centres play an important role in combating illiteracy. In modern Georgia, where there are now laws for individual areas of adult education, the focus of the concept of lifelong learning is more on vocational and political education.

The topic block "Transformation of Adult education centres in countries in transition" examines the question of how the adult education centres have developed in the transformation phase after the collapse of the socialist countries. The development of the VHS in Germany after reunification, as well as the countries of the Eastern European neighbours Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are examples which are examined.

The question of the public and/or municipal responsibility for the financing of adult education structures is dealt with in the chapter "Financing community learning centres", using the example of adult education centres in different regions of Asia as well as a case study on the development of CLCs in Cambodia.

In the chapter entitled "Working with government and developing juridical frameworks", the role and responsibility of government agencies is reflected upon. Examples from Mexico, Serbia and Macedonia are described and analysed on how to work with government agencies to develop and implement a binding legal framework for adult education. This, in turn, is a prerequisite for underlining the importance of adult education and for an assurance of the financing of its structures and staff.

A study of management models of adult education centres, with the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the one hand and the VHS Cham in Bavaria on the other, as well as the importance of networking for the development of the national network on youth and adult education in Bolivia round off the volume.

We hope that the readers of this new IPE issue will not only find inspiration for the conference itself but for their work on the ground as well.

Bonn, September 2017

Maja Avramovska, Esther Hirsch, Beate Schmidt-Behlau

**Uwe Gartenschlaeger**

# Introduction: Community learning centres as spaces for Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century

Sustainable Development Goal 4 prominently recognises the need to shape education in a lifelong learning (LLL) framework, including formal, non-formal and informal learning. A lot of factors are necessary to make LLL a reality, amongst them a well-funded and equipped formal and non-formal education system which allows for easy transition between all levels and sectors of education, a supporting teaching culture which stresses the joy of learning and enables participants to organise their learning according to their needs, an adequate system for recognition, validation and accreditation of learning, decent pre- and in-services training opportunities for youth and adult educators and many others.

In the past few decades a common understanding arose, that premises for youth and adult education on the community level are another essential necessity to ensure a successful implementation of LLL. And in many parts of the world these centres already have a long history: Community Centres in the UK as well as some *Volkshochschulen* in Austria and Germany look back to more than 100 years of history, and so do the residential *Folk high schools* in the Nordic countries. The *Kominkans* in Japan have existed since the early 1940s, and in many Arab, African and Asian countries, Community Learning Centres have been flourishing since the 1980s, initiated in many cases by local civil society actors. As diverse as the roots, are the names of these centres: besides the terms already mentioned we can find community development centres, adult education centres, non-formal education centres, alternative education centres and many others. While all of them are a part of the reality described in this publication, to make things easier, this article will follow UNESCO terminology and use the term Community Learning Centres (CLCs), thus including all of their different forms.

**SDGs Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning

*Adult education centre in Kabul*                                    *Source: DVV International*

In fact, the variety in the terminology reflects the diversity in the concrete scale and scope of activities CLCs are providing. They are **needs oriented, flexible and multifunctional**. Well-designed and well-managed CLCs are able to respond immediately to the needs of their communities. These communities differ fundamentally within a country and between the regions globally: in some cases basic education and literacy or income generating activities in the agricultural sector are demanded, in some cases it is vocational training with the objective of employment, languages or ICT knowledge. Ageing societies in Europe and Asia feel the need to provide health education and creative activities for their senior citizens. In a context of a growing number of migrants and refugees, CLCs are requested to offer various forms of training for the newcomers, as we arrange dialogue formats to mitigate the tensions between newcomers and the existing population. All this leads to a situation where the attempts to describe CLCs regionally or globally ends with a very broad definition. For example, according to UNESCO "(the) purpose of a CLC is to promote human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. CLCs support empowerment, social transformation

*Participants in an electrician workshop, National Adult Training Centre, Tajikistan 2014*
*Source: DVV International*

and improvement of the quality of life of the people. The main functions of CLCs are to provide:

a) education and training;
b) community information and resource services;
c) community development activities; and
d) coordination and networking."[1]

This very broad concept creates challenges for advocating for the support of CLCs. While the concept of a school or a university seems to be clear to all of us, including national and local governments and donor agencies, the meaning of CLC should exist with this vague and broad framework, as a more restrictive definition will damage core elements of the work.

However, it is striking to witness the commonalities of the different concepts, when you focus on the above-mentioned core principle of

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[1] Community Learning Centres: Asia-Pacific Regional Conference Report 2012, UNESCO Bangkok 2013, p 3.

addressing local needs. In the Handbook "Community-Based Lifelong Learning and Adult Education: Role of Community Learning Centres as Facilitators of Lifelong Learning", UNESCO Bangkok lists the key questions to be explored for every CLC for shaping their activities: "All community members are invited to design CLC programmes. In pursuit of programme designing, a social analysis is conducted in the village to find out the following:

- What are the community needs?
- What do community people want to learn?
- What are the challenges faced by the community?
- What are the local contexts and conditions?
- What are the policies/regulations to support CLCs?
- What/who are the supportive agencies and stakeholders?
- What networks can boost implementation?

From the social analysis, the CLC will prioritise the kind of programmes that will be implemented with due consideration of opportunities and capacities in the community."[2] While the answers to these questions will differ, depending on the social, economic and cultural context, the questions remain valid for CLCs globally.

    A very good example of defining their own position can be found in the mission statement of the German *Volkshochschulen* (VHS): "The VHS (adult education centre) is everywhere. In the cities, municipalities and counties of Germany, the VHS is the tried and tested central institution of municipal public services in the area of further education and an important guarantor of a citizen-oriented educational infrastructure. The continuing education centre VHS is, at the same time, a place of learning, a place to organise and a social and cultural meeting place for all. The VHS are delegated with the task of providing a demand-oriented and affordable range of further education by countries and municipalities, which, without hurdles to overcome, can be taken advantage of by all people. The VHS are supported by municipal self-administration and democratically legitimised. In addition to this public education mission, they also support their communities by providing interdisciplinary counselling as well as the implementation of labour market and social policy objectives."[3] In this case, the above-mentioned core principles of being close to the community, needs orientation and multi-functionality are translated into the concept of a developed European

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[2]/ Community-Based Lifelong Learning and Adult Education: Role of Community Learning Centres as Facilitators of Lifelong Learning, UNESCO Paris/Bangkok 2016, p 5.
[3]/ Die Volkshochschule – Bildung in oeffentlicher Verantwortung, Bonn 2011, p 3.

*VHS Bonn (Haus der Bildung – House of education)*
*Source: Stadt Bonn/Michael Sondermann*

country. The situation of the *Volkshochschulen* in Germany provides another striking example for the functionality of the CLC model in an ever faster changing world: The German CLCs are at the moment by far the biggest provider of language and integration training for migrants and refugees. Decision-makers especially value the ability of the VHS network to provide large scale, high quality training for this new target group.

While the CLC concept has been well known in many countries for more than 100 years (and used by development actors, including UN agencies at least since the 1980s), the recognition of lifelong learning as the key framework for education reaches back to the 1970s: "The lauded Faure report, *Learning to Be* (1972), and the later Delors report, *Learning: The Treasure Within* (1996), championed lifelong learning as the paradigm for the future of education systems as well as for the learning needs of the individual and society. These values, perspective and priorities are sustained for twenty-first century conditions in the UNESCO report *Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?* (2015)"[4].

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[4] Chris Duke, Heribert Hinzen: Synthesis Report on the State of Community Learning Centres in Six Asian Countries, Seoul/Hamburg, 2016, p 5.

*Accounting training for women: Model community learning center in Boricha Woreda, Ethiopia*           *Source: DVV International*

However, the institutional setting of youth and adult education and LLL was neglected for a long time. The UNESCO Conference on Adult Education CONFINTEA V 1997 in Hamburg drew the focus on networking between different institutions and stakeholders to satisfy the needs of the individual learner, thus neglecting the community as an important entity: "The new concept of youth and adult education presents a challenge to existing practices because it calls for effective networking within the formal and non-formal systems, and for innovation and more creativity and flexibility. Such challenges should be met by new approaches to adult education within the concept of learning throughout life."[5]

CONFINTEA VI in Belém, 2009, recognised the institutional weakness of youth and adult education in many countries and calls, in the Belem Framework for Action, for "creating multi-purpose community learning spaces and centres…"[6]. It is the revised version of the UNESCO recom-

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[5] Final Report: Fifth International Conference on Adult Learning. Hamburg, 1997 UNESCO. http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/repeng.html
[6] Quotation from: Chris Duke, Heribert Hinzen: Synthesis Report on the State of Community Learning Centres in Six Asian Countries, Seoul/Hamburg, 2016, p 7.

mendations on Adult Education 2015, which mentioned explicitly the importance of "creating or strengthening appropriate institutional structures, like CLCs, for delivering adult learning and education and encouraging adults to use these as hubs for individual learning as well as community development"[7].

According to the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, as many as 170,000 CLCs operate throughout the region alone. Against this background, it is a bit surprising that the concept of CLCs is so poorly reflected in the international framework concerning adult education and LLL. Hopefully, the current debate about the impact of youth and adult education can contribute to a wider recognition. For Europe, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) provided a good case by publishing their "Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century".[8]

At the same time, new challenges are around the corner, which will change the work of CLCs in many regions:

- Digitalisation effects the way people learn. A growing number of online learning opportunities are available, and a growing number of, especially, young people are using them. How does this influence a community-based institution, which is based mainly on in-house training?
- Societies around the globe are facing increasing challenges of cohesion. Migration and the growing divide between the rich and the poor are only two of the influencing factors. Communities will play a key role in dealing with these challenges, and CLCs are at the heart of the debates, because they provide a convenient space for exchange, discussion and dialogue between different actors.
- At the same time it remains the focus of CLCs to support the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the community. Rapid changes in society, environment and economy, however, can shift the demands of these groups and will make it necessary to constantly adapt.
- Growing privatisation in education will make the financial framework more insecure. Public funding for education is decreasing and private actors are emerging. CLCs will play a key role to support the focus on education activities, which respond to the needs of not only the market, but all actors in the community.

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7/ Recommendations on Adult Education and Learning 2015, UNESCO Paris 2016, p 11.
8/ Download in several European languages available at: http://www.eaea.org/en/policy-advocacy/manifesto-for-adult-learning-in-the-21st-century.html

*Community learning center in Ghriss, Morocco*       *Source: DVV International*

At the moment, UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities (UNLC)[9] tries to support sharing and exchange between cities and regions to establish lifelong learning spaces. It would be essential to ensure that institutions for youth and adult education will be a part of these networks and recognised as constituencies in their own right, which can play an important role in making lifelong learning a reality. DVV International and its partner support the establishment and improvement of such centers in many regions. Quality LLL for all without a decent CLC network will hardly be achievable.

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9/ See http://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/learning-cities

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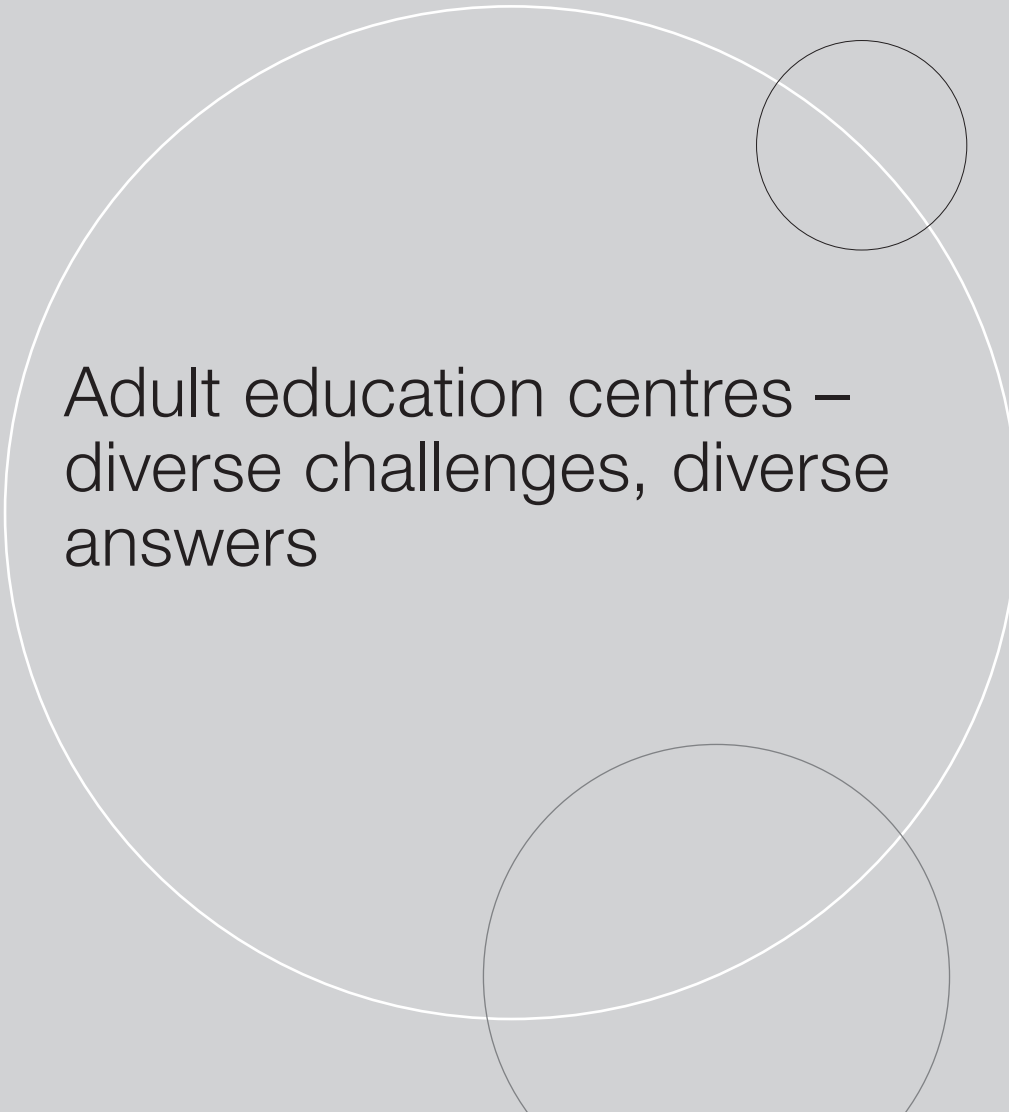
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# Adult education centres – diverse challenges, diverse answers

Aziz Chaker

# Community learning centres in Morocco[1] – An unprecedented experience

*The still very high illiteracy rate in Morocco requires new paths and structures. The concept of the Community Learning Centres (Centers d'apprentissage communataire) offers new opportunities. One main goal is to reduce the illiteracy rate. The CLCs were established through a joint project of the Moroccan Ministry of National Education and the UNESCO Life Initiative (2006-2008), during which the first four CLCs were created. The following article describes the structure of the centres, the concept, the objectives and, ultimately, the positive impacts and successes that lead to the emergence of more and more adult education centres, especially in rural areas with poor infrastructure.*

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[1]/ Centres d'apprentissage communitaires (CAC)

Morocco still suffers from a high rate of illiteracy. Indeed, according to the latest census of the general population and households (2014), 32.2 % of the Moroccan population aged 10 and over is illiterate, which represents 8.5 million inhabitants. This average encompasses important disparities according to age, gender (22.1 % for men compared to 41.9 % for women), residential environment (22.2 % for urban versus 47.7 % for the rural) and region.

The illiteracy rate in Morocco has nevertheless declined significantly in recent years, as it was still 43 % in 2004. This drop is the result of efforts made in the framework of the national literacy strategy, which includes public operators as well as local associations (1200 associations with agreements for 2015-16).

In order to offer the newly literate support to maintain their achievements and to continue to educate themselves, Morocco has embarked on the community learning centres (CLC) programme initiated by UNESCO. This programme consists of making spaces in their proximity available to people with a low skill level in reading, writing and numeracy in order to enable them to consolidate and develop their newly acquired achievements.

CLCs are designed to meet the basic needs of learners in literacy and education in order to support the overall development of the people and communities through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and a sense of values which are relevant to their daily lives.

### Genesis of the community learner centres in Morocco

In Morocco, the CLC concept was born in the context of a joint programme of the Directorate for the fight against illiteracy (DLCA – Ministry of National Education) and the UNESCO LIFE initiative (2006-2008). **Four community centres** were established in the provinces of Ouarzazate and Zagora with the aim, as a priority, of strengthening women's literacy skills and providing them with a space for lifelong learning.

A key component of this programme in Morocco was a project carried out in the field on "Post-literacy and the socio-economic integration of women in the provinces of Ouarzazate and Zagora".

### Massive nature of the intervention

The project targeted the post-literacy situation of 4,500 newly literate women in the provinces of Ouarzazate and Zagora, according to an inno-

*Community learning centre in Alwifac*                    *Source: DVV International*

vative method oriented toward the empowerment of women. This necessitated the recruitment of approximately 150 experienced literacy instructors and 5 national education inspectors as supervisors and co-trainers. On the other hand, each centre was encouraged to adopt, in a participatory approach, a local timetable for the realisation and organisation of the training, according to the possibilities and constraints of the environment.

**Survey on the referenced situation**

In order to carry out a multi-dimensional inventory and to produce a situation of reference which allowed to better target the actions, and especially to better adapt the processes and the tools of intervention, a group of university researchers conducted research which allowed them:

• to establish an inventory of educational plans and access and control of economic resources by the disadvantaged local populations;

- to involve the people from the outset in the implementation of the project, for a better understanding and acceptance of the innovative character of the programme.

### The design of training modules

The concept of the education of women envisaged a training manual with modules designed to reinforce basic learning (reading, writing and numeracy), but based on the local cultural, economic and social situations for the beneficiaries as well as in the development of knowledge and skills in the conduct of small economic projects and, more generally, in the sense of the empowerment of women.

In addition to the modules, aimed at literacy teachers and local NGOs, the aim was to **reenforce** the capacity of the men and women members of local development associations and the facilitators of the community learning centres in order to equip them with technical skills for the proper management of community development programmes, in particular post-literacy occupation and the promotion of income-generating activities, promotion of citizenship, equality and equity as regards gender.

### The evaluation of local economic opportunities and the initiation of small income-generating activities (IGA) for women

This innovation, prescribed by the terms of reference of the project, aimed at taking stock of the local economic potentials favourable to the promotion of small economic activities for the benefit of the newly literate women beneficiaries of the programme. The results of this study, analysed, discussed and amended by the associative leaders in the training workshops on IGAs, served as a reference for the identification of generative activities adapted to the context of each locality and each community.

### The extension phase of the community learning centres

Several national[2] and international[3] operators expressed their interest in this project and its extension.

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[2] The Direction of the fight against illiteracy (DLCA), the National Assistance, the provincial authorities through the National Initiative of Human Development, the Regional Office of agricultural development of Ouarzazate.

[3] European Union, Spanish Cooperation, DVV International.

| Distribution of categories of beneficiaries of CLC activities | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Categories of beneficiaries | % | Total | Number of CLCs |
| Women | 61 | 19,127 | 32 |
| Men | 6 | 1,884 | 18 |
| Youth (tutoring and other) | 26 | 8,163 | 21 |
| Preschool children | 7 | 2,115 | 22 |
| Total | 100 | 31,289 | **93** |

Since then, several centres have been opened to the public, notably in the regions of Er-Rachidia, Taza-El Hoceima-Taounate, Oriental, Tangier-Tétouan and Souss-Massa-Draa with financial and technical support from partners such as DVV International, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), the European Union and UNESCO.

These centres subsequently underwent a profound evolution: **There are now nearly 200 CLCs across the nation.**

An evaluation study of the programmes of the community learning centres of the National Agency for the fight against illiteracy (ANCLA) and its partners, was carried out in 2014 with the support of DVV International. The results of this study, which covered a sample of 34 CLCs which were visited in different regions of the country, are very encouraging. They show that the idea of imbedding CLCs has been increasingly integrated into literacy and post-literacy plans and programmes. The partner associations of the National Agency for the fight against illiteracy are aware of the need to undertake, in parallel with their literacy activities, other actions to accompany the community (pre-school classes, pedagogical support, awareness-raising activities, economic activities, etc.).

The evaluation of the CLC programme reveals a wide range of learning opportunities in these centres. It also shows the consolidation of management processes that are becoming more and more professional thanks to the advent of this CLC culture.

**Diversity of activities**

- **Women's literacy and post-literacy:** This is the primary role of the CLCs, which have been created to actively participate in women's education. CLCs are located in isolated rural communities or disadvantaged

urban areas where educational provision is very limited or inadequate and where local and non-formal solutions are more relevant. The resources of the CLCs enable them to contribute significantly to reducing the illiteracy rate among women in their communities.

The average noted among the centres which were visited and interviewed was around 600 women per centre during the year 2013-2014, for a grand total of 19,127 women beneficiaries in this study of the 34 centres involved. It should be noted, however, that there are large differences between centres at this level. The numbers are determined by the density of the population of the rural villages or neighbourhoods, the material, physical and human capacities of the centres and the cultural context, in some cases.

- **Preschool:** CLCs are increasingly involved in preschool development: it has been observed that in 22 out of 34 CLCs, 64 % of cases, spaces for early childhood care (preschool classes) have been systematically opened to facilitate mothers attending CLCs. On average, 96 children per CLC attended preschool classes during the 2013-2014 year.
- **School tutoring:** The CLCs also organise – in large part by themselves (21 CLC out of 34) – courses to support young students in the community; more than 300 pupils on average per centre for the past year.
- **Support for small economic projects for women:** All centres visited or interviewed report having women's groups involved in income-generating activities. The CLCs play an important role in supporting these activities by first providing women with a forum for discussion, exchange and sometimes production, and then assistance with marketing, organising expenditure and managing profits. The small economic projects observed essentially concern: carpet-making, beekeeping, horticulture, couscous production through providing value for different varieties of cereals, providing value for dates, sewing and other traditional crafts, toy-making sold through fair trade channels, cosmetics, products based on local culinary specialties, Moroccan leather goods, orthopaedic shoes.
- **Professional training** in kitchen crafts, pastry, sewing, weaving and hairdressing trades. The CLCs strive to offer new training methods in this field. Thanks to the trainers and the means available, innovative techniques and new equipment have been introduced in the various workshops.

It should be noted that rural women in particular tend to opt for activities of a traditional type and somewhat related to domestic needs. It should be noted, however, that this trend responds to two main constraints: on the one hand, it corresponds to the real needs of the local rural market, whose purchasing power remains limited, and on the other hand it al-

*Cooking course in the community learning centre in Farkla*        Source: DVV International

lows women to adapt progressively to the instruments of the market and also to cautiously overcome the constraints of access to public space. Through "reassuring" traditional activities, rural women remain available for domestic activities that are still too heavy for women alone, and which men are not yet ready to assume equitably.

It was noted, however, that collaboration with international NGOs largely influenced the diversification of this type of activity: making toys for newborns, bags (with a Spanish NGO), or orthopaedic shoes (with a German NGO).

- **Establishment of cooperatives** for the marketing of local products: When the local market presents economic opportunities, women often form cooperatives and are assisted in their efforts by the CLC and the association, particularly in administrative procedures and the founding of the cooperative.
- **Workshops and meetings on awareness-raising topics**: These educational meetings are crucial for strengthening the life skills of women. Topics related to women's reproductive health and early childhood

education are extremely valuable to the beneficiaries. These sessions also allow women to learn about their rights under the law and legal aspects. Among the most frequent actions:

- STD[4]/AIDS prevention workshops
- Vaccination, screening, circumcision campaigns
- Infant first aid and nutrition
- The environment
- Women's rights
- **Assistance and legal advice for women in difficulty** (cases of violence related to gender, divorce, legal custody of children, land ownership, etc.)
- **Public services:** notably, assistance in various administrative and legal formalities (obtaining the National Identity Card, etc.).

### Progress in the professionalism of associative action

The CLCs are a real added value for associations who work in the realm of the fight against illiteracy: they have provided them with a structured operating framework and thus conferred them with status, legitimacy and a certain appeal for the beneficiaries, who have expressed their preference for this type of structure.

Those responsible for the associations estimate that the literacy programmes in the CLCs are better, because they take place in a framework which incentifies, is more formalised, but also where the sense of belonging among women is stronger. The women are more motivated and therefore more assiduous, in particular because of the prospect of creating an IGA, of integrating an introductory course in the trades or also benefiting from the wide variety of activities and services offered by the centres.

On the other hand, the recruitment of literacy personnel and capacity building are central to the CLCs. Literacy teachers, whether paid or voluntary, are systematically provided with a series of training sessions by the centre or the responsible NGO. The CLCs rely on manuals and guides distributed by ANLCA (DLCA) for literacy, post-literacy and IGAs, but also use other training materials developed in the contexts of other projects. A total of 663 facilitators in all 34 CLCs, including 577 women, benefited from this support for skill-building and acquired a better understanding of the issues linked to gender, etc., due to the predominance of a group of female beneficiaries.

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[4]/ STD : sexually transmitted disease.

In addition, a specific profile, that of CLC supervisor, stands out in this programme because it plays a key role that goes from the mobilisation and motivation of the beneficiaries to that of the activating of training and awareness workshops. The supervisor is also in charge of managing all aspects of the centre. The position occupies a versatile and central function. In some cases, it was noted that the president of the association occupies this function; in others it is the beneficiaries or the facilitators. The position occupied by the supervisor induces a notion of permanent employment, which reinforces in the community the image of a space of professional education, structured and perennial, at the same level as a formal space.

Organisationally, there is no pre-established model for setting up CLCs, which previously benefited from a non-formal context that allowed them to adopt a flexible organisational model adapted to their needs, opportunities and constraints. This is a very important aspect for the success of the centres and the main reason for their acceptance by women. This flexibility is situated at several levels: it can be found in the functioning (opening hours, designation of responsibilities) and in the offer of programmes (a variety of activities depending on the environment and means).



*Community learning centre in Hassilabiad*                    *Source: DVV International*

## Conclusion

As centres of local learning, CLCs are not, as such, original structures of which there is no equivalent in Morocco. Their main originality, however, lies in their being mainly located in rural areas, where there is a widespread lack of educational and cultural structures outside of primary schools.

Indeed, one can think of hundreds of learning centres not bearing the label "CLC", but whose missions are not very different from the CLCs, and which operate under the supervision of various ministerial departments, often co-managed by associations. In this regard, we must specifically mention the cases of centres under the authority of the direction of l'Entraide nationale (National mutual aid), which is a component of the social pole of the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, centres linked to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and finally the special case of mosques as literacy centres under the tutelage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

Today in Morocco, the number of people enrolled in the various literacy programmes, all operators combined, amounts to more than 700,000 people annually. They are supervised by 18,000 literacy teachers, and are distributed among 16,700 literacy centres, of which 8,700 are in rural areas. Of these centres, only 200 are "labeled" CLCs, for the simple reason that they have been created or supported and strengthened in the framework of integrated, innovative projects aimed at diversifying the offers of education to communities of the most vulnerable, and the promotion of a literate environment conducive to lifelong learning.

The challenge that seems important to us today is to work toward the convergence of all these missions and to coordinate all the operators by developing a reference guide that will harmonise the intervention procedures toward a more effective branding of the CLC.

**Rusudan Sanadze / Lali Santeladze**

# Adult education centres in Georgia: History and present

*Georgia has had an interesting and rich history (including a history of education for adults) since ancient times, but has also experienced controversial and turbulent times which affected different spheres of life. From the provision of adult education in training centres in the 4th century to a superb education system during the Golden Age in the 11th and 12th centuries, through to an innovative educational vision in the 19th century and Soviet propaganda-based education in the 20th century. Modern Georgia, however, is striving to approach European values, including educational standards. Thus lifelong learning (and adult education as its important part), equal access and quality must serve as points of orientation in the education sector. This article will try to describe how the approach is taking place currently.*

### Historical perspective of adult education in Georgia

Adult education as an important part of the concept of lifelong learning has been known in Georgia since time immemorial.

According to available sources, provision of educational techniques to adult learners started at the Phazisi Academy in western Georgia in about the 4th century (near the present day city of Poti). It was also known as the Higher School of Rhetoric. Georgians and Greeks studied there and education was supposedly conducted in both Greek and Georgian. The students studied rhetoric, philosophy, physics, mathematics, logic, and other subjects.

In Georgia in the 5th and 6th century, along with other professions, adults were trained to make books by hand. Secular education included physical and military training as well.

The 11th century was The Golden Age for Georgia. The artisan class was honourable in the society. Great architects, sculptors, goldsmiths established their own vocational schools. Many documents prove that vocational and agricultural skills were intensively taught by secular residents of the country. Teaching and apprenticeship was common. Young people gained skills not only in the monasteries but also in small workshops.

Several famous cultural and educational centres were functioning in Georgia by that time.

Petritsony monastery was the largest Eastern Orthodox monastery in Europe in the 11th century. Except for theology, other subjects, such as philosophy, grammar, astronomy, arithmetic, geometry, music, etc., was taught in the monastery; labour and diligence lessons were also included in the curriculum. Historians suggest that even medicine might have been taught there, and that this monastery prepared the ground for the renaissance which emerged powerfully in Georgia in the 12th century.

Ikalto Academy, from the 11th to 13th centuries, was a higher school of education and academy in Georgia. Ikalto monastery was known as one of the most significant cultural-scholastic centres of Georgia.

Another monastery with an outstanding academy was Gelati monastery, a medieval monastic complex near Kutaisi in the Imereti region of western Georgia. A masterpiece of the Georgian Golden Age, Gelati was founded in 1106 by King David IV of Georgia and is recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Historically, Gelati was one of the main cultural and intellectual centres in Georgia. It had an Academy which employed some of the most celebrated Georgian scientists, theologians and philosophers. Due to the extensive work carried out by the Gelati Academy, people of the time called it "a new Hellas" and "a second Athos". The

educational process in Gelati Academy was also conducted in the Byzan-tine trivium-quadrium system, which means that students studied gram-mar, logic and rhetoric in the lower (trivium) level and it served as a basis for quadrium level (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy).

It should be noted that the graduates of the Gelati Academy worked as teachers. If we compare it to the present-day system of adult education we can state that the above mentioned academies in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries ensured training of the trainers, which is nowadays termed TOT.

Apart from the academic disciplines, adults learned blacksmithing, goldsmithing, pottery, making clay pans, Viticulture and Winery in Gelati Academy. These types of training were obviously connected to the labour market demands of that time.

In the 11th and 12th centuries pedagogical thinking became more developed and refined. Humanism penetrated into the education sys-tem. Higher-level specialists, such as lawyers, judges, teachers, doctors, church workers, the clergy, technicians, artists, sculptors, poets, copyists, scribes, translators and administrative officials were being educated in Georgian academies. For centuries the monasteries continued to be adult education centres (AECs) in Georgia.

Georgian history annals provide information about the Largvisi Mon-astery complex which was built in the 4th century and yet continued to be the most important education hub in the 14th century. Students not only studied theology there, but life-skills as well.

Actually, adult education reflected the political and social develop-ment and needs of the country. From the second half of the 17th century, the proper background for cultural and economic revival was prepared in Georgia.

King Vaktang VI (1675-1737), is known as a notable lawgiver, scholar, critic, translator and poet. He set up a commission of scientists. With the support of this commission he promoted the development of mathemat-ics along with the other branches of science. In the period of his reign, in 1705, the first typography was established in Georgia, which was the first one in the whole Caucasus. At the beginning of the 18th century he introduced apprenticeship rules in Georgia. Masters had a Constitution in which there were certain regulations for apprenticeships. For example, apprentices paid their masters. Thus the masters represented not only the professional association but an organisation which offered vocational training to people. The terms of the vocational training depended on the complexity of the craft and personal attitude of the master. Great impor-tance was given to women's education: they were taught to read and write, needlework, gardening and preparation of drugs. Despite the fact

that these regulations did not develop further, it gave way to new forms of professional development in the 19th century.

From the second half of the 18th century in Georgia there were far better conditions for cultural and educational revival. Influenced by the Age of the Enlightenment, which was the development of the educational system in Europe and increasing interest in science, schools and programmes in Georgia also were renewed. In this period the first secular schools were opened. In the 18th century the government became responsible for public education and consequently it led to positive results.

King Erekle II started the reforms of the education system. In the seminaries established by that time, the following subjects were mainly taught: grammar, poetics, rhetoric, logic, metaphysics, philosophy, divine law, church history, native language, arithmetic, civil history and other. Of course the education system served the interests of the dominant class. Most of the lower class population was satisfied with primary and vocational schools. Individual vocational training was also very popular.

In the 19th century the world had changed a lot and it influenced Georgia as well. The establishment of capitalism required scientific, industrial and technical progress. Numerous schools were established for adult learners, such as Cadastral Survey School (1874), Tbilisi and Kutaisi Gardening and Horticulture Schools (1855), Lotchini Sample Farm-School (1864), Railway Technical School (1870). At the beginning of the 20th century the following schools were opened: Poti Navy School, Tbilisi Gardening School, Saqara Sapling School, Kutaisi Elementary Agricultural school. In 1915 in Georgia there were 15 craft schools, 14 technical and agricultural schools and vocational schools as well.

Pedagogy as a science was first suggested by Ilia Chavchavadze (1837-1907), the great writer, political figure, philosopher, lawyer, critic, publicist, orator, economist and historian. He was inspired by the contemporary liberal movements in Europe. He envisaged education and science as necessary constituent parts for the transformation of life. He believed that education influenced society more than money. He tried to achieve his political and social goals by educating adults. Ilia Chavchavadze, with other noblemen and educators, founded The Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians. This charity organisation was founded in May 1879 and continued activities until the complete sovietisation of Georgia. The society funded schools, bookshops and libraries in Georgia. They also issued journals in the Georgian language. The organisation involved many women in spreading literacy among adults at that time. Ekaterine Gabashvili was among them. She led vocational education for women, assisted poor female students in obtaining general education along with professional training. Education of adults was crucial for the national revival of

Georgia in the 19th century. Ilia Chavchavadze and his adherents prepared the ground for the foundation of the first national university with European-level standards in Georgia (and in the whole Caucasus) in 1918.

## Adult education in modern Georgia

During the Soviet era adult education was used mainly as an instrument of Soviet propaganda. Stalin created the "Soviet Union Society for dissemination of political and scientific knowledge" (Union – *Znanie*) which was a platform for praising the advantages of the Soviet regime, its political and economic line. By 1990 the Union provided the population of the Soviet Union (including Georgia) with more than 25 million lectures per year.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the education systems of Georgia have undergone considerable changes and controversial reforms. Despite the positive outcomes of the first interventions, the inconsistent educational policies which followed and the lack of funding resulted in the failure of educational reform. According to the 2013-2014 Global Competitiveness Report, Georgia ranks 105th in terms of "quality of the educational system", and 130th in terms of "availability of research and training services". "Despite the fact that education spending has been rising in recent years, it still remains significantly behind average ECA levels. Physical infrastructure of education has suffered from the low levels of spending and individuals working in the system are poorly paid, which reduces motivation"[1].

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, Georgia initiated a 12-year elementary and secondary school course of study. Georgia has been a member of the Bologna process since 2005. All curricula and syllabi in all

| School/Level | Grade from | Grade to | Age from | Age to | Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elementary school | 1 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 6 |
| Basic school | 7 | 9 | 13 | 15 | 3 |
| Secondary school | 10 | 12 | 16 | 18 | 3 |
| Vocational Education | | | 15 | 18 | 3 |
| Technical/Vocational Education | | | | | 2 |
| Bachelor's degree | | | | | 4 |
| Master's Degree | | | | | 2 |
| PhD degree | | | | | 3 |

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1/ Social-economic Development Strategy of Georgia "GEORGIA 2020".

stages of the educational system have been modernised. Nowadays, the Georgian educational system can be described as in the table and chart on page 33 and 34.

There are many state higher education institutions in Georgia, and many more private ones. All follow the traditional model of bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. The oldest of these is Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University founded in 1918. All accredited universities which offer PhD degrees are obliged to have LLL centres.
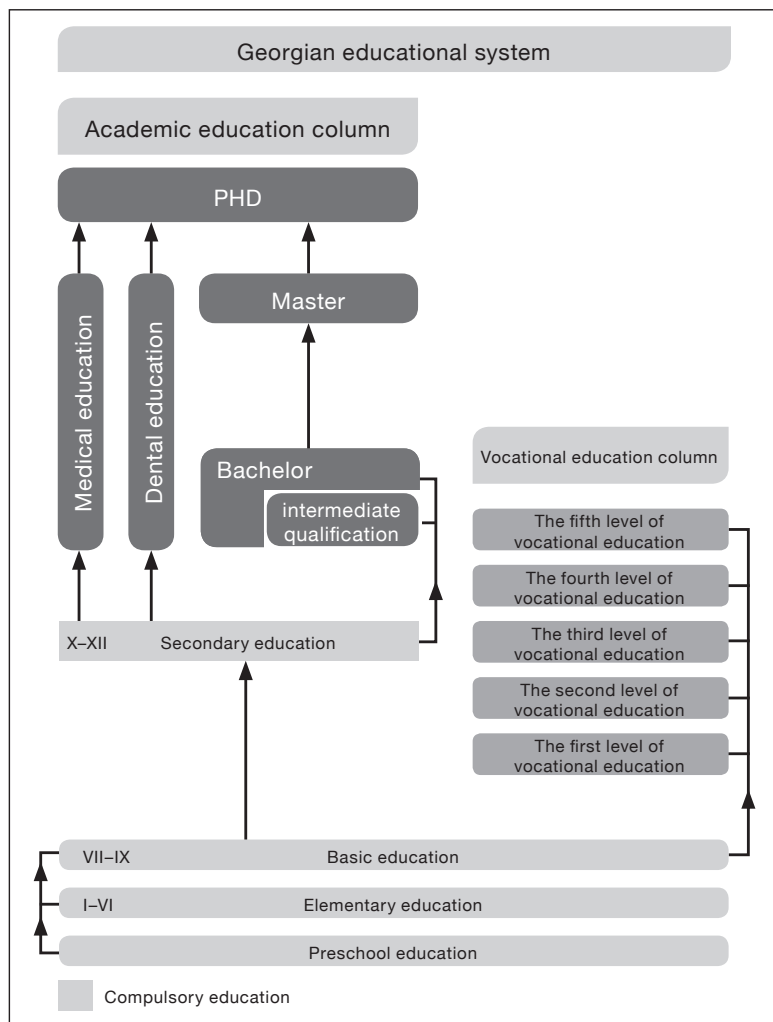
The Georgian constitution articulates each citizen's right to education. Freedom of choice in education is guaranteed. The state guarantees that educational programmes will conform to international standards and rights. The state guarantees pre-school education. Primary school education is state-provided, free and mandatory. Citizens have the right to free secondary, professional and tertiary education at state institutes within the framework and rules established by law.

The Educational System is regulated by several specific laws:

1. Law of Georgia On Higher Education[2]
2. Law of Georgia On Vocational Education and Training[3]
3. Law of Georgia On General Education[4]
4. Law of Georgia On Development of Quality of Education[5]

In addition, the priorities of the educational and scientific sectors are defined by the Social-economic Development Strategy of Georgia "GEORGIA 2020". According to the Strategy, employment and support for the formation of innovative economics is one of the priorities for the government. The Strategy also describes concrete educational priorities:

1. Improving the quality of general education
2. Developing vocational education and training
3. Facilitating the development of the tertiary education sector

In spite of all the changes and reforms which are aimed at giving birth to a more qualified labour force, they are focused primarily on youth, while the potential of the adult population as well as their needs for constant development are not addressed adequately.

Then DVV International (German Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association) got involved. The goal of DVV International is to serve as a catalyst of change to assist adults with limited access to education opportunities. The organisation has been positively altering destinies of individuals and their respective communities since 2002. In 2002, DVV International opened a country office in Georgia, which has become one of the key players in adult education (AE) in the country. Following the holistic understanding of adult education, DVV International

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[2]/ http://www.eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816022280962.pdf

[3]/ https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/23608/12/en/pdf

[4]/ https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/29248/56/en/pdf

[5]/ http://eqe.gov.ge/res/docs/201412081600419310.pdf

*English class in Jvari*                                          *Source: DVV International*

Georgia strives to develop a sustainable system of non-formal education through establishment and support of AECs in all regions of the country, capacity building and networking of AE providers, employment and development oriented programmes, popularisation of LLL (lifelong learning) principles and values and lobbying for better educational opportunities for all segments of the population without age limitations.

By overseeing short pilot projects for the disadvantaged segments of the population, DVV International acquired vast experience in designing and implementing non-formal education activities. Not only do these activities serve as an effective tool for personal development, but they simultaneously stimulate integration and social mobility of the marginalised population. This approach was originally harnessed in 2006 when the first two adult education centres were established in Georgia with the financial support of the EU and the German government. The centres were opened in Samtskhe-Javakheti – a region with an Armenian majority population – in order to help motivate individuals to get integrated into society by combating frustration and reclaiming self-esteem. The primary emphasis of the aforementioned approach has been on Civic Education courses, in conjunction with carrying out a plethora of vocational programmes that enhanced the civic participation of the learners and bolstered their competitiveness on the job market.

With promising results on hand, DVV International proceeded further to assist socially disadvantaged individuals in other regions of the country. This time, the focus was placed on people suffering displacement from the product of two separate ethnic conflicts. In 2010, establishing and attaching adult education centres to the IDP (internally displaced persons) settlements in Koda, Shaumiani, Senaki and Jvari was nothing short of a powerful revival of the learners' eagerness to live life to the fullest.

All the above mentioned centres were established in the regions with heavy challenges: poor infrastructure, socially disadvantaged overall atmosphere, lack of possibilities for further education, multinational environment, resettlement of IDPs, etc. Thus, the key missions of the adult education centres range all the way from animating professional growth by cultivating crucial skills, to forming an environment that encourages the lifelong quest for knowledge.

Successful functioning of the centres demonstrated that not only national minorities and IDPs but the local population as well is in big need of opportunities for further education and development. Increased motivation of IDPs, national minorities and the rest of the community to get involved in the activities offered at the AECs also emphasised the significance and effectiveness of the project. That is how DVV International decided to continue establishing centres in other regions of the country with involvement of all segments of the population.

The AECs started functioning with a few courses based on the requirements of the targeted population. Gradually the AECs expanded their scope of activities and provided numerous free or low cost vocational and personal development training programmes, youth and social initiatives, civic education, cultural education, capacity building and awareness raising projects, thus assuring their continued presence and recognised place among the learners. The AECs managed to maintain a distinguished position through needs-based and innovative study programmes, open and equal, with a friendly and honest atmosphere created to combat against the previous prejudice, reluctance and mistrust of the population who lacked an awareness of non-formal and adult education programmes and did not believe in the power of learning and knowledge.

Today, 10 AECs are functioning in 7 regions of Georgia. Functioning of the centres is made possible through the generosity of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), along with financial assistance from local municipalities and a number of local and international donors. DVV International-managed AECs often represent the one and only chance for further development of the adult population in the regions. This is one of the foremost reasons why DVV International felt morally obliged to stay on track and proceeded with es-

*Souvenir production in Shaumiani     Source: DVV International*

tablishing new AECs in other regions of the country.

AECs are flexible resource institutions established in accessible places, open to people of all ages, functioning the whole week, without rest days. The centers plan their activities based on the requests, requirements and current needs of local people.

AECs follow holistic educational approaches with the purpose of preparing the learners to meet the challenges of daily life. Every beneficiary is offered a package of training programmes of a different nature and directions which complement and enrich each other:

1. Education for employment and poverty reduction
2. Civic education
3. Cultural education
4. Health education and sport

### Education for employment and poverty reduction

Personal development courses and more than 30 different vocational courses (sewing, souvenir production, felting, quilting, embroidery, shoe repair and production, driving, house building and painting, plumbing, repairing of household appliances, culinary arts, installation of heating systems, etc.) are offered to learners. These are short-term courses (from 3 to 5 months) actively involving "learning by doing" methods with emphasis on developing practical skills. Course selection is based on market research done by the centres every year and on the requests of the learners. Personal development courses (IT skills, financial literacy, foreign languages, accountancy, entrepreneurship and small business development skills, etc.) in combination with life skills (job-finding, communication, presentation, leadership, conflict management, problem solving,) are offered to learners to complement their vocational education and to increase competitiveness on the job market.

One of the main achievements of the AECs which has an impact not only on individuals' lives, but also influences the country as a whole, is the high number of learners who found employment, became self-employed, were promoted or kept jobs thanks to the support of AECs' vocational and personality development courses. Short-term professional and personal development courses offered by the centres give a chance of employment to those who have specific goals and little time to master new skills. On average, 8 % of the learners find a place to work after attending the courses at AECs. Considering the high unemployment rate in the country, this can be considered a valuable result. Beyond professional benefits, the entire training programme is a unique possibility for learners to experience some self-realisation, regain self-esteem and confidence, overcome stress and despair and promote interaction and integration.

### Civic education

The goal of civic education at the CECs is to increase social responsibility of the local population, promote active participation, volunteerism, and other important civic values. The initiatives aim to meet the need among targeted communities to improve their knowledge, to have free access to information and get a better understanding of specific issues through training, public lectures, talks and discussion about human rights, advocacy and lobbying. The topics of the lectures cover politics, economics, public diplomacy, ecology and many other issues of common interest. Active citizens' clubs functioning in all the centres are in charge of civic activities of a complex nature, often resulting in practical solutions to community problems and challenges. AECs have turned into social catalysts, which have a big influence on development of civic activism. Members of active citizens' clubs, the youth, and the learners generally, become more self-confident, take more responsibility for their actions and learn to fight for and protect their rights in society.

### Cultural education

Cultural education organised by the AECs is filling a gap because the people (especially adults) in many Georgian regions have no or very limited opportunities to attend exhibitions, theatre, or other cultural events. In a way they are deprived of their cultural rights. AECs provide learners with educational courses in painting, creative writing, photography, drama and theatre performances, art therapy, organise visits to theatres and exhi-

*Adult education centre Jvari*　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Source: DVV International*

bitions in big cities, invite celebrities to the centres to meet the learners. With all these and many other activities, AECs try to develop a taste for cultural life in learners so they can enjoy their rights and life around them in full.

The centres have become a strong incentive for the entire community, and particularly for women (the socially vulnerable, the single mothers, those having large families) to overcome stress and despair and regain self-esteem, strengthen capacities and seek new opportunities. Moreover, AECs changed the style of life and thinking for many members of the communities: the centres became the only places in the settlements for public gathering, meetings where people treat one another with respect and dignity, express their own opinions without any fear or shyness and accept the ideas of others. Joint participation in the activities for IDPs and local people representative of different ethnic minorities (e.g. Armenians and Azeri) as well as community meetings and exchange of information, contribute immensely to the formation of an integrated, healthy and advanced civil society.

The centres have become a link for other governmental and non-governmental organisations and the local population. Representatives of municipalities and various national or international organisations, imple-

menting projects and activities in these settlements, often come seeking information about the people and/or to mobilise the local people. For other structures, AECs represent a stable body, which can consult them on the situation in the settlements and provide contacts with the local population.

AECs helped many people and families in their pursuit of a better life and livelihood, but probably the most important outcome is that they brought hope and confidence to communities that had previously lost all hope and trust. The centres accumulate and help to develop civic, educational, business, artistic and other energy growing in the communities. The AECs have turned into a resource of positive energy, around which the attitudes of the people change, communities become much livelier, more joyful and one can see more smiling faces in their surroundings.

In order to ensure continued operation of the centres and sustainability of the initiated activities, the local community-based organisations were formed on the basis of AECs. The newly established organisations maintained close liaison with the local municipalities as well as with other stakeholders to support further implementation of the programmes. Currently the centres have several sources of funding: self-financing (through fee-based courses), funding from local government and support from international organisations.

In 2014, DVV International and the AECs initiated the establishment of the Georgian Adult Education Network (GAEN) to:

1. Ensure national and international cooperation for the AECs in the field of adult education;
2. Advocate on behalf of network members to be heard by local and central government;
3. Provide targeted professional development for member organisations through structured programmes of trainings and workshops;
4. Strengthen and diversify funding opportunities for member centres.

Currently all 10 centres are members of the network. One of the priority directions of GAEN is the establishment of cooperation between German VHS and Georgian AECs and bring European experience and expertise regarding adult education to Georgia. Several directions of cooperation were developed, including study trips to Germany for staff of newly established AECs, trainings for Georgian adult educators provided by experts from German VHS, exhibitions and presentations about Georgia organised in VHS, joint projects, etc.

Together with adult education centres and their network organisation, DVV International not only establishes places for lifelong learning, but also builds a sustainable system for adult education in Georgia. This, in its turn, makes changes for a better future in people's lives and contributes to the progress of Georgian society. By focusing on "one adult education centre per region", DVV International continues shaping the Georgian adult education system and bringing it closer to the important European values.

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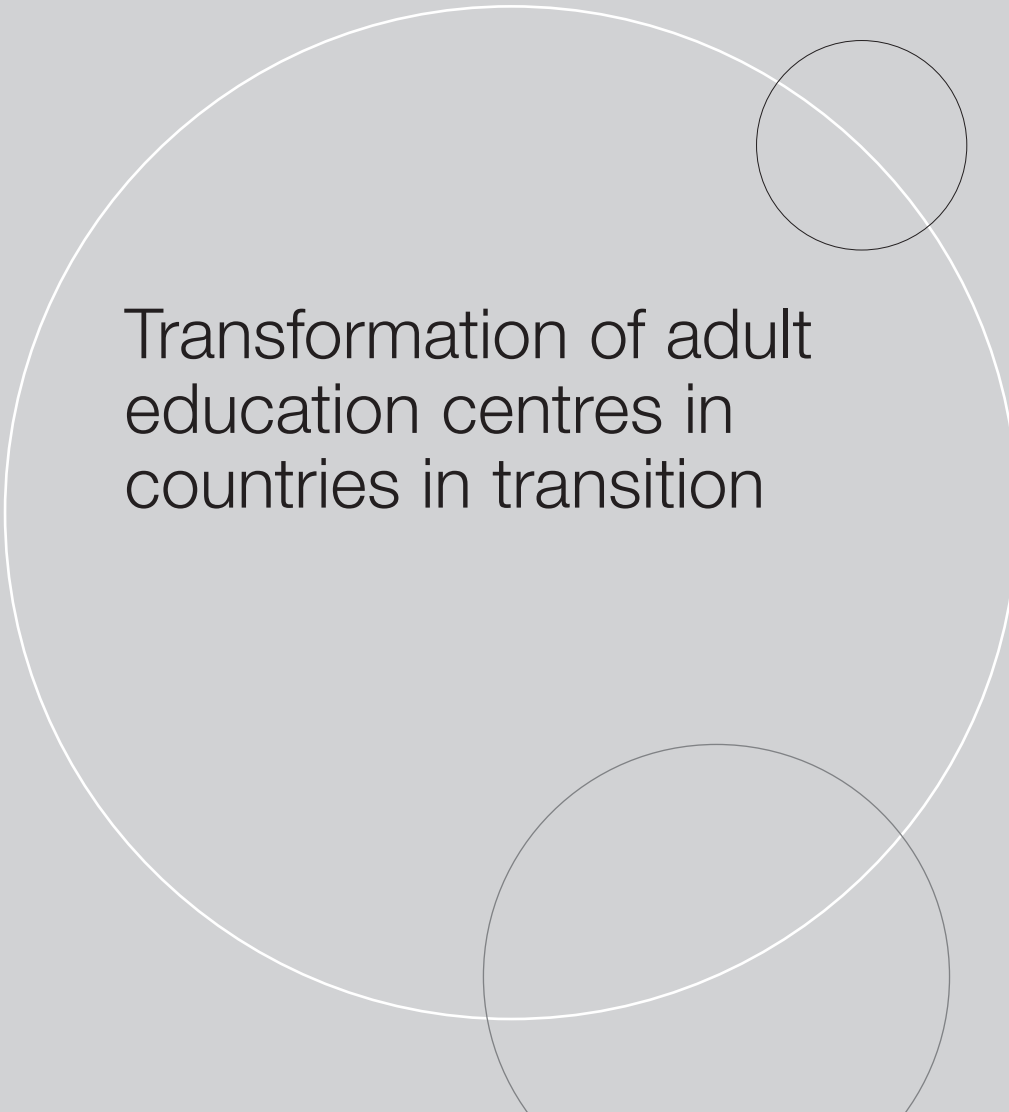
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# Transformation of adult education centres in countries in transition

**Sylvia Kränke / Gudrun Luck / Klaus Meisel**

# Adult education in social transformation – development of the Volkshochschule (VHS)[1] landscape after German unification

*Both German states, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), underwent extremely severe changes in their short history after the collapse of the dictatorial and inhuman Nazi regime. However even the post-war years were not comparable in terms of scale and quality to the developments that took place after the rapid disintegration of the GDR during German unification after 1989.*

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[1]/ The "Volkshochschule" is an adult education centre and is also known in Germany as the VHS.

## Social transformation

This situation after 1989 is aptly characterised by the concept of social transformation[2]. This political science, social and economic science concept aims at a description of processes and navigation problems of societies undergoing transformation, characterised by fundamental political, social, economic and cultural changes. In the case of social transformation, it is not only a question of partial changes which are small or large. Social transformation in a society is characterised precisely by the fact that in it "very different processes of structural change come together, superimpose upon one another, and partially strengthen each other" (Schäffter 2001, p. 44). However, the actors and the people affected are dealing with a social situation in which all their existing security is called into question. The future social structure has not yet established itself, since political power distribution and influence must also be realigned, and the political institutions, the legal system, the economic and social structure must also be redefined. For the society as a whole as well as for the individuals, such processes denote a considerable learning challenge. If, according to Schäffter, adult education in preceding development was primarily an "instance of social change", then in structural transformation it "also has to contribute to psychosocial stabilisation and the recovery of the structural-ability and experiential-ability of the present" (Schäffter 2001, p. 47).

The situation is difficult, however, if the institutions from the collapsed education system are themselves called into question and adequate responses are hardly possible. To this extent, tried and tested pedagogical problem-solving strategies that follow other logical forms no longer fit in with the transformation processes. "The concept of social transformation therefore offers a time-diagnostic interpretation, from the point of view of a continuing education system which is based on a disrupted adaptation between the institutional forms of further education that had developed thus far and the structural change that they can still experience. The old facilities are therefore exposed to a "dramatic loss of effectiveness" (Schäffter 2001, p. 46).

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[2]/ In English: *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_transformation* Social transformation in this context requires a shift in collective consciousness of a society — local, state, national or global — so that reality is refined by consensus. This often happens by external stimulus and sometimes intentionally. In German: (see *http://universal_lexikon. deacademic.com/311057/Transformationsgesellschaften*, 13.12.2016).

*VHS Jena: Computer course*                                   *Source: JenaKultur/Andreas Hub*

## Two German states – two systems of adult education centres

Although there was a VHS system in both German states, they were fundamentally different in their institutional structure, in the programme profile and in the professional perception of the staff. In the Federal Republic, a public responsibility for the VHS had developed into a community responsibility of the federal, state and municipal authorities for the communal institutions, which gave the institutions a very high degree of autonomy in pedagogical programme design. Pedagogical planning staff tried to tackle the learning needs on the ground locally, which is why a broad, regionally different programme portfolio of general, political, professional and cultural education developed (cf. German Adult Education Association 2011). For decades the West German VHS had been organised in national associations with service facilities, and these were organised in a federal association as a representation of interests. The VHS in the GDR, on the other hand, were state institutions which were directly subordinated to the city and county school directorships. To equate them with second educational path institutions would be a short and incorrect representation of the

situation (see Siebert 1970). However their educational offers (e.g., foreign languages, typing) were usually carried out in a very "academic" manner. To enter into the situational, pedagogically speaking – an open curriculum with a high level of the right to self-participation – was given very little space for thought (see Tietgens 1993, p. 19). The educational staffs of the adult education institutions were teachers with the corresponding professional understanding. They gave lessons, formulated curricula, but planned only very limited new offer formats. Democratic association structures did not exist, a trans-regional exchange of ideas, only sporadically. Behind the "VHS" label, with regard to self-understanding and pedagogical practice, there were largely different institutions in the two German states. Despite the apparent same language (German), there were initially considerable difficulties posed in order to enter into a common dialogue on adult education through the different backgrounds of experience and the system structures as well as the unequal preconditions. The western system was regulated – despite all the inadequacies and perceptible structural underfunding – and had also been largely secured in adult education legislation, whereas the GDR institutions could not be sure whether they would survive the system change at all.

For the GDR, social transformation was a special case. It took place faster than in other socialist countries; it contained a high share of the imported West German market economy. On the one hand, through its entry into the Federal Republic it was easier, but also more complicated by the effective and visible break with the previous economic, social and historical conditions (See Nuissl, E. 1995, p. 14). For the VHS, too, the conversion did not mean a linear development process, but a friction-rich search for a new self-awareness in areas of political tension, in which the space for self-design was initially not very clear and recognisable.

## Support of the German Adult Education Association in the management of change

The German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.), in numerous talks with a specially established Speakers Council of the VHS of the GDR, worked toward getting the local VHS in the new federal states to organise themselves into federal state associations. The Federal Association had set up a "contact point for new federal states" as an additional support for policy advice to ensure a legal basis for the work of the VHS in the states.

The task of the pedagogical service institute of the Federal Association, the so-called pedagogical workplace, was to strengthen the respon-

sible employees of the institutions for the development of a new VHS system by means of communication processes and training initiatives. These projects did not explicitly try to fit the West German system onto the East German institutions. Through active participation in the complex transformation process of adult education in the new federal states, there was seen to be, rather, an opportunity to have them reflect on their own positions and prejudices critically, and to think reflexively about the emerging structural decisions and what they imply for adult education development throughout the Federal Republic (cf.: By Küchler, F./Kade, 1992, p. 12). The projects initiated at the pedagogical workplace were not only pro forma but were always seen as a contribution to "help for self-help". The double challenge of responding to the new demands for offers for information, orientation and qualification on the one hand, and on the other the redefining and regulating of one's own institutionalisation form, could not be determined from the outside, but had to be shaped from within.

It is hardly surprising that in the first phase of support projects, attempts were made to secure the knowledge which was in the old system. In qualitative interviews with VHS leadership personnel, behavioural and processing modes were investigated that enabled life and work between "adaptation and resistance" to take place. Despite numerous centralistic guidelines, relatively unusual spaces for free movement were found at the local level, which were seldom exploited to their limits (see Tietgens 1993). Documents of historical adult education research were worked on and secured (see Horadam 1993) and the status of adult education as a subject of study at universities was elucidated (cf. Lischka 1993). There was also an analysis of a number of more important fields of practice – seen in perspective – such as environmental education (see Apel et al., 1993). It was not easy to address the changing role of women as a challenge for adult education since some of the central disadvantages that had brought the West German women's movement into focus – for instance women in employment – were quite different in the new federal states. This was reflected in the fact that in the West there were projects for the qualification of women in men's professions and in the East qualification projects for women in women's professions. A constructive approach was taken with innovative programme developments such as health care promotion programmes (see Lehmann 1993).

In a subsequent second project phase, training initiatives were in the foreground. Conceptually interlinked levels were those of the person, professional understanding, the educational programme and training organisation. The didactic principles for courses/events were as follows:

*VHS Jena 1931: Gymnastic course*                    *Source: Fotoalbum VHS Jena*

- Information transmission about and discussion of development options (legal framework, prerequisites, resources, etc.) should take place.
- A communicative understanding between VHS employees from the old and new federal states with mutual visits to locations and forms of collegial counselling should be introduced.
- Learning about adult-oriented didactics and the design of a participant-oriented teaching and learning process should not only be discussed but also practiced.
- A spectrum of different programme profiles should be comprehensible and the importance of one's own design possibilities should be made clear.
- The further development of the professional understanding of the VHS staff should be considered, taking into account their existing occupational biographies (cf. Küchler 1995, p. 28).

In a multitude of regional and supra-regional events, management tasks were structured and reflected upon, institutional self-awareness discussed (cf. Kolbenschlag 1995) and relevant management fields such as financial management and public relations (cf. Kniep 1995) were dealt with. The

*VHS Jena today: Gymnastic course*                    *Source: JenaKultur/Andreas Hub*

communication process was also not free from misunderstandings. One example of this was the assessment given by a participant who brought the collaboration for a common future for the VHS aptly to the point: "We have been through stages from euphoria to disillusionment together, they (the western teachers) have tolerated our temporary, strong aggression, and in the meantime, taking has been transformed into cooperation." (Trampe 1995, p. 113). Even from today's point of view, the course of the training initiatives as a whole was very constructive. This could be traced back mainly to the additional, very concrete, practice-relevant work for helping in the development of new courses in foreign languages (see Rübeling 1995) and in professional or cultural education (compare Steinke 1995).

In addition to training, helpful resources such as photocopiers were provided. Everyday-oriented educational services (such as dealing with insurance companies) increased the attractiveness of the VHS in the new federal states. One thing must not be forgotten: for most of the people of the former GDR, things did not work as they once used to. Companies were shut down, unemployment was experienced for the first time, every-

day life had to be reorganised, a change in the way one appeared in public was required, and fear of the uncertain future was coupled with their own past (compare Meisel 1995). It's true that in the East an almost blanket coverage of vocational qualifications was able to be carried out quickly in a wide range of areas by many of the western educational institutions. From field research (see Dobischat/Meisel 1993) which accompanied that, however, it emerges that the participants were realistic in assessing the qualification measures under the conditions of a labour market that was breaking up and so redefined the vocational qualification measures for themselves as orientation measures. This example shows that during social transformation, the direct transfer of concepts from one society to the other is only possible to a limited extent. Rather, it must be about the support of functions of reflection as well as the strengthening of persons who are active, so that they can cope with the transformation process through means of participation and are able to adapt new concepts. The competence for change as an individual ability to deal with modified and new requirements (see Wittwer 2000) can only be partly transmitted. This had to be adapted to self-education processes as well. This assertion becomes clearer if one looks at developments, more or less with the help of a magnifying glass, from the federal level at the state level and at the local level.

This is illustrated by the example of the development of the Adult Education Association in the federal state of Thuringia and secondly by the local VHS in Jena.

### The time of upheaval – founding a state association in Thuringia

In the months before November 9, 1989, numerous discussions took place throughout the VHS, mainly concerned with a further development of the VHS system per the 1982 state-prescribed regulations. Only little of this could be linked to the process which followed, but at least there was already supraregional communication between different local institutions.

Shortly after the collapse of the old system – the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 – there was an initial meeting between VHS staff from the former GDR and from the federal states.

Three representatives from Thuringia also attended, including Dr. Schug, who later became the first director of the Thuringian Adult Education Association. This is mentioned here because it makes clear that during transformation phases the commitment of individuals with courage to plan and outline can be absolutely trailblazing. This and all subsequent

meetings were characterised by mutual respect and curiosity about what was to come and how to shape it together.

Starting from the various conferences with representatives from the VHS of the Federal Republic and from the joint meetings of the VHS representatives from the former GDR, even in Thuringia itself the path the VHS should take in the state was considered. A central role in the first weeks and months after reunification was played by the chairman of DVV, Prof. Dr. Dohmen. According to Prof. Dohmen, the main idea was to reach an understanding about the basic idea of the VHS "as open for all religions, political persuasions, groups and yet government-independent, but in public responsibility and ownership, primarily oriented toward its learner participants; an integrative training centre embedded in the community" (Dohmen 1990, p. 7). At the beginning of February 1990, a working group called "Initiative VHS" presented a paper with initial proposals for the renewal of the work of the VHS in the new federal states of the former GDR. In addition, in many local VHS consideration was given to how the regional VHS should develop. Questions relating to sponsorship, staffing and funding played an important role in this period. There was a tendency for the VHS to continue as a state school, but at the same time the goals, ideas and experiences of the VHS from West Germany played an important role. The importance of the support given by the consultants from the western federal states can be found in many statements in the old documents. These documents also show the sometimes very controversial search for a common path for the VHS in the eastern part of Germany or the question of their participation in the German Adult Education Association (DVV). The fact that federal structures were formed in the five new federal states[3] at the political level, and that cooperation with the western state associations was institutionalised, the idea that predominated was to build up the state associations, modelling them on the structures of the old federal states. Of course, the Thuringian VHS had also taken part in an intensive exchange because it hinged on the question of their existence. Here, some Thuringian colleagues had decided in early 1990 that they would initiate a merger of all the Thuringian VHS in Erfurt. To this end, all the VHS from the three districts of Gera, Erfurt and Suhl, in the present state of Thuringia, were invited. On March 14, 1990 representatives from 35 VHS in Thuringia were present for this event. Together, thought was given to the regional and supraregional developments. A proposed draft constitution of an as-

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[3]/ The new states, which had been abolished by the East German government in 1952 and were re-established in 1990, are Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia.

*VHS Jena 1931: Language course*                    *Source: Fotoalbum VHS Jena*

sociation was discussed and then a state association was founded in the legal form of a registered voluntary association and a founding board was elected. This day is now recognised as the foundation date of the Thuringian Adult Education Association.

The main tasks of the newly formed association were to safeguard the existence of the VHS, which mainly involved the questions of future trusteeship. Because before reunification an important task field of the VHS was "school-leaving certificates and examinations", the question also arose about the role of this topic in the future content of the VHS. It was also necessary to create a framework for pedagogical work. From the date of the founding of the association, contacts were strengthened with the representatives of the western state associations of Bavaria, Hessen and Rhineland-Palatinate. At the level of the individual regional VHS there were much earlier contacts and connections with West German VHS representatives. Remarkably special about that period was that all the work at the state level was carried out on a voluntary basis. Working conditions were also not easy because, for example, telephone communications were very bad and correspondence by letter took several days.

*VHS Jena today: Language course*                    *Source: JenaKultur/Andreas Hub*

The first free local elections in the new eastern states took place on May 6, 1990; the first state elections in the former East Germany took place on October 15, 1990. Through this the representatives of the Thuringian Adult Education Association had contacts at the political level and were able to present their concerns directly. One of the most urgent tasks during this time was to ensure the further financing of the VHS. Mixed financing was seen as the best solution, that is: one-third of the funding from the municipality, one-third from the state and one-third from participant fees. This also meant a change from the procedure that had been in place, since the VHS, as state schools in the former GDR, were financially secure in every instance.

Numerous negotiations, mostly with the help of colleagues from the old federal states, were carried out with representatives of the ministries and parliamentary deputies in Thuringia to draw attention to the importance of the tasks of the VHS. The main goal was to provide a solid foundation for the VHS in an adult education law (see ThürEBG 1992). The Thuringian law was the first adult education law in the new federal states, and is valid in its basic principles up to the present.

In the first adult education law of the Free State of Thuringia from 1992, the aims and tasks of adult education were as follows:

1. Adult education serves the realisation of the right to education. It is an independent part of the entire education system and is open to all.
2. Adult education should contribute to equality of opportunity through an ambitious and wide-ranging offer, reduce education deficits, allow for the deepening and complementing of existing knowledge, skills and qualifications, and enable learners to become self-reliant and independent in their personal, professional and public life. (Thuringian Adult Education Act 1992 §1).

Furthermore, the term and content of adult education is defined as: "The content of adult education is determined by the educational needs of the adult" (ibid)

The people who were acting at the time were very successful in anchoring the VHS as a *municipal* task in the law. The promotion of a VHS regional association was later included in the amended law in 1997.

A further priority task of the state association was and is to advise the VHS in the design of their programme offer. Thus it was a great challenge for the VHS in the spring semester of 1990 to create a new expanded and adapted programme for the situation at that time. For that the knowledge and competences of the colleagues from the West were also often used. The association in Thuringia was the first state association founded in the eastern federal states, but within a few weeks the other states followed.

### The road to the German Adult Education Association

A preliminary spokespersons' council for the eastern German VHS paved the way for the accession of the state associations into the German Adult Education Association (DVV). The spokespersons' council prepared a position paper dealing with the question of the eastern German associations joining the DVV. A working group which had been founded in the GDR state associations then quickly prepared the regulated accession of the individual state associations into the DVV. Thus, in September 1990, the General Assembly of the Thuringian Adult Education Association decided unanimously that accession should take place as soon as possible. In this phase, different positions had to be negotiated. From today's point of view, the various interests of the newly merged VHS from the former GDR had to be weighed: the positions of the active organised groups of VHS leaders, the recommendations of the western German associations,

and the educational contexts. Not everything happened without friction; various content positions were intensively discussed. The expanse of their own ability to design and create was difficult to assess, especially since political developments took place at an unbelievable speed. It was thus all the more important – this is also an assessment from today's point of view – that the representatives of the individual institutions connected with one another and organised themselves. Another important prerequisite was the attempt to formulate a common understanding of one's own role in the education system. And it required clever actors who not only followed the developments closely, but also intervened in the processes involved and ultimately helped to shape them.

At the 39th Annual General Meeting of the DVV on 21 and 22 April 1991, the Thuringian Adult Education Association e.V. submitted its application for membership in the DVV. This request was accepted. This laid the foundation for a common path of the VHS in the old and new federal states. "With democratic renewal and the founding of the Free State of Thuringia, a new era also began for adult education in the country. The strictly organised system of state adult education of the GDR became a pluralistic adult education system with a multitude of institutions, organisers, programmes and ideas." (Friedenthal-Haase 2002, p. 31) This statement describes very aptly a very brief but content-wise very intensive era of the VHS in eastern Germany as a whole.


### The development of a VHS in the time of transformation – example Jena

During the course of the changeover, there was some retrospection about the history of the VHS Jena organisation before Fascism, in particular its history from 1919 to 1933. This resulted in essential guidelines for the development of VHS Jena as an open institution for all adults. The educational needs of the population should be grasped, and the VHS should be a place of democratic coexistence.

Not all the principles of the VHS work in the GDR era had to, in essence, be broken with. For example, in the constitution of the GDR from 1949: "The members of all classes of the people will be given the opportunity to acquire knowledge in the VHS without interruption of their professional activity" (constitution of the GDR 1949, article 38). Shortly before the transformation, a "concept for the development of the community VHS *Pablo Neruda* in Jena from 1987 to 1990" (Jena City Council 1987) was decided by the city council of Jena, which stated: "The VHS contribute, in the district, to the development of the general level of education of the

citizens and to the significant enrichment of intellectual and cultural life in the residential areas. They have the duty, above all, to carry out courses on the expansion and deepening of the general education of the workers in different fields of knowledge." (Joint resolution of the Council of Ministers of the GDR and the FDGB[4] 1979).

For the VHS Jena, this meant specific functions had to be carried out according to plan:

- Courses to acquire the ten-year general polytechnic high school diploma and to acquire university entrance qualification
- Courses for the teaching of foreign language knowledge and skills
- Courses for the expansion and deepening of general education in the mathematical, scientific-technical, social and cultural-aesthetic fields
- Courses for the training of basic skills in stenography and typing

But the requirements had to be freed from the ideological context of a state-controlled VHS and from the requirement to train adults.

Programme booklets, such as we know them today, as for an annual or semester programme, did not exist. A programme booklet was valid for several years and was updated through typewritten additions. Announcements about the start of registration were found in the daily press, but also, for example, in the company magazine "Die Scheinwerfer" [Spotlight] of the Carl Zeiss Collective. In general, there was close cooperation with the Jena companies and institutions. There were two main directions: on the one hand the training of the people working (e.g.: VHS English courses for the foreign trade employees of the Zeiss Collectives, German for foreigners for the Cubans who were trained in forestry, for the Vietnamese who worked in production at the Schott factory, or for Libyans who were completing their training as opticians); on the other hand, the acquiring of teachers for the VHS from the institutions and companies (e.g.: in the late 1980s, more knowledge about the so-called "key technologies" should be taught. In addition, there were popular science lectures with speakers from an institute of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR).

There were many ideologically substantiated content guidelines, for example in the training of "recording industry entertainers" or "city-profile clarifiers". Also, one could not just register for a remedial school leaving certificate. For this an authorisation from the company was needed. Nevertheless, each VHS also had a certain amount of content-topic leeway. Examples from the creative scope of the institution: spinning, weaving,

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4/ Free German Trade Union Federation (FDGB).

**VHS Jena 1931**



*Biology internship*



*Cooking course*



*Drawing course*

*Source:*
*Fotoalbum VHS Jena*

lace-making, decorative design. Individual lectures were reserved for another adult education organisation, URANIA, but cooperation was also supposed to take place there. That changed fundamentally during the transformation.

## VHS in networks and the transition to local government

During the GDR period, the VHS Jena was in partnership with the VHS Magdeburg. There were both personal and work programme exchanges. The VHS Jena also committed itself, during the time of transition, to the initiation of a supraregional exchange for the establishment of an interest-related VHS network in the state of Thuringia.

Very quickly, contacts were made to a western VHS, the VHS Erlangen. (Jena and Erlangen had been partner cities since 1987.) In February 1990, several colleagues went for a (semi-official) visit there. The VHS received support in the printing of its first programme, course instructors came from there to Jena and the VHS Erlangen took over the fees. The colleagues learned a lot about modern language teaching, legal concerns and computer courses. These very collegial contacts have continued to the present day and still lead to mutual visits to the institutions. The most insistent question during the transition was: Where will we be assigned in the future? And: Will we continue to exist? How many employees will the VHS have in the future? (In 1987: in total almost 20 full-time employees as well as 59 part-time employees – in 2015: 7.0 full-time positions and 354 course instructors).

Especially in the years 1990/91, there was already a clear reduction in the number of employees, which was fortunately carried out in a socially acceptable manner. In September 1990, from a resolution by the magistrates of the city of Jena, the VHS Jena, one of the first in the GDR, was taken over by local authorities in Jena. The subordination of the VHS to various individual city departments has changed several times since then. Today the VHS is an institution which belongs to the municipal cultural enterprise, which is a configuration that hardly exists anywhere else in the Federal Republic. At the local level as well, the VHS was supported in various forms by western VHS regional associations, the German Adult Education Association and its pedagogic workplace with the training and development projects previously mentioned. For this it was decisive that competent members of the expert committee gave sober advice to both the institution and to the municipal policy-makers.

From the reports of the service counselling of the VHS Jena from the end of August 1989 one can see how the whole social situation is also

reflected in the discussions. Much more than previously, demands were made in regard of the institution's self-perception and its future design. Specific changes followed very quickly, for example, in November 1989 in the curricula plan for remedial completion of school certificates. Colleagues were asked by school management to make suggestions about how work would proceed. In addition, freelance course instructors had to be recruited. Some of the people involved were unable to cope with the dynamic changes. Everything that had been safe and secure up to now was no longer valid. Old rules and regulations had no substance and new ones were not yet in existence. And not everyone could cope with the uncertainty. Others used the time to make their own proposals, such as, e.g. to propose an initial statute like the integration of the VHS in the municipality or, more specifically, for the appropriate payment of the employees. Thus, there arose an also hitherto non-existent, quite unusual scope for the employees who remained. There were numerous concrete questions to be clarified:

- How should remedial school qualifications be handled? The VHS had, up to then, the right of examination, which was now no longer admissible. At the same time, the current courses, in particular the remedial school certificate courses, should not be interrupted.
- Many learners participated in so-called language tests every year during GDR times. What were the tests now in the "new system"? How does the audit centre system of the DVV e.V function?
- Individual lectures, up to now, had only been conducted by URANIA. There was now a new subject area for the VHS, which had to be laid out.
- Legal issues were to be dealt with: statutes, fees, board of trustees (yes or no), travel consultants or agents for study trips.
- Which topics should be addressed at all? What offers were actually requested by the learners? Dealing with the market mechanisms of supply and demand was practically a new field of learning.


**The transformation of the professional image**

The educational staff of the VHS had been general education teachers in the public schools. They had more or less come by chance to adult education and had to jump into the cold water. Academic positions for adult education, with specific pedagogic training, did not exist. With few exceptions, colleagues spent their holidays attending the same further training as the teachers at the schools. The employees who remained took part in

many further training courses at the western partner organisations from the beginning of the 1990s and "mutated" from further education instructor to education manager, further education consultant and educational economist. The transition period was an extremely exciting, learning-intensive and interesting time. It brought to the VHS the (re)discovery of its own VHS story and thereby generated more identity-recognition.

## Summary evaluation

The experiences of the VHS in dealing with the challenges arising from the situation of social transformation after the collapse of the GDR can certainly not be shifted in whole onto other societies in the process of transformation. The special situation of the existence of two German states and the accession of newly founded federal states to the Federal Republic of Germany is historically an exceptional case.

In this paper, we focused on addressing the challenges facing a society in transformation from the perspective of the new federal states. Of course the western actors involved in the process also learned a lot. Only they did not have to deal with fundamental reorientation. However one should not overlook the fact that the old Federal Republic also underwent considerable change. If current European and global developments are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the supposed stability of political systems is more fragile than was thought for many years. It is therefore all the more significant to reflect upon the role a humanity-oriented and democratic adult education can take in transformation societies.

A look back at the processes at the different levels of action, as has been done here, can spur ideas about how further training organisations can productively cope with the process of transformation. A basic attitude, which would have been directed at the passive preservation of the institutions, would have led to a reestablishment of institutions. Only comprehensive transformation of the organisational aspects and the personnel in the context of an aggressive new policy of redesign has made it possible to transit the VHS into a new system. An aggressive redesign policy presupposes that there are actors who have acted responsibly and with a high degree of responsibility for the changes and have also changed themselves. They could only do this because they also saw the transformation process as a challenge for themselves. The supraregional communication about future orientation prevented actors from becoming individual players. The comparatively successful development could also only be achieved because the actors actively involved themselves in the fast-paced processes of educational policy and educational reorientation.

Participation in further training courses were not just opportunities to deal with new knowledge and a professional reorientation. They were also places where one could reflect on one's own uncertainties and develop new certainties.

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**Larisa Lukyanova / Galina Veramejchyk[1]**

# Transformation of adult education institutions in Eastern Europe – Experiences of Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova

*The collapse of the Soviet system and the subsequent transformation processes in post-Soviet countries in all spheres of social life changed the status quo of the adult education system, influenced the education policy and transformed the institutional landscape. Analysing the initial situation and transformation of adult education in post-socialist countries, the authors try to find features which sustain the dissemination and implanting of the concept of adult education centres and to highlight the role of international organisations in this process.*

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Depicting the process of transformation of adult education centres (AECs) in the countries of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) seems to be a challenging task, since the post-Soviet states have never had an organisational form that could be equated in its profile to VHS (Volkshochschulen) or other municipal AECs in Germany, Denmark or other Northern European countries.

In the context of this article, the following characteristics of AECs are of fundamental importance:

• focus on the needs of the residents of adjacent territories regardless of their educational level, age, occupation, etc.;
• pluralism and diverse formats of education content (thematic variety, availability of programmes of formal and non-formal, vocational and non-vocational education for adults);
• contribution to the development of local areas through close interaction with local authorities and local enterprises.

Without any doubt, those objectives were met to some extent in post-Soviet societies, but were not typical of one single type of adult education institution. Therefore, this article aims at answering the following questions:

• How has the institutional structure of national adult education systems changed in the above-mentioned countries?
• How do these changes impact the fulfilment of the core functions of AECs in contemporary local communities?

### Advanced training and retraining as a starting point for system transformation

As mentioned in earlier articles, adult education in the USSR was characterised by division into advanced training (AT), retraining (RT) and cultural public activities that related to the cultural rather than the educational system (Veramejchyk, 2009, S.109).

Consequently, when Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova became independent, the key actors in organised adult education were AT and RT institutions. Moreover, for a long time the educational policy of these countries had no single comprehensive term that would refer to vocational, general, cultural and civic education of adults. Even vocational education for adults in these countries was referred to by different names. For instance, Belarus used the term "advanced training and retraining", while Ukraine

*Course for adult education managers, Belarus*　　　　　　　　*Source: DVV International*

preferred "postgraduate education" (The Education Act of the Republic of Belarus, 1991, §. 22, The Education Act of Ukraine, 1991, § 47)[2].

The Republic of Moldova was the first to introduce the term "adult education". The Education Act of the Republic of Moldova adopted in 1995 includes a special Article (§ 35) on adult education, that states:

- Adult education promotes scientific and cultural inclusion fostering social changes and professional development through continuous education;
- Adult education spans a wide range of institutions and organisations: adult education centres (VHS), open-type universities, houses of culture, art schools, clubs, associations, funds, courses organised by enterprises;
- Adult education requires coordination of the activities of different ministries and local public administrations as well as providing support to adult education institutions (The Education Act of Moldova, 1995).

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[2] Postgraduate education in accordance with the Education Act of Ukraine adopted in 1991 was seen as acquiring new qualifications, occupation or profession on the basis of a previously acquired one (referred to as "retraining" in Belarus) as well as enhancing the earlier obtained professional knowledge (referred to as "advanced training" in Belarus). Thus, different terms were used to describe similar notions.

Most of these statements were not put in practice for adult education in Moldova and retained the status of intentions. The primary reason for that could be the fact that the legislators here as well as in both other countries adopted the Soviet approach and foresaw state financial support (within the scope of funds allocated to the entire education system) for advanced training and retraining programmes exclusively.

Thus, the question that arises is: Did the system of advanced training and retraining cover the needs usually covered by municipal AECs, and to what extent?

In the beginning of the 1990s, the Republic of Belarus had more than 130 educational institutions where roughly 400,000 workers, specialists and managers improved their qualification annually (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus[3]). During the first decade of independence, nearly 6.5 % of adults of working age (primarily officials, physicians and teachers) could benefit from the services rendered by advanced training institutions. Representatives of other professional groups had fewer opportunities or were excluded from the process. We may therefore ascertain the selective, elitist nature of the inherited post-Soviet system of AT and RT and its focus on supporting key state systems, social institutions and industries as well as serving the needs of the most educated.

In the countries concerned, the system of AT and RT included various types of institutions: trade academies of post-graduate education, professional development institutes, training and professional development centres, university- and high-school based schools of AT and RT. The basic principles of the system included concentration of well-qualified educators in big cities, centralised advanced training programme development for the entire sector and specialised training group formation from across the whole country or region. Accordingly, the framework of this approach did not allow for addressing the needs of an individual or a small community, which resulted in a closed system and orientation toward complying with the request of the centralised administration system.

The system of training and advanced training in enterprises played a major role in post-Soviet societies as well. It was equally presented across the above-mentioned countries but, just like educational institutions, was focused on updating professional knowledge.

Development of personality, creative skills as well as historic, cultural and literature education lay within the competence of cultural public work and was the responsibility of numerous cultural institutions and the

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3/ http://edu.gov.by/page-6121. Accessed 12.02.2017

*VI Festival of non-formal education, Belarus*          Source: DVV International

*Znaniye* (Knowledge) society. Those were largely leisure activities marked by a strong ideological component.

A separate group of adult education institutions was formed by evening schools that enabled their students to get a general education certificate. By the time of the Soviet Union collapse, those state educational institutions did not play such an important role, since the Soviet education system could boast almost universal (nearly 100 %) inclusion of the population in secondary education.

### Diversification or emergence of a pluralistic adult education system

The collapse of the system and subsequent transformation processes in all spheres of social life as well as the focus on transition to a market economy changed the status quo of the adult education system. Those changes are perceived as ambiguous and having both positive (understanding the importance of adult education by society) and negative consequences (reduction of training time, commercialisation of many spheres of adult education, reduced funding).

Despite the crisis, the system of advanced training and retraining managed to survive. At the same time, the number of state institutions decreased making room for private centres; the number of participants and duration of programmes was reduced. Reduced state funding forced AT and RT institutions to enter the market offering formal and non-formal adult education services. Since 2000, state institutions have been striving to go beyond the specialised (trade) programmes and offering commercial courses for various target groups.

**Trends in the Ukraine**

Let us illustrate the major trends of transformation by the example of Ukraine. Today there are 17 ministries and around 70 committees and state bodies that manage educational institutions for advanced training and retraining of managers and specialists in various fields. Funding of postgraduate education in Ukraine comes from the state budget. The funds are spent on advanced training and retraining postgraduate learners but are insufficient to provide minimal systematic training for workers in different sectors of the economy at least every five years. The contemporary system of retraining and advanced training covers 5-10 % of employees, which is far below the Soviet rates. At the same time the minimum education standard (144-156 hours) has been halved and is now a two-week (72 hours) advanced training for postgraduate specialists. These are mostly teachers, physicians, executives, civil servants, partly cultural actors, librarians, social workers whose advanced training expenses are covered by the state and regional budgets.

The unemployed undergo annual vocational training at the premises of enterprises, organisations, offices or higher and technical-vocational education institutions in Ukraine. Vocational education centres of the public employment service register the increase or decrease of the unemployed at their vocational training courses. There is also a growing need for distance vocational training among the unemployed.

The number of students involved in on-the-job training is growing as well. At the same time the system of effective in-house retraining is established only in large companies. The expenses of Ukrainian employers on on-the-job training per employee are relatively low and amount to less than 2 % of the payroll fund, while the experience of some competitive local and foreign companies shows that they should amount to at least 5 % of the payroll fund. Meagre on-the-job training expenses are partly due to the downsizing of structural divisions involved in vocational training provision

*Initiativa Pozitiva 1 – Training on business launch and development for HIV/AIDS positive people, Therapeutical Community in Anenii Noi, Moldova*　　　　　　　　　　*Source: DVV International*

as well as due to lack of interest among employers in such kind of training (Volyarska, 2015).

Despite reduced state funding and lack of due attention to adult education at the policy level, we can see vigorous development of non-formal education of adults in all three countries. Two emerging sectors – commercial education and civil society – experiment trying to find adequate responses to the educational needs of the people – which have changed a lot. They also use organised education of adults as a tool to promote their ideas and products.

The commercial sector also contributes to the development of the market economy and enhances the mobility and competitiveness of job-seekers in the labour market. It renders services to companies that can organise corporate trainings for their employees as well as for high-income residents of big cities. Commercial institutions offer both additional professional skills (IT courses, foreign languages, basics of professions that have no official recognition yet) and social skills development.

Non-governmental organisations use non-formal education and training primarily as a tool to promote their values and to provide services for their target groups. Obtaining the first experience helps to realise the

importance of adult education and its contribution to social transformation. Civil society actors have begun to specialise and form alliances to promote shared interests.

Adult education in Ukraine has been the competence of such NGOs as *Znaniye* (Knowledge) and *Prosvita* (Enlightenment) for a long time. In the decades since independence, many other NGOs emerged that have been very active in awareness-raising among various social groups.

Let's consider an example of DVV International partner organisations in Ukraine. The Non-Governmental Organisations Development Fund "Western-Ukrainian Resource Centre" established in 1994 at the initiative of 15 NGOs is one of the leading adult education providers in Western Ukraine. Today the fund is a professional, educational and grant platform that works in the field of capacity building and creating opportunities for a better quality of life in local communities in Ukraine and supports the principles of sustainable development. Its activities are aimed at the development of local communities, building cooperation between state authorities, businesses and civil society organisations, and at local and at the capacity development of regional NGOs through provision of educational, counselling and information services.[4]

The Yavorov Region history experts' association *Gostinets* was founded in 2008 for the purpose of strengthening civil society through life-long education of adults and has been successfully operating since. The Association's "Strategy for adult education development in Yavorov Region for the period 2014-2020" sets goals for local development.[5]

In 2005, the need for speeding up reforms in the penitentiary system and narrowing the gap between those in the correctional facilities of Pol-tava Region and Europe resulted in creating a charitable organisation *Svet Nadezhdy* (Light of Hope). The organisation works in two core directions: implementing the mechanism of social reintegration of former prisoners and training correctional facilities staff.[6]

The NGO *Zolotye gody* (Golden Years), registered in Lviv in 2014, creates conditions for senior citizens to realise their full potential in different ways: Centres for activities for seniors, supporting citizen initiatives of seniors, and programmes of non-formal education for adults.

Education for seniors is actively evolving in the different countries, serving as a perfect example of inter-sectoral cooperation. For instance, many Ukrainian cities have Universities of the Third Age. Additionally,

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4/ http://zurc.org/uk. Accessed 20.01.2017

5/ http://www.gostynets.org.ua/ Accessed 20.01.2017

6/ http://www.lightofhope.com.ua/ Accessed 20.01.2017

*Alfagravity training, Ukraine*                                          Source: DVV International

seniors' education institutions are represented by schools, discussion clubs, project groups, counselling agencies, artistic workshops, sports, health-improvement and rehabilitation centres, IT courses, lectures, centres for seniors' retraining, etc. Education programmes for the people of the third age are developed by higher and secondary education institutions, city and village schools, political parties, cultural associations, social centres and other organisations.

A number of NGOs actively assisted by the Institute of Pedagogical Education and Adult Education of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine established the NGO "Ukrainian Association for the Education of Adults" on May 13, 2015. The association became the first professional union for adult education practitioners and theorists in Ukraine; it publishes a practical-oriented journal *Territory of Success* and is actively involved in promoting adult education and non-formal education in the regions.[7]

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7/ www.uaod.org.ua Accessed 20.01.2017

**Experiences from Belarus**

The experience of NGOs in Belarus provides a good example of collective effort to promote the culture of non-formal education. A number of large-scale projects were launched by the network of Belarusian NGOs – AHA (from the Belarusian for "Association of Civic Education") in the period from 1995-2012 (Vialichka, 2006; Veramejchyk, 2008):

- The journal *Adukatar* (2005 to the present) is extremely popular despite its small circulation. It is the only communication platform for organisations and specialists in the field of non-formal education.
- Resource Programme for Study Circles (2004-2011) aims at promoting method (on the basis of the Swedish tradition), enhancing communication among organisations, training new leaders.
- A Week of Non-Formal Education (2005-2009, annually) aimed at raising awareness about the role of civil society, presentation of member organisations' programmes and expansion of contacts with target groups.
- 2006 saw the first Festival of Non-Formal Education organised with the support of IBB Minsk and DVV International, which found support among partners and has since then become traditional (held in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016).

Practical cooperation of the network resulted in establishing the Association for Life-Long Learning and Enlightenment in 2011 that continues to implement the majority of projects initiated by AHA. The association and other Belarusian civil society organisations' activities have led to a notable expansion of the scope of programmes for different social groups, primarily those at risk of social exclusion (prison inmates, seniors, rural residents, etc.) as well as projects aimed at developing certain areas (Chernobyl region, Polesye, etc.) and promoting relevant concepts (projects like "Learning Region", "Inclusion in Education", "Education for the Purpose of Sustainable Development", etc.).[8]

Another peculiarity of Belarusian civil society activities is the creation of an alternative to formal academe (university). Belarusian authorities have increased ideological control in higher education institutions since the late 1990s, which resulted in mass dismissals of teachers who did not support the official political line (Kryvoj, Smok, 2015, p. 15). This led to the launching of a number of alternative projects:

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[8]/ www.adukatar.net Accessed 12.02.2017

*Belarusian Collegium* (founded in 1997) positions itself as a forum for holding discussions, lectures, a place for intellectual and cultural dialogue, contacts and cooperation. Educational activities are organised within a traditional academic year and cover four directions: Journalism, Recent History, Philosophy and Literature, European Studies. The core curriculum can be complemented by attending seminars, special courses and workshops.[9]

*Flying University* (founded in 2009) positions itself as a "programme of creating a real contemporary university in Belarus and for Belarus". Teaching in Flying University is conducted on two levels: the first one offers a number of courses in the humanities, and the second one offers attendance at four schools: the History of Ideas School, the Methodological School, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania School and the Social-Philosophical Analytics School.[10]

*European College of Liberal Arts in Belarus (ECLAB)* (founded in 2014) – the project that provides an opportunity to get supplementary education within the Liberal Arts Education system as a non-formal alternative to formal Belarusian higher education. ECLAB offers education in five interdisciplinary departments (concentrations): Contemporary Arts and Drama Studies, Internet and Society, Public History, Contemporary Society, Ethics and Politics, Mass Culture and the Media. Studying one discipline includes attending 6 core courses and 3 elective courses.[11]

### The development of adult education centres

Alternative academic projects initiated by civil society are a significant factor shaping new elites in Belarus but its elitist character and concentration in the capital of the country prevents it from being in full compliance with core AEC objectives. The educational activities of the majority of other Belarusian NGOs are evolving around projects and only a few of them can boast creating their own educational centres that work with the broad population on a regular basis. AECs established on the premises of state educational institutions are, as in the past, concentrated exclusively in big cities.

The development of AECs in Moldova takes place mainly in cooperation with civil society organisations that promote the idea of adult education. On the other side, one of the regional projects in the north of the

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[9]/ http://belcollegium.org/ Accessed 12.02.2017
[10]/ http://fly-uni.org/pra-nas. Accessed 12.02.2017
[11]/ http://eclab.by/ Accessed 12.02.2017

country is aimed at transforming public libraries into more modern institutions that would, among other things, perform the functions of AECs.

Ukraine today has two models of AECs: centres established on the premises of educational institutions (higher education institutions, colleges, schools) and centres that operate in local communities and are NGOs at the same time.

For instance, Bogdan Khmelnitsky Melitopol State Pedagogic University and Berdyansk Pedagogic University had AECs created on their premises in 2014-2015. Those AECs have much in common. They aim at developing an adult education system, most notably by researching the problems encountered in education of different groups of adults in the context of socio-economic processes, as well as enhancing adults' adaptability to social changes. However, the AEC created on the premises of Melitopol University is a Scientific and Methodological Centre operating in accordance with the self-financing principle within the structure of the University, whereas the Berdyansk Centre is an NGO Adult Education Centre.

A network of AECs successfully operates in the Skolev region of Lviv district; they were established on the premises of the *Impulse* NGO which was created in 2010. Local communities support educational programmes developed by the centres – people are actively engaged in assisting other people with a lower educational level. Among other things, this helps to a certain degree to overcome social and professional demarcations.

Ukrainian AECs offer people a wide range of programmes of adult education: from vocationally-oriented programmes to cultural or political courses and leisure activities – and cover three core aspects of adult education:

- compensatory education – recovering lost and acquiring new knowledge (of general and professional character);
- developing and reinforcement of skills and competencies (media and language skills, communication skills, learning abilities and social skills);
- overcoming personal challenges, professional and social (everyday life) problems.

### Contribution of international organisations

The transformation of understanding the importance of adult education in the late 1990s was vastly influenced by processes taking place in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Interstate Committee on Knowledge Dissemination and Adult Education was established in 1997. It developed three model laws: Adult Education Act (updated in 2005),

Postgraduate Education Act (1998) and Enlightenment Activities Act (2002) (see Pshenko, 2001).

These model acts recommended that CIS member states legally recognise the rights of adult citizens, widen the thematic scope and forms of adult education, and encourage the development of a scientific base and social cooperation. These recommendations happened to be more like research material for theorists in the field of adult education rather than a starting point for adopting specific adult education regulations. Today the position of the CIS on adult education is much weaker and often not taken into consideration by national governments.

The second important factor of international cooperation is cooperation with the European Union. Despite the different nature of relations, the contribution of the European Union to adult education development in all three countries remains minor and is mostly limited to:

- the activities of the European Training Foundation (that sees adult education as a process of acquiring vocational skills and developing entrepreneurship), as well as initiating the process of developing national qualification frameworks, which forces national governments and the formal education system to reconsider their attitudes towards non-formal and informal adult education;
- financing projects of particular NGOs within the framework of such programmes as the European Instrument for Human Rights, Non-Governmental Actors and Local Authorities, etc. These projects are not targeted at developing adult education in general but use educational elements for particular social groups to reach their objectives;
- encouraging youth participation in youth exchange programmes and volunteer projects within the programmes Youth in Action (previously), Erasmus+ (currently).

Unfortunately, the Grundtvig programme, just like the special sector of the Erasmus+ programme aiming at adult education development, is still unavailable to organisations in Belarus, Moldova or Ukraine.

However, the non-commercial non-governmental sector represented primarily by public associations shows a clear pro-European vector and determination to expand cooperation with partners from individual countries as well as at the European level, which is corroborated by the membership of many Belarusian, Moldovan and Ukrainian organisations in the European Association for the Education of Adults.

At the same time, cooperation with such organisations as the UNESCO Institute in Hamburg, International Board of Adult Education, European

Society for Research on the Education of Adults, International Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE) is weak.

Adult education development in the above-mentioned countries was influenced by cooperation with DVV International (Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association). Opening the offices in Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova (in 2009, 2010 and 2010 respectively) has led to an increased number of projects aimed at promoting non-formal adult education, developing national and local strategies of adult education development, popularising the idea of adult education centres and the professionalisation of adult educators. Today DVV International cooperates with dozens of partner organisations in each country, as well as with key ministries and parliaments, and assists local partners in building bilateral partnerships with German and European organisations.

Moreover, DVV International in cooperation with partners promotes the idea of including adult education in the list of local authorities' competencies. Achieving this goal is of utmost importance in helping to lay the foundations for creating local AECs and/or re-profiling already existing educational and cultural institutions there. A good example of this is the rapidly developing network of AECs in Ukraine.

## 25 years later – Adult education and policy

Despite the absence of a solid development strategy, adult education in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine is gaining increasing popularity. It is getting noticeable on the education policy level.

In 2011, **Belarus** adopted the Education Code of Belarus that introduced the term "supplementary adult education" and stipulated that formal and non-formal education were components of the national education system. In 2016 adult education, though very restrictedly (primarily in the form of distance learning), was included in the "Education and Youth" National Programme of the Republic of Belarus; the Ministry of Education requested the Republican Institute for Vocational Education to develop a concept of modular training for adult educators.

In **Moldova** lifelong education is covered by Article VII of the Education Code adopted at the end of 2014; the article does not specify adult education whatsoever but stipulates continuous professional training of adults in different contexts (as part of formal, informal and non-formal education) with the objective of creating or enhancing competencies for the purpose of personal, civil, social and professional development. The Concept of National Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Education has been awaiting adoption since 2013 (available on the Ministry of Education

website). In 2016, with the help of DVV International, the country resumed its efforts to develop the Strategy for Lifelong Learning in the Republic of Moldova which will be publicly discussed in 2017. In 2016, the Ministry of Education also prepared a draft decree on lifelong education for adults which stipulates general adult education that does not require compulsory approval by the Ministry of Education and therefore is not subject to state certification, as well as continuous vocational education of adults which is subject to more restrictive regulations including credits and correlation with ISCED.

In the fall of 2016, **Ukraine** adopted the Draft Education Act at first reading, which officially employs the term "adult education" for the first time as well as stipulates lifelong learning and the obligation of the state to develop formal, informal and non-formal education of adults. There is an Institute of Pedagogical Education and Adult Education within the framework of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine. Moreover, the Department of Non-Formal and Informal Adult Education established within the Institute of Modernising the Content of Education (the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine); the Scientific-Methodological Commission of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on Organisational-Methodological Provision of Higher Education (SMC 15) organised a Sub-Commission 301 "Lifelong Learning, Non-Formal and Informal Education Recognition" in 2016.

Unfortunately, state recognition of adult education is limited and declaratory. This is evidenced from unwillingness to revise public financing principles (funding is still available for state institutions and advanced training exclusively); non-inclusion of this aspect into local development plans and statistical reports; unwillingness to delegate powers (together with the right to use municipal facilities and funds for AE purposes) to local authorities, etc.


### Conclusion

At the same time, it is worth mentioning that transformational processes have had a great influence on adult education practices in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine and changed the functions of certain organisations and the institutional landscape in general:

- The universities and higher education institutions have become more active and have established departments and adult education centres on their premises that offer services on a commercial basis;

- Adult education is provided by a wide range of cultural, social, health and economic institutions as an additional component of their services;
- At the same time, the scope of enlightenment activities in cultural and other organisations has been reduced, including the major non-formal adult education actor of the Soviet time – the *Znaniye* (Knowledge) association.
- The years of independence brought an end to the state monopoly on education: there are a lot of commercial and non-commercial non-governmental education providers that enabled diversification of contents and forms of adult education.
- Civil society organisations have become promoters of non-formal education, active citizenship and overcoming difficult life situations while commercial providers have contributed greatly to the development of the market economy and self-employment of citizens.
- New lines of educational activities oriented at specific target groups (local communities' activists, NGOs, seniors, prison inmates, etc.) have formed.
- The majority of new non-governmental organisations as well as state institutions of formal education are concentrated in big cities. Thus, the objective of "approximation" of educational services to the places of residence of the citizens remains unachieved.
- A number of organisations are trying to adapt the idea of adult education centres to local realities. Today the success of those initiatives depends on financial support from local and foreign donors as well as volunteer contribution. The future of those initiatives will depend on the willingness of state and local authorities to create a system of tangible and intangible rewards to develop adult education and local communities through the joint efforts of local authorities, community and economic entities.

In this article we have focused on describing and analysing similar transformational processes and outcomes in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Many trends described are touched upon only superficially and demand further analysis within the context of each country.

Moreover, the countries in the region demonstrate essential differences in foreign policy, internal policy, growth of national self-consciousness and civic education of adults. The impact of those differences on the transformation of adult education systems can be a subject for a separate study.

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# Financing community learning centers – the Asian perspective

Vanna Peou / Wafa Singh

# Community learning centres – the Asian perspective[1]

*Asia-Pacific is the most populous region in the world, with nearly three-fifths of humanity. It has also been the fastest growing economic region over the past two to three decades (Raya, 2015, p. 1). Yet the region faces serious challenges in education in terms of access, literacy, equity, poverty, unemployment, gender disparity and financing. Among these, one of the most profound problems facing governments throughout the Asian region is how to effectively respond to the education needs of millions of adults who, as children, missed the opportunity to attend school or dropped out of school before attaining essential skills and knowledge (Roland, L, 1997, p. 1). Therefore, the widespread need for adult learning is an uncontested fact in countries in the Asian region. Adult education is a term used to describe a wide range of educational services provided to youth and adults who either never received formal basic education or received too little to establish literacy and numeracy. It encompasses programmes to provide youth and adults with life skills for economic and/or social development, such as skills training, apprenticeships, and formal and non-formal programmes in health, nutrition, population, agricultural techniques, the environment, science, technology, family life, and other societal issues (Roland, L, 1997, p. 4).*

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[1]/ With intellectual guidance from Dr Rajesh Tandon, Founder-President, Society for Participatory Research in Asia & Co-Chair, UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research & Social Responsibility in Higher Education.

Several countries have witnessed tremendous expansion of adult education since the Education for All (EFA) Conference held at Jomtien in 1990. In the Asian region, initial attempts in adult education were primarily focussed on imparting basic literacy skills (Singh, 2002, p. 2). However, adult basic education goes beyond merely acquiring literacy. It encompasses reading, writing and numeracy, but also includes the competencies, knowledge and expertise needed to improve living and working conditions and meeting the collective needs of the local community (Singh, 2002. p. 2) Therefore, the concept of literacy has been expanded to include holistic human development. However, although basic literacy in itself is not sufficient, it remains the necessary prerequisite to continuing education programmes and lifelong learning.

## Adult education in Asia

Education is indeed a most important and effective tool that a person can use to fight poverty, discrimination and all forms of exclusion. It arms us not just with knowledge, but also with the ability, strength and confidence to survive, fully realise our potentials, and live a good quality of life (ASPBAE, 2011, p. 1). But in Asia and in the world, even today, millions of people continue to be deprived of their right to education. In the Asia-Pacific region alone, there are nearly 800 million youth and adults without basic literacy skills, and about 200 million youth 15 to 24 years old who have not completed primary education. The region hosts the largest concentration of adult illiterates and youth missing an education (Raya, 2015, p. 1). In the face of such compelling challenges, national coalitions and institutions across Asia have levelled up efforts in the past five years to advance the right of all citizens to quality education and learning opportunities throughout their lives (ASPBAE, 2011, p. 1). There have also been consistent efforts by several Asian countries to reorganise their educational systems from the perspective of adult education and lifelong learning. The idea behind such efforts is to systematise the learning process which gets reflected in traditions, knowledge, experience, all of which are rooted in the daily lives of ordinary people. A direct result of this was seen in the large scale expansion of agricultural extension and cooperative development programmes, skills development, rural education, and accreditation and equivalency programmes. Open education systems are being set up in every country. Non-formal education to continue post primary and post-secondary education is being offered to out-of-school and disadvantaged youth and adults who have been deprived of access to the formal system for various socio-economic reasons. Other programmes have

*Community learning centre in Laos*                    *Source: DVV International*

been established to focus on improving access to education for women, cultural minorities, rural and remote communities, the ageing population, street children, and persons living in conflict areas and in poverty conditions (Singh, 2002, p. 3). All such efforts share the common objective of empowering communities and the individual in a way to make learning more relevant by maintaining an ongoing relationship with learning content and life experience, revitalising local cultures and learning in the mother tongue, and giving special attention to community participation.

## Public support for adult education

While adult learning programmes in Asia vary depending on the political circumstances in the given country, a common trend across the region has been the role of civil society in the organisation of adult learning programmes (Singh, 2002, p. 4). It has played an important role in reinforcing governmental support, and in the development of alternative programmes with a greater sense for local community concerns. The promotion of

*Course in a community learning centre*                    *Source: DVV International*

community ownership through the transfer of responsibility for implementation of programmes as well as by encouraging communities, learners, teachers, and various governmental and non-governmental agencies to participate in the development of adult learning programmes has promoted the sustainability of programmes. This inter-sectoral and multi-level approach aids in making the programmes more relevant to the needs and concerns of communities.

Consequently, policy makers are now turning their attention to adult learning, particularly in relation to the fight against poverty. Many countries in the Asian region are seeking to integrate basic literacy programmes with skills training to increase employability and income generation opportunities thus linking adult learning and sustainable development. The emphasis is on adults in general and on community education as a whole, rather than the narrowly defined skills training alone. Greater importance is being given to promoting the values and practices of critical citizenship, democratic participation, gender justice, and the right to education for all.

Further, networks like ASPBAE and international organisations like UNESCO, World Bank, etc., have been continuously lending their support

towards the cause of adult education in the region and globally. ASPBAE is committed to ensuring that every individual receives their right to a good quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. Its members and partners work closely together to hold governments accountable for making education available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable – free from all forms of exclusion and discrimination. On the other hand, UNESCO led a global movement known as Education for All (EFA), for providing quality basic education to children, youth and adults by 2015. "Achieving a 50 % improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults" is the fifth goal of the Education for All (EFA) initiative. Responding to the needs in the region, UNESCO supports Member States in the training of personnel, development of curriculum and teaching/learning materials to enhance the provision of education through non-formal modes. Since the 1990s, UNESCO has promoted community-based learning through the development of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) as effective local institutions outside the formal education systems. In villages and urban slum areas, these CLCs are usually established and managed by people from local communities.

**Community learning centres as centres of learning and empowerment**

While governments and their policies have a major role to play in macro-level action by setting the national agenda and the vision for building a learning society, it is the cities and communities where the real actions occur. To put the discourse of lifelong learning and a learning society into practice, UNESCO has emphasised the important role of CLCs, explaining that they can provide equal access to education for different groups of learners to acquire the competencies through literacy programmes, post-literacy programmes, basic education, continuing education, as well as vocational and life skills training to make their lives better. In essence, CLCs enable and empower people to gain better access to learning as well as to fight against a status quo characterised by injustice and discrimination that undermines principles of autonomy (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 18).

Implementation of adult education and literacy in many countries in Asia occurs at the local level, either through the local government/council, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community or private providers. However, while ministries may devolve some administrative responsibilities, the locus of power still rests with them in terms of budget control, programme design and planning, as well as programme content, structure and learning outcomes (Ahmed, 2009, p. 43). Accountability is consid-

*Typical classroom in a community learning center*        Source: DVV International

ered to be easier when central responsibility for planning and delivery rests in the control of a single body, namely a central government agency. However, experience suggests that where adult education activities are decentralised, they are often more successful, because communities are empowered (Saldanha, 2007). Such decentralisation of education activities results in communities enjoying a sense of ownership and control over the management and coordination of activities. Programmes are then likely to be more relevant to the lives of those in the community and therefore more sustainable and effective. One such modality of decentralisation of adult education programmes has been the CLC (Ahmed, 2009, p. 43).

CLCs are local educational institutions outside the formal education system, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities. The purpose of the CLC is to promote human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. It supports empowerment, social transformation and improvement of the quality of life of the people. The main functions of CLCs are to provide: i) education and training, ii) community information

and resource services, iii) community development activities, and iv) coordination and networking (UNESCO, 2008, p. 2).

UNESCO APPEAL (Asia-Pacific Programme for Education for All) defines CLCs as: "local institutions outside the formal education system for villages or urban areas usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of people's quality of life." (UNESCO, 1995, p. iii):

CLCs play a major role as a space for lifelong learning regardless of the existence of robust policy frameworks of lifelong learning. CLCs in each country have country specific characteristics, but they share a common characteristic in that they are community based institutions which are generally managed by local communities (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 18). They plan and organise programmes that are relevant to local needs and contexts. Through active community participation CLCs are adapted to the needs of all people in the community, and are flexible in their programmes and functions and suited to the local contextual needs of the country. The main beneficiaries of a CLC are people with few opportunities for education, especially pre-school children, out-of-school children, women, youth, and the elderly.

## Sub-regional variations within Asia

In the Asia-Pacific region, the CLC has emerged as a viable model for the delivery of basic literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for adolescents and adults. It has served as a local venue for communities, adults, youth and children of all ages to engage in all forms of learning, through literacy and continuing education programmes. It has functioned as a mechanism to facilitate learning and to enable participants to acquire the knowledge and the skills essential for human development (UNESCO, 2011, p. 2).

CLCs across the Asian region are interpreted, understood and practiced in the participant countries as community-driven entities that embody sustained initiative. They are principally focused on literacy and continuing education in support of EFA. The activities organised by CLCs cover a wide range of community-based development programmes in health, agriculture, education and entrepreneurial skills for out-of-school children, youth, women, the under-privileged and the rural poor (UNESCO, 2008, p. 2).

Nevertheless, there are interesting sub-regional variations in the purpose, philosophy and operations of CLCs. The sub-regional characteristics, its history, political scenario, socio-economic context, and other related factors play a crucial role in shaping CLCs or their related modifica-

tions, which again vary from country to country. The justification for looking at groups of geographically contiguous countries is to apply a comparative perspective among countries which have a degree of similarity in contexts, historical circumstances and developmental challenges (Ahmed, 2009, p. 5). The expectation is that a sub-regional synthesis will also allow us to look at the future prospects and constraints regarding actions and strategies with somewhat greater specificity than an overall review across all countries may allow. It has to be remembered, though, that intra-regional diversity can be as significant as the inter-regional differences.

Therefore, the following section presents a brief comparative account of the sub-regional variations, focusing mainly on South, South-East and East Asia.

## South Asia

Despite progress made in the last decade South Asia lags behind other sub-regions in Asia in moving towards the achievement of EFA Goals. Over the past two decades, the sub-region has achieved a 25 % increase in the adult literacy rate by the conventional measure of literacy – one of the fastest in the world. Yet the sub-region is home to half of the world's adults without basic literacy skills (Ahmed, 2009, p. 17). A dearth of education and inequality of access is an issue across the South Asian region. The incidence of education insufficiency – as measured by the percent of population with less than four years of schooling – is more likely to fall in the poorest income bracket, who live in rural areas and are predominantly female (Mahbub ul Haq Centre, 2015). Therefore, most of the South Asian countries, with the exception of Sri Lanka, fall under the category of low basic education, a key feature of which is weak and relatively ineffective adult and lifelong learning provisions.

Countries such as Bangladesh and Nepal have made a commitment to ensure that learning continues throughout life and that they should support individuals and communities to meet their basic human needs and maintain their sense of dignity through continuous learning (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 8). India, on the other hand, launched the National Literacy Mission, which designed a programme of continuing education for neo-literates that came into force in 1996, along with a plan for Continuing Education Centres (CEC) (Singh, 2002, p. 44).

Different ministries and national bodies have been involved in several South Asian countries, besides NGOs and local communities with small-scale programmes. Literacy programmes of sizeable scale that include elements of life and livelihood skills are present in most countries. Many

of these are supported by international NGOs and bilateral and multilateral agencies – thus organised as externally-funded projects, which raises issues about their institutionalisation and the development of a sustainable national system for lifelong education (Ahmed, 2009, p. 17). One such programme has been the development and expansion of community learning centres in the region. Looking from a broad perspective, the focus of CLCs in the south asian region has been non-formal/continuing education, imparting vocational skills and improvement in the overall quality of life of the communities.

| S. No. | Country | Philosophy/Purpose | Activities performed/ Programmes undertaken |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Bangladesh *(Community Learning Centre)* | Modality for socio-economic development through non-formal education and adult learning | • Non-formal education (literacy/continuing education)<br>• Skills development (human resource development & income generating activities)<br>• Community development services/social mobilisation<br>• Cultural development/community consolidation |
| 2. | India *(Continuing Education Centre (CEC))* | Institutionalise continuing education for neo-literates and to ensure flexibility in design and implementation in order to cater to the needs of the neo-literates | • Retention & reinforcement of literacy skills<br>• Application of functional literacy for quality of life improvement<br>• Dissemination of information for participation in development programmes<br>• Creation of awareness on national concerns<br>• Training in vocational skills<br>• Organisation of cultural and recreational activities |
| 3. | Nepal *(Community Development Centres (CDC))* | Education and rural development initiatives have envisioned local schools as CDCs | • Formal education support centres<br>• Non-formal education and lifelong learning<br>• Political discourse centres<br>• Women's forum groups<br>• Social and culture revitalisation<br>• Microcredit<br>• Community's reflection centre/association<br>• Skills training/vocational education |

*Adapted from UNESCO (2011); Singh (2002)*

### Southeast Asia

Countries in the Southeast Asian region, which have expanded the reach of basic education up to the middle level of secondary education, have begun to diversify the scope and range of adult learning and non-formal and continuing education. Countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand have had more than three decades of experience in developing and expanding national non-formal education programmes

largely in the public sector. They are now able to consolidate and deepen the gains and place adult learning and non-formal education firmly within a progressively comprehensive framework of lifelong learning (Ahmed, 2009, p. 25).

Therefore, the countries in this region have demonstrated an evolving capacity for consolidating the concept of lifelong learning in national policies. While Thailand has incorporated the concept of lifelong learning into the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan, in Vietnam it is considered an integral part of Vietnamese culture based on the views of Ho Chi Minh, the late founder of the modern Vietnamese nation, who said: "Learning is endless. Learning for life helps us mature, and the more we mature, the more we must learn" (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 9).

Therefore, for CLCs based in the Southeast Asian region, the thrust has been on expanding and deepening opportunities for lifelong learning, as also on the holistic improvement in the quality of life of the communities. The latter is reflected in the diverse kinds of services, offers, activities performed by CLCs, which includes aspects like vocational training, community development, development of art and culture, ensuring good health,



*Mobile skills training on a site*                                    *Source: DVV International*

environmental management, etc. A brief account of CLCs in Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia is as outlined below:

| S. No. | Country | Philosophy/Purpose | Activities performed/programmes undertaken by CLC |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Thailand *(Community Learning Centre)* | Focal point for conducting various Lifelong Learning activities (non-formal/informal education activities) and for giving vocational and educational advice for all community members (children, women, adult, elderly, underpriviledged, etc.) | • Literacy promotion programme<br>• Basic non-formal education programme<br>• Vocational training programmes<br>• Life skills development programme<br>• Social and community development programmes<br>• Informal education provision by way of media, learning materials, books, etc. |
| 2. | Vietnam *(Community Learning Centre)* | The ultimate purpose of CLCs is to enhance the quality of people's lives and contribute to development of the country, hence leading to the stability and prosperity of the region as well as of the world | • Providers of lifelong learning in communities and provide literacy and post-literacy programmes<br>• Reproductive health and family planning<br>• Safety and prevention of transportation accidents<br>• Personal health and hygiene<br>• Drug prevention/combating prostitution<br>• Improved agricultural practices<br>• Utilisation of forestry resources<br>• Environmental sanitation<br>• Art, culture, dancing, and music |
| 3. | Indonesia *(Community Learning Centre)* | Offers space for lifelong learning to improve people's quality of life; along with tackling illiteracy and promoting non-formal education for children | • Equivalency programmes<br>• Early childhood care and education, mainly in rural areas, functional literacy<br>• Maternity clinic points, mainly rural CLCs<br>• Culture, sports, and recreation, mainly urban<br>• Internship/fee support mainly industrial CLCs<br>• Vocation skills<br>• Entrepreneurial skill |

*Adapted from Leowarin S., UNESCO 2008, (CLCs, Country Reports from Asia)*

**East Asia**

East Asian sub-regions have a relatively high literacy rate. The East Asian countries are often categorised as advanced countries in that their efforts for transformation into a learning society have produced significant outcomes such as efficient educational pathways and various lifelong learning provisions. For instance, in the policy documents of some countries like

Japan and Korea, the concept of lifelong learning is often tied to concepts of a knowledge economy, economic productivity and active citizenship in line with the changing milieu of globalisation (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 9). Further, in the 1980s, China started to officially endorse the term "lifelong education" as one of the main pillars of its education and training system. In the Action Plan for Education Vitalisation in the 21st Century in 1998, the need to construct a better continuing education system was emphasised (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 8).

However, the region faces new challenges such as changing employment markets and workplace environments which demand improvement of literacy skills and renewal of occupational skills. However, affordable opportunities for enhancing skills are limited. Growing cross-country



*Mobile skills training*                                    *Source: DVV International*

movement of workers has given rise to the demand for re-adjustment of work skills and language skills. As globalisation and the knowledge economy put a premium on the continuing upgrading of knowledge and skills, the influence of the neoliberal market doctrine has led to increasing commercialisation of both skill upgrading and general adult and non-formal education (Ahmed, 2009, p. 4).

Therefore, the CLCs in East Asia, in addition to the literary focus, especially serve to improve the skill set of the communities, such as training in practical skills, training required for change of occupations, development of local industry, etc. A brief on the CLCs in China, Japan and Republic of Korea is as outlined in the table below:

| S. No. | Country | Philosophy/Purpose | Activities performed/programmes undertaken by CLC |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | China *(Community Learning Centre)* | Development of CLCs follows the framework of two broad movements: (i) The two basics: Basic universalisation of nine years of compulsory education and basic eradication of youth and adult illiteracy (ii) Community Education Movement of the late 1980s | • Literacy education<br>• Training in practical skills<br>• Training focused on change of occupations<br>• Family education<br>• Social education<br>• Leisure time engagements |
| 2. | Japan (*Kominkan; lifelong learning centres; Citizens universities*) | Strong legal frameworks and decentralised delivery has supported the promotion of community-based learning over the past 60 years. Comprehensiveness in affording community-based learning for all the people in a community has been a hallmark of the system. | • Social, non-formal education<br>• Cultural exchange (contemporary/traditional/academic/life culture)<br>• Advancement of local industry by enhancing residents' culture and knowledge<br>• Community development<br>• Fostering community solidarity by strengthening bonds between residents and cultivating a spirit of mutual assistance |
| 3. | Republic of Korea (*community centres; lifelong education institutions' lifelong learning centres of happiness*) | Various forms of lifelong education institutions have been located at the centre of a learning society. Many of these lifelong education institutions take the form of CLCs since they are mostly community-based learning organisations and have various networks and partnerships with other organisations within a community such as schools, libraries and museums. | • Improving quality of life for all through the sufficient provision of learning activities<br>• Sustainable growth of individuals, communities and the nation |

*\*Adapted from UNESCO (2008); UNESCO (2016; Community Based LL & AE); Yang & Yorozu (2015)*

### Case Study: Community learning centres in Cambodia

### Historical overview

In Cambodia education began within the Buddhist pagoda. Cambodian people see the pagoda as the community moral and social training centre. For many centuries in Cambodia the pagoda was the basic foundation and the sole place of education.

Buddhism has been an active presence among the people in Cambodia for 1500 years. Monks were not only greatly respected but also had significant influence on the people as a whole. Monks were seen as educated people who can provide mentoring and coaching to the whole society, both in Buddhism and in daily life. For a long time, the Buddhist pagoda played a significant role in traditional education for the poor, especially the illiterate population in the rural areas. Community people used the pagoda for multiple functions, such as traditional ceremonies, dharma classes, literacy classes, libraries and other community events. We can say that the temple is the central place for community education, the centre of learning activities in the past and in the present. The community invited monks to be the members of the community learning centre committee and supporters of the community learning centre's activities. In some places the community learning centre is located in the temple area.

### Community learning centre initiatives in Cambodia

### Abstract

This case study indicated that there is a lack of literacy and numeracy in the skills training curriculum for use in the CLCs in Cambodia. However, some CLCs within the country use skills handbooks developed by local CLCs without a standard. Since Cambodia opened itself up to free markets, the number of young people who have dropped out of school and the number of migrants are increasing significantly. DVV International, through a one day strategic planning workshop, with five partners, analysed and created a strategic plan for measures to combat the migration rate and improve the living standard of the people in the community through CLCs which will be developed from 2018 to 2020. In case the situation of CLCs and the people change within the planning period, we will undertake a review based on the actual situation.

DVV International has been working in Cambodia since 2009. All of its partners receive technical support as well as financial support through the

regional office based in Vientiane, Laos. In January 2017, DVV International opened a national office to coordinate the country project and to work with new challenges and improve the NFE situation in Cambodia. Our main partner is NGO Education Partnership (NEP). Through NEP we established a non-formal education sub-sector group (NFE-SSG). Up to the present, 25 NGOs from 140 NGOs are members of NEP and have garnered a great deal of experience in the implementation of non-formal education programmes throughout Cambodia. Moreover, three NGOs have special CLC expertise, such as the Shanti Volunteer Association (NFUJA) based in Siem Reap. In 2017, DVV International went into direct partnership with MOEYS (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports) through the Department of Non-formal Education (DNFE) to develop the curriculum for CLCs. The curriculum contributes much to the needs of the community and meets the standard approved by the Education Minister in 2015.

## The history of community learning centres in Cambodia

In 2006 a first community learning centre in Cambodia was established, and by 2013 the number of community learning centres in the country had increased to 300, most of them poorly operated and inefficient. Community learning centre activity in Cambodia plays a very important role, parallel to government policy. The government is committed to promoting decentralisation in order to spread empowerment to the grassroots level. In 1994, community learning centres were introduced in Cambodia by UNESCO and NFUAJ (National Federation of UNESCO Association in Japan) and were operated in Siem Reap, Battambang and Kandal provinces. Then, after 1999, the experience gained was used to pilot them in Takeo, Kampong Speu and Kamong Thom provinces. Post literacy activities were introduced in the community learning centre through providing a reading corner for newspapers and short stories, and a mobile library. Some activities related to early childhood care and development, such as parenting skills and nutrition programmes, are also conducted at the community learning centre. The Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MOEYS) initiatives for NFE are currently implemented through two institutions – the formal education institutions and the community learning centres.

In Cambodia, CLCs have been conceived of as places for providing education and other information related to community development in order to respond to the needs of the community's people. Major policy and strategic documents highlighted the scope of NFE and CLCs, such as the NFE National Plan of Action 2008-2015 that identified CLCs as a place for providing education and other information related to community development in order to respond to the needs of its people and out-of-school

youths. The NFE action plan 2008-2015 targets the setting up of one CLC per commune to act as a focal point for all non-formal education initiatives and provide vocational skills. The Education Strategic Plan 2009-2013 also affirmed the government's policy for the establishment of community learning centres and the implementation of equity programmes.

## Structure and functions

### Process of establishment

Community learning centres are long-term projects dedicated to knowledge and know-how for the development of and the progress of the community, and they are administered by local citizens to serve the common interests of the community. The purpose of the community learning centres is to reduce illiteracy in society and to strengthen community development resources. They are community-based non-formal educational institutions or organisations which provide a range of services and learning opportunities to out-of-school children, youth and illiterate or semi-literate adults from socially disadvantaged rural and urban communities. The community learning centre operates outside the formal education system and intends primarily to address the learners' basic literacy and educational needs and therefore support the holistic development of citizens and communities. As non-formal educational institutions, CLCs are usually established and managed by local communities with financial and technical support from various governmental and non-governmental agencies. Furthermore, their activities are also tailored according to the local context in order to address the local community's problems as well as to satisfy its basic needs. The aim of the community learning centre is to support the development of personal self-confidence and the development of personal and community capacities to help people understand relations between themselves, their neighbours and the world, arising from diverse cultural identities amidst a continuously accelerating globalisation process to support the formation of an individual's co-responsibility for his or her own community and for society as a whole. CLCs are established primarily to help to deliver the first of these objectives. Some of the specific aims of community centres are to provide opportunities for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills through structured activities in non-formal learning environments, link literacy with life opportunities and skills, involve all members of the community in participation of programmes and decision-making, promote dialogue within the community and between community members and local authorities, develop partnership links with

*Mobile skills training*                                        *Source: DVV International*

potential national and international stakeholders, mobilise efforts toward alleviating the poverty situation in neglected areas.

Based on the real practice of the CLCs, establishment of some functions have been created by local communities as follows:

### A. Setting the location (the community donated a piece of land to be used as CLC

- infrastructure: monasteries, churches, institutions, community school, community health centres, public buildings or build new
- located in the centre (village commune)
- roads (coming)
- there are many illiterate poor disadvantaged areas
- intellectual centre of the community (village)

### B. Analysis of problems and needs

- survey (recorded interview) about the problems and needs of the community
- data collection and analysis of information
- identify priority issues and needs analysis
- demonstrate the benefits of…
- gain support and confidence of the citizens
- create an action plan

### C. The selection of committee management

- election
- roles and responsibilities

### D. Programmes and plans

- open class
- training
- consultation meeting

### E. Learning materials

- material administration
- educational material
- teaching and learning

### Management of community learning centres

### Structure to coordinate the work of community learning centres

a) Chairman (head monk, village chief, school principle)
b) Vice chair (deputy director, deputy village chief, retired teacher, elder)
c) Members of the Permanent Secretary (retired teacher volunteers)
d) Members (volunteers, literacy teachers)

### Duties of management committee

Management activities of CLCs for optimal and sustainable data management information activities in the community to organise

- Determine the real needs of the community and create a community learning centre plan. Collaborate with the board of directors of non-formal education programmes to develop CLCs.
- Media in collaboration with the chiefs about the benefits of CLCs and recruiting students to attend.

- Coordinate with relevant agencies within and outside the community for the benefit of the CLCs.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation programme for the CLCs.
- Performance reporting activities of the CLCs and transmitted through the hierarchy.

### Commission structure supporting CLCs

a) Chairman (chairman of the council or mayor, county, district council member
b) Vice Chairman (council member or governor, district chief)
c) Permanent Secretary (council member, chair of CLC)
d) Members (village chief, head of monks, charities, volunteers, village potential people, community life skills teachers)

### Support committee tasks

The Advisory Board of the Community Learning Centres mobilise and seek help (budget items) from ministries, development partners and donors to support CLCs. They promote the concept and benefits of CLCs for the people of the whole community. They engage in monitoring and evaluation activities for the CLCs and recommend implementation to the president of the CLC.

### Community support and participation

A CLC is a place of peace where a good relationship and partnerships between young learners, adult learners and other community resources can be set up. The community learning centre model builds on the core instructional programme of a place by adding educational and vocational skills, life skills for the vulnerable groups and removes barriers to learning by providing necessary social services.

In a CLC, young learners, adult learners, their families, and community residents work as equal partners to develop programmes and enhance services in some areas:

- literacy skills education – improve adolescent reading and writing skills;
- vocational skills – empirical skills that individuals acquire in a specific area of interest;
- family and community engagement – families and other local community members actively participate in designing, supporting, monitoring, and

advocating for quality programmes, activities, and services in the school and community;

• community development – all participants focus on strengthening the social networks, economic viability, and physical infrastructure of the surrounding community.

8,200 learners enrolled in skilled occupations at the CLCs in 2016 (August 2016).

**Income generating programme through community learning centres**

| School year | Students attending | | | Students who graduated | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Female | Female percentage | Total | Female | Female/ percentage |
| 2007-2008 | 6,542 | 1,172 | 17.91 | 3,875 | 1,522 | 39.27 |
| 2008-2009 | 6,876 | 2,479 | 36.05 | 4,038 | 2,285 | 56.58 |
| 2009-2010 | 8,982 | 4,903 | 54.58 | 7,357 | 4,000 | 54.36 |
| 2010-2011 | 10,456 | 5,591 | 53.47 | 9,122 | 4,819 | 52.82 |
| 2011-2012 | 10,507 | 6,310 | 60.05 | 7,137 | 4,881 | 68.39 |
| 2012-2013 | 8,783 | 5,351 | 60.92 | 7,208 | 4,565 | 68.39 |

*Source: NFE-MIS, MoEYS*

The number of CLCs increased from 57 in 2006 to 348 in 2013. Skills classes also increased from 120 classes in 2006 to 631 classes in 2013. The number of females enrolled in CLCs increased from 1,438 in 2006 to 6,217 in 2013. This increase is mainly due to the fact that the skills offered were attractive to females and responded to the needs of the labour market demands. 295 more females than males graduated from community learning centre courses in 2006. This rose to 1,973 in 2013.

The reason for this increase was that communities found the centres a cost effective and enjoyable way of developing capacity. They therefore encouraged the establishment of the centres and provided community support to keep them operational even at a time when Ministry of Education funding was limited. Skills training included tailoring, traditional music, hairdressing, beauty training, stone carving, weaving, carpentry, use of computers, English, small scale agriculture and animal health.

NFE is an integral part of the National Education Action Plan 2003-2015. Most NFE activities are organised through the Provincial Offices of Education for Youth and Sport (PoEYS), District NFE offices and Commu-

*Mobile skills training*                                                    *Source: DVV International*

nity Learning Centres (CLCs) that promote community participation in education development through collaboration among organisations and other stakeholders. Based on MOEYS D-NFE data and further research, there are 3600 NFE programmes in Cambodia, with 11 % provided by NGOs. Research of 383 NFE programmes provided by NGOs in 2012 shows that literacy programmes (44 %) and job skills programmes (31 %) ranked highest. In Cambodia, MOEYS Department for Non-Formal Education runs 325 CLCs of which 276 (91 %) were said to be functional in 2013, and there are also 19 NGOs that run a total of 23 CLCs. MOEYS NFE EMIS 2014 data put a total of 471 CLCs nationwide as the main institution for skills training within an NFE framework, engaged in 361 classes in 2013.

Supported by UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education for All programme, the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) conducted a survey of 110 NGOs in 15 provinces working in the Cambodian NFE sector to collect information for the NFE Management Information System (NFE-MIS). Comparing government vs. NGO programmes, 75 % of all NGO NFE programmes focused on literacy or job skills while government NFE accounted for only 38 %; on the other hand, common to the government

NFE programme are the re-entry programmes, accounting for 43 %. The study found that some NGO-run programmes are not formally categorised as NFE (by government definition) such as income-generation, pre-school, bilingual education and computer training. Among 48 NGOs that were able to provide details of their NFE programmes in 2012, the most common was the NFE for job skills programme (48 %), followed by literacy (40 %), CLC (40 %), library (19 %), equivalency (15 %), re-entry (8 %), and others at lower percentiles.

Focusing on NGOs' life-skills programmes, the location of the NFE programme is predominantly (36 %) in the NGO premises, 24 % in schools, 29 % are home-based, and only 6 % are within CLCs. The beneficiaries are mainly between 15-45 years old (67 %); however, under 15-year-olds made up 14 % of those enrolled and 17 % of those who completed; females made up a bigger proportion of the under 15-year-olds involved in job-skill training than males. According to the enrolment and completion data, out of 2,815 people enrolled in a NGO job-skills programme in 2012, 2,217 completed their course, which corresponds to a 78.7 % completion rate.

The skills training courses of NGO-run CLCs include the following: Since the illiteracy rate in Cambodia is quite high, during that time the main activities in the community learning centre were focused on literacy classes, some skill training for income generation was integrated within the centre. Those skills are sewing, hairdressing, raising pigs, weaving, tailoring, repairing motorbikes, makeup as well as income generation programmes such as computer training, English language training, art of weaving skills/traditional silk, rice planting techniques, mat weaving/ rattan basket weaving skills, vegetable planting, animal/fish raising, bicycle and motorcycle preparing.

### Financial mechanisms

The Royal Government will continue to expand informal education through literacy and vocational programmes, establishment of community learning centres and implementation of equity programmes. The government will increase budget allocation for education and mobilise more financing to support education to ensure a higher and effective quality of education.

In 2014, the percentage of the national budget for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport rose to 16.2 %, compared with the 2013 allocation of 15.52 %. This represented a 20 % increase in the amount of money and a 22 % increase for personnel expenditure. The Royal Government reform aims to improve the living standards of teachers in order to encourage quality improvements in education. Approximately 75 % of the education budget is normally spent on salaries and about 82 % of that amount is

spent at provincial levels. Approximately 63 % is spent on primary schools. The additional operating cost budget for disadvantaged schools has been increased.

The Council of Ministers approved its 2016 budget, which will be increased by 12.18 percent from last year to $4.3 billion, with education set to get another significant injection of funds and the Labour Ministry also receiving a sizeable boost. Released on social media by government spokesman Phay Siphan, the draft budget, which now must be approved by parliament, continues the government's push to fund improvements in the Kingdom's education sector, which was handed some $502 million, a 28 percent increase on last year's allocation.

Allocated $42 million, the Ministry of Labour enjoyed a 45.8 percent boost to its finances, extra money that would be invested in a vocational training institute to train people in mechanics, electronics and electricity, according to spokesman Heng Sour. "This increase shows the commitment of the government to improve the capacity and productivity of the workforce," Sour said.

## Practical challenges

The main challenges are there because of a lack of infrastructure and clear guidelines for management and operation of CLCs, and a lack of a handbook for life skills. Teaching and learning materials were inadequate. Many CLCs have poorly organised training courses that practically didn't meet people's learning needs. The key to addressing these challenges is effective coordination among communities, local authorities, and other organisations in Cambodia so that sensible policies and mechanisms can be formulated to help mobilise resources and create favourable conditions for the operation of CLCs. Moreover, the CLC managers need to improve soft skills as well as management skills to ensure effective operation and effectiveness by offering attractive training courses that meet the needs of the community and the local labour market. Due to budget cuts and the use of the budget of the Department of Provincial Youth and Sports, as well as the sophistication of the budget process, CLCs are not responding to the needs of local residents. Lacking is the provision of data, information, education in the provincial capitals and a number of development partners as well insufficient time. Planning activities and operational planning and budget allocations have not yet met the targets of the programme. Cooperation in the implementation of non-formal education programmes of local authorities and other stakeholders has not been widely undertaken. A shortage of financial and material resources continues to threaten programme quality and potential expansion. There is a great lack of meth-

odological literature and didactic materials for trainers and trainees. The development of legislative support for the non-formal education sector has been insufficient, particularly in efforts to make certificates obtained in CLC courses nationally recognised qualifications. There is insufficient public awareness of the role of CLCs and the activities available. Networking between CLCs is slow due to communication constraints, normally because of poor or no internet connectivity due to scanty infrastructure and it is therefore difficult to share knowledge and experience.

### Community learning centres in the digital era

Two of UNESCO's key areas of interest are Education for All (EFA) and the need for higher quality education. UNESCO is therefore pursuing various programmes which aim to improve the reach and quality of education. Another area of concern for UNESCO is the growing "digital divide" between those who have access to modern forms of information and communication technologies (ICT) and those who do not (UNESCO, 2007, p. 3). The concern is that unless the divide is bridged, the lack of access to ICT will have adverse implications in terms of access to information and participation in socio-economic life, particularly in the emerging knowledge societies. It has been demonstrated that integrating ICT into education systems can increase the quality of education and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education delivery. Use of ICT in formal and non-formal education also offers the potential to facilitate greater access to information and services by marginalised groups and communities (UNESCO, 2007, p. 3)

Adult and lifelong learning is also increasingly exploring the possibilities afforded through information and communication technologies (ICTs). Alternative and innovative delivery methods have been developed in terms of providing distance education to increase access to educational opportunities, particularly for remote and rural communities. ICTs have also played an important role in the development and distribution of learning materials, such as facilitating the production of literacy materials in a variety of languages, and enabling increased access to materials to sustain literacy skills, increase continuing education opportunities, and promote lifelong learning.

Various models of "ICT-based community learning centres" (ICT-CLC) have emerged or been developed in the Asia-Pacific region especially. This generic concept is an important focus for exploring both the social and educational implications of new ICTs. Firstly, it represents a powerful bottom-up and practical model with global implications of possible convergences between ICTs, education, and community in local contexts – in particular, the importance of potential connections between informal

and formal as well as virtual and actual contexts of learning and community development. The ICT-CLC models are deserving of more attention and further consideration, and perhaps better exemplify the implications and possibilities of a global learning hub in the new knowledge society (Richards, 2012). ICTs typically have an important and even central role in various influential notions of "life-long learning" and "learner-centred paradigms of learning" on one hand, and larger concepts of a global "knowledge society" or "new information age" on the other. As well as including both formal and informal models of learning and interaction, the various contexts of ICT-CLCs include both virtual and actual or face-to-face aspects. It might be argued that the educational purposes of ICT-CLCs in a sense precede and in this way are complementary to commercial, developmental and applied purposes (Richards, 2012).

Therefore, ICT-CLCs represent a powerful strategy for overcoming various notions of the so-called digital divide conceived in terms of how ICTs have increasingly important economic and developmental functions in the age of globalisation. Indeed, many people recognise that the key to survival in the emerging global economy and knowledge society will increasingly be the ability of societies and their education systems to produce learners who are innovative, flexible, collaborative and problem-solving in their knowledge and understanding (Richards, 2012).

## Conclusion

From the Asian experience in the field of adult education and CLCs as a potent mechanism to achieve EFA goals, it can be easily said that this region witnesses challenges and opportunities alike. Challenges are in the form of illiteracy, socio-economic conditions of communities, political turbulences, varying human development indicators, etc. On the other hand, opportunities exist by way of numerous bottom-up initiatives for achieving education goals, extensive civil society network engaged in community development activities, support from global institutions like UNESCO, World Bank, policy advocacy and capacity building initiatives by regional networks like ASPBAE, etc. Amidst all such efforts, the emergence of CLCs as a means for empowering individuals and promoting community development through life-long education for all people in the community, including adults, youth and children of all ages, has been a significant milestone for the Asian region. The success stories from around Asia bear testimony to how the institution has been changing lives of individuals and communities. Therefore, to conclude, the below mentioned account re-

flects on the CLC experience in the Asian region and provides some crisp recommendations for the future:

## 1. Value of community learning centres for lifelong learning

From the aforementioned account, it is clear that experiences of CLCs in different countries demonstrated their significant contributions in providing access to relevant and appropriate learning programmes towards empowering marginalised communities. They have hence emerged as a crucial means for ensuring lifelong learning opportunities for adults and marginalised communities in particular. The value of CLCs in relation to lifelong learning is also reinforced by the Sustainable Development Goals for Education (SDG). SDG 4 which includes the Education 2030 targets to "ensure inclusive equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." The Framework for Action for Education 2030 emphasises the need for strong inter-sectoral approaches for education beyond schools or formal institutions. It calls for "strengthened links between formal and non-formal structures" and, strategically, advocates for the establishment of multiple pathways to learning to ensure that each child, youth and adult will have access to lifelong learning programmes. This signals the crucial need to reinvigorate the CLCs as hubs for learning, information dissemination and networking to implement the SDGs (UNESCO, 2016b, p. 1). Further, CLCs hold a unique advocacy and service delivery position as state and institutional liaisons and centres of their local communities. This allows them to constantly innovate and seek new collaboration with universities, NGOs, the private sector and others. Continuous innovation is a natural result of the shifting position of CLCs and should be leveraged to create further lifelong learning opportunities for all community members, as is already happening in some countries in the region (UNESCO, 2013, p. 1)

The consultations on the Guidelines on the role of CLCs in a lifelong learning system, being drafted by UNESCO Bangkok, put forward recommendations on Recognition, Validation and Assessment (RVA) of prior work and how CLCs can be part of seamless pathways to learning from community/work to school/training institutions. They are:

- Have a certificate of participation for every participant and for every programme
- For some programmes, link them to formal education, such as with the Ministry of Education, or a registered training organisation to provide equivalency for learners

*Training of master trainers*        *Source: DVV International*

- Working collaboratively with different education settings to ensure a seamless path, aware of what programmes are being delivered in these settings
- Tapping expertise needed in setting up equivalency/qualifications framework
- Setting up quality assurance recommendations depending on the kind of programmes.
- Partnership between central and local government in setting up RVA
- Role of the private sector in setting up equivalency paths, particularly in identifying skills for specific work and trainings needed. (ASPBAE, 2016, p. 5)

## 2. Implications for practical, daily life

Apart from its focused functional areas in the fields of education and training, community information and resource services, community development activities, etc., CLCs have been seen to promote holistic human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. They support empowerment, social transformation

and improvement of the quality of life of people on a daily basis. There-fore, the impact they have on the lives of the community in the practical, real-life sense is immense. As also outlined by the SDGs in Agenda 2030, all citizens have to become active producers of knowledge and well-being, not mere apathetic consumers. Education has to trigger the excitement that promotes civic values embedded in notions of inclusive citizenship. It is in this context that CLCs play an important role by nurturing values in communities by means of their varied functions.

Through its education function, the CLC prepares communities to perform their economic functions, jobs, employment, livelihoods; i.e. *learning to do,* thus aspiring to connect knowledge and skills, learning and competence, inert and active learning, codified and tacit knowledge, crea-tive and adaptive learning; through its community development functions, it helps communities in *learning to be* active, responsible citizens. It also encompasses one's spiritual and existential broadening towards discov-ering the meaning of life and pursuit of happiness. Finally, through varied learning opportunities, it helps communities develop a sense of *learning to learn* in order to respond to challenges in daily life and in finding sustain-able solutions to pressing problems. It also appeals to the urgent need of reacting to the multiplicity of information sources, diversity of media con-tent to new ways of knowing in a society that is closely interconnected.

## 3. Sustainability of community learning centres

Having outlined the importance of CLCs in the current context, and in Asia in particular, ensuring the sustainability of such structures emerges as a natural aspect in the discussion. In order for CLCs to remain sustainable they must constantly respond to emerging trends in content provision that reflect the needs of communities, look at becoming financially self-sustain-ing, ensure excellent community management, and secure useable data in the form of tangible results which can be consistently measured (UNESCO, 2013, p. 2). Further, CLCs have come into existence largely at the initia-tive and with the support of local community groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), external donors and/or development agencies. In certain cases, they've been created through support from local and national government authorities. Considering such a management struc-ture, sustainability of CLCs is directly linked to community participation, community ownership and also external intervention (governmental/donor/ development agencies support). There is an assumed connection between participation, ownership and sustainability, with more participation leading to more ownership leading to more sustainability. This is a logical progres-sion, and one which is readily accepted. However, there can be degrees

of difference in partnership which is most important to ownership and the degree of ownership which bears profound impact on sustainability. Therefore, lately, the concept of "participative ownership" has been gaining ground. It allows stakeholders to participate in the aspects of ownership they value most. Further, common views on the relation between external intervention and sustainability of CLCs are that the former has to give way to advancing the internal autonomy of CLCs, which is the better route to sustainability. However, an important point here is that sustainability in the long run would depend on financial assistance from such external interventions.

Therefore, creating balance and synergy between external agencies and local communities is inevitable for the sustainability of CLCs. This balance has to be discovered gradually with the active involvement of all stakeholders. It is not a question of "either-or"; rather, the synergy between external agency and local community evolves over time (UNESCO, 2011, p. 17). It cannot be achieved as a project goal to be measured and demonstrated in a short period. Instead, it demands long-term engagement with the concept and mutual trust between the external agency and its intentions on one hand, and the aspirations and capabilities of the local community members on the other (UNESCO, 2011, p. 17).

## 4. Roles and challenges faced by NGOs running community learning centres

The multi-dimensional roles and the functions performed by CLCs bring along with them varied challenges and opportunities alike. An important component of such challenges is faced by the local community group: the NGOs who run CLCs in several locations. Being managed and run locally by community groups comes with associated riders which pose operational and functional challenges. Funding issues is one among them, especially in places where there is an absence of financial assistance from an external agency. In such cases the NGOs with limited finances face a severe paucity of funds to carry out the CLC functions. While most CLCs provide training in limited types of skills, in many cases skills training cannot be put to use because of the shortage of money for starting income-generating activities, or a lack of access to markets for the products or services. Secondly, at some places "participation by people" becomes a challenge. The role of local communities in planning CLC activities is still marginal. Local communities in practice do not monitor the activities of the CLCs, although they elect their members. At times CLC members do not regularly take part in CLC activities and that only demonstrates that the CLCs are not very successful in becoming institutions for which the general members

have a feeling of ownership. Thirdly, the absence of institutionalisation of linkages with other stakeholders (governments, other NGOs/NPOs, etc.) leads to operational deficits. Fourthly, domination of CLCs by external sources in terms of their organisation, establishment, planning of activities and implementation further undermines the role of NGOs, and limits their operational space. Fifthly, absence of support from policymakers emerges as another huge challenge. The lack of political will to eradicate illiteracy, especially for the young and women, coupled with adult education not featuring in priority policy agendas further leads to function-related barriers.

Therefore, as mentioned earlier, the challenges are many, but so are the opportunities. The need is to adapt a strategic and methodical approach towards CLCs, so that they can emerge as a model mechanism for achieving education and community development objectives on a global platform.

Some recommendations for future action include:

- **Funding**: To effectively sustain and use the contributions of CLCs and their future potential for reducing illiteracy and promoting basic education there is a need to explore effective arrangements which can augment the CLCs financial base within the broader framework of country-level programme support and funding.
- **Networking**: Collaborative strategies and modalities for programme implementation need to be formulated for promoting closer cooperation and enhancing people's participation in basic education. The same collaborative efforts must also apply to the wide array of national and sub-national bodies. Effective networking arrangements between all actors need to be developed for planning programmes through converging experiences.
- **Equivalence:** For achieving desired results, the CLCs need to be empowered and, most importantly, measures to promote equivalency and certification of certain literacy and non-formal education programmes offered by the CLCs need to be taken. This is essential if CLCs are to be viewed as potent structures in the field of education.
- **Alignment to national policies**: The exclusion of CLCs from the national development agenda has emerged as a huge barrier in realising their objectives. Therefore, it is imperative to devise ways to link CLC operations to national policies and programmes. This linkage of CLC mission and objectives to national initiatives can ensure its effective and long-term impact.

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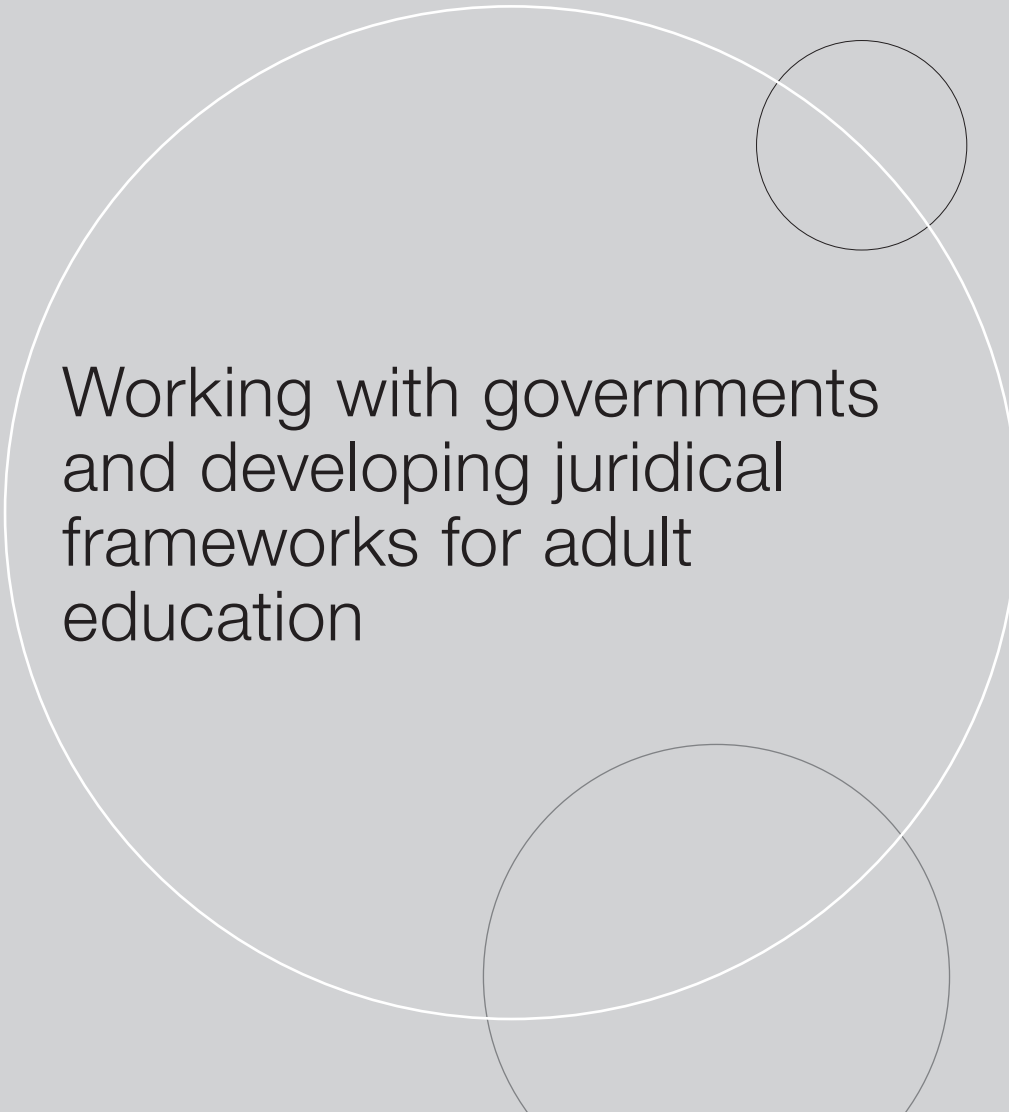
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# Working with governments and developing juridical frameworks for adult education

**Carlos A. Díaz / Jesé Romero**

# Reinforcing the Right to Education through inter-institutional collaboration – an example from Mexico

*The Right to Education is a human right enshrined in different UN-Conventions that have been ratified by most of the UN member countries. Many governments have developed laws in the field of education that could actually contribute to guaranteeing that the right to education can be realized. But figures show that in reality especially vulnerable groups do not even have access to educational services due to structural barriers. The following reflections are based on experiences with a project (EPJA[1]) that has been implemented in Mexico in the years 2014 to 2017. The starting point of the project has been an analysis of public policies and budgeting in the sector of adult education using the human rights instrument.*

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[1]/ Educación de Personas Jóvenes y Adultas (EPJA): Education for young people and adults.

The right to education is a fundamental prerogative for the development of human beings. Individuals and communities acquire and strengthen the knowledge and skills for life through this right. It is established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13), the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (Article 12), the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights (Article 13), among other treaties and conventions, including General Comment no. 13 of the ESCR[2] Committee. These international human rights norms are recognized in the constitution of the United States of Mexico[3].

In a traditional way, the content of the right to education, that is to say, the identification of its attributes and what they imply within the International Law of Human Rights, has been developed based on the levels or systems of school education: basic, secondary and vocational education; However, for methodological effects of the project EPJA, described in this article, it was defined so as to be able to analyze its institutional components: adaptability, acceptability, accessibility and availability together with the principles of application of transparency and accountability.

Taking into consideration these components it is possible to define that education is a means for the development of the human personality and a sense of dignity, the capacity for participation in society, the conditions of peace in community and as an instrument for performing other rights. In this sense, the processes through which it materializes must be ideal ones to provide the people with the necessary knowledge and skills that allow them to reach those objectives. It is fundamental that the processes are continuous because learning is permanent in the life of the people, regardless of their age and the type of educational systems they are coming from or going to.

In addition to aiming at empowering and developing individual aspects, education should also be seen as a right to promote, establish and conserve community goals, i.e. focus on producing collective wellbeing and, at the same time, be a common objective of companies. The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, as a result of the Second World

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[2]/ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

[3]/ Article 1. In the United States of Mexico, all persons shall enjoy the human rights recognized in this Constitution and in the international treaties to which the Mexican State is a party, as well as the guarantees for their protection, the exercise of which shall not be restricted or be suspended, except in the cases and under the conditions established by this Constitution. Human rights norms shall be interpreted in accordance with this Constitution and with the international treaties of the subject, at all times favoring persons the widest protection.

*Participants discuss human rights issues*                    *Source: DVV International*

Conference on Human Rights in 1993, refers to this aspect in paragraph 78: "The World Conference on Human Rights considers education, training and public information of Human rights as indispensable for establishing and promoting stable and harmonious relations between communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace".

Perhaps this dual purpose of education, individual and collective, is even more clear in article 1 of the World Declaration of Education for All:

"The satisfaction of [... the basic needs of learning] gives the members of a society the possibility and, at the same time, the responsibility to respect and enrich their common cultural, linguistic and spiritual heritage, to promote the education of others, to defend the cause of social justice, to protect the environment and to be tolerant of social, political and religious systems that differ from their own, ensuring respect for humanistic values and commonly accepted human rights, and working for international peace and solidarity in an interdependent world."

Another, no less essential objective of the development of education is the transmission and enrichment of common cultural and moral values. In these values, individuals and societies affirm their identity and dignity.

Within the framework of the EPJA Project, a methodology for the analysis of public policies from the human rights approach was developed.

## The Mexican context

Mexico today, seen from a critical perspective, is characterised by a context of violence, poverty, social inequalities and disenchantment with institutions; if looked at from a hopeful perspective, it is the right scenario in which to spearhead transformations based on solidarity and actions focused on the respect, defense and exercise of human rights.

In the last decade it has become clear that there is a human rights crisis[4], and not only Mexico has been bestowed with this "prize", but several countries in Latin America and in the world as well; therefore, the defense of these rights has been a constant issue in Latin America. From popular local movements to civil organisation and government agencies, there has been a push for the enforcement and respect of human rights, and it is these struggles that drive to build more equitable societies, with equal opportunities, that are more inclusive and just.

## Government law reforms

Enumerating the public problems which exist in social contexts would result in a task that would force us to address the role that states play in the fulfilment of rights; however, for the description we are now concerned with, and in the interest of promoting the Right to Education in the Mexican context, we will limit ourselves to mentioning actions related to the State Compliance with The Right to Youth and Adult Education – YAE.

In Mexico, since December 2012, 11 government reforms have been launched[5] that, according to the argument made by the Mexican government, address some of the most important social problems in the country: unemployment, poverty, public insecurity, organised crime, lack of economic policies, environmental damage and problems in education, just to mention a few.

However, this series of reforms, rather than benefiting the public, respond to the particular interests of a neoliberal model which benefits

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[4]/ In March 2016, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights presented the report that addresses the situation of human rights in Mexico. http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes/pdfs/Mexico2016-es.pdf

[5]/ The 11 reforms promoted by the Federal Government include the following: energy, telecommunications and broadcasting, as well as economic, financial, labour, educational, national code of criminal procedure, the law of protection, electoral-policy and transparency. To learn more about its progress information can be found here: http://reformas.gob.mx/

*Workshop for developing an educational model for indigenous women migrants*
*Source: DVV International*

capital, negatively affects the majority of the population and has represented a setback in the struggles of the indigenous peoples. For example, we can mention the **educational reform**, which resulted in dismissals of thousands of teachers without any respect for their labour rights. Far from touching on subjects related to the contents of curricula or new pedagogical methodologies, it is nothing more than a measure of labour control over the teaching profession, since that represents one of the sectors of greatest opposition to the regime in recent times[6].

Faced with this devastating prospect, in June 2011 a **constitutional reform** was initiated in the area of **Protection and Promotion of Human Rights**[7], which meant fundamental reparation to the recognition of the obligations of the state, derived from the international human rights treaties of which the state of Mexico is a member. Without a doubt, we consider that

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[6]/ To get more information on the subject, see: http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-la-dignidad-en-nuestras-manos/2016/06/17/las-reformas-estructurales-y-su-impacto-en-los-derechos-humanos/ (last online18/01/2017)

[7]/ To learn more about the constitutional reform of 2011 you can go to: http://www2.scjn.gob.mx/red/constitucion/inicio.html

the scope of the reforms has not been able to have the impact hoped for, so we have seen reactions that call for social justice and these have been made concrete.[8]

## An example of an inter-institutional cooperation between government and civil society

Taking this picture of general reforms and educational reforms at a particular level into account, and attempting to promote an approach to human rights in education, a three year project was launched by the regional office of DVV International in Mexico. The activities of the project of The Right to Youth and Adult Education – YAE (Proyecto Derecho EPJA)[9] have been promoted in the states of Chiapas, Quintana Roo and Puebla, with Mexico City as its base. This project was coordinated by DVV International in cooperation with the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA), as well as various state adult education institutions (IEEAs), based on a process of permanent collaboration in favour of The Right to YAE.

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[8]/ The structural reforms have caused great inequalities in the population, it is going through one of its major crises, provoking waves of migration that put people in situations of greater exploitation and vulnerability; crime (both organised and common) has become the only way to access material resources, since lack of employment, low wages and poor access to healthcare and education services leave little or no opportunity for human development. In this sense, crime has provoked multiple forms of violence that end up redefining life: disappearances, kidnappings, people trafficking, murders, are the consequences of a society that has not guaranteed security of any kind.

[9]/ The right for YAE project, arises from the initiative of people committed to the right to education of young people and adults, where the identification of interests by various civil society organisations, has allowed for the promotion of reflection and the creation of spaces for the recognition of the advances and challenges that occur in YAE. Since the beginning of the project, it has sought to make concrete progress in matters of public policy. This action is based on the creation of two methodologies, one for the analysis of public policies and another for the analysis of budgets – both include the human rights approach and evaluation. The proposals were built with the collaboration of the following organisations: *Iniciativas para la Identidad y la Inclusión AC (INICIA); Universidad Campesina Indígena en Red (UCIRED); Educación, Cultura y Ecología AC (EDUCE); Patronato Pro Educación México (Proyecto COA); Voces Mesoamericanas, Acción con Pueblos Migrantes; Contracorriente A.C.; Instituto Estatal de Educación para Adultos Puebla (IEEA-Puebla); Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Rural (CESDER); Universidad Pedagógica Nacional – Red EPJA; Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres (REPEM) y Grupo de Educación Popular con Mujeres (GEM).*

*Training workshop with adult educators*                    *Source: DVV International*

This inter-institutional collaboration between civil society organizations and a government institution such as INEA[10], has allowed progress in the recognition, promotion and defense of The Right to YAE, where each of the actors involved seek to add their capacities to achieve a common good in education, because acting alone cannot embrace education for all. As Jaime Canfux Gutiérrez of the Latin American and Caribbean Pedagogical Institute of Cuba wrote:

   "Popular education alone will not be able to encompass education for all, therefore it is necessary to seek alliances with the governments that have the possibility to show political will that obliges them to attend to each and every one of the needs of the towns where people live, without

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[10]/ Decentralised organ of the Federal Public Administration, a legal entity with its own endowment, created by decree to preserve the unity of national education so that the basic education of youth and adults is accredited and certified with validity throughout the republic. To see the decrees of creation of the institute and its educational policies, the following links are available: http://www.inea.gob.mx/index.php/inicio-portal-inea/nquienesbc.html y http://www.conevyt.org.mx/

discrimination regarding race, colour, ethnicity, etc., so, we have to look for a strategy aimed at strengthening this alliance in favour of community development, not to see community development held down, since a person travels from the community to the national and arrives at the international, gets feedback and returns with a sense of belonging to the community". [11]

It is for this reason that the space generated through inter-institutional cooperation has contributed to the **rethinking of the human rights approach within INEA**, promoting **alternatives for inclusion, citizen participation and review of educational policies** altogether, which is not only of benefit to educators and learners, but also because the human rights approach touches and profoundly changes lives within YAE institutions, their breadth, outreach and depth. In this sense, we consider that education must be preceded by involvement on the part of everyone, as Ricardo Cuenca mentions: "It must be absolutely clear that investing in education for social justice is a difficult decision that requires inter-institutional work". [12] An Inter-institutional alliance reinforces this initial idea of wanting to build societies with more equitable conditions, with equal opportunities, more inclusive and just, investing in education as a pillar for transformation.

In the project a network of relationships has been built with civil society organisations, government institutions such as INEA at the federal level and various institutions (IEEAs) at state level, as well as with people on the ground who, from their everyday life, seek another way of understanding education. To make the results sustainable, a series of educational models have been developed that are now implemented after the termination of the project.

The successful relationship with a national state actor was not without critical debates on the side of the organisations who understand themselves to be in solidarity, especially with the most vulnerable – the indigenous population of Mexico, but without INEA these rather small organizations would never have achieved the same impact. This is demonstrated in the outreach capacity of the institute:

The National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) is present in indigenous communities and communities in 18 states of Mexico. It has devel-

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[11]/ Extract from the interview with Doctor Jaime Canfux Gutiérrez of the Latin American and Caribbean Pedagogical Institute in Havana, Cuba in February 2015, within the framework of the Havana book fair. If you want to see the complete interview, you can go to the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AllzezbuD50

[12]/ Cueca, Ricardo. Revista Internacional de Educación para la Justicia Social (RIEJS). Vol. 1, Núm. 1, 2012, pp. 79-93. last viewed online on 08/03/2016 en: http://www.rinace.net/riejs/numeros/vol1-num1/art3.pdf

*Facilitators in one of the various workshops*                    *Source: DVV International*

oped educational materials and contents not only in Spanish but also in 72 ethnic languages and 107 linguistic variants. In 2017 INEA provided courses to more than 80 thousand people from indigenous communities. Through the materials developed within the EPJA project the training of trainers is now based on an understanding of education as a human right.

### Implementation and monitoring – the tools

Within the inter-institutional interaction that has taken place since The Right to YAE project with INEA, a series of seminars have been held in the states of Chiapas, Puebla and Quintana Roo, as well as two national seminars in Mexico City, with more than 600 participants. These have been carried out with people who have different tasks within their institution, such as directors, middle managers (area coordinators, regional officers, etc.), as well as volunteers (figuras solidarias), who are the link between the institution and the people who receive the services provided by INEA through its **Model for Education for Life and Work (MEVyT)**.

The purpose of the seminars was to **identify the knowledge, perceptions and practices of those who collaborate with the institutions, related to human rights, the right to education, transparency and accountability and the enforceability of rights**.[13] Through dialogue and reflection on their daily activities, a correlation was made in order to identify human rights and the importance of respecting them in the individual and the collective. The dynamics allowed for the association of the defense of human rights and the right to education with the daily activities of public officials and solidarity supporters, and the fact of seeing themselves as defenders of the right to education allowed them to have a guide for persistence in the struggle for a more just world through their daily work.

These activities allowed the project actors to reaffirm that the role played by INEA for The Right to YAE is very important, since in a country like Mexico, where education is often relegated to second or third place in relation to preferences for other governmental initiatives, adult education, ends up being the last link in the chain of priorities and budgets[14].

Building on the dynamics and challenges of the context related to **The Right to YAE project,** a series of educational models were developed, such as: "Pedagogical tools to improve educational practice in MEVyT implementation", "Social management of the territory", and an *educational model for indigenous women migrants in the highlands of Chiapas*. These educational models are focused on consolidating initiatives with migrant women and indigenous youth, and these processes have been developed with the premise that education is the key to access other rights. And the fact was taken into consideration that lifelong education contributes to improve community processes, create sustainable mechanisms and interlace them with possibilities for the creation of spaces that contribute to the appropriation of alternative ideas.

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[13]/ For more information regarding the activities described, you can go to the following link: derechoepja.org

[14]/ Where there are more than 4 million 749 thousand people who cannot read or write and with an average schooling grade of 9.1, which translates to a little more than completed secondary school. Statistics related to the educational characteristics of the population can be seen on the website of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) http://www3.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/temas/default.aspx-?s=est&c=19004

## Lessons learnt – acknowledging complexity and diversity by multi-cooperation

An advance towards the full exercise of the right to education can only be achieved by accepting the complexity of the context, **recognising** and **realising** diversity, its particularities and contributions, valuing the word and taking into account the needs and interests of the people involved, so that together we can build an education that makes sense in our daily lives.

Following this line of thinking, one of the tasks that the authors believe has been fulfilled through the positive experience of inter-institutional interaction between a government institution, academia and civil society organisations in the framework of the project The Right to YAE and INEA, is the generation of knowledge so that action doesn't stop at just formulating an attempting to obtain greater citizen participation in the taking of political decisions, but ensures that the institutions that have to guarantee rights, take on the recommendations issued by civil society, recognise their contributions and **jointly develop strategies** to build a more just, equitable and inclusive Mexico.

Education is a complex and at the same time optimistic process, the way in which this right has been conceived has structural and multiple factor problems, therefore, to solve them necessitates precise actions at different levels and from various positions of entrenchment. In this sense, we must all play an active role, or as Paulo Freire said: "The pedagogy of the oppressed, as a humanist and liberating pedagogy, will therefore have two distinct but interrelated moments. The first is in which the oppressed reveal the world of oppression and commit themselves to praxis, resulting in its transformation; and the second, in which once the oppressive reality has been transformed, this pedagogy is no longer of the oppressed and becomes the pedagogy of men [and women] in the process of permanent liberation."[15] And so, we must understand education as a transformative and collective process that helps build communities and provides dignity for the people.

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[15]/ Freire, Paulo. Pedagogía del Oprimido, Ed. Tierra Nueva y Siglo XXI Argentina Editores, Buenos Aires, 1972, p.35. Online at: http://www.servicioskoinonia.org/biblioteca/general/FreirePedagogiadelOprimido.pdf

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*Freire, Paulo (1972):* Pedagogía del Oprimido, Ed. Tierra Nueva y Siglo XXI Argentina Editores, Buenos Aires, 1972, p. 35. Consultado en: http://www.servicioskoinonia.org/biblioteca/general/FreirePedagogiadelOprimido.pdf

*INEA:* Documents on public policies: http://www.inea.gob.mx/index.php/inicio-portal-inea/nquienesbc.html y http://www.conevyt.org.mx/

*Gutiérrez, Canfux*, Instituto Pedagógico Latinoamericano y del Caribe, Havanna Cuba: Interview: February 2015 at the book fair. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AllzezbuD50

*The Interamerican Comission on Human Rights* Report on the Human Rights situation in Mexico http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes/pdfs/Mexico2016-es.pdf

**Maja Avramovska / Jovan Miljković**

# Working with governments – developing and implementing juridical frameworks for adult education

*The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were approved in September 2015, set the policy targets that should be reached by 2030. "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an ambitious, aspirational and universal agenda to wipe out poverty through sustainable development by 2030" (http://en.unesco.org/education2030-sdg4). It is obvious that adult education legislation should support the SDGs and create a legislative framework which will make goals more reachable. The article examines the processes of development of adult education legislation in Serbia and Macedonia and the role of the adult education centres within these processes.*

**State of the art in the research fields of adult education legislation**

Before we continue with describing the state of the art in the research field of adult education legislation, we feel it necessary to stop for a moment and think about previous goals and their fulfilment.

As Popović (2014: 274) said, "the dynamics of international education agendas in 2013 and 2014 presented adult education actors with a bitter task – summing up the results of the big promises and obligations made in 2000, namely: the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Dakar Framework of Action: Education for all (EFA), whose deadlines expire 2015. These programmes are tasked to solve a huge number of the world's problems, because adult education appears to be a prerequisite for achieving different objectives (economic, ethnic, environmental, security, etc.) and as such must be an integral part of other policies, and above all, an integral part of development policy" (Alibabić, Š., Miljković, J., Ovesni, K., 2012).

Vandemooetele (2009, according to: Popović, 2014: 276-277), as one of the creators of the MDGs, made a valid criticism and said that MDG goals and indicators are very hard to reach in countries with a low level of human development and that goals are misunderstood as being goals that suit everyone (one-size-fits-all). The MDG approach is dominated by money-metrics and a donor-centrist view of development that is not ready to accept that inequality within countries is the main reason why targets for 2015 will not be reached. Unterhalter (2013, according: Ibidem) claims that the evident oversights have had an impact on policy, planning and financing, and that the MDGs have been associated with a series of "distorted incentives". They included expansion of the offer at the primary level, but often at the expense of quality. In addition, the development of other sectors of education, especially secondary, technical and vocational, higher and adult education, were given a lot less attention because of the focus on spreading universal primary education. Linking basic education with the theory of human capital has drastically narrowed the agenda in relation to the period from the 1970s to 2000.

From the earlier narratives in the context of human rights, we now have a quantitative measurement of education in the context of economic changes. That is important to emphasise, because the new SDGs must be considered in the light of the MDGs and their impact on national and legislative policies. Adult education policy is very often understood as just a continuum of legislative and administrative measures, whose aim is to shape and develop the area of adult education.

*Commission for development of the adult education law, meeting at DVV International office in Skopje, 2007*
*Source: DVV International*

UNESCO (according to: Popović, 2014) has a similar view of the problem of educational policies. Policy is legislative, precisely: laws, action plans, strategies, the competent authorities and their cooperation, financing, and a number of specific problems, such as priority goals, target groups, participatory planning processes, language policy, etc. These are, of course, important questions regarding adult education legislation, but for researchers the even more important question is the question of power and the question of how the political process produces legislation. In the research of educational policy and legislation, researchers must pay special attention to issues such as the methods of policy making (who are the visible and invisible actors in this process, how decisions are made, the level of transparency and the participatory process), transfer of policy (methods, equipment, instruments – the number, type and character), as well as issues related to monitoring and evaluation (methods, criteria, participation, adaptation).

It is very important to see what kind of political process is behind the legislation – is the legislation the result of a top-down or a bottom-up process? When we have a top-down process, we very often have a problem in conducting legislation in a proper way. One of the biggest obstacles in conducting research on legislative impact is that there is a great deal of inequality within countries themselves. Adult education legislation is a completely national issue, and different states, with different views, conduct their legislation accordingly. The big question and research problem is also the process of policy transfer, in which less developed countries simply copy the legislative solutions from more developed countries, without the power (nor the will) to implement them. When we speak about state of the art in the research of adult education legislation there is always an open question about the quality and the ideology of the research on which the legislation is based. Desjardins (according to: ibid) believes that evidence-based policy is more of a mantra than actually having a basis in reality, rather that it is evidence derived from the policy (not policy based on the evidence). He also suggests that decision-making in politics is not rational, nor linear, and that available information is often inadequate or contradictory, or simply does not point to any particular required solution. So, the conclusion to this brief overview of the problems in this research field ends with a question: Is this research *of* adult education legislation, or research *for* adult education legislation?

**Adult education legislation: What do we have in the countries?**

*The Situation in Serbia*

The process of Serbian educational reform started after 2000, with a focus on the education of children. As regards adult education, teachers were the dominant target group. Later, greater attention was paid to adult education, and at the end of 2006 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Adult Education (*Strategija razvoja obrazovanja odraslih u Republici Srbiji*) as the first in a series of documents that should legally frame this area. The Strategy represents a step forward in relation to the previous understanding of adult education, emphasising social partnership (role of stakeholders, ministries of education, labour and finance in its management), and adult education is seen as key for sustainable socio-economic growth of the country and its integration into the European economy. The Strategy requires that the Adult Education Law and the Action Plan for the Strategy should be adopted.

The Action Plan (*Akcioni plan za sprovođenje Strategije razvoja obrazovanja odraslih u Republici Srbiji za period 2009-2010. godine*) was adopted in 2009 (with a two-year delay), and its two-year goals are aimed at a further operational mode of including stakeholders in adult education, distribution of jurisdiction, the establishment of standards in the field of adult education and financing models. In the same year as the Action Plan, a new version of the umbrella law on education: the Law on the Foundations of the Education System (*Zakon o osnovama sistema obrazovanja i vaspitanja*) was adopted. Articles 24a and 24b of the law determine the establishment of the Agency for Education, as an institution for monitoring the realisation of general principles and objectives, strategic directions of development and improvement of the entire educational system. The Agency should carry out tasks related to acquiring the status of a publicly recognised organiser of educational activities in the area of non-formal adult education, as well as the recognition of prior learning, in accordance with international instruments and standards for research, monitoring and evaluation in adult education. The law stipulates that the Agency will become operational in 2016, which has not yet happened. A new version of the law from 2016 confirms the competence of the Agency, but does not specify the date of the beginning of its work (the text is written as if the Agency exists now).

After the strategic documents that partially dealt with education, in 2012 the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Development of Education by 2020 (*Strategija razvoja odraslih do 2020. godine*). This document presents a vision for the development of the entire system of education and adult education as a structural part and incorporated in it. In this document, the government highlighted the vision according to which "in 2020 at least 7 % of the adult population in the Republic of Serbia will participate in adult education programmes" (*Strategija razvoja obrazovanja do 2020. godine*, 2012: 190). Besides the adoption of the National Qualifications Framework, recognition of prior learning and career guidance and counselling for adults, the Strategy says that by the end of 2013 special schools for basic adult education will be closed, and adults will get the opportunity to participate in part-time study at university – none of the ideas mentioned have been implemented. This strategy also plans to establish an independent institution for accreditation of adult education and its quality improvement.

The Adult Education Law (*Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih*) passed in 2013 (with a three-year delay to data mentioned in the Action Plan), regulates education and lifelong learning of adults as part of a unified education system of the Republic of Serbia. According to the law, responsible bodies for ensuring and improving the quality of adult education are: National Educational Council, Council for Vocational Education and

*Meeting with stakeholders, Discussing the adult education law draft, Skopje 2007*
*Source: DVV International*

Training, the Ministry of Education, Economy, Employment, Labor, Social and youth policy, Regional development, etc., Institute for evaluating the quality of education, the Institute for improvement of education, the organisation in charge of employment, and national minority councils (where is it necessary). It is worth noting that within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development there is a separate organisational unit called Sector for Secondary Education and Adult Education, with a special Group for Adult Education, while within the Institute for Improvement of Education, there are two organisational units (centres) that are directly responsible for adult education: Centre for Vocational and Adult Education, and the Centre for Professional Development in Education.

The Adult Education Law (2013) introduced publicly recognised organisers of educational activities in the area of non-formal adult education (which must satisfy numerous adult education standards to get a status), as a prelude to the formation of the system of accredited adult education

providers. This law says that the status of public education providers is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Improvement of Education, and not a single word mentions the Agency for Education. The law offers the possibility of accreditation and certification of prior learning at publicly recognised education providers, but this option has not yet been implemented because sub-laws have not been adopted. According to the 2013 law, the government shall, on a proposal by the Ministry of Education, make annual plans for adult education (which are to be implemented after the adoption of the law). And as additional support to adult education, the law provides for the possibility of engaging andragogical assistants.

Another legislative act, which could be interesting for adult learning and education, is the Higher Education Law (*Zakon o visokom obrazovanju*) of 2005, which was last amended in 2016, and in which, unfortunately, there is no concrete regulation that would refer to adult education, with the exception of mentioning that institutions of higher education have the right to offer programmes of lifelong learning (the participants of these programmes don't have the status of students).

Finally it is worth mentioning that the government of the Republic of Serbia, in the period since 2000, brought dozens of strategies, some of which are directly related to adult education (e.g. the strategy of career guidance and counselling in the Republic of Serbia), and some incorporate adult education as one of the measures to be included in the problem to be solved (e.g. social protection strategy development).

### What was the process of developing the adult education legislation? Focus: Cooperation of different stakeholders

"As part of the political and social changes that have been launched in Serbia since 2000, almost all areas and at all levels of the education system, a series of reform initiatives have been taken to improve the education system in Serbia and harmonise it with contemporary European policies aimed at the fulfilment of the Lisbon agenda" (Đerić, R., Anđelković, S., Marušić, M., 2011: 11). During this period, Serbia began an all-out reform of its education system. Reforms have started opening the system for impulses coming from the participants in the system as well as the implementation of a number of public debates on the issue of reform of the system during 2001 and 2002 (MPS, 2004). It is important to emphasise that the reform included a number of relevant experts who gave their contribution through the newly formed commissions. The government established cooperation with various professional and

governmental institutions from different countries (such as GIZ, SDC, BC, CIDA, SIDA, EAR, ETF, MPS, 2004)[1]. However, this transition period in Serbia (2000-2010) was marked by discontinuity in the field of designing and implementing educational policies, which elicited various responses and attitudes among key stakeholders of the education system. This very unstable educational-political context caused a decrease in the effectiveness of reform initiatives and that had a negative impact on the motivation of key actors and their capacity for effective participation in change (Đerić, R., Anđelkovic, S., Marušić, M., 2011: 11). We must be aware that there is a lot of overlap between the changes in educational policies, legislation and changes in educational practices. They often follow their own logic and pace. Sometimes the changes in practice are the unexpected result of a policy that has "targeted" something else entirely. On the other hand, sometimes the changes in practice occur years after an appropriate policy formally no longer exists, but which during its time managed to launch a process that had yet to produce an effect. This period has been marked by changes in educational policies and practices which, not so often, were complementary, coherent and syncronised. (Stanković, D. 2011: 41).

In spite of starting educational reform through changing the legislation from the bottom-up, with a wide range of experts, teachers, institution and other stakeholders included, we think that today we have top-down changes. Lots of changes in policy (personal, discourse and programme changes), every 3-4 years, resulted in a loss of energy and experts, and some stakeholders (such as some international organisations) are not interested in participating any more in the "never-ending" reform of Serbian adult education, and more important political issues (such as a national security) often push adult education policy to the background. Some stakeholders (like schools for adult education) are not capable of taking part in public debate, or don't believe in it as a tool to create changes, and that is a problem of Serbian political culture. So, in recent years, although we still have a public debate for many of the government's legislative proposals, we are not sure that this is the level of participation which can guarantee success of the reform process in adult education.

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1/ These are abbreviations for the following international organizations: GIZ – Deutsche *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, SDC* – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, BC – British Council, CIDA – The *Canadian International Development Agency, EAR* – European Agency for Reconstruction, ETF – The European Training Foundation.

*Part of the expert team for development of the Adult education Strategy 2016-2020, Skopje 2016*
*Source: DVV International*

**Implementation and monitoring? What role do the adult education centres have?**

Currently in Serbian legislation, as we said before, there is an incoherent idea about an independent umbrella organisation (an Agency) in charge of all aspects of education, but it exists only in the form of an idea. When we speak about the backbone of the previous Yugoslav adult education system (that Serbia acquired through succession), about workers and public universities (*radnički i narodni univerziteti*), it must be emphasised that during the 1990s these organisations collapsed along with the whole system of adult education, and today the "surviving" organisations are not in a position to assume the role of monitors. For many years these institutions were just trying to survive on the educational market, and until recently they were not even in a position to implement adult education policy. Since a few years ago, the adoption of the Adult Education Law and the Annual Education Plan have allowed these and similar organisations to become implementers of adult education policy if they satisfy the conditions prescribed by law.

### The situation in Macedonia

Macedonia became an independent state in September 1991 after declaring its independence from the collapsing Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The quality of education was one of the positive assets which Macedonia inherited from the Yugoslav Federation. The literacy rate was about 94 percent; the secondary school system was well developed, and there were two universities, in Skopje and Bitola, with a good range of faculties (according: Pantaleev, T, 2003:9).

After 1991, Macedonia had to implement major reforms and establish its own institutions in all sectors, including the education sector. In the first years after independence the reforms focused mainly on the formal educational system and particularly on primary and secondary education.

The educational sector reforms were strongly supported by the donor community. According to the Mapping Report financed by the EU and implemented by Ars Progretti and Archidata, in the period between 1997 and 2013 several important donors contributed significantly in the area of lifelong learning (LLL), vocational education and Training (VET) and adult education. The EU was the most active supranational organisation in supporting the development of the education system in the country with 17 implemented programmes and a dedicated budget of over 52.4 million Euro. Other supranational organisations that have supported the sector were United Nations Development programme (UNDP), World Bank, European Training Foundation (ETF) and UNESCO (according: Mapping report 2014:19).

On the bilateral level, numerous countries financed and implemented programmes in the field of LLL. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded eight major programmes and committed USD 52 million, or approximately 38 million Euro. Germany, through GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), the Federal Ministries and DVV International (Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association) contributed with ten programmes, implemented in the area of LLL support. The United Kingdom and the British Council have funded and implemented five programmes, mainly focused in the area of VET support. (according: Ibidem)

According to this report the contribution of DVV International in the reform process was substantial, especially in modernising the educational system, in capacity building in adult education and in increasing competencies and qualification of performers within adult education (trainers, teachers, professionals in the field and experts). (according: Mapping report 2014:14).

The initial commitments by the Macedonian government for adult education and lifelong learning were made with the adoption of the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015. In this strategic document, for the first time lifelong learning and adult education were mentioned as priorities of the government. The following aspects and commitments are mentioned for lifelong learning: "The Ministry of Education and Science will strive to create a positive atmosphere for the continuing learning and self-development of all population groups. This implies increasing opportunities for the educational mobility of young people and adults and realising a dynamic cooperation between the educational institutions and requirements which result from the area of labour and social life. In this context, mobilisation of those population groups whose knowledge has become obsolete for various reasons and who do not have suitable competences or have become educationally handicapped, such as the unemployed, illiterate people and all marginal groups, will be important. Therefore, strong support will be given to the activities undertaken by non-governmental and voluntary associations in the field of lifelong learning." (Nacionalna programa za razvoj na obrazovanieto vo R. Makedonija 2005-2015, 2004:43, National programme for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia).

In order to establish and reform the adult education sector, the following measures will be taken:

- decreasing the illiteracy-rate among adults, especially the gaps between the illiteracy-rate of men and women;
- expanding basic education among adults;
- providing opportunities for adults to acquire knowledge, skills and value, required for improving their quality of life;
- increasing the opportunities for educational choice;
- developing education for adults which will be in the interest of social cohesion;
- developing opportunities for education and training which will meet the expectations, aspirations and needs of the different groups in the existing and potential work force;
- education and training of adults for the dynamic changes in the areas of labour and life.

The Ministry will focus on carrying out activities and giving support to all initiatives which are directed towards preventing professional and social exclusion. By promoting lifelong learning and job security, the wellbeing of the population will be promoted at the same time. (according: Ibidem).

But the real breakthrough for the reform of the adult education system began with the legislative adult education framework which was adopted in 2008, which aimed to arrange the organisation, structure, financing and management of the adult education system and recognised adult education as part of the unique educational system of the Republic of Macedonia.

"One year later, in 2009, the public institution Adult Education Centre was established and tasked with promoting a system of adult education that would be functional, modern and in line with EU standards, a system that would provide high-quality learning opportunities that would lead to qualifications in accordance with the needs of the population, increase employment and develop entrepreneurship, meet the needs of the labour market and contribute to economic, social and personal development." (Avramovska, M., Czerwinski, T. 2017:203)

Further progress was made with adoption of the Adult Education Strategy 2010-2015, which aimed to support an adult education and learning system that will enable the entire population of the Republic of Macedonia to have equal possibilities for participation in quality learning in the course of one's entire life, in which the education offer will be based on the requirements and the needs for learning arising from all spheres of human existence and to encourage and enable the population for participation in all spheres of contemporary living, especially in the social and political life at all levels, including also the European level (Adult education Strategy 2010-2015: 3)

### What was the process of developing the adult education legislation? Focus: Cooperation of different Stakeholders

Discussions and the first attempts to develop adult education legislation in Macedonia started within DVV International's programme in Macedonia. DVV International started a consultation process during 2005, and in the frame of this process a consultation workshop was organised in November 2005 with a German consultant and representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science and other relevant state and non-state actors. During the consultation workshop, a first draft of an adult education law was formulated and completed. According to the German expert Prof. Dr. Joachim H. Knoll, "the consultations on draft adult education education legislation in Macedonia had a favourable starting point. In the first place, the Ministry of Education was included from the beginning of the consultation process as an equal partner. Secondly, the Ministry expressly and emphatically welcomed and supported the initiative. ... At the same

*Workshop with the working group for development of the Adult Education Strategy 2016-2020, Skopje 2016*                                     *Source: DVV International*

time, however, it was necessary at the outset of the consultation process to settle basic questions with respect to the importance of a systematic approach as well as the need to identify the content of adult education. Detailed briefs had been prepared in writing beforehand. Professionalisation was the only issue where the group opted for an improved in-service arrangement, since adequate provisions for specialised trainings were not yet available at the University of Skopje to begin with." (Knoll, J.H.:51)

This adult education development process was slowed due to the parliamentary elections which were held in July 2006 and won by the opposition. At the beginning of 2007 the Ministry of Education and Science established a commission for development of the Adult Education Law. The commission was composed of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Vocational and Educational Training Centre,

the Bureau for Development of Education, the Worker's and People's Universities[2] and the representative from the DVV International Office Skopje. In 2007, DVV International, in cooperation with its partners from the adult education sectors, supported the process of preparation of the Adult Education Law with expertise, organising a forum for exchange and discussion and organising a study visit to Croatia. In this frame, in the same year (2007) as part of the 6th Lifelong Learning Festival in Macedonia, a conference at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, was organised to discuss the necessity of the Adult Education Law for further development of the public Adult Education Centres (Open Civic Universities for Lifelong Learning) and the adult education system in general. Additionally, as part of the media campaign for the 6th Lifelong Learning Festival, several TV and radio appearances and articles were dedicated to the topic adult education legislation. In March 2007, a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders in the adult education sector started, with several events and workshops where the draft of the adult education law was presented and discussed. Also in March 2007, a delegation (representatives from the commission for the preparation of the adult education law) visited the relevant stakeholders in Croatia (Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, Agency for Adult Education, Croatian Adult Education Association, Chamber of Commerce and several Adult Education Centres) in order to exchange experience for the process of preparation and implementation of the adult education legislation. (DVV International's project documentation).

On 08 January 2008 a new chapter began for the adult education sector in Macedonia with the adoption of the Adult Education Law by the Macedonian Parliament.


### Implementation and monitoring? What role do the adult education centres have?

After adoption of the law, the Adult Education Centre was established as a public institution and the implementation of the law began. During the implementation process additional rules and regulations were developed in consultations with the stakeholders and adult education centres. In 2010 the Strategy for Adult Education was developed for the period 2010-2015, also with involvement of expertise from DVV International and expertise

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[2]/  Renamed 2011 under the Law on Open Civic Universities for Lifelong Learning in Open Civic Universities for Lifelong Learning.

from various Macedonian experts and institutions like the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje. Currently, in the frame of the EU project (funded by EuropeAid, and within IPA as the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession, implemented from January 2016-November 2017) "Enhancing Lifelong Learning through Modernising the Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education Systems", led by the British Council, with DVV International and the Lifelong Learning Centre in Skopje as partners, two essential documents, Adult Education Strategy 2016-2020 and the first Lifelong Learning Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia (2017-2020), were developed in a participative process involving all relevant state and non-state stakeholders, including the adult education centres. The next step is adoption of these two strategies.

## Lessons learnt: Focus on the development process

From the Serbian experience, we discovered that it is very important to create a broad field of stakeholders who are interested in adult education and are convinced of the necessity to regulate this area with sustainable legislation. Legislation is just a tool to attain some social and educational goals; it is not a goal in itself. The political process is crucial – if stakeholders conclude that the government is not honestly going to support change and regulate this area, their contribution to the public debate will be weak, and the government will get, instead of a critical friend, institutions that will try to avoid any kind of regulation. It is also very important to complete the reforms which have been started, because we can't expect to get any kind of support from stakeholders if we waste their energy and time, every couple years starting a new endless reform process.

As lessons learnt from the Macedonian adult education legislation and implementation process it can be said that the adult education centres had an important role in developing and implementing the adult education legislation in Macedonia. They were active in proposing solutions and discussing the development and implementation of the legislation with the relevant state and non-state actors and will remain an important part of all further developments and processes regarding the policy connected to the adult education sector.

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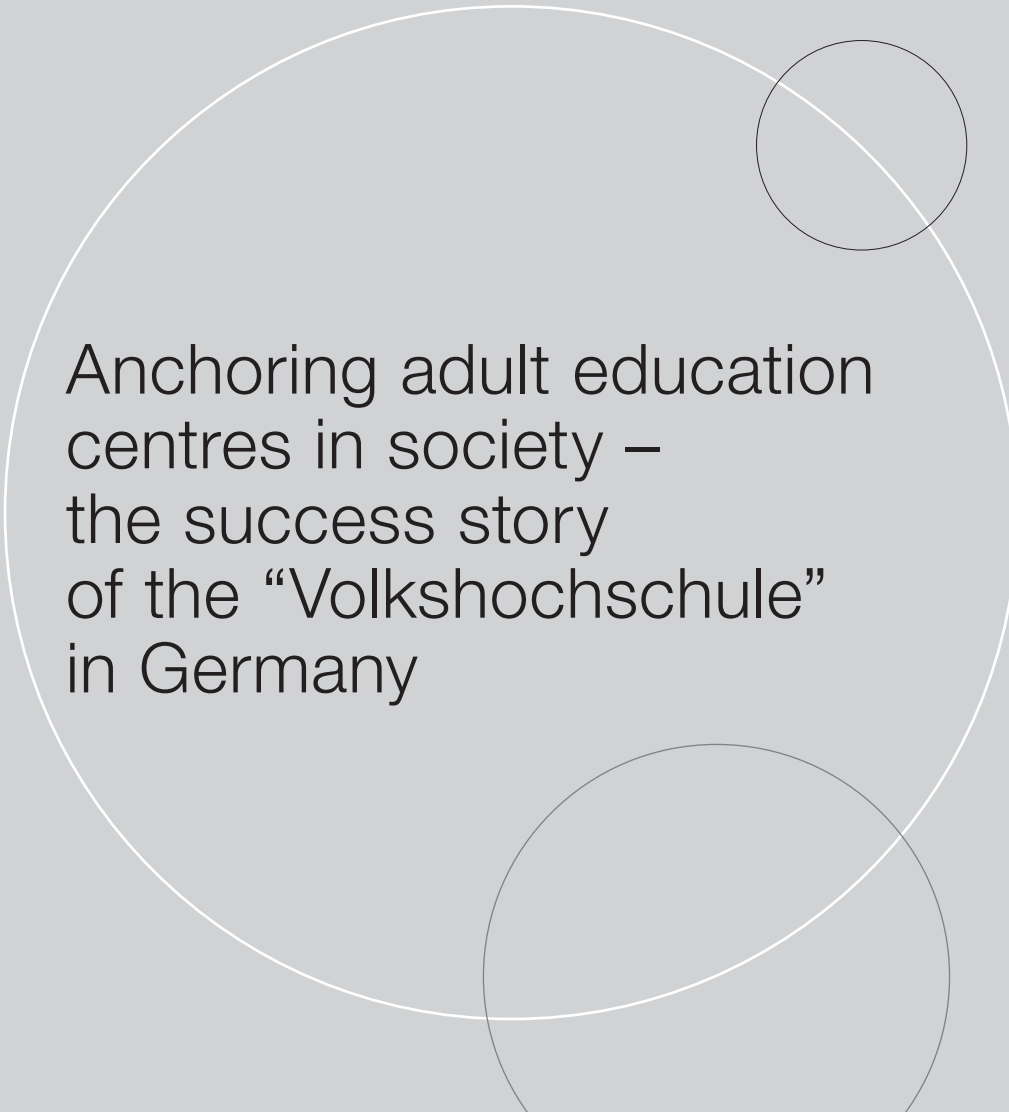
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# Anchoring adult education centres in society – the success story of the "Volkshochschule" in Germany

**Klaus Heuer / Nicole Kuprian**

# Anchoring adult education centres in society

*The adult education centres (Volkshochschulen – VHS) exist in al-most every town in Germany. For nearly 100 years they have offered a wide range of training and appropriate education for any interested person and are firmly anchored in the everyday life of the people of Germany. Their educational mission is guided by the principles of the Enlightenment and universal human rights. They stand for the right to education, the opportunity for lifelong learning and equality. The German adult education system and the strong network of adult education centres are inspiring and have inspired many countries across the world in developing their own systems and adult educa-tion centres. This article will analyse the elements of the success of the German adult education centres and their meaningful role and contribution in developing and ensuring democracy, human rights and prosperity in Germany.*

### Translation and definition of Volkshochschule

It is not possible to translate the compound term *Volkshochschulen* – consisting of *Volk* and *Hochschule* comprehensively into English. It includes, depending on the context, adult education centre, evening classes, popular education location, high school or university – in French, the term used is *université populaire* – the term "folks' university" comes from the Danish: *folkeuniversitet*, which is well-known and was developed by Grundtvig for the northern European continuing education institutions.

What does not correspond to international connotations is the concept of *Volk*. *Volk* is a difficult to grasp, historically grounded residual category. It contains an expression of an appreciative attitude towards "folks", the "ordinary people" – a classification not linked to status, money or educational qualifications – and communal learning with joint acquisition of knowledge. Through the ideology of the people's mass movements and later through national socialism, the concept of the *Volk* was misused to justify the racial supremacy of Germans. In the recent past, the phrase *wir sind ein Volk* (we are one people) played a central, identity-enhancing role in the demonstrations against the GDR regime in 1989. With this slogan the demonstrators appealed to the security forces of the GDR to recognise the commonality between themselves and the demonstrators and act accordingly.

Grundtvig's idea of the *folk high school* comes close to the positive concept of the VHS, but it is strongly related to the rural-agricultural sector and in its development is tied to boarding schools. Additionally, it has as its stated intention the strengthening of Danish national culture with causes and aims that are emancipative and non-nationalistic.

The term VHS refers to two different institutional forms: the *Heimvolkshochschule* (home school), which is based on Danish models and is mainly spread in the countryside, and the *Abendvolkshochschule* (evening school) in the city. In the course of the twentieth century, the VHS is increasingly equated with evening school. (Schoepig) In the German-speaking countries of Austria and Switzerland the term VHS is also used – and with these countries the strongest commonalities exist as well as the best possibilities for comparison (Nuissl/Pehl, 2004).

**Leitmotiv and leading questions**

A practitioner (the head of the VHS Koblenz) and a historian (scientific research assistant at DIE[1]) have written this article together, so we have attempted to relate practical and historiographical perspectives on the history of this continuing education institution which is now approximately 100 years old, and to make these viewpoints productive.

For a long time we thought about what could be a proper attitude for a presentation of the development history as it relates to the present VHS. Johannes Weinberg verbally outlined two characterisations in a conversation. To us, they appear to be open and practical. The first is the statement: "Adult education lives for the day", which is driven by the second, the idea that "adult education is openly offered to all who want it". This diagnosis, which is based on many years of scientific reflection on the practice of the VHS, stands for the success of the practice of the adult education centres and their limits. This is addressed, among other things, to the rapid expiry date, the innovative skills and the forgettability of the facility, but also the dynamic character of the challenges and the attitude toward the challenges. We will try here to deal positively with this perspective and to use it as significant and specific to the developmental history with reference to the present. That this historical outline can only be short – and precisely directed – is self-evident. In the same way, the difficulty becomes greater as it approaches the present-day, and the evaluation of the comprehensiveness and the complexity of the development engines. There are many things omitted here and many unanswerable questions.

The leading questions formulated for this article were:
- Which movements (Tietgens 1986) in the history of the development of the VHS are those which have had a profound effect on its profile, which work currently and which are likely to have an impact in the future?
- What task does the VHS take over for the inner cohesion of society – in the sense of a pre-political public orientation, a broad understanding of political education; in the sense of a factual orientation toward the education of the populace; in the sense of "opportunity for a second-chance"; and in the sense of necessary processes of adaption to social change, with analytical self-reflection?

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1/ DIE: Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung (German Institute for Adult Education/Leibnitz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE), former Pädagogische Arbeitsstelle (PAS) of the DVV.

## Framework conditions

The VHS is the largest – mostly communally organised – continuing education institution in Germany, and it is represented with full coverage nationwide. There are various types, the large, medium and small-town VHS. It usually provides a six-month comprehensive programme in general and professional development and is publicly funded. Participation in the courses is not restricted by any access requirements and is comparatively reasonable for the participants. There are also a large number of other public, private and company training providers. The federally established state associations and the umbrella organisation of the VHS are the representatives of the interests of the VHS to the outside world. In most federal states there are adult education laws in which the operation of the VHS is a compulsory task of the federal states and municipalities. In many federal states, the number of pedagogical personnel employed is tied to the number of teaching hours as well as to the amount of subsidies granted by the federal state. Here the support of the VHS mostly has priority over other training providers.



*Information event about the VHS Koblenz*                    *Source: VHS Koblens*

The different laws have a strong impact on the support of the VHS in the individual federal states. This is illustrated by the share of financing provided by the offers of the VHS. Thus, the VHS in Saxony have to finance themselves at a rate of 49.3 % from participant fees, while in North Rhine Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Bremen it is less than 30 %. While further training is financed in Saxony with 5.87 euro per inhabitant, in North Rhine Westphalia is 21.38 euro. The federal average funding share is 13.01 euro (Huntemann/Reichart 2015).

All these indicators are proof of the success of the VHS institution and are also proof of their success story. This refers to their history and to the present. And also, we are convinced, for the future, if they continue to adapt to the changing needs of the people and the respective requirements of ongoing social change and to further develop these basic conditions in their programmes in a humane and public-oriented way. The VHS is successful if it continues to fulfil its seismographic function for the needs of society and the changing needs of the people in the dialectic of adaptation and resistance as well. VHS were and are, no more and no less, a service provider.

### Facts and figures about the VHS today

Range, tasks, and structure of the VHS institution can be well perceived through the current figures from the VHS statistics. These statistical evaluations have been conducted annually by the German Institute for Adult Education, the Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning, for nearly 60 years.

For the year 2014, therefore, Germany had the following balance:
• 907 VHS with more than 3000 external posts in all 16 federal states
• 6,404,233 participants in courses
• 590,850 courses per year
• 95,000 individual courses (lectures in particular)
• 15,305,827 teaching hours per year
• 8,728 study trips and journeys with 188,000 participants
• Distribution of teaching hours: 44.9 % languages; 19.3 % health; 10.7 % culture and design; 10.5 % work and occupation; 10.1 % basic education and school certificates; 4.4 % politics, society, environment
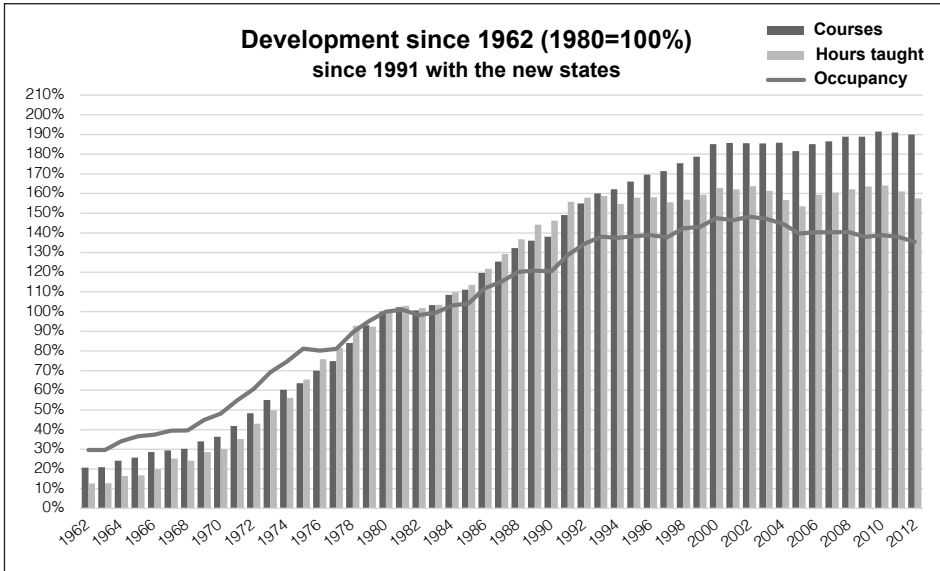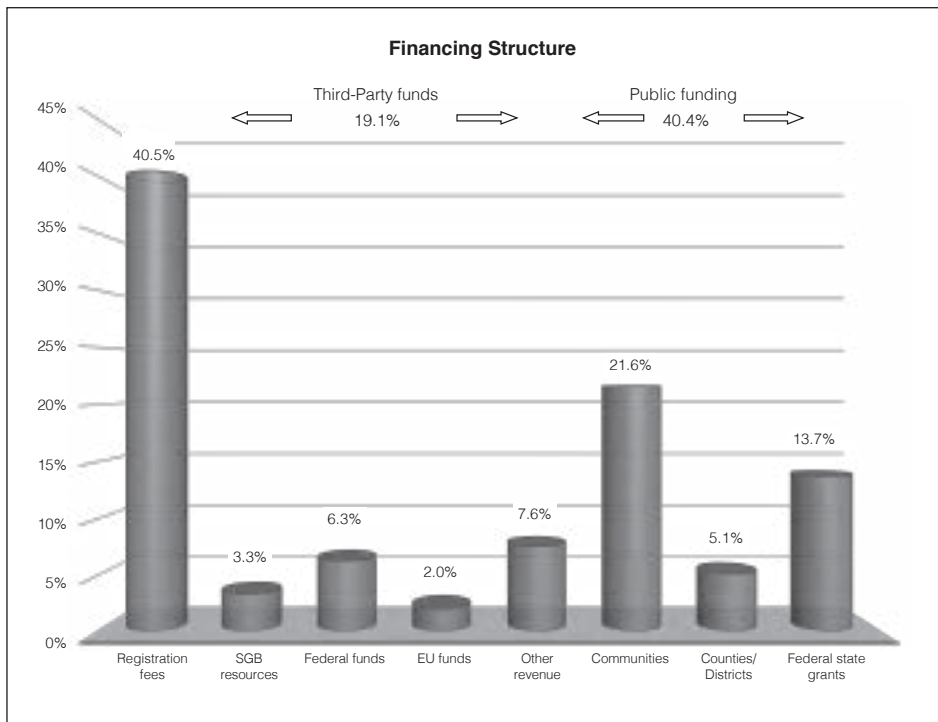
*Development of teaching hours, courses and participant assignments since 1962, from: VHS statistics 2015, 59)*

Types of courses:
- 44.9 % evening courses, 40.5 % day courses
- 75.3 % of the participants are female
- Age composition of the participants: 44.7 % between 25 and 49; 42.5 % over 50
- 1/3 of all courses are aimed at people with a migration background
- 128,000 examinations, including 7.4 % school examinations
- Finance volume: 1 billion euros per year
- 73.1 % expenditure on staff, 41.7 % for full-time staff
- 40.4 % of the funds are public grants; 40.5 % participant fees; 19.1 % other revenue

- Funding: approx. 60 % municipalities, including 7.9 % non-profit association; approx. 30 % registered association, 43 VHS as gGmbHs and other private persons (note: the respective sponsor of the VHS, their legal structure, can have an important role for the organisation of the scope of activity in the self-organisation and the programme offers)

**Financing Structure**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Third-Party funds 19.1% | | Public funding 40.4% | |

Registration fees: 40.5%
SGB resources: 3.3%
Federal funds: 6.3%
EU funds: 2.0%
Other revenue: 7.6%
Communities: 21.6%
Counties/Districts: 5.1%
Federal state grants: 13.7%

*Percentage distribution of funds for the VHS in Germany, from: VHS statistics 2015, 66)*

• Number of employees and structure: 672 full-time supervisory positions; 3,164 pedagogical staff (one-in-four is temporary); 3,931 administrative offices; 188,000 freelance staff for the organisation of events. (Huntemann/Reichart 2015, 2f)

The statistics highlight the outstanding importance of the VHS in the German continuing education market. In particular, the wide range of courses in the further training offers and their comprehensive character are unmatched individual features.

A reduction in the meaningfulness of the performance figures presented here results when differentiating these nationwide indicators by individual federal states and by cities. In some cases there are serious deviations downwards or upwards.

### Genesis and development of the Volkshochschule

### Before 1918

In this article we are dealing with several parallel lines of tradition and political precedents. According to this, the VHS emerged from a) the reading and natural sciences societies – with their focus on the popularisation of knowledge and community formation, which had been part of the bourgeois emancipation efforts in the early nineteenth century, also as university extension; (b) private professional training institutions, trade associations, and in particular, peasant education – the first founded was the *Heimvolkshochschule* (home school) in Rendsburg (1843); (c) the workers' education associations and women's associations (Luise Büchner) which arose in the 1860s. What they had in common was the fact that they arose as a reaction to rapid social change, which demanded adaptation to professional qualifications and, on the other hand, tried to absorb the social upheavals caused by industrialisation by means of efforts oriented toward the public good. Their practical relevance to everyday life is a central determinant of these educational aspirations. In addition to the republican models (Condorcet with his state system of lifelong learning, 1793), it also included middle-class education (Alexander von Humboldt, famous for his Cosmos lecture series, 1828[2]) and romantic ideas (Johann Gottfried Fichte). The education of the general population took place outside the state structures and the institutionalised parties. It was based on the voluntary, mostly unpaid commitment of bourgeois philanthropists and of primary school teachers. The facilities were organised as associations.

In the literature (Steele 2007), the VHS are regarded as one of the early social movements, depending on the position, either of the bourgeoisie or of the working class.

In our opinion, it is the class-crossing and pluralistic nature of the aspirations and the low degree of institutionalisation that was central to the self-help and self-organisation that occurred. The movement characteristics of the VHS still play an important role in the propagated self-awareness of the VHS. It is seen as a sign of flexibility and democratic character. The extent to which it currently has a relationship with the so-called new social movements would have to be explored.

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[2]/ *Kosmos* (usually referred to in English as *Cosmos*) is an influential treatise on science and nature written by the German scientist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt. *Kosmos* began as a lecture series. *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosmos_*(Humboldt)

## 1918-1933

In the Weimar Republic, adult education became a constitutional item. Article 148 §3 of the *Reichsverfassung* (constitution) of 1919 made the promotion of adult education a compulsory task for the Reich[3], the federal states as well as the municipalities, especially emphasising the VHS. The VHS were one of the public places where wealth status-neutral and non-hierarchical communication could be practiced. Even if the number of participants was limited to an active minority, mainly company employees and manual workers.

According to Bernhard Schossig, the VHS "formed the essential features of its inner and outer form in the Weimar period and became the most important institution of adult education. It was oriented towards democratisation both through social theory and pedagogical didactics. This approach was expressed primarily in the social form of the work community." (Schoßig)

The municipalisation of the VHS was sought by many institutions because that promised secure financial support, easier access to teaching facilities and technical material, mainly in schools, and better cooperation possibilities with other local educational institutions (Olbrich, 2000, 154). In the historiography of adult education, a relatively uniform polarised representation of the directions of adult education in the Weimar Republic was chosen. The key words are: old vs. new direction, intensive vs. extensive adult education, romantic vs. realism, neutrality vs. party partiality. There are no integrative considerations which point in particular to the parallelism and simultaneity and examine the value of these debates for the work of the VHS.

The diversity of the VHS, both with regard to the initiators of ideas as well as the effects of the political reality of the specific regional orientation in the Weimar Republic and the specific local cultural and social policy tasks, have so far not been comparatively investigated. Every major city (such as Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Essen, Mannheim, Munich) and many regions (Thuringia, Saxony, Rhine-Main region) had their own roots and approaches to the education of ordinary people.

Keywords for the work in progress, which was tested there in a pluralistic way, in the sense of the foundation of democracy in a pre-political public were the various types: the intellectual committed to the practical, the scientific practitioner, the mediator of expert knowledge – especially in

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[3]/ The Weimar Republic of 1919-1933 continued to use *Deutsches Reich* as its official name.

the big cities where many sociologists were heads of the VHS – participant orientation, interaction on the same social level, the technical reference to work, the practical support for everyday life and the interdisciplinary dialogue between the participants.

## 1933-1945

According to Hans Tietgens and other older exponents of the history of adult education, there was no adult education, due to the dictatorial, national socialist system. According to this influential view, adult education is based on the principle of voluntary learning and the Enlightenment. With this abecedarian nitpicking, a secure terrain for the democratic tradition of education was established, but the fact that further qualification training and organised leisure activities were offered and accepted in the national socialist system of governance, is not able to be justified. And the connection between romantic and quasi-religious ideas of adult education, as propagated by groups from the right and left political spectrum as forerunners of national socialism, or the continued employment of so-called Aryan and politically unassuming instructors in the post 1933 newly established National Socialist public education institutions does not allow for clarification. For the period of National Socialist rule, as regards continuing education institutions, and especially the VHS, there is a research gap.

## 1945-1960

After 1945, the VHS representatives tried to link up with the pedagogic reforms and youthful traditions of the Weimar Republic. The exiles who had survived in Sweden and Great Britain were, thanks to the support of the western Allies, particularly influential. The older generation, that was still alive, the adult educators who were influenced by the Weimar Republic, were just as important for an unbroken dimension of continuity as the liberal-minded civil servants who were once again working in the cultural administrations. The old controversies also arose again, between decentralised and centralised structures, between municipal and association-anchored VHS, between different understandings of professionalism regarding the employees in adult education, instructors with expert status versus instructors with pedagogic qualifications, between personally directed general education and vocational education, between the VHS and other adult education providers, in particular the denominational sponsors, who insisted on equivalent public recognition of their concerns.

The constantly emphasised, highly valued, propagated and planned reeducation by the Allies must be seen relatively. This refers not only to

the assumed stringency of the Allied concept, but also to the evaluation criteria for the success or failure of these efforts. This is especially true for the reexamination of the national socialist past and of the concepts of political education, which were also very little in demand by the participants. The success consisted rather of a broad offer of support for everyday life, which helped in the overcoming of the lag in modernisation and, through the organised offers of life-support, created the framework for learning which was civilising – created distance from the past – and rebuilt the community.

Due to the split in Germany between the FRG and the GDR, two different types of VHS developed. In the GDR, their model was based on the creation of the "socialist person" and integrated into the political system. A certain room for manoeuvre resulted from the fact that it acted in a social niche, with a focus on remedial education and leisure activities. The structure and inner constitution of the VHS has not yet been investigated conclusively for the GDR. However, first approaches for this are available (Gieseke/Opelt 2004, Opelt 2005).

## 1960 to 1980

The rapid development of the VHS in West Germany, which began around 1960, is not to be grasped if it is not understood as part of the general educational reforms, school reform, university reform, and the economic and political interests that were expressed through that. Catchwords such as *Sputnikschock* – as an expression of immense modernisation problems, particularly in the field of science and technology – or the *Bildungskatastrophe* (education catastrophe) – as the expression of a lack of support for educational resources – were significant regulators of public debates. The erection of adult education as the fourth pillar of the education sector was put on the agenda but could not be fully implemented. The will toward structural political design was increasingly confronted with a lack of financing possibilities and a changing political understanding in which economically oriented control competency replaced technologically formulated planning.

In the second half of the 1950s the newly formed German Adult Education Association had begun to make its support proposals more vocal in relation to policy, into a matter which also translated into ministerial and administrative action. This involved not only the content of the work – including participation in the concept of the "citizen in uniform" as a political education of the armed forces – but also the translation of its own projects into figures, in budgets and financial calculations. Thus, for example, there was the implementation of the pedagogical workplace of the DVV, now the

German Institute for Adult Education, as a budget heading of the Federal Ministry of the Interior during this time, and a little later, around 1962, the foundation of the institute DVV International, as the basis for international development cooperation, through funding from the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Decisive for the articulate competence of the VHS was the expert opinion "On the Situation and Duty of German Adult Education" (1960) of the "German Committee on Education and Training".

From the 1960s to the mid-1970s, other relevant educational policy recommendations, memos and expert reports were published and a nationwide network of further training laws emerged. In most of the federal states the VHS there was a compulsory undertaking for the cities and municipalities, each with proportionately different financing from the respective federal state, and the establishment of a prominent position for the VHS among further education providers.

The resulting expansion of the VHS also made it possible to greatly increase the number of permanent staff. As a result of this, a professionalisation of VHS work was possible. The understanding of professionalism changed, (adult) pedagogical qualifications were given a higher value in relation to practice-based scholarly expertise. There was an extension and differentiation of the programme offer. Instead of just German as a foreign language, an independent programme area and a large number of offers for the education of women were created.

Between 1965 and 1975, technocratic planning euphoria prevailed, which played an important role – and also an illusory one – with many of the participants for a long time.

## 1980-1989

At the latest with the end of the so-called social-liberal government era, the expansion stage of the VHS ended and consolidation took place at a high level. The long term political planning-based design structuring of the continuing education sector was replaced by manager-oriented control based on market principles. The content-based tendering procedure in the programme planning area was increasingly transformed into a strong predominantly market-oriented and finance-related principle of demand. The VHS had to face increasing competition from other training providers and became a provider in a pluralistic further training market. In particular, the vocational qualification area for the longer-term unemployed expanded and represented a significant source of funding for VHS work.

**1989 to the present**

Within the framework of the reunification of Germany, the implementation of the structural and organisational constitution of the West German VHS was a central, in particular politically desirable, task, which the German Adult Education Association, the federal state associations and some VHS applied to themselves and successfully managed. Here, as always in the history of Germany, the VHS took on an important practical fire brigade function at different levels. At the praxis level, important partnerships developed between the East and West German VHS.

The instruments of control – in particular quality assurance, certification expectations for the employees, business-oriented management, project-related support – were and still are being refined and, in a certain way, into a new core brand of the VHS.

The readjustment of the position of the VHS in the municipal context of social and cultural policy, while at the same time reducing the cost to the public sector, is an ongoing process, with its specific local characteristics and scope for action.

The VHS has been able to successfully gain new topicality in its overall social fire brigade function since 2015 thanks to its massive support for the task of integration of refugees. A total of 37,385 courses for people with a migration background were offered in 2015. This was 8,421 more than in the previous year. In German courses, 194,000 more participants were enrolled – an increase of 16 % compared to 2014. (Huntemann/Reichart 2016)



*Exchange of expertise among colleagues*          Source: VHS Koblens

**Focus: VHS Koblenz – Profile-building indicators of its development history**

The Koblenz VHS today, with about 30,000 teaching units, about 1200 courses and about 18,000 students, is a medium-sized VHS and was one of the first in Germany.

**Initial phase – 1919 and thereafter**

In 1919 already, the municipality provided financial resources in order to be able to set up VHS courses according to the guidelines of the Prussian Ministry of Science, Art and National Education. At first, very little money was available for the education system and the VHS in Koblenz. However even then there were clear ideas about the structure of the organisation like, for example, the age of the participants, the nature and duration of the courses, the teaching method, the number of participants, the amount of the fee for the participants or the remuneration of the teachers. In its beginnings, the Koblenz VHS was oriented pedagogically and didactically toward democratisation and to "cultivate intellectual education for its own sake and not to obtain entitlements". Many of the principles of organisation and methodology exist to this day in the Koblenz VHS. The first work plan for the courses of the VHS included a series of six lectures on economics and social policy, health education, natural sciences, German history, the history of literature, art and music, as well as law.

The social and historical framework conditions in Koblenz as well as in the entire country, a lack of intellectual orientation and the growing economic emergency at the end of the Weimar Republic prevented the permanent establishment of the VHS in Koblenz. The courses were discontinued 9 years later, in 1928, due to the many years of scarce financial support from the municipality, the overburden of work for the part-time director and the low number of registrations for enrolment. Topics of the final series of lectures were "On the understanding of music and musical taste", "Introduction to the spirit of Romanticism and the Gothic era", "Introduction to the study of the volcanic world of the Rhein" or "Introduction to chemistry".

**Reestablishment phase – 1946 and after**

In the years after the Second World War, in all of Germany, as in Koblenz in 1946, there was a reestablishment of the VHS. In the French zone in Koblenz, the further education institution was neither hampered nor promoted. However, in 1947, the basic guidelines for adult education in Germany

*Work room in the VHS Koblenz*                           *Source: VHS Koblens*

were formulated in Quadripartite Control Council Directive No. 56, and the VHS were recognised as an important means of reeducation. The focus of the reeducation of the populace in Koblenz was on the "cultivation of a true, genuine humanity" and the Pestalozzi leitmotif: "Let us become human again, so that we can again become citizens, so that we can become states again."

The first full-time head of the VHS, Hermann Wedell, formulated the principles for the VHS in Koblenz in 1946. He wrote that the VHS was an "educational institution of its own kind, which, without a direct practical objective, without its own curriculum, without exams and entitlement certificates, is in the service of the new democratic construction of our people. It aims to clarify the urgent questions of our time and the eternal questions of humanity, distributing objective knowledge over all its areas of existence, through encounters with the works of our German and Western culture, cultivating genuine community life in amateur theatre, music and singing clubs, with motivation toward actual work. It appeals to all adults, no matter what social class and education, of whatever party and worldview. The principles of sovereignty of the people, equality, self-administration, and humanity are the essential principles of education".

Up to the present, the Koblenz VHS has worked with the basic principles which were laid down in 1946. After the collapse and political defeat, the VHS in Koblenz concentrated on offering the people starting points for

socio-cultural reconstruction. "On the nature of humans", "Social ethics reflected in the 10 Commandments" or "Communal self-administration as a reflection of our time" were now the topics. In addition, courses were held in which the knowledge gaps caused by the war period were to be closed and the professional opportunities of the participants would be improved. This included topics such as "Math", "From account to balance", "Special courses for the construction branch", "Technical drawing for construction", "Typing" or language instruction in English and French. Even at that time, we responded directly to the needs of the people and also offered courses such as "Do-it-yourself gardening" or "How can parents help their growing children today". This orientation continues to be an important element in the planning of the Koblenz VHS and contributes to the continuing success of the institution in the heart of Koblenz. In addition to this, the instructors often got their qualifications and were decision-makers or personalities in the city of Koblenz. For example the Lord Mayor, a chief physician, a manufacturer, a music director, a graduate engineer, and many different lecturers were instructors.

Even in the post-war reestablishment phase, a parallel can be seen in the planning of the Koblenz VHS, which has stretched through decades to the present as a stabilising element. For example, there were courses on offer which were personality-building and had as their goal forging an understanding between people, as well as courses which were concretely adapted to the current needs of the population. The teaching of topics by qualified teachers and city personalities reflects the eminent reputation of the institution in the municipality.

Along with the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany, the appointment of the first full-time head of the VHS Koblenz, Hermann Wedell, was made in the spring of 1949. This created the first necessary prerequisite by the municipality to secure the long-term preservation of the Koblenz VHS as an adult education institution. With its first classroom, and since 1955 with its own small premises, the *Heimverein der VHS Koblenz e.V.* (Home Association of the VHS Koblenz) – familiarly called the *VHS Heim* (Home VHS) – the essential prerequisites were created and which still stand for a successful further training institution: Full-time qualified staff, own premises and qualified instructors.

During the era of the economic miracle of the 1950s, the new full-time management gradually adapted the VHS programme to current topics such as the market economy, property, the East-West conflict, but also to the epoch of cultural pessimism. Courses for the development of professional possibilities, such as stenography or bookkeeping, were expanded, as well as specific target groups with their own prescripts were addressed. Examples include "For the Woman", "Podium of the Younger Generation"

or specific working groups in photography, theatre, acting and singing. Particularly important was the trade union-oriented "Work and Life" community, which was aimed toward workers, and with which the VHS organised a kind of wide-ranging study programme to improve general education. In the programme planning of the fifties and early sixties, the VHS directorship pursued three main approaches: the professional orientation of the participants, the question of the image of the modern human, and preparation for new forms of community and social life. In addition, the work plan was restructured and made more fact-specific as well as broken down by subject and subject areas. A uniform structure of the programme areas of all VHS, the basis for its scientific approach and target group orientation, are clearly visible in this phase. All three aspects gain in importance with the progressive development of the Koblenz VHS into a municipal training centre. In the long term, they contribute to subject-orientation and a precise understanding of the knowledge gained by the participants. In addition, efforts are still being made at the Koblenz VHS to ensure a successful orientation of the programme offers to specific target groups or milieus with their own prerequisites, interests and needs.

**Build-up phase 1960-1980**

A continuous and intensive expansion of the programme of the VHS Koblenz took place in the next two decades, the 60s to the 80s. This was done with modest support, first of all by a part-time head of the departments, and from 1978 onwards with other full-time pedagogical staff. At the beginning of 1960, about 100 courses were held. That grew to 200 by 1966 and reached 300 in 1979. During this period in Koblenz, political education was of particular importance in the dissemination of knowledge and civic awareness. Thus, in collaboration with other institutions such as the Federal Archives or the Institut Francais, documentary films from the Second World War were shown, a political series on France was offered, or current questions on European politics were discussed.

Slowly, a fundamental process of rethinking and adaptation was introduced into the management of the VHS Koblenz. With a growing awareness of the social requirements of a rapidly developing economy in the Federal Republic of Germany, the focus in the programme planning of the VHS also changed. The expanded and intensive build-up of vocational training for the professional sector was a response to the growing needs of the economy for qualified personnel with the corresponding final examinations and certificates. The VHS Koblenz was innovative and started the first evening course in the Rhineland-Palatinate in 1959 for acquisition of the state-recognised secondary school certificate. From 1967 onwards

new long-term qualification courses began in the technical and commercial sector in cooperation with a distance learning institute. Additionally there was the introduction of courses for interpreters and commercial correspondence in English and French as well as the implementation of VHS certificate tests which were recognised nationwide. By 1985 the language area at the VHS Koblenz expanded to 131 courses, one of the largest in Rhineland-Palatinate.

At its start, the Koblenz VHS was still primarily focused on promoting the personality development of its participants. It now became more and more an instrument of modern education, which had to fulfil a wide range of social tasks. It constantly had to adapt during its development history to target the diverse needs of the people of Koblenz and the new challenges faced by society. To date, this is one of the most important profile-building indicators of the development history of the continuing education institution. Again and again, the Koblenz VHS has responded to social change and helped shape it. In various phases of development, it has adapted its programme and pedagogical activities to the new needs without being unfaithful to its principles of equality, humanity, equal opportunity and the ability to act independently.

### Stabilisation phase – 1980-2000

In the two decades which followed, up to the turn of the millennium, the Koblenz VHS was able to stabilise and establish itself with a continuous programme expansion, further innovations and the targeted approach to selected groups in the municipality. In the mid-1990s, the full-time employees were reenforced with three pedagogical specialists and other administrative staff, increasing management of the continuing education institution to a total of 8.5 posts. Thus, for example, the Koblenz VHS received coveted recognition as an examination centre for the carrying out of the international examinations for the University of Cambridge, which annually attracted some 200 participants from regional industrial enterprises and high schools. Next to the setting up and expansion of literacy courses, the target group of seniors now also came into view in the task spectrum of the VHS with innovative model projects such as "Yes old, but not too old" or "Mobile VHS for Seniors". The founding of the Rhein-Mosel Guide Network with the offer of city walks and guided tours in Koblenz museums, or the founding of the working group "Living Antiquity" showed the innovative power and adaptability of the VHS Koblenz to the needs of the population. The acquisition of the attractive title "Microsoft Approved Computer Training Centre" reflected the systematic expansion and differentiation of computer programmes with a high quality and a modern technical standard.

*Physics experiment in the VHS Koblenz*                    *Source: VHS Koblens*

With the adoption of the Law on Continuing Education in Rhineland-Palatinate in 1995, continuing education was acknowledged as an independent, equitable area of education in public responsibility, and the basic tasks of continuing education and the VHS were also legally stipulated. The Koblenz VHS had already fulfilled the tasks formulated here for many years: namely the realisation of the right to education, the equality of opportunities, the reduction of educational deficits, the expansion of knowledge, abilities and qualifications as well as the ability to act independently and to share responsibility in professional and public life. Legitimation by the state of Rhineland-Palatinate has given Koblenz basic and reliable financial support to the present day. The division into basic support of the continuing education institution, a promotion of the teaching units carried out, and a staff allowance for the pedagogical staff was an essential ground for increasing the professionalisation of the VHS as a municipal service enterprise.

With the conversion of military property into public use in 2000, after decades of efforts of the VHS leadership, together with the municipal education institute and the music school, more adult-oriented premises were obtained. In addition to the increasing use of schools, an office with

self-managed premises is a basic prerequisite for professional training and modern services in the 21st century. Topics such as cost-effectiveness, public relations, service, consultancy, customer communication, development of offers, teaching-learning processes, evaluation, controlling and strategic management are now increasingly the focus of the management work of the market-oriented but not profit-oriented Koblenz VHS. Quality development directs the view from programme planning to the goals of the entire institution with economically efficient management. In 2004, the Koblenz VHS took part in the pilot project for the first certification of the organisation in accordance with a quality management system recognised throughout Germany (LQW – Learning-oriented Quality Development in Continuing Education) and has to the present day successfully completed all further recertification processes. Providing evidence of efficient and quality-oriented adult education work became more and more important for the VHS Koblenz in times of increasing financial bottlenecks in the municipality. In the years up to 2012, the further training institute received further licenses for examinations, for instance like admission to the naturalisation test or the Xpert tests in the commercial and computer sector, which are recognised throughout Europe. The introduction of the European reference framework in the field of languages also made it possible to compare acquired language skills across Europe. Entry into the "Quality sphere of Health Education", into the new initiative of the Koblenz city photographers; the establishment of the "Science Forum" with the University of Koblenz-Landau or the participation in the Rhineland-Palatinate cultural summer, show the various further education activities of this development phase of the VHS, as for instance: in cooperation with the Centre for Integration, for the first time, language support for schools with children who have a migration background was offered; or a model project of the federal state for the "teaching of learning strategies and self-learning competences in basis-oriented parent education" for which it was granted a financial subsidy for its implementation. Its participation with numerous events at the Federal Garden Show in Koblenz was the peak of a steady rise in the number of teaching units, courses and participants which had gone on for decades at the VHS Koblenz.

### Adjustments – 2000 and thereafter

The high level of indebtedness of the city of Koblenz since 2010 led to profound consolidation measures by the municipality. At first, only general savings were required from the Koblenz VHS. In 2012, however, the city passed a concept for the reduction of the continuing education institution. For the following years, to 2015, it ordered about 20 % savings in the

full-time personnel. The establishment of the non-profit foundation fund between the city of Koblenz and the Koblenz citizens' foundation "VHS in Change" in 2009 was already geared to support further education at the VHS with alternative financial means. Since 2012 the concentration of the management work at the VHS Koblenz has depended on the effective restructuring of the organisation, the targeted use of the human and financial resources and the safeguarding of the tried and tested further training offers. Despite the changed focus, the training institute was able to be innovative during this period as well. For example, it participated in a new community project with 7 Koblenz cultural institutions for the commemorative year 2014 under the title "War! 1914 at the Rhine and Moselle". In 2015 as well, the Koblenz VHS received a positive answer to its submission of a concept for a model project for the support of continuing education as part of the literacy and basic education initiative, and offered numerous measures for the integration of refugees. At the present time, the following four topics are at the forefront of the content and planning work of the VHS: integration, basic education, digital participation and demographic



Data source: Koblenz School of Education; ILV: Internal Performance Calculation
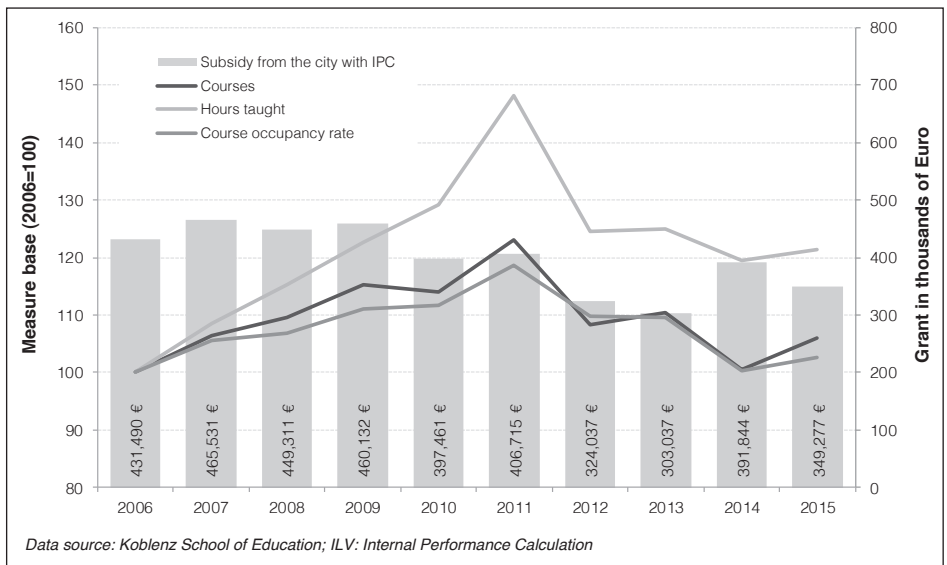
*The chronological development of selected statistics from the VHS Koblenz from the previous decade illustrates the continuous increase in the development of the teaching units, courses and participation, with an extraordinary peak thanks to the strong participation at the Federal Garden Show 2011 in Koblenz. In addition, the link between the amount of the city's subsidy and the basic services of the Koblenz VHS is also indirectly visible (from: Stadt Koblenz (2016): Statistisches Jahrbuch 2016, Image 10.06*

change. Against the backdrop of social change and the new demands for quality-oriented further education, the Koblenz VHS will continue to try and implement the traditional-rich motto "Education for all – in all areas of life".

These indicators can be summarised as follows: A future-oriented and quality-oriented further education at the Koblenz VHS can only be provided on the basis of sound funding from the municipality and the state. The basis is adequate staffing with pedagogical specialists and administrative staff, their own premises and further training appropriate rooms as well as the didactic-methodical design of the infrastructure with necessary media and materials. If these framework conditions are met, they will fulfil a key profile-building indicator of the flexible adaptation of the programme offers to the specific needs of the regional population according to lifelong learning. As a municipal training centre and an educational service provider, the VHS Koblenz also has to face the tasks in the municipality and to actively support them in their management, for example as presently in the integration of refugees.

## Future tasks

At the 2016 Adult Education Conference, Federal President at that time Joachim Gauck honoured the achievements of the more than 900 VHS in Germany from a historical and current perspective. His speech was in the tradition of many of his predecessors, such as Theodor Heuss, Gustav Heinemann, Walter Scheel, and Roman Herzog, who had contributed to earlier Adult Education Conferences. Their speeches reflect the recognised value of the VHS in the political-cultural system of Germany. Joachim Gauck emphasised the following permanent models of VHS work:

- Open to all – in the sense of equality of opportunity, educational equality;
- versatile – as a seismograph of social trends in its programme offers;
- civic engagement – in the sense of practicing a social and political sense of responsibility

Joachim Gauck particularly emphasised the communal, life-centred function as "schools of the community" as "workshops for democracy", which play a prominent and guiding role both in times of profound social upheavals and in times of adaptation to economic and technological change. The prominence given to the VHS by the President of the Federal Republic through his speech, as well as the partisanship which he expresses for the

VHS, illustrates the immense political importance of the VHS in the educational system in Germany.

Today the VHS is a core component of municipal public services. Its work is characterised by its plurality and its flexibility. In its fire brigade function for current social problems, which are on its "policy" agenda, it has to cover the respective tasks resulting from this. By making this successful, it secures its existence and creates the conditions for doing its daily business.

In our view the VHS has the following future tasks, which are based on the profiling categories of its history of development:

1. Exercise of fire-brigade tasks: increased efforts to integrate the marginal and, in basic education based on a broad definition of culture, to pass along necessary knowledge;
2. popularisation of science: mediation and discussion of expert knowledge related to social survival in times of increasing crises;
3. the promotion of social well-being: the use of a broad concept of political education based particularly on the subject matter and the public character of the educational offer;
4. Creation of learning centres as places of self-organised learning of groups, with e-learning aspects.

The high points of the VHS were periods of upheaval – change in the form of the state, but also change in work, change in culture and in mentalities. Those were the crises experienced after the First World War, after National Socialism, and after German reunification in 1989 – always times when the learning needs of the people greatly increased, even if not as expected for the classical topics of political education. This connection of social crises and learning needs has so far not been systematically investigated in research. However, the presentation of social history as a history of learning promises to garner an expanded prospect of the profile-forming tasks of the VHS.

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# Management models in organisations for adult education

**Emir Avdagić / Winfried Ellwanger**

# Management models in organisations for adult education

*One of the scientific fields which could and should use its knowledge to initiate positive changes in the development of adult education is education management. So, the main aim of this article is to present results of the research done in the field of management of organisations for adult education. Since organisations for adult education are specific in comparison to other education organisations, and since there is a need to professionalise management in organisations for adult education in Southeastern Europe, the main aim of the research was to discuss the relationship between management models and the external environment of the organisation. The theoretical base in studying management models in organisations for adult education was related to principles of contemporary theories of organisation and management, as well as andragogy. Within the qualitative research paradigm and case study model, we applied the techniques of document analysis and interview in the research. The sample included education organisations from two very different social and economic systems – Germany as one which is well developed, and Bosnia-Herzegovina as one which is "transitional", which is dominant in the Southeastern Europe region. Research results "advocated" ten management models as the most important ones in the management practice of organisations for adult education, with strategic management being first. Other models which can be implemented in relation to the general and immediate external environment, are marketing management, management of organisational culture, goal-oriented management, and network management.*

## Management in adult education

In the context of transition challenges, and especially democratisation and decentralisation, autonomy is growing in the field of education, which is very useful for the development of some new scientific fields that could enhance changes and the development of education. One such field is **management in education** – a concept and practice that has been intensively developed in the past few decades. Management in education is expected to make some changes in the nature and mission of education organisations, to support and to accept a new understanding of the state management of education, which is shifting from a bureaucratically led system towards work for the benefit of learners.

There are various definitions of management in the recent literature. Management is defined as (1) a scientific field aimed at producing, systematising and presenting results of scientific research on the most rational and most efficient forms of managing; (2) the practice/process of coordination and efficient use of subjective and objective resources in order to achieve certain goals; (3) a team of competent persons who lead an organisation. Management thus serves as the unique name for various constructs and processes, but there are also different meanings of the term management. Management is seen as the process of shaping the environment in which individuals, working together, efficiently achieve certain goals (Weichrich, Konntz, 1994). Management is also "the process of achieving desired results by efficient use of human and material resources" (Bedeian, Glueck, 1983).

One of the most delicate definitions of management can be found in the work of Drucker (2000). He says that management is about action and implementation, and it can be tested by results, so in a way we may call it a technology. Drucker also says that management deals with people, their growth and development, their values, social community and effects on it – which makes it a discipline from the field of the humanities, or a "humanistic skill". Managers use knowledge from humanities and from social sciences in order to achieve specific results in their activities. The term *management* is quite broad, so it comes as no surprise that scientists from various disciplines are interested in it and they are trying to explain the phenomenon of management, its functions and structural elements. They only party succeed in that, since this phenomenon develops constantly (Alibabić, 2002). In general, one may conclude that management is a very complicated term, related to regulation functions, processes, resources, knowledge and the practice of leading. It is usually defined as the process of coordination of human and material resources in order to achieve certain goals (Staničić, 2011).

Management has moved from the military, production and economic field into all other fields of work, and management skills have become an im-

portant part of all activities, including education. It is obvious that we apply management to certain fields and name it after these fields, and that is how we got *management in education* or *education management* (as a term, practice, process, discipline, profession). Management in education refers to the implementation of characteristics and functions of management in the education field – at all levels of education activities, education systems, education organisations/institutions, education process (Alibabić, 2002).

Management in education can be defined as the coordination of human and material potentials in order to achieve goals set (explicitly and implicitly) in concepts, strategies, and projections of education. Implementation of management in education is operationalised through leading and guiding the education system and its sub-systems (Stančić, 2011). There are some authors who claim that management and education are two separate phenomena, which are not related to one another. The term *management in education* consists of two terms: *education,* which by definition should be free and autonomous and *management,* which rises from the economy and is a synonym for the "rule of money" (Pigisch, 2010). This is why some say that these two phenomena cannot be related. Also, there is a claim that management is not in accord with education values and content; that the power relationships that occur in management are not in accord with the democratic principles that are expected in education; that the work of educational organisations is different from the work of the market-oriented organisations; that the idea of the market, which is in the essence of management is harmful for the field of education; that managers in general enjoy their power, neglecting moral principles that are important in education; that vertical responsibility among employees in schools makes them unhappy. Due to all these reasons, managers in education need to be only "the first among equals" (Everard, Morris, according to Stančić, 2011).

In spite of evident differences between education and the economic field, there is a need for management in education, since every educational organisation needs planning, organisation, coordination, development of human potentials and material resources in order to improve efficiency and provide better education activities. "A good manager makes the organisation successful and competitive, but also makes society productive and innovative, especially in these uncertain times" (Zech, 2010).

Good managers, those who can respond properly to management challenges, are those who can overcome "the gap" between theory and practice, which is a certain "Gordian Knot" of management in education. It is possible to overcome it, but only by understanding and respecting relevant research findings and theory. The relevance of theory for good practice almost comes without saying. If the practitioners ignore theory

then they rely only on their experience, which is certainly useful, but not enough. Managers quite often say they have "followed common sense" in decision-making. However, these pragmatic decisions are often based on implicit theories. Managers act based on their principles, formed through experience, but they could work more efficiently by accepting theory based on practice. Since management is "the pillar" of every organisation (Zech 2010), it is important that managers do know theory, since only with competencies can they respond to contemporary management challenges (Alibabić, Ovsenik, Miljjković, 2013). The German Adult Education Association has already responded to this by offering a modular training concept "VHS Continuing education and training module series for the advanced training of management and management staff at adult education centres"[1] which is available on the DVV website in German.[2] Research in the field of management in education is aimed at enhancing the competencies of managers. Thus the main purpose of this article is to present results of the implementation of management models in organisations for adult education and to make these results available to the scientific public, as well as for managers in education.

### On research intention – research and its elements

Due to the specific nature of organisations for adult education and due to the need for the professionalisation of the management in adult education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and Southeastern Europe, our research intention was to examine possibilities for the implementation, as well as the context and characteristics of the management models in organisations for adult education in two very different socio-economic systems. This research intention was oriented towards finding successful management models and their possible applicability in various contexts.

The subject of this research is management in organisations for adult education in the context of development of the organisation environment, comparatively viewed and analysed in organisations in two countries – one well-developed (Germany) and one in transition (B&H). The results from previous research gave us some orientation in formulating our goal. There were not many previous research projects, but they concluded that management in organisations for adult education differs from

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[1]/ VHS Weiterbildungsmangement-Modulreihe zur Fortbildung von Führungs- und Leitungskräften an Volkshochschulen.

[2]/ https://www.dvv-vhs.de/service/vhs-weiterbildungsmanagement.html, Accessed 10.01.2017

*Carpentry workshop at the VHS Cham: building a canoe*                    Source: VHS Cham

management in other organisations, small companies, etc., and that it is determined by numerous factors of different origin, which are necessary to examine in more detail.

Thus the goal was to examine possibilities for the implementation of the management models in organisations for adult education in the context of the specific external environments of educational organisations from two countries – Germany and B&H – and based on that (comparative) approach to develop a set of recommendations and guidelines for selection and implementation of management models which are appropriate for certain contexts or environments.

The results we got can contribute to a scientific view of management in adult education – overcoming the gap between the theory and practice of management, as well as contribute to the professionalisation of management of adult education in B&H and Southeastern Europe. Also, the results of this scientific research can be used not only in Germany, but also in adult education in other European countries in which we see the lack of a wider debate on the professionalisation of adult education (Nuissl, according to Pigisch, 2010).

In accordance with the established goal, general research questions were set and research variables identified.

Research question: Is the implementation of a certain management model in organisations for adult education related to the characteristics of the external environment (general and immediate) of these organisations?

### Research variables

1. **Dependent variables**
   Set of management models[3] (nominative management, strategic management, goal-oriented management, management of programme, management of process, management of knowledge, management of human resources, financial management, marketing management, sales management, management of quality, project management, management of change, management of organisational culture, conflict management, management of time, network management).

2. **Independent variables**
   a) General external environment (adult education in the educational policy of the country; conception, strategy, law, system of adult education, subsidies, international/national conflicts.
   b) Immediate external environment (characteristics of the environment of the educational organisation, demographics, economic growth, economic development, competition and population density).

Research approach, model, methods and techniques: Having in mind the nature of the research problem, the accent was on the qualitative research approach – explaining and understanding the data of objective and subjective origin, and their interrelations. This approach helped us to examine the problem/topic in-depth and in more detail, to get much relevant detailed data from direct actors in management and to get deeper, empirical answers to important questions related to management in adult education. Research was conducted using the case study model, and by "model", we mean "approach to data collection and seeking answers to research problems" (Savićević, 1996). In this research, methods, which are in accordance to the demands of the holistic and qualitative research paradigm, were used, including description, cooperation and interpretative analysis. "Material" on characteristics of the environment has been collected through the document (content) collection technique, and data on the

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[3]/ Set of management models (*Das ArtSet – Managementmodell*, Zech, 2010).

implementation of the management model through the interview technique (with managers of selected organisations).

The research sample was composed of the organisations for adult education and their managers (five from Germany and five from B&H): The selection of organisations for adult education was intentional, in order to include various types of organisations (VHS[4], private education institutions, NGOs, adult education institutions).

### Analysis of results

### 1. The relation between the general external environment and the implementation of the management models in organisations for adult education[5]

Studying the general external environment of organisations for adult education resulted in identifying and describing its components, which can be in relation to the implementation of management models. This is why we give a short description of the general external environment in two countries.

### Germany

Education policy in Germany is mainly the task of the federal states, which have some political freedom to form policy, and this can be done in education (unlike in many other fields in which the dominance of the federal government is strong). Although on the federal level there is a State Ministry of Education and Research based in Berlin, this Ministry, through its institutions, is mainly research-oriented and has a coordination role in the policy-making of the states. There are 16 states (Länder) in Germany and the education system is decentralised, so the competencies for education, including adult education, are at the level of the state and municipalities instead of at the federal level. This research was conducted in one of these states – Bavaria. In accordance with that and in accordance to the system in which organisations for adult education work in Germany, the general immediate environment for these organisations is Bavaria, while the areas

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[4]/ Sample: VHS from Bavaria different in size (big, medium, small) and legal status.

[5]/ Data collected from documents, publications and online sources listed in bibliography.

of the cities Regen, Cham, Munich, Landau an der Isar and Regensburg are the external immediate environment for these organisations.

Adult education in Bavaria is part of the unique education system and it is defined by the Law on Improvement of Adult Education (1974). It is also mentioned in the 1946 state constitution, in which three articles mention the importance of adult education and encourage local communities to establish organisations for adult education and plan public funds for this field. The Länder ministries work together in the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Awareness of the importance of adult education is raised not only in employers and individuals, but also in local authorities. The concept of adult education of the state Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Art is based on the idea that every individual needs to be ready to gain new knowledge and competencies and to widen his/her horizons through learning.[6]

Adult education, that is education for every individual, is seen as an opportunity and as development potential, which can contribute to development of the individual and wider community. The fact that the state as well as local communities give significant amounts of money for adult education shows that adult education is recognised as a significant development factor. However, in spite of the awareness developed on the need and the importance of adult education, the state ministry has been trying to change the law on adult education for many years. One of the main problems with the existing law is the fact that there is an exact amount of money prescribed by law, which is mandatory for the state to invest in adult education, and it should be a percentage of the total amount for education, which is much bigger nowadays than 40 years ago. Another problem is also a different view of the role of "vocational education" and a different understanding of the tasks of adult education among officially recognised providers of adult education.

Education authorities in Bavaria, except for the fact that they are trying to adopt a new law which would be more in accordance to the current needs of society, have not made other significant improvements in the development of a strategy for adult education.[7] Bavaria does not have a strategy for the development of adult education and does not have a strategy for the development of lifelong learning. Following the ideas of many

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[6]/ http://www.km.bayern.de/ministerium/erwachsenenbildung.html, Accessed 06.12.2016

[7]/ Vollzug des Gesetzes zur Förderung der Erwachsenenbildung, Bekanntmachung des Bayerischen Staatsministeriums für Bildung und Kultus, Wissenschaft und Kunst vom 17.02.2016, Az. VI.9-BS1710-3.2 63 im KWMBI Nr. 5/2016 (Obligation to introduce a quality management system).

*German language course in the VHS Cham*                    *Source: VHS Cham*



*Management in adult education course by*
*DVV International         Source: DVV International*



*Learning to be a geriatric nurse at the AEC Nahla*
*Source: DVV International*

authors, we included the factor of international/national conflicts as one of the components of the general immediate environment. When it comes to the general environment in Bavaria, we may say that there are no national conflicts there, but some international conflicts, mostly in Syria and Afghanistan, which do affect the work of organisations for adult education

in Bavaria. Since Bavaria is in the southeast part of Germany, the largest number of refugees come into Germany through Bavaria. Bavaria is also the most well-developed region, so thousands of refugees and potential asylum seekers stay in Bavaria. This is a challenge for adult education in Bavaria, which will require a response from authorities in the future.

## Bosnia-Herzegovina

In order to better explain the context in which organisations for adult education work in countries in transition, such as B&H, it is necessary to present the administrative organisation and competencies related to education in B&H: The state of B&H consists of two entities, the Federation of B&H (FBiH) and the Republic of Srpska (RS) and one additional administrative part, the Brčko District. FBiH and RS have their own constitutions, which need to be in accordance to the Constitution of B&H. The B&H Federation is an entity comprised of ten cantons (which then consist of municipalities): Posavina Canton, Tuzla Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton, Una-Sana Canton, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton Goražde, Middle Bosnia Canton, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, Western Herzegovina Canton, Canton Sarajevo and Canton 10. Republic of Srpska is administratively divided into regions and regions then are divided into municipalities. Brčko is a District established by a decision of the Brcko Arbitral Tribunal for Dispute Over the Inter-Entity Boundary in Brcko Area.[8] Education, including adult education, is under the competency of entities (RS) and cantons (FB&H) and municipalities. There is no ministry of education at the state level. The Ministry of Civil Affairs at the state level has a sector for education, which has a coordinating role and which works on programmes with the EU. It also monitors the implementation of programmes and strategic documents in the field of education (formal, non-formal and informal) and the implementation of European conventions and declarations related to education. The sector for education also develops standards in education and lifelong learning. Having in mind the importance of adult education, the Council of Ministers in B&H, on a suggestion by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, in April 2014 adopted the document *Principles and Standards in Adult Education in B&H*, which was a result of the EU project *Strengthening Capacities of Development of Human Resources in B&H*, which is based on international, European principles and standards for adult education. This document represents a framework in which education

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[8]/ https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/provision/international-arbitration-general-framework-agreement-peace-bosnia-and-herzegovina

*VHS Cham*                          *Source: VHS Cham*   *Adult Education Centre Nahla*
                                                        *Source: DVV International*

authorities develop and implement policies and regulations related to adult education, having in mind their constitutional and legal competencies. Within the same project another document has been adopted: *Strategic Platform for Development of Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Learning in Bosnia-Herzegovina for the Period 2014-2020.* This document was adopted in October 2014. This important document is a legal framework for acting and cooperation between authorities in the field of adoption and full implementation of strategic documents related to adult education. There have been significant steps forward at the entity and cantonal levels when it comes to adoption of laws on adult education, thanks to the lobbying of different international organisations which work in B&H. The first law on adult education was adopted in 2009 in RS, and after that several cantons adopted laws: Una-Sana Canton (2013), Zenica-Doboj Canton (2014), Bosnia-Podrinje Canton (May 2015), Western Herzegovina Canton (July 2015), Tuzla Canton (July 2015) and Canton Sarajevo (October 2015). Four cantons in the Federation B&H and District Brčko still do not have laws on adult education.

In our research, three administrative units in B&H represented the external general environment: Republic Srpska (RS), Tuzla Canton and Canton Sarajevo. The cities of Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Tuzla and Gračanica were seen as the external immediate environment for organisations for adult education, which we had as a sample. The selection of five organisations was intentional, since, beside different types of organisations, our intention was to take into consideration diversity when it comes to one of the components related to the general environment of organisation – the

legal component. As mentioned, in one of three external general environ-
ments during the time of research, the law on adult education was adopt-
ed, which incorporated adult education in the educational system. How-
ever, none of the three external general environments had any strategy
for development of adult education. Although all relevant B&H documents
mention the importance of the concept of lifelong learning as a basic com-
ponent of the desirable model of society, awareness of the importance of
adult education has still not been developed at any level of governance.
There is no legal regulation, or it differs in different local administrative
units, frameworks for the work of organisations for adult education differ
too, and budgets for adult education are still very limited and insufficient.
Political problems, national issues and political conflicts reflect on the field
of adult education as well, so all attempts to adopt a general law on adult
education at the state level failed. This law could have created a frame-
work for adopting harmonised laws at the lower levels of governance and
could have provided a unique system of organisation of the field of adult
education based on the platform of lifelong learning. In addition, it could

**Table 1:** Components of the external general environment of the organisations for adult education

|  | Bavaria | Republic of Srpska | Canton Sarajevo | Tuzla Canton |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| System | Adult education is part of the education system | Adult education is part of the education system | Adult education is not part of the education system | Adult education is not part of the education system |
| Law | Yes-since 1974. | Yes-since 2009. | No | No |
| Concept | Development of the individual, and through that of society in general is the most important | Socio-economic revitalisation is the most important | Socio-economic revitalisation is the most important | Socio-economic revitalisation is the most important |
| Strategy | None | None | None | None |
| Subsidies | Available from, state and local community | None, or minimal and very limited | None, or minimal and very limited | None, or minimal and very limited |
| International or national conflicts | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

have enabled stronger connections between social partners and could have ensured higher mobility of the labour force in the labour market. A resume of the external general environment of the organisations whose managers we interviewed are in Table 1.

By interviewing managers of the selected organisations (which work in the above-described environment), we collected information as to which management models they prefer in their managerial practice – Table 2.

As presented in Table 2, in managerial practice of the organisations from Germany, eight (out of 17 offered) models were listed, in comparison to seven in managerial practice of the organisations from B&H. These models have been rated as very important. *Strategic management, management of human resources and goal-oriented management* are three management models which were rated as a priority by all five managers from organisations from Germany, while other models listed in the table were also rated as important by four managers.

Out of 17 models offered, managers of the organisations from B&H have listed seven as very important in their managerial practice. Two of these seven can be selected as the most important ones in the managerial practice in these organisations for adult education, that is: *strategic management* and *marketing management.* These models were rated as very important by 4 or 5 managers. When we look at these models in the context of the characteristics of the external general environment of these organisations which implement these models, we may conclude that only in some cases may there be a relation between variables researched.

**Table 2:** Management models that rate as very important

|  | MANAGEMENT MODEL IN ORGANISATIONS IN GERMANY | MANAGEMENT MODEL IN ORGANISATIONS IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Strategic management | Strategic management |
| 2. | Management of human resources | Marketing management |
| 3. | Goal-oriented management | Financial management |
| 4. | Management of programme | Management of programme |
| 5. | Management of quality | Management of human resources |
| 6. | Financial management | Management of quality |
| 7. | Management of organisational culture | Management of time |
| 8. | Network management | |

Let us mention some examples of that possible relation. Marketing management (a model which was not listed as an important one for the organisations in Germany), as well as financial management, were especially important for organisations which work in the environment without a law on adult education (or a law that has recently been adopted and has not been fully implemented yet), which do not get subsidies for their activities (these are organisations from B&H). The implementation of these models probably can attract students and financial means for the implementation of programmes. When we take into consideration the importance of models in environments in which adult education is part of the unique educational system (Germany), management of a network model is very important, since in such an environment organisations try to be part of the network of important actors in the field of adult education. In the environment in which adult education is still "looking for its space in the educational system" (Canton Sarajevo and Tuzla Canton) this model of management is less important in the work of organisations for adult education. Concepts of adult education as characteristics of the external general environment can influence the implementation of models of management of programmes and goal-oriented management. Organisations for adult education from Bavaria have rated both of these models as very important in their managerial practice, since the adequate educational programme, which serves the development of the individual, and with the aim to develop society, is a very important aspect of the work of organisations for adult education. International/national conflicts can reflect on the selection of the management models as well. In the case of organisations for adult education from Bavaria, they make significant efforts to ensure the necessary human resources and logistics in order to help thousands of migrants, first, in learning German as a foreign language. This may be the reason why managers from these organisations have said that management of human resources and management of programmes were very important. These models have been rated high in organisations in B&H as well, since these organisations concluded that with adequate programmes and competent human resources national tensions can be reduced.

## 2. The relation between the immediate external environment and the implementation of management models in organisations for adult education[9]

By putting the implementation of management models in the context of the external environment of organisations, we have tried to see if there was a relation between the implementation of the management models and components of the external immediate environment (in cities or regions in which these organisations work), which has been explained through indicators such as: demographics, population density, economic development, economic growth and competition.

### Bavaria

When we analyse the **demographics** of the immediate environment of the organisations for adult education in Germany, that is in Bavaria, we see that the population aged 18 to 65 is mostly in Landau an der Isar 62.5 % and Munich 67.9 %. **Population density**, as one of the indicators of the external immediate environment, can also play a significant role in the number of potential participants in adult education programmes. The lowest number of people per square kilometre is in Regen (78), while the immediate environment of Munich has 4715 inhabitants per square kilometre. Another factor that is important in relation to the success of organisations for adult education is **economic growth and economic development**, which means the wealth of the individual. Bavaria has a GDP of 38,429.00 Euro per capita, and it is not only the most developed state in Germany, but also one of the most developed regions in Europe. Inhabitants of Regensburg, in comparison to other cities, have the highest GDP per capita, which is almost double than average, 71,567.00 Euros. The lowest GDP is in Regen, 25,899.99 Euros per capita, which is less than average for the region. Economic growth is largest in Regensburg at 4.5 %, and the smallest – even negative – is in industrially well-developed Landau an der Isar at -5 %. As the fifth component of the immediate external environment, we examined if there is **competition** in the environment. We discussed that in direct interviews with managers of the organisations for adult education. All Bavarian organisations do have competition, but not with such a broad educational offer as in the VHS. Competition is present the most when it comes to formal vocational trainings and recreation programmes (fitness,

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[9] Data from documents, publications and online sources listed in bibliography.

yoga, pilates…). However, for most of their programmes the VHS do not have strong competition in their environment, since they have a powerful educational offer for very competitive prices because local communities do finance some aspects of these programmes.

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

When we analyse the **demographics** of the immediate environment of the organisations for adult education in B&H as one of components of the external immediate environment, we see that the population, which is aged 18 to 65 (who are potential users of programmes for adult education), is bigger than in Bavaria. In Sarajevo it is 69.9 % and in Gračanica 71.2 %. In addition, **population density** can play a significant role in raising the numbers of potential participants in adult education programmes. The smallest number of inhabitants per square kilometre is in Banja Luka (202), while in Sarajevo that number is 2,195 inhabitants per square kilometre. In both cases, especially in the case of Sarajevo, this number is larger than average for the state, which is 75 inhabitants per square kilometre. However, **economic growth and economic development** differ significantly in B&H in comparison to Bavaria. GDP per capita in B&H is 3,508.50 Euros. In Gračanica per capita GDP is much lower than average (1,799.24 Euro), while in Sarajevo it is above average (9,732.44 Euros). The largest economic growth is in the immediate environment of organisations for adult education in Tuzla (2.7 %), while the smallest is in Sarajevo (0.7 %). As the fifth component of the external immediate environment, **competition** has been examined as well, and we saw that most of the organisations in our sample do not have competition, since most of them offer specific programmes for specific target groups and that even if there is competition, it is not constant. A resume of the characteristics of the immediate environment of these organisations is in Table 3.

Almost all managers in organisations for adult education, during interviews, have said that components of the immediate environment of their organisations are important for the implementation of management models. According to their statements, demographics have the biggest influence on the implementation of the model of management of programmes, since this management model includes, among other things, analysis and a permanent following of educational needs of the immediate environment of the organisation, with the aim of providing specific educational offers to specific age groups of the population, having in mind topics, methods, time of implementation, etc. Planning programmes in organisations for adult education is not only an operative task, but it is an

**Table 3:** Components/indicators of the external immediate environment of organisations for adult education

| | Regen | Cham | Munich | Landau | Regens-burg | Sarajevo | Banja Luka | Gračanica | Tuzla |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Demo-graphics | 63.4 | 63.8 | 67.9 | **62.5** | 67.3 | 68.1 | 69.9 | 71.2 | 68.1 |
| Popu-lation density | *78* | 83 | **4715** | 154 | 1921 | 2195 | 202 | 243 | 448 |
| Economic develop-ment | 25,829 | 29,967 | 58,000 | 53,545 | **71,567** | 9,732 | 4,458 | 1,799 | 4,698 |
| Economic growth | 3.3% | 1.3% | 0.4% | -5% | **4.5%** | 0.7% | 1.9% | 2.5% | 2.7% |
| Competi-tion | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |

important strategic issue as well, so it is once again important to say how crucial it is to implement strategic management, since 9 out of 10 (90%) managers considered it the most important model in the managerial practice of organisations for adult education.

First of all, the strategic management model is "without competition" in all organisations, which is logical, since this model is necessary in every environment (Table 2). Demographics can influence marketing management as well, and to a certain extent quality management too. Density, as a characteristic of the immediate external environment, is a factor which influences the number of participants in organisations for adult education, as well as the application of certain management models. Managers in organisations for adult education, when speaking about the importance of analysis and following the competition, said that they see that process as one of the important tasks of strategic management, a task that is important for the successful work of organisations for adult education. Competition, as one of the characteristics of the external immediate environment, is related to the implementation of the financial management model and the quality management model. Managers said that awareness of competition intensifies the implementation of these two models.

There is an obvious, and expected, discrepancy between the immediate environment (cities) from Germany and B&H when it comes to indica-

tors of economic growth and economic development, and even competitiveness (Table 3). Was that a factor of choice regarding the management model? One could say, with caution, that the answer to this question may be positive. A model which is dominant in Table 2 is marketing management, which got quite a high score from managers from B&H organisations and a low score from managers from Bavaria (not even among the first eight). One may conclude that in an economically developed environment, marketing management does not have the same function as in an economically undeveloped environment – in which it is indirectly oriented towards collecting financial means to support the organisation through increasing the interest of potential trainees to participate in education programmes.

### Conclusion – Why and which management model?

By analysing the relationship between variables in the external environment of organisations for adult education and the implementation of management models in these organisations, we may conclude (however, with caution) that there is a relation between the characteristics/variables of the external environment of the organisations for adult education and the implementation of the management models in these organisations. Research has shown that only some components of the external and immediate environment are in relation to the implementation of the management models. Strategic management was rated the highest in all organisations, regardless of their environment, and managers said that through strategic plans the characteristics of both levels of the external environment are incorporated. Models which have been rated by managers with highest scores as the most important ones, and which can directly relate to the characteristics of the external general and immediate environment, besides **strategic management**, are:

* marketing management
* network management
* management of organisational culture
* goal-oriented management

One of the examples of the relationship between the external environment and implementation of management models is the implementation of the marketing management model. In a financially stimulating environment, such as in Bavaria, we do not find implementation of the marketing management model very important, while this model is very important in finan-

cially unstimulating environments, such as in B&H. In Bavaria, the Bavarian Adult Education Association invests 6-digit sums in marketing activities for its members – for adult education centres, the marketing support is understood as a central task of the association. It is obvious that an environment with well-organised systems, general or immediate, influences the implementation of the network management model. Thus, this model is important in organisations for adult education in Bavaria, while in organisations in B&H it is not considered as important. The same is with the management of organisational culture model. This model in Bavaria was marked as very important in managerial practice, most likely because it responds to strong competition, while in the B&H environment organisations do not think of this model as an important one, which can be explained by the fact that the competition-based market is still "immature" in B&H.



**Image 1:** Models recommended for implementation in organisations for adult education
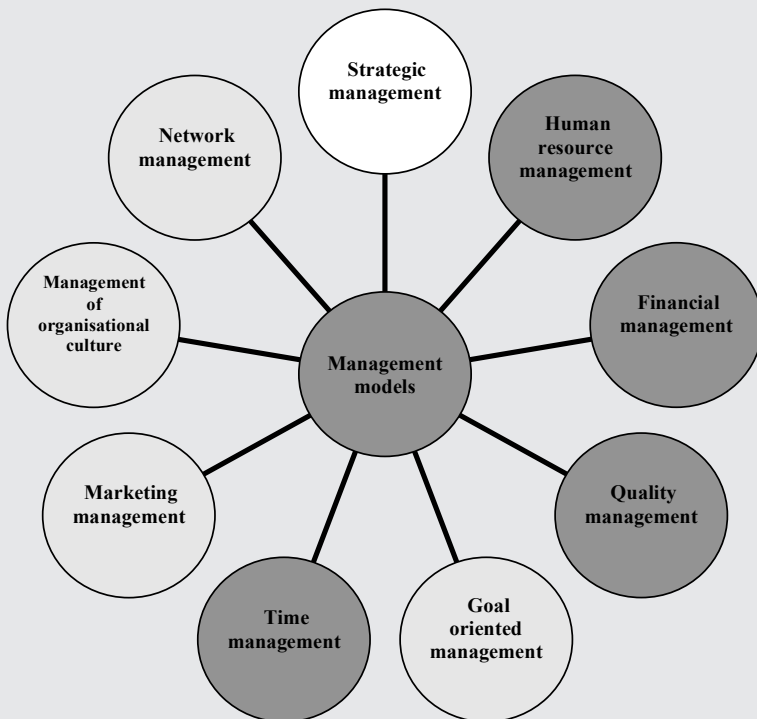
### Why should we apply management models?

To respond to everyday managerial challenges, to make plans for the next day or the next year, two or five years, to motivate employees, to make routine or strategic decisions, to discuss and negotiate with partners, to improve educational offers and develop an organisation and its employees is not possible by working as amateurs, without a strategy. All of these activities and processes need to be managed in a proper way, which means one needs to have adequate "tools" to be able to use them in practice. This is exactly what management models are for. They are many and more or less applicable in managerial practice of organisations for adult education, but they can be implemented depending on the characteristics of the external environment.

### Which management models?

Recommendations by managers of the organisations which were in our sample are presented in Image 1. All the important models are presented, however five of them can relate to the general and immediate environment of the organisations for adult education.

Out of 17 management models, managers have recommended ten, and the following five (non-grey models in the image) are directly related to environment characteristics:

- **Strategic management** is at the top of the list, which means that its implementation is necessary in the managerial practice of organisations for adult education. During interviews managers have said that implementation of this model is directly related to environment characteristics, which means that phases of strategic management in every organisation are related concretely to the environment.
- **Goal-oriented management** is especially important for specific organisations – in an environment in which there is a clear concept of the adult education developed.
- **Marketing management** is especially applicable in organisations from a financially unstimulating environment, in which neither state nor local community participates in financing.
- **Management of organisational structure** is especially important in organisations, which try to respond to the challenge of competition, since these organisations see strong organisational culture as a competitive advantage.
- **Network management** is very important in organisations which work in the organised educational system (organised educational market), and it helps them to position themselves well in it.

All the answers listed to questions of **why** and **which** management models to implement are based on research findings and as such can be used as guidelines for the managerial practice of organisations, which work in various organisational contexts, that is environments.

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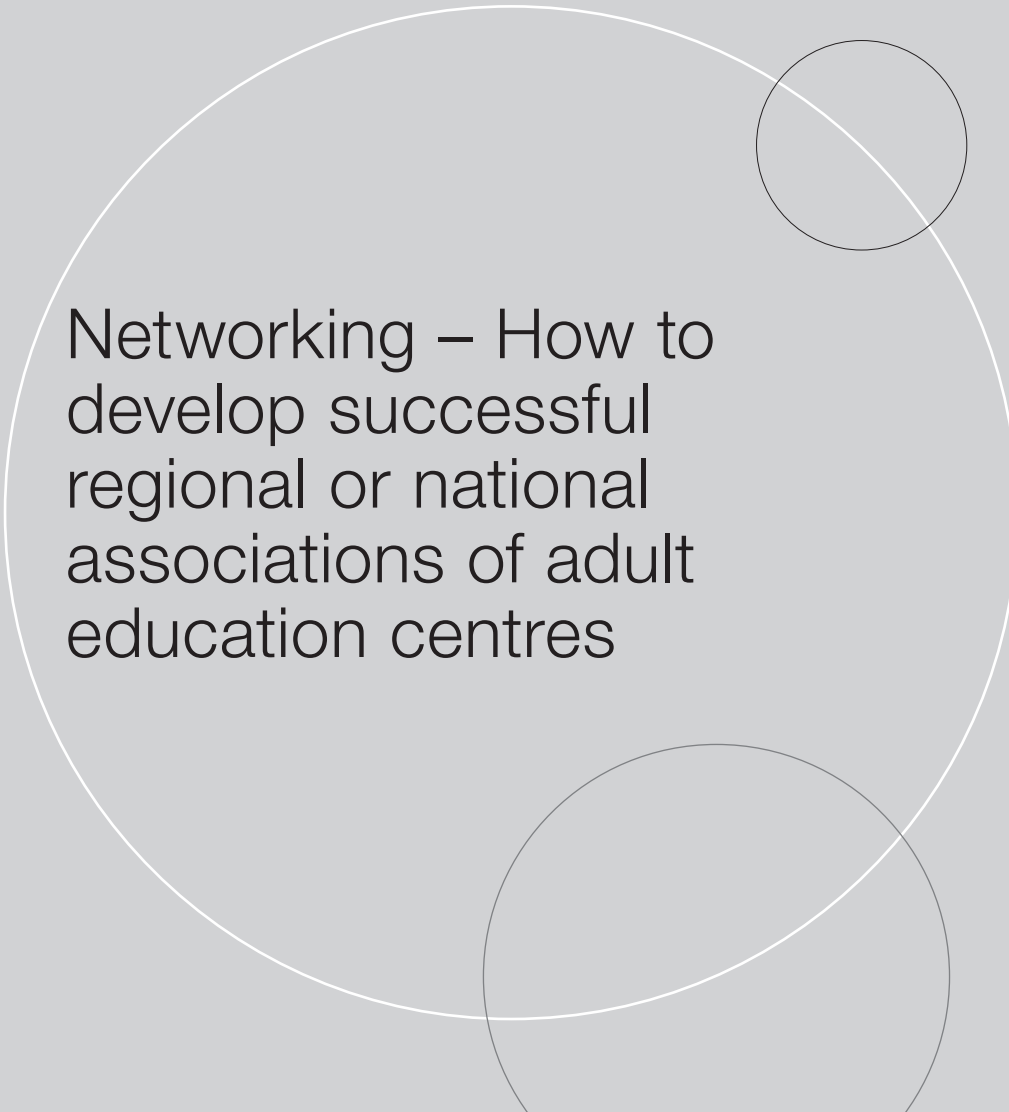
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# Networking – How to develop successful regional or national associations of adult education centres

**Wilfredo Limachi / Marco Salazar**

# Youth and adult education in Bolivia: Networking for transformation

*Networks provide conditions for collaborative work, they increase the social value of individuals and institutions and enable sustainable representation of the different actors vis-à-vis the state. Such is the case with the Network of Adult Education Centres (REDCEA) in Bolivia, which has allowed several adult education centres to express themselves, cooperate with one another, and exchange information on relevant issues in the sector of youth and adult education. What is remarkable is that it is not as a trade union representation or a claim, but rather as a form of work that develops activities to make youth and adult education visible to society as well as to strengthen the individual centres and their actors internally. This article describes the process which led to the establishment of this network and reflects and analyses its impact on the symbolic, institutional and substantive level based on its identity as a social and political actor.*

To achieve inclusion and quality in youth and adult education, social participation is one of the basic fundamental components. In the last two decades, social participation has transformed itself into a basic condition in the educational policies of the region that gives legitimacy to these. Without a strong consensus founded on social participation, these policies cannot be applied, or at least their concrete implementation, existence and scope will be limited.

For this reason, the experiences from social participation have diversified and reached all levels of formal and alternative education. In the case of Bolivia these have been enshrined in various structures and mechanisms as well as been translated into laws and decrees that regulate their function.[1]

This article describes and reflects on the experiences of the National Network of Alternative Education Centres (REDCEA). In the beginnings it represented social participation in the framework of Youth and Adult Education (YAE). The network was also part of a process of educational transformation defined by the Bolivian state that developed from 2003 onwards.

### Networks as an opportunity for social participation

Social participation as an action and an effect of organised and even spontaneous social movements of civil society is considered as the space in which these movements act. The degree of political inclination (elitist or populist) of these spaces is defined by the zone of conflict in which the demands of the movements originated (Melucci, 1980). To that extent, social participation is historically regarded by these movements as a conquest rather than a concession for governability. Therefore, to the extent that political conditions have allowed the emergence of a strong presence of civil society in co-defining public policy, social participation has transformed into a crucial issue.

In this context, REDCEA is an experience that has explored and drawn benefits from these political historical circumstances that the country has lived through and still lives in at the present time. Indeed, while it is true that social participation was proposed in the decade of the 1990s, the

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1/ Cf. Political Constitution of the State (2009) Art. 83; Law No. 341 of Participation and Social Control (2013) Art. 6; Law No. 031 Framework for Autonomies and Decentralisation "Andrés Ibáñez" (2010), Law No. 070 of Education "Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez" (2010) Art. 90, 91 and 92.

*Binational training course for sustainable development in the educational centre, Tacuaya, Yacuanque, Bolivia*                                                          *Source: Altrópico*

emphasis on even deeper social participation has taken root in the current political circumstances.

In the particular area of Youth and Adult Education (YAE) in Bolivia, social participation has taken the shape of a network. This network has been used as a mechanism and at the same time as a key experience so that it cultivates, in its actors, a motivation for action in the long-term. The action includes advocacy of policy, taking positions, communicating horizontally, promoting pedagogical innovation, promoting quality and inclusion. Above all, education through the operation of the centres is understood as a part of local development (German Adult Education Association [AAEA], Bolivia, 2013). The action is based on the conviction that social participation in education forms part of a commitment to the deepening of democracy. In this understanding it is a (human) right of civil society to propose and be heard, to analyse and discuss proposals (also of govern-

ment bodies), and to be consulted in processes of decision making related to public policies.

## The roots of networking

The development of the network structure of adult education centres was preceded by two very important events in the history of YAE in Bolivia. The first refers to the strong presence of the tradition of popular education, which enabled to overcome the existing concept of a compensatory education. This enabled a conversion about a distinct form of education, different or alternative and capable of developing ideas of social change and transformation and functioning as a service to the interests of the communities. The second – in clear correspondence with what was previously mentioned – was to understand the alternative education centre (AEC) as a focal centre that radiates culture and promotes participation for the community in which it is located and around which its main social and cultural activities revolve (Limachi, 2011).

One could affirm that the awareness of united participation in the defense of the right to education is based on these two ideas, since YAE was always oriented toward the service to sectors that in one way or another were excluded from this right.

It should not be forgotten that it was DVV International that fostered and supported the development of this awareness. The presence of this institution in Bolivia, with a country office since 1986, has contributed largely to the visibility of YAE in the education system and in the general field of youth and adult education (AAEA, 2011, 2016).

## Creation of the National Network of Alternative Education

One of the ideas generated from the experience of the German Adult Education Association was to think about the functioning of the centres for adults as a **coordination of actions** rather than the result of successful – but individual – experiences. The network idea was generated both by the history and traditions of organising adult education in Germany, which had its beginning in the 1950s.

In Bolivia the system of educational units was rearranged and a concept of "**educational nucleus**" was established. This was seen as a set of schools that constituted among themselves a **network of complementary educational services**. An educational nucleus corresponded to a local socio-economic or socio-cultural unit in a rural area and to a neighbour-

*Participants in a vocational programme for gastronomy, AEC Corea, El Alto, Bolivia*
*Source: DVV International*

hood in an urban area. In that context, during 2003 and 2004, the Departmental Management Teams (Equipos Departamentales de Gestión (EDG)) were formed in Bolivia, making it necessary to orient the AECs under two axes. The first one to carry out processes of organisation and institutional development based on a dynamic that favours participatory processes on the decision-making level and, the other, to orient the action of the AEC toward being a service with greater relevance to the community and to local development.

During those years the incessant activity of training of the management teams developed and the National Congress of Education participated actively. This was the initial starting point, in 2005, for the **creation of the National Network of Alternative Education**. The legal basis was the regulation of organisation and operation of Alternative Education Centres[2] approved at that time by an Administrative Resolution of the Ministry of Education. The character and nature of REDCEA is organisational and represents the actors of the associated AECs within the framework of

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[2]/ Reglamento de Organización y Funcionamiento de los Centros de Educación Alternativa.

*Course in education for sustainable development*  Source: DVV International

the mechanisms of democratic participation of civil society in the political affairs of the Bolivian State. It is set in motion from the principle that the establishment and application of public policies is a matter for both the government *and* civil society, for which purpose the network is put forward as a mechanism for social participation in YAE.

### REDCEA as a mechanism for social participation

To that extent, REDCEA is associated with a mechanism that provides connection for different Youth and Adult Education (YAE) actors, such as its participants, teachers and directors and as a structure that groups together other YAE organisations. It is associated with a pedagogical movement aimed at improving the conditions of quality, access and per-manence of the participants through actions such as training, mobilisation and proposals; that provides a space for contribution to the social trans-formation of the country. In short, it is designed as a resource to contrib-ute to public policy.

The identity of the social groupings organised for social participation is related to the purposes that unite them and is constantly reinforced when the unity between these groupings is based on the difference in geographical location rather than in the characteristics and condition of its members. In this way, when the proposals are translated into a goal, then the feeling of belonging is clear and the bonds that unite them (cognitive and affective) are very strong and lasting. The cognitive refers to the consciousness of its aims and functions, and the affective to the perception of some equality of the members who share a grouping. In contrast, when the goal is very abstract, the bonds weaken and are transient. Therefore**, identity is not related to the structure of the group, but to the purposes**. This fact has strong implications for the practices and the forms of organisation, because they allude to its internal functioning, which can follow horizontal paths for consultation, or follow other paths which are more direct.

The REDCEA developed under these premises. It is not so much about the particular intentions of its members, whether these are its individual actors or its education centres, but **about the goals that are set out between them as collective actors**. The network idea is based precisely on the idea of strategic action responding to the approach with which the AEC were created. Specifically, these centres in their organisation did not just respond to fulfill the requirement of reorganisation of the educational system, the intention of an AEC is enveloped in a strategic perspective. In effect, there was an attempt to design a space that allowed for the development of lifelong capacities, but articulated toward the community at the same time. Therefore the organisation of the network had a prior basis which was precisely the character of the AECs. Social participation is the structure that makes the network come into being and it is what gives life to the institutional actor.[3]

### New forms and dynamics of participation

In this way, REDCEA was formed as a structure for social participation in education and, since this component is central in the operation and application of the sector's policies, it can be said that the network begins to represent the role of a new institutional actor in the scenario of educational management of the system as a whole. Although each AEC has its

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[3] In 2003, the Vice Ministry of Alternative Education under the Ministry of Education issued Administrative Resolution 235/2003 expressly establishing the organisation of the networks of Alternative Education Centres (AEC).

own unique existence, the fact of the existence of the network makes them play a broader role of action together. Some of their actions develop in a dimension and scale much richer with regard to the exchange of experiences and forms of adult education, the dissemination of innovations and pedagogical ideas. The incursion into non-traditional areas of education – such as work done in prisons – representation and insertion into the education system and the close links with institutions responsible for YAE at the local level, such as the sub-departmental divisions of Alternative and Special Education.

The adoption of social participation as a mechanism for generating collective decision-making processes in institutions and organisations implies thinking about new forms and dynamics of participation and their respective reconfiguration of the working conditions, objectives and priorities of the institution within the framework of its autonomy and its own identity.

For this reason, the network is a structure focused on the strengthening of YAE, which also implies the strengthening of the AECs themselves. This strengthening is made concrete through the impulse toward a pedagogical movement that includes reflection on the object itself (the AEC) and the objective of YAE, its methodology and the impact of the educational action for empowerment. It also functions as an articulating mechanism for actors who make local decisions, such as organised social movements and local government bodies.

## Scope of influence: local – municipal – departmental – national

The scope of the REDCEA actions is territorially configured and incorporates new actors at the same time. It starts at the **local level** then "climbs" a rung to reach the **municipal level**. This level is particularly important because it is the decision making level closest to the actors themselves; the municipality is the place where public policy is made concrete. The mayor represents the local government, makes decisions based on an operational plan and can take decisions that enable the implementation of public policies, especially in a sensitive area such as local development. Effectively, the municipality in concert with the territorial and administrative organisation of the country is a territorial space that functions as an administrative and financial unit for the implementation of development for a set of communities.

The next level of organisation of the REDCEA is the **departmental**, where the network operates through the Departmental Management Teams and contributes to technical pedagogical tasks with the Depart-

*Participants in a local leadership training course*                    *Source: Altrópico*

mental Directorates of Education. The activities at this level refer to technical pedagogical workshops, "thematic roundtables" for contemplation with environmental authorities, for participation in campaigns to raise the awareness about the right to education, for the assistance and presence in national assemblies for analysis of YAE educational policies and for the preparation of departmental strategic planning for the development of adult education in each of the nine departments of the country. And, finally, as an interlocutor (institutional actor) vis-à-vis the national authorities for the discussion of problems and perspectives of YAE.

Finally, the **level of national organisation** obviously has a greater scope, not only in terms of territory, but also with regard to the dimensions of its actions. Its main objectives are organised around internal strengthening and how its relations with the institutional environment of the educational system and its functions are characterised by the connection of the centres, the representation of teachers, directors and participants vis-a-vis society and the state. Other objectives are the management of actions to support the implementation of public policies and social dynamic for lobbying, consensus and negotiation of proposals. Thus, for example, REDCEA is responsible for supporting the territorial networks, intervening

and contributing to the design, development and application of YAE policies and strategies, to develop actions for innovation and change aimed at improving the quality of life of the population and YAE, as well as to promote alliances with social organisations to empower YAE.

### Thematic networks

In order to contribute to the areas of quality and coverage from a specific point of view by the type of subjects, by the priorities and by the characteristics of the work of the institutions, thematic networks (Limachi, 2007) were established. They are defined as an inter-institutional space for coordination to solve or address a specific YAE problem. Unlike the territorial networks, these thematic networks can acquire a trans-institutional character because they integrate both public centres and institutions dedicated to some specific field of YAE. Currently there are three thematic networks: **rural indigenous population (network "FERIA"), educational contexts of prisons, and distance education**.

In short, the nature of the network is that it is constituted from a social grouping of entities that ascribe to a common goal: educational transformation.

### Between the symbolic, institutional and substantive impact

With the above described functions and the character of its organisation it is not difficult to account for the impact of networks on YAE. Following a classification used in the field of political analysis, we can highlight its impact in three areas described below: the symbolic, the institutional and the substantive (Martí I Puig, 2004).

### Impact at the symbolic level – the right to education

The symbolic sphere refers to the change of values, identities, attitudes and behaviours. Networks have been set up around common interests, that is to say, around their identities as centres. Therefore, perhaps one of the best explanations of the organisation and above all of the functioning of networks is precisely the convergence of certain values that are shared in particular as they are represented in their purposes. The fact that centres individually shape their identity and then operate with another identity, that of networks of different scales and with different problems, can mean

*Center for vocational training in the bolivian highlands*                    *Source: DVV International*

nothing other than that affinity is what unites them. Without a doubt this point is somewhat more complex because the identity expressed in the purposes of each centre, individually speaking, has not emerged spontaneously. Rather, the discourse that preceded it has had to be transformed. Moving from conceiving education as compensatory to a conceptual vision based on **defending the right to education** means that the centres have had to adopt this discourse and build their identity around it, which is made concrete in their objectives and their function. The way this has happened is related to the activity of supporting the development of consciousness, with the history of the educators in the country and with the experience of the participants themselves, expressed in their needs and expectations.

An important source for the transformation of the discourse are the circumstances that have created political change and demanded the presence and participation of the social movements and understood them as the material result of collective challenges for well-being and democracy.

### Impact at the institutional level

At the institutional level, the networks have contributed to the emergence of the AEC as an institutional actor vis-à-vis the state in the context of the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies. In this way, their emergence as networks has defined the field of policies as a space for negotiation rather than a space of consent and approval of plans and programmes. The fact of appearing as an actor and not only as an individual and isolated centre has had a major consequence: the visibility of YAE as a legitimate field of education. It is possible to affirm that the networks have configured a new way of operating regarding their needs. Without the urgency to become a union-like organisation, the interaction of the networks with the divisions and sub-divisions of the Department of Alternative Education of the Ministry of Education, has given rise to the development of actions for the improvement, training, empowerment and for the search and exploration of new areas of intervention for YAE as an educational strategy. The fact of being present as an organised network proposing a new YAE in the country during the National Congress of Education, added to the fact that the new Education Act No. 70 *"Avelino Siñani-Elizardo* Pérez" adopted aspects for the education of adults developed internally in one of the thematic networks. This can be regarded as one of the strengths and measures of the networks as institutional actors in public policies.

*Participants in an international seminar on adult education*          Source: DVV International

### Impact at the structural level

The substantive changes are related to transformations at the structural level, that is to say that they are situated in the ways the state and government bodies operate. Three results are noteworthy of mention in this regard: a) having been able to participate with proposals in the design of educational policies and not only to intervene with presence and approval; b) having been able to place the AECs as "collective actors", thus being consistent with the dynamics of social participation and national development policies based on the idea of community and culture; and c) the development of a "pedagogical movement" that has allowed YAE to be considered as a specific field that requires organisation, rules of operation, logistical support, innovation and permanent care. The fact that the networks have managed to establish that the AEC communicate with each other, and that experiences and innovations emerge from them, is an example of the visibility of YAE.

**The drama of change: sustainability**

The history of curricular, institutional and organisational innovations, as described above, does not always enjoy the degree of stability that is imposed on the historical and administrative circumstances of educational systems in the region and the country. The picture, in that sense is not very optimistic. To think that the experiences oriented towards change will institutionalise themselves and that the system in general tends towards its own transformation, is not right. As the lessons learned from the past point out, **tradition and the "old system" always find ways to resist change.**

But experience has also taught that **transformation processes in education tend to be slow** because they involve the transformation of ideas and beliefs that often support and nurture the identities of individuals, groups and institutions. For this reason, institutional and pedagogical change is also a cultural change, that is to say, a change in the ways of seeing, feeling and understanding reality and the phenomena that include ways of planning, evaluating and acting.

The REDCEA is an experience that has been made concrete institutionally and its members or management teams know that this has a great weight and importance, because one of the first obstacles that must be overcome is to change people's attitudes. The establishment of a network has given structure to the field where the activities develop. This is an important advantage since it superimposes itself above what individual wishes and efforts can do, whether by people or specific centres. **The centres are in the network and the network exists because its centres shape it**, and this **internal dynamic** can be one of the factors that allow it to sustain itself over time. Without ceasing to remain optimistic, one must at any rate recognise that innovations tend to have at their origin – and in the present also need – a "light" (illumination) to return to, which enables them to think once again, to adapt their performance to the conditions of the historical framework and the politics of the circumstances.

The REDCEA has taught those who work in YAE two main lessons: that bonding, interaction and cooperation are basic conditions of exist-

ence and: that influencing a system, that often does not open easily to recognis ing the right of individuals and groups to education or to their participation in local development, is possible.

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# List of authors



**Dr. Emir Avdagic** has been working for DVV International as Director for Bosnia and Hezegovina since 2000. He is responsible for managing the project *Adult Education in Southeast Europe*, which includes, training of youth and unemployed adults for the labour market, training of trainers lobbying and promoting a legal framework for adult education, consulting and professional monitoring of partner organisations.



**Maja Avramovska** studied Pedagogy, Sociology Psychology and Adult Education in Berlin and Kaiserslautern. She is specialised in adult education policy and co-authored the Adult Education Strategy 2010-2015 and 2016-2020 of the Ministry of Education and Science, Macedonia. Since 2013 she has been working at DVV International Bonn as Senior Desk officer for the region Caucasus, Turkey and South East Europe and Senior Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation.



**Aziz Chaker** is a Moroccan expert and an international consultant in the fields of education and economic and social development. Mr. Chaker is a consultant for several international organisations, such as UNDP, USAID, UNESCO, UNIFEM, and the World Bank. Since the opening of the DVV International office in Morocco, he has worked intently on the completion of several studies and training workshops on adult education.

**Carlos Alberto Díaz Campos** studied Social Anthropology at the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH). From 2014, he joined the team of the EPJA rights project in Chiapas as research assistant of DVV International in Mexico. He is currently participating in the Work Strategy to improve educational practice in the implementation of the Bilingual Indigenous Model (MIB) in Chiapas.

**Winfried Ellwanger** has been working in adult education since 1987 and, since the founding of the VHS in the district of Cham, has been its Director. He is a member of the board of directors of the Bavarian VHS Association and a member of the board of DVV. The work of the VHS Cham is characterised by a strong international orientation and many years of cooperation with DVV International.

**Uwe Gartenschlaeger**, MA, is head of the Regional Office of DVV International for Southeast and South Asia, based in Vientiane, Laos. He studied history, East European history, politics and philosophy in Berlin and Cologne. As project leader in Russia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and currently in Southeast Asia, he was involved in the development of community learning centres. Since 2015, Uwe Gartenschlaeger has been Vice-President of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE).

**Dr Klaus Heuer,** MA, has been a research assistant at the German Institute for Adult Education Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning since 2002 and is responsible for the archives and the history of adult education. He has had a great number of teaching positions at various universities as well as numerous publications in this field. His main areas of interest are oral history, biographical research, regional and local history.

**Sylvia Kränke** is a qualified German Language and Literature/ History teacher. After four years as a research associate at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, she was active in adult education at the Volkshochschule (VHS) Jena for many years, and since 1996 has worked at the Thüringer Adult Education Association. She has been Director of the association since 1998.

**Nicole Kuprian**, MA, MBA, cultural scientist, has been head of the Koblenz VHS since 2006. In the area of adult education, she worked as a research assistant and lecturer at the University of Oldenburg in the field of museum management, in the administration of culture, tourism and city marketing as well as director of VHS Quickborn. She has published various works on cultural science topics.

**Wilfredo Fidel Limachi Gutiérrez** studied Pedagogy at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés and has more than 25 years of experience working in Youth and Adult and Non-Formal Education. He specialised in the design of curricula, materials development, training of educators and research in Adult and Alternative Education. He currently directs the country office of DVV International in Bolivia.

**Gudrun Luck** studied German and Russian at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. She has worked since 1986 as a teacher at the VHS Jena in Second Chance Education and in the field of German for foreigners. Since 1992, she has been the Director of the VHS Jena. From 2001 to 2016 she was Honorary Chairman of the Thuringian Adult Education Association. She currently works in various working groups of the German Adult Education Association.

**Larissa Lukjanova** served in various functions in adult education institutions. She is the Chairperson of the Board of the Ukrainian Adult Education Association, as well as the Head of the Institute of Pedagogical Training and Adult Education of the Ukrainian National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. She has a PhD in Education, and is a corresponding member of the Ukrainian National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences.

**Prof Dr Klaus Meisel** is currently Managing Director at the Munich VHS. The focus of his work is on further education management, personnel development and organisational consulting. Until 2006,he was the Director of the German Institute for Adult Education. He holds many important professional positions, such as an honorary professorship at the Philipps University Marburg, the chair of the Bavarian Adult Education Association, among others.
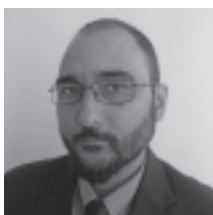
**Dr. Jovan Miljković** is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. During his ten-year university career he worked on subjects related to management and marketing in adult education, systems and organization of adult education, leadership in education and primary adult education. He has been engaged in numerous government and non-government educational projects.

**Vanna Peou** is the country Director for DVV International in Cambodia. She has an MA in Meteorology, worked at the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology for 9 years and lectured on Climatology at the Royal University for Agriculture. In 2001 she resigned from the government and worked as project coordinator for the Buddhist Nuns Association and the Harp-Swell Foundation. She also served as Chair of the Board of Directors for the local NGOs.



**Jesé Romero G.** is currently an associate of DVV International in Mexico, coordinating projects in the states of Chiapas, Puebla and Quintana Roo. He studied Sociology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Since 2014 he has worked with DVV International within the framework of the Youth and Adult Education (EPJA) rights project and the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA). He has also collaborated in numerous projects with civil society organisations.



**Rusudan Sanadze**, PhD, associate Professor at Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University in the Department of Education, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, she became a member of the TSU academic board in May 2016. As an educational accreditation expert, she is a certified trainer for adults and EFQM trainings. Since 2003, she has conducted courses for the BA, MA and PhD programmes. She currently supervises PhD students directly linked to adult education.

**Lali Santeladze** is an educational expert with 15 year working experience in the sector, including pre-school and school education; vocational education; youth and civic education, non-formal education and education in emergency. She holds a Masters degree in Journalistic and Media Studies and in Foreign Economic Relations. Since January 2010 she has been working as the Country Director of DVV International office in Georgia.

**Marco Antonio Salazar Prieto** studied Psychology at the Bolivian Catholic University and carried out educational research in Chile. He has worked in adult education, secondary education and intercultural bilingual education in institutions such as the DVV, GIZ and UNICEF. He is currently a professor at the Catholic University and at the UMSA and is a specialist in secondary education at Plan International Inc.

**Wafa Singh** has been engaged as the India Research Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research, in various projects in the thematic area of higher education. She has numerous publications to her name, including coauthoring the book *Knowledge & Engagement: Building Capacities of the Next Generation of Community Based Researchers*, and contributing to the 6th HEIW Report (Higher Education in the World 6).

**Galina Veramejchyk** has 20 years of experience in the area of non-formal and adult education as a trainer and project manager and has had over 40 articles about adult education published in Belarus and Europe. Since 2009, she has been working as Country Director of DVV International (Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association) in the Republic of Belarus.

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