

ICAE Virtual Seminar



**“Adult Education
and Development:
Post 2015”**



ICAE Virtual Seminar “Adult Education and Development: Post-2015” 10 – 24 of March 2014

The seminar will be based in the publication of *dvv international* in cooperation with ICAE, *AE+D on the Post-2015* (“Adult Education and Development” Journal published once a year in three languages that was launched in December 2013).

http://dvv-international.de/index.php?article_id=1460&clang=1

The objectives of the ICAE Virtual Seminar are:

- 1- To promote a debate and dialogue on selected articles of the yearbook **AE+D POST-2015** in order to go deeper and broaden in the analysis
- 2- To create a virtual space as an opportunity to reflect on the links between the Post-2015 development agenda, the EFA goals and the CONFINTEA Belen Framework for Action, in order to strategize and define common advocacy actions
- 3- To give updated information on the Post 2015 process to follow up the Education agenda in the global scenario

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- A reflection from Chile about the need of dialogue between student's movement and adult learning advocates. Reflection by **Sebastián Vielmas** [1]
- Reflection by **Sofia Valdivielso**. Gender and Education Office of ICAE, Spain.
- Comment by **Carmen Colazo**. GEO/ICAE/REPEM. Paraguay.
- Working out ambiguities: lifelong education in the post-2015 definition process: MDGs and EFA. By **Jorge Osorio V.** - ICAE, Chile.
- Second synthesis of collective reflection. By **Cecilia Fernández** – ICAE Secretariat



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Introduction by Alan Tuckett President of ICAE



The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were adopted in 2000 have concentrated the minds of development agencies and governments alike, and whilst few will have been achieved by 2015, they have had a galvanising effect on where resources are concentrated. You can see it best, perhaps, in education where the effect of adopting just two of the Education for All goals into the MDGs was to marginalise the other four goals. The result for adult learning was that the fine promises made by governments in CONFINTEA V and VI, the UNESCO world adult education conferences, and in the Dakar EFA were never backed by sufficient resources.

It is clear then that global targets are important – hence the ‘Post 2015’ focus for the first edition of the new annual DVV Adult Education and Development, which has been produced in co-operation with ICAE. This virtual seminar focuses on the core themes raised in the year book, and draws in particular on three contributions:

‘Lifelong Learning for All – A potential global goal for the post 2015 education and development agendas!’ by Heribert Hinzen;

‘Learning for All: The World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020’ by Elizabeth King; and ‘The world needs a clear target on Lifelong Learning for All for another world to be possible’, which I wrote.

In this introduction I want to bring the debate up to date – since the volume of consultative processes mean that the landscape of discussion and debate shifts rapidly, and to consider how the current debates on Sustainable Development Goals should relate to the Education For All process, and whatever succeeds EFA after 2015. I also want to highlight themes and issues considered in these three pieces by reference to other articles in the ‘Post 2015’ Adult Education and Development Yearbook. ICAE, and our partners in DVV International hope that you will be stimulated to contribute to the virtual seminar, that you will get hold of a copy of the Yearbook (Post 2015, Adult Education and Development, vol.80, 2013, DVV International, Bonn), and of course we hope that you will be enthused to re-double your advocacy efforts to secure a lifelong learning target with a meaningful commitment to rights based education for young people and adults.

Where then are we now? Since the High Level Panel report of May 2013, which was discussed in my paper for ‘Post 2015’, the UN General Assembly met, and the Secretary General reported in a broadly helpful way on the need to give priority to education, carrying forward the formulation ‘quality education and lifelong learning’, without alas highlighting education for young people and adults beyond labour market entry, and without highlighting the continuing challenge of securing the right to literacy for 775 million adults.

Up to the 2013 General Assembly, reflections on what should follow the MDGs had been substantially shaped by UN agencies.

Following the Assembly, responsibility shifted decisively to the representatives of member states, working through the Open Working Group (OWG) which was charged with developing proposals for Sustainable Development Goals. (SDGs) The OWG held eight initial open consultation meetings, and the co-chairs released at the end of February their draft summary of conclusions to date. On education, they argued:

1. Education is absolutely central to any sustainable development agenda. It is not only an essential investment but an important basis for human enrichment through life-long learning.

2. The post-2015 development agenda must achieve the MDG goal of primary education for all. However, it should also aim to address quality as reflected in learning outcomes, which will need to be more widely and effectively measured.

3. Gender equality in education is an important objective in its own right, with multiple social, economic and environmental benefits.

4. Moreover, to ensure productive employment in increasingly knowledge-based economies, greater emphasis is needed on secondary school and even tertiary attainment, and some countries may choose to set relevant targets.

5. Even if the emphasis is put on educating young people, continued attention is needed in many countries to raising adult literacy and in all countries to lifelong learning to facilitate adjustment to changing labour market conditions.

At a side meeting of the eighth meeting of OWG called by a coalition of the Global Campaign for Education, Education International, ICAE and the Open Society Foundations, the Deputy Ambassador for El Salvador explained that there was consensus among member states that education is a priority; however, debates continue as to whether this priority should be expressed through a stand-alone goal, or as a cross-cutting measure affecting all the SDGs. ICAE’s position on this is clear – that we need both a stand-alone goal that is life-long and life-wide, as Heribert Hinzen argues in his article in ‘Post-2015’, and that it is also a cross-cutting theme – since education, and particularly the education of youth and adults, is an

essential pre-condition for addressing other priorities – from infant survival rates, to clean water, to managing responses to climate change.

These debates about progress towards new post-2015 goals at the UN are paralleled in the monitoring of progress towards the Education for All targets, which like the MDGs are unlikely to be achieved on time. A key conclusion of the EFA developments to date is that EFA suffered from the separation of the MDG and EFA processes. For the collective voices of NGOs supporting EFA it has been a central demand that a single overarching education goal in the MDG/SDGs post-2015 be supported by an EFA mark 2, where the elements of the overall goal can be disaggregated, and monitored, and that UNESCO should have that responsibility.

This is not the position of the World Bank, or influential lobbying organisations like the Brookings Institute, which want a narrowly focused target. Adult educators, reading Elizabeth King's contribution to 'Post-2015' will be struck by the complete absence in the bank's analysis, at least reflected in the piece, of any mention of adult learning. The nearest the Bank's strategy comes to a recognition of the importance of learning through life is in the argument that there is a need to 'invest early because the ability to learn through life is best acquired in early childhood.' But what happens to people who missed out on the chance to get that experience?

In his stimulating contribution to the YearBook, 'If we don't look at how to finance Adult Education, we can forget about the post-2015 agenda' David Archer points to the risk that even if the words adopted in global targets are sympathetic to adult education, the key is to see where the money goes:

We may argue passionately and convincingly that in a changing world we need to support people to become active citizens to contribute to sustainable development – and that education underpins this. But money will talk and Adult Education will be left under-funded.

His advice is for adult educators to join the wider campaign for tax justice, and to overcome people's fear of economics, to insist on policies that work for everyone. It is an argument that looks beyond 2015, and remembers Adult Education's strengths in building mass popular movements. Camilla Croso points out, too, the need for civil society to mobilise to influence the debate, to secure 'what the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights established in 1999: that the fulfilment of the right to education requires all its four dimensions be satisfied: its availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability.'

Another of David Archer's arguments is that the focus of efforts to secure those rights will need to be domestic, as Aid budgets shrink. Raquel Castillo demonstrates that such Aid for education as does reach developing countries is overwhelmingly concentrated on formal structures, with tiny percentages committed to alternative non-formal and informal routes. Hers is an example of the painstaking analytical work needed, alongside principled argument, and popular campaigning, if hundreds of millions of adults are not once again to be denied the right to learn.

What then are the key issues for us in this debate? First, how should advocacy energies be focused in the eighteen months before new targets are established. Second, what energies can we draw from our work on Post-2015, for the longer journey of work with youth and adults to create the other possible world to which we are committed? Third, how can we secure, as the Year Book does so well, that the debates and decisions that affect the lives of communities of learners throughout the world also listen to their experiences. I look forward to reading what colleagues say.



Post-2015: Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All By Heribert Hinzen, dvv International, Laos



EFA and MDG

The year 2000 saw two very important events which both set goals and indicators to be reached by the year 2015, a milestone year which actually is just around the corner. Later these global gatherings were referred to as EFA for the education and MDG for the development agenda:

- EFA: Education for All, where the 1.500 participants of the World Education Forum in Dakar agreed on six goals covering early childhood, primary education, youth and skills, adult literacy and continuing education, gender equality, and improving quality.

- MDG: Millennium Development Goals, where at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in New York, 193 member states agreed to achieve eight goals set towards reducing poverty, primary education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, partnership for development.

The EFA agenda was a big step forward compared to the World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs of an earlier World Conference in Jomtien in the year 1990 as the enlarged vision of EFA actually was orientated towards education and learning covering the whole life span – long, deep and wide.

Being involved

The global adult education movement got involved in these processes early, and was thus going beyond CONFINTEA, the series of UNESCO World Conferences on Adult Education. In the year 1990, just before Jomtien there was the ICAE World Assembly, also in Thailand. On national level, dvv international played a strong advocacy role in the preparatory task force within Germany, and the author was later invited to join the Government delegation that participated in Dakar. Since that time has this journal published special issues and numerous articles preparing for or reporting on the EFA events, and their outcomes in policy and practice on global, regional and national levels.

These contributions were honored by invitations and seats for ICAE, dvv international and other members in important committees like the CONFINTEA VI Consultative Group, the UN Literacy Decade Experts, or the Editorial Board of the Education for All Global Monitoring Report published on a yearly basis. The last one that came out for 2012 was on “Youth and Skills”, and the next will be on “Learning and Teaching for Development”.

In Dakar it was achieved already that two goals were close to our concerns:

- “(iii) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- (iv) achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults...”

However, this potentially larger EFA vision during the decade of implementation was limited to the MDG 2 which called for: “Achieve universal primary education”. Therefore, only this aspect of the EFA agenda got higher attention by most governments and development partners. It would an important task to analyze the flow of development aid for education, and demonstrate how much – although not enough – was there for children and schools, and how little has there been for the continuing education and training needs of youth and adults.

Concerns and critiques from the adult learning community on the achievements of the MDG and EFA so far have therefore been on the limited concentration towards primary schooling, and where youth and adults and their learning and training needs have largely been left out. To help to reverse this trend, the Editorial Board of the journal decided that at this point in time a participation in the already running discussions towards the future perspectives of education for development would provide an excellent chance to get involved in the challenges that can be foreseen. It was stated: If we do not take it up now then the journal issue next year will be coming out too late for a meaningful contribution.

Post-2015 debates

A diversity of processes, conferences, and websites has been put in place to evaluate the outcomes so far, and start the debate of what should follow. All in all it has become clear that most of the eight MDGs have not been reached in most of the countries of the global South, and will not be reached by 2015. The same can be said for the six EFA goals, where most indicators show that and how much more is needed. This being said: There is no reason why not at the same the many successes should be further analyzed as they can provide lessons to be learned for the next decade, a job well done by the yearly GMRs which are full of such stories.

One stream of arguments is related to set global goals again, but to have national and / or context specific targets with related indicators. What is easy to reach in one country maybe very difficult in another one. Even within countries disparities persist often between opportunities in urban or rural areas, between richer and marginalized people, or the ongoing inequality between female and male access. For the new MDGs, which may be phrased later as Sustainable Development Goals, there is a growing understanding of the interconnectedness of the different goals: Healthier people learn better, better educated youth and adults are less vulnerable.

The UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda published what they called a “thematic think piece” on “Education and skills for inclusive and sustainable development beyond 2015”. Following their understanding of the current state of development, they observe trends for education, and name respective chapter as:

- “The growth of information and its changing nature
- A shift away from teaching to an increased focus on learning
- Lifelong learning: Beyond a classroom-centered paradigm of education
- Future learning: Blurring boundaries between learning, working and living

- Rising skills requirements and foundational skills
- Employability challenges: Facilitating transition from school to work
- Anticipating change”

It seems that despite a variety and diversity of views and arguments, there is a growing common understanding which in respect to the different agendas calls for:

- An education specific agenda covering all aspects of schooling, training, and learning
- And that education must be everywhere in the implementation of the development agenda

This can be seen from the many documents floating around. The good thing is that there are so many opportunities to participate in the high number of meetings, websites, blogs and social media. The discussion in the Asia Pacific region can serve as a positive example where the UNESCO Bangkok office has taken the lead to explore future perspectives together with experts through a series of meetings:

- May 2012: Towards EFA 2015 and Beyond – Shaping a new Vision of Education
- November 2012: What Education for the Future: Beyond 2015. Rethinking Learning in a Changing World
- March 2013: Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Regional Thematic Consultation in the Asia Pacific
- October 2013: Beyond 2015: Transforming Teaching and Learning in the Asia Pacific. Regional High Level Expert Meeting
- For June / July 2014 there is another regional meeting being planned which will look at the national EFA reports

Where are we now?

The debate reached a first global momentum with the UN Thematic Consultation on Education in the post-2015 development agenda. The meeting in Dakar, March 2013, came up with priorities towards: “More focus on quality and how to measure it; on equity and access for hard-to-reach children; and what should happen during the first 3 years of secondary school.” Therefore it is not wrong to state that unfortunately, the current flow of processes and debates demonstrate that the new EFA goals are again dominated by schooling needs of children.

However, again there is also a great step forward with the following formulation in the Summary of Outcomes: “Equitable quality lifelong education and learning for all” is proposed as an overarching education goal to realize the world we want”.

The Civil Society Communique of the Global CSO Forum on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, held in Bali March 2013, came up with a statement that a future “framework must include goals and zero-targets on universal access to equitable healthcare, quality, inclusive education and life-long learning, water and sanitation, and food and nutrition security.”

Taking these debates up now, and deepen them through our journal, should therefore provide an enlarged opportunity to have an in-depth-discussion why “Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All” would be an overarching aim that has education as a human right as well as skills and competencies for citizenship, livelihoods, and vocational needs as an overall orientation.

It is not too late for the adult education community to get deeper involved. Members of ICAE should do it on national and regional level, and at the same time exchange arguments, and strengthen positions and claims by evidence based policy recommendation coming from good practice. The idea to strengthen this discussion and to widen it via a virtual seminar based on this journal issue and all the much other information seems to be a welcome opportunity. Potential issues to be raised could be:

- What are the alternative paradigms in and for education and development that transcend the limited orientation towards economic growth?
- How can education systems reach out to provide better access and more inclusive structures based on policy, legislation, and finance for all sub-sectors?
- How can civil society on national, regional, and international levels get better involved in these debates, and thus support the efforts by ICAE and others?

And this involvement should cover both, the education as well as development agenda. Youth and adult learning and training must be strong components in both.

CONFINTEA and GRALE

Complementary, and at the same time distinct from the EFA and MDG agendas there is also the chance to use the CONFINTEA process to strengthen our positions. The Belem Framework for Action coming from CONFINTEA VI in the year 2009 is monitored by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. A mid-term report is due also in 2015.

Belem saw the first Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE). Now after the new GRALE which has just been published, the adult education community is in a position to know what has been achieved since Belem, and where

policy and practice, support and partnerships should concentrate on, including the highly needed governance, professional and financial structures and mechanisms.

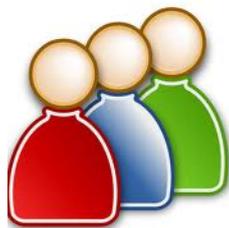
It should be clear that opportunities and time for bottom-level-up debates are running very quickly. It seems that already in May 2015 in Korea the EFA-follow-up will take place as the World Education Forum. Why not to ask globally for: Quality Education and Lifelong learning for All – and have related goals for the diversity of specific education sectors and needs of the people, especially including youth and adults, and move to national targets and indicators for implementation and measuring of achievements.

Resources

UNESCO. 2013. *Education for All is affordable - by 2015 and beyond*. Paris, EFA global Monitoring Report. (Policy Paper #6.)
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/rethinking-education/beyond-2015/>
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/post-2015/>
<http://norrags.wordpress.com/2012/09/17/education-and-skills-post-2015-what-education-what-development/>



Greetings and comments



Carmen Colazo - Paraguay

I am very happy that the Virtual Seminar has started. I hope to contribute to the presentations and also receive information and feedback on the subject from such distinguished experts! Greetings from Asunción!

Moema Viezzer- Brasil

Congratulations to ICAE on this new initiative! I will be accompanying and, if possible, contributing.

Babacar Diop Buuba - Senegal

These reminders and put into perspectives are useful. Bravo.

Malú Valenzuela and Gómez Gallardo

Popular Education Group with Women, B.C. Mexico

Cecilia, we wish you all the luck in the world with this new effort of ICAE, a big hug for the whole team. Thanks, I'll be watching to participate.

Juliana Alves de Araújo Bottechia to the introduction of Alan Tuckett

Good night!

I would like to congratulate the initiative of completing the Virtual Seminar and thank the opportunity to join the lists, although you use the Google translator (rs). I hope I can make myself understood...

My name is Juliana Alves de Araújo Bottechia and I am a teacher of adult education from public schools of the Federal District, and currently work in EAPE - School Improvement of Education Professionals. I've been forming literacy volunteers who work with their classes of non - literate, organized by the Department of Education / Coordination of Youth and Adult Education (EJA) with the help of popular movements that promote each phase, the inscriptions of these students in literacy teachers actions DF - Literate in classes in urban or rural areas.

In turn, they pass through the process of training and after completion of literacy will be assessed as to the level where they are and can move on to more advanced classes in the EJA series of public schools if they wish to pursue studies in.

Literacy volunteers receive a stipend, students and school food book, but in Brasilia are still about 10 illiterate people per square meter, or about 65 thousand illiterate, although these last three years many actions within the DF - Literate (in partnership with Brazil - Literate) program are being carried out.

The goal of the DF - Literate was literate at all until this year (2014), however, with population growth of around 2.82 per cent and the annual urbanization rate reaching 94.7 % (one of the highest in the country), the call rate of illiteracy - despite the actions literacy teachers - still reaches about 4 percent among people aged 15 and over.

Considering education as fundamental to the sustainable development agenda through lifelong learning, the shares are literacy teachers in the development agenda aiming at quality in terms of learning outcomes, as in the current knowledge society, emphasis is needed in teaching everyone, regardless of social diversity, generation, gender, ethnicity, religion, but directly dependent on the resources and investments.

**Daniel Baril, IALLA I
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Heribert remembers us of a lesson to take into account in our strategic considerations: the continuing narrowing of the education agenda to primary education or a paradigm centered on economic growth. Adult learning needs and demands, in all their diversity, as central as they are to personal and collective development, have still to struggle to emerge as a long overdue priority. « From rhetoric to action » was the calling of CONFINTEA VI. So true is still the analysis leading to it. Hopefully, so far in the debate, the global orientation proposed, i.e., equitable quality lifelong education and learning for all, opens up a wide space for international and national advocacy, as underlined by Heribert. But, as the past teaches us (MDG and EFA), as wide as a political space be, adult education will always have to fight to be included in policies, legislation and financing priorities.

I would like to highlight that, with the CONFINTEA VI following up process, the international adult learning community has another very specific forum to advocate from, in the defense of the right to adult education: the actualisation of the 1976 recommendation on the development of adult education. Next autumn, a new recommendation should be adopted at the UNESCO general conference. So we could expect being consulted in the near future. More specifically, it is proposed to join an action plan to the next Agenda post-2015. Regarding the place of adult education in the Agenda post-2015, this action plan should include, as an adult education action plan, the newly adopted Recommendation on the development of adult education. That would be a way to strengthen the always fragile place of adult education in the global agenda.

In all solidarity,
Daniel Baril



“CONFINTEA and GRALE: Processes to be taken into account in the POST-2015”

By Nélide Céspedes, Perú

CEAAL Secretary General. ICAE Executive Council



1. Rhetoric is more than action. Follow-up to the CONFINTEA VI. GRALE/UII Report

At the follow-up to the CONFINTEA VI, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) took on the mandate of the Belem Framework for Action: Preparing the World Report on the progress made by governments and their commitments in relation to this Framework.

The Advocacy Group of Educational Policy of CEAAL (GIPE, for its acronym in Spanish) reviewed the reports prepared by the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean and made a critical analysis that formed the basis for analyzing the Global Report on Adult Learning and Adult Education (2010).

We appreciate the transparency of the report as it states that in relation to the axes of the mandates regarding Policy, Governance, Funding, Participation and Quality, rhetoric is more than action. This transparency is very beneficial because otherwise it would not help awareness-raising in order to take on commitments to policies and programs for youth and adults in the region. Therefore, the report rises "that the situation has not changed much after the CONFITEA VI was held", although the problems are part of the debates and they permeate processes in this field "at a slow pace", as we say.

a) A special focus on literacy

The Report includes a special concern for Literacy as it is a matter of ethical commitment. It is unfair that in the twenty-first century there are still millions of young and adult illiterates in the world and in our Latin America and Caribbean, and that their opportunity to exercise their right to education has not been assured. The report notes that literate environments and learning societies are important; however, a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach is essential to overcome the causes of illiteracy, such as social injustice and unequal distribution of wealth in the continent.

Stressing the importance of the right to education, Katerina Tomasevski, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to education, pointed out that "the right to education is [...] the key to unlock other human rights." Paulo Freire argued that it is an educational process that enables apprehending the world, having a place in it and contributing to its construction^[1], from an approach of contextualized, critical and transforming education with a pedagogy that enables the *empowerment of social actors*.

b) Latin America and the Caribbean: an intercultural continent

The report also states that there are no reliable data, that resources are limited, and the challenge will be the dialogue between different alternatives that are underway; it points out that together with this challenge there is the information gap in relation to cultural and linguistic diversity not only in terms of measurements but on how weak policies still are for indigenous people.

In a study conducted by CEAAL entitled "**At a Slow Pace**"(*) which analyzes reports from 22 countries submitted to the UIL for GRALE report, we found that: Native languages are weak in the regular offer and not in all cases there is a policy on the language of instruction for adults: only 11 of the 22 existing reports (46%) recognize the development of literacy processes in other languages other than the official and national languages. They also report that they do not have materials for literacy in indigenous languages, and rather do it in the national language or simply do not use materials. It must be assumed that literacy is essentially a process that aims people to get on as subjects of rights, as citizens and actors in the development of their community and their country and we need to address the intercultural reality of our peoples.

The Belem Framework for Action (BFA) and recommendations Policy

The report notes that progress has been made in the field of rhetoric, but policy implementation for ALE is still poor, and there is little recognition of non-formal and informal learning educations. In Latin America and the Caribbean it is essential to talk to the rich tradition of community education and ALE linked to Popular Education. In a recent study by CREFAL entitled "Towards a transformative ALE", many scholars have pointed out the need to open a debate regarding this political and educational approach because it aims at inclusion and the exercise of rights, it promotes the appropriation of the word, of communication to the transformation of social actors, to social transformation. This education nourishes from and seeks democratization, solidarity and cooperation. Its methodology starts from the real situation of people excluded, their historical context and its analysis to raise commitment towards change, and it works on knowledge as a dialogical process of active listening, criticality and proposals for people to assume their own personal and social development.

What does it outline about Governance?

The report highlights three important aspects: the decentralization of regional and local levels, the involvement of all stakeholders as policy support, and capacity building.

The development of regional and local education plans is a policy that is being promoted in the region, however, these plans are weak because they mean to transfer the management of education in general to local governments, evidencing their educational and financial inefficiency. In some regions of our countries there are types of medium-term plans that need to be improved as they are an attempt to bring the policy closer to the regional situation which is responsible for education, and to regional governments regarding funding, although bureaucracy impede these decentralization initiatives.

A very sensitive issue is participation. On many occasions, the participation of civil society is not taken seriously; however, this is also changing due to the role of civil society, of educators themselves who are permanently struggling to participate and make proposals. Such participation should be expressed by ALE subjects themselves who have a wealth of experience and know their needs, so it is necessary to use different mechanisms of inclusion in policy formulation and in listening to their voices by raising various strategies.

So in the context of Post 2015 debates, various civil society networks (ICAE, CLADE, REPEM, FSME, FLACSO) have spoken and made proposals for an understanding of education as a fundamental human right, and to make ALE visible. This has occurred in the 68th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations at the launch of the Special Report of the Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon entitled: "A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015". The debate there has not been easy, we have to fight for ALE to be understood as lifelong learning and to perceive its relation to policies, as well as to move forward towards a conception of the right to education that stops its commercialization and stripped it of its sense of common good.

Funding

In the previous report, underinvestment, lack of information, poor research and lack of political will are noted. Today, due to the limited funding, public accountability in ALE decreases and shoddy private training centers increase, who profit at the expense of the poor, and in which methods of corruption were even found by purchasing notes and certificates. And the authorities are aware of all this. On the other hand, in some Latin American countries there is a tendency to decrease the budget year after year: it is argued that there are few students and due to their low quality, inefficient schedules, lack of materials, and lack of cultural relevance and age, young people quit these centers.

A final wake-up call: if we keep assuming that ALE deserves poor education for the poor, it will not have the visibility and the place it deserves. The challenge is to take over a concept of lifelong ALE as a fundamental human right. While it is a matter of policy, it is also an ethical commitment towards our citizens who have been discriminated and excluded from their rights.

Quality

The report points out that several countries are in the process of improving the quality of ALE. The efforts made by the OIS (Organization of Ibero-American States), UNESCO and other countries to encourage initiatives that account for a smaller number of illiterate people in the region are recognized, and the campaign strategy is being exceeded, approaching it systematically and in a variety of modalities.

In a final result of surveys entitled *"It is never too late to go back to school"*(**), prepared by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), it is noted that 36 million adults who can not read or write live in the region. In surveys conducted with women, they have said they do not match their age, they are not in relation to context or to their experiences, there are no adequate educational materials, they are not in the native language of the participants, and educators are not trained for that level. This explains why drop out, i.e. because of low quality.

It is important to recognize that civil society develops interesting educational experiences with youth and adults which - in some countries - are not well enough received and recognized in the design of policies for ALE.

What is left, then, is the great task of focusing on improving quality and articulating it with the development of citizenship, multiculturalism, and linking learning to the environment. It is important that policies and programs focused on ALE recognize its cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, representations, expectations and skills, as well as its contexts and needs. It is extremely important to emphasize the education of women, which represents a fundamental commitment to gender equality and non-discrimination, which is strongly related to achieving dignity, respect and justice.

As well, in Latin America and the Caribbean there is an EPJA Observatory (EDULAC Portal) in partnership with the UNESCO Regional Office in Santiago, UIL, OIS, INEA (National Institute for Adult Education) in Mexico and CEAAL/ICAE. The idea arose during the regional follow-up meeting to CONFINTEA VI in response to the scarce and scattered information about ALE in the region. Thus, EDULAC proposes to establish parameters for the generation of knowledge through the analysis and comparison of data, and to promote a space of cooperation and coordination between the 33 Member States of the region, but the challenge is based on its recovery.

Only by studying these analyses will we be able to make the necessary proposals towards the legitimate right to education young people and adults deserve.

<http://bibliotecasolidaria.blogspot.com/2009/09/la-educacion-como-practica-de-la.html>

(*) <http://www.ceaal.org/v2/archivos/publicaciones/carta/a-paso-lento.pdf>

(**) <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Santiago/pdf/IP15-2013-literacy-education-survey-statistics-en.pdf>



Comments

Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo
Deputy Director of UIL

Thank you to ICAE for initiating this virtual seminar.

Daniel has pointed out that we should use the upcoming revision of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (RDAE). This draft revision will be presented to the UNESCO General Conference in 2015 for approval and the Institute is now preparing a process (ensuring substantive discussions at the same following legal

procedures) to arrive at a revised RDAE. This will start with an expert meeting to be held in Hamburg this May, to be followed by an online consultation in June and a formal consultation process to Member States starting September. The timetable of the revision of the 1976 RDAE is also coinciding with the Revision of the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education so we are working closely with our colleagues in Paris and in Bonn to make sure that these two documents are speaking to each other. The expert meeting in May in fact will address the two Recommendations and therefore bring together experts in AE and TVET. We hope that you would all actively participate in our online consultation in June. For our part, we will be listening to the discussion and make sure that the key issues coming out from this are also reflected in the May expert meeting.

Carmen Colazo – Paraguay

Dear colleagues,

I find it very interesting the synthesis achieved and I share one by one the issues that have been considered as key priorities for inclusive and lifelong education, following the steps of the CONFINTEA VI in Belem Do Para. However, I want to make three specific points that I think we can relieve in this dialog:

a) The compliance with the constitutional mandates of the region, especially in recent Constitutions, which have taken a huge step in the incorporation of Human Rights, the normative framework of human rights within international law influencing our domestic legislation, because these Constitutions mark a way forward, determine a priority for states and their budget allocations, as well as to the follow-up of their progress in terms of DESCs and the respect of multicultural and intercultural aspects defined in them (most mother tongues are transmitted by indigenous women in the region, the most illiterate ones, with all the problems of educational governance and educational quality that this entails).

b) The inclusion of gender in education, in a cross-cutting way, for a COEDUCATIONAL education (a part of the quality we're talking about), that exceeds quantitative approaches and deepens qualitative ones that keep repeating sexist patterns that are then translated into the reality of lack of rights and problems of development for half the regional population that are women, and also for people with other sexual orientations and gender identities that, even if they are now included in some constitutions (such as Ecuador and Bolivia) as subjects of law, education systems have not adapted at all for these rights to be real and effective in their lives.

c) Finally, I am concerned about ICTs, especially in their view of gender, sexual orientation, multi and intercultural aspects, gender violence, from the educational point of view. I think we have to say that if multicultural and intercultural co-education is not funded, there will be no changes in the states, democracies and governances in our so diverse region. A big hug and let's continue the debate!

Carmen Colazo (Feminist Academic, Women, Gender and Development with Equity Network Coordinator. School of the Americas. Inter-American University Organization -COLAM - OUI). From Paraguay.



The world needs a clear target on Lifelong Learning for All for another world to be possible (*) **By Alan Tuckett- ICAE President**



The story to date

Ever since the eighth World Assembly of ICAE in Malmö in 2011 we have followed three key threads of the process which will lead to the adoption of new global development targets for the period 2015-2030. The first strand focused on the world Earth Summit conference in Rio in 2012. At this conference UN member states made the commitment to create Sustainable Development Goals, and commissioned 30 countries to lead an Open Working Group to report in 2014. Adult educators had only modest success at the summit in Rio in securing two discrete mentions of the Lifelong Learning agenda in the formal agreement of the conference, but ICAE made an effective alliance with other education civil society organisations, and led the preparation of a civil society policy paper on education for the world we want.

The second strand of our work was the Education For All process – which monitors progress on the range of education goals adopted at Jomtien in 1990 and confirmed in Dakar in 2000. Three of the EFA goals have a direct bearing on our interests. Target 4 makes a commitment to gender equality – but has in practice been focused overwhelmingly on access to

schooling for girls. Target 2 commits to expanding learning opportunities for young people and adults – and whilst the EFA Monitoring Report in 2013 reported on skills for youth, no attempt at all has been made to monitor wider adult learning provision. Target 3 promised a 50% reduction in the numbers of adults without literacy skills – but in 23 years there has been an improvement in the literacy rate overall of just 12%, and numbers (just short of 780 million) are broadly static given the expansion of the world’s population. No improvement has been achieved in the proportion of women without literacy – still 64% of the total number.

ICAE and its partners have been relatively successful in influencing the EFA agenda, through the Consultative Committee of NGOs, the EFA steering committee, and the Dakar Consultation on Education, held in March 2013, which adopted an overall goal of “Lifelong Education and Quality learning for All”. All well and good – but the summary of the Dakar event still managed to omit any mention of adults.

The third process has been the work in considering what should follow the Millennium Goals. This has had a bewildering range of threads, co-ordinated by the UN Secretary-General’s High Level Panel (HLP), and we have found it difficult at times to see how best to contribute. The Panel reported at the end of May 2013.

The report, A New Global Partnership, is in some ways more positive than I had feared, but it also contains major and disturbing omissions, and clarifies areas where we need to redouble our advocacy. It provides, though, one clear context for our immediate discussions, and in my view highlights some key challenges the adult learning movement needs to address.

The report bases its recommendations on global goals on an analysis that five “big, transformative shifts” in priority are needed for a sustainable future in which poverty can be eradicated. These are:

1. “Leave no one behind” – income, gender, disability and geography must not be allowed to determine if people live or die, or their opportunities. Targets are only to be achieved when they impact equally for marginalised and excluded groups.
2. “Put sustainable development at the core” – the report argues that it should shape actions by governments and businesses alike. There is little, though, securing sustainable ways of living.
3. “Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth” – jobs are what help people to escape poverty but people need “education, training and skills” to be successful in the job market. There is, though, nothing on the need to strengthen the skills of people working in the informal economy – though these are the overwhelming majority in sub-Saharan Africa and in India.
4. “Build peace and effective, open and accountable public institutions” – the report argues that freedom from conflict and violence are essential foundations for effective development, and that “a voice in the decisions that affect (people’s) lives are development outcomes as well as enablers.”
5. “Forge a new global partnership” – including a key role for civil society.

A new global partnership then offers, for illustrative purposes twelve universal goals, each with between four and six sub-goals, to be accompanied by targets set nationally, and indicators that can be disaggregated to see the impact on marginalised groups. The targets are ambitious, wide-ranging, and as the report argues, interrelated:

1. end poverty;
2. empower women and girls and achieve gender equality;
3. provide quality education and lifelong learning;
4. ensure healthy lives;
5. ensure food security and good nutrition;
6. achieve universal access to water and sanitation;
7. secure sustainable energy;
8. create jobs, sustainable livelihoods and equitable growth;
9. manage natural resource assets sustainably;
10. ensure good governance and effective institutions;
11. ensure stable and peaceful societies
12. create a global enabling environment and catalyse long-term finance.

It is an impressive list, weakened by little clarity about how everything is to be paid for, but adult educators will recognise that few, if any of these goals can be achieved without adults learning – understanding, adapting to and shaping the changes that are needed. But it is perhaps no surprise that this is not a central conclusion of the report. Nevertheless, there are things to welcome. First, the reassertion of human rights as the basis for development, and the determination that new targets should focus on ensuring that “no-one gets left behind”. The key proposal that no targets can be met unless they are achieved for each quintile (20%) of the income distribution, and that they are achieved for women, for disabled adults, for

migrants, and for others previously excluded is reiterated through *A new global partnership*. The report recognises that for this to happen, there needs to be major investment in improving data, which can be disaggregated to provide accurate information on how effectively marginalised and excluded groups are reached. Improved household surveys, including questions about participation in learning would go a long way to assist adult educators in monitoring the success of programmes in meeting the needs of under-represented groups.

A second benefit is that the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals processes are brought together. It argues, like the Earth Summit that antipoverty and sustainable development goals must be developed hand in hand. It recognises, too, that the 12 goals identified are interrelated.

At first glance, the recommended goal for education looks positive, too. The third goal, to “provide quality education and Lifelong Learning” – at least includes Lifelong Learning on the agenda. Yet it differs from the Dakar education thematic conference in omitting any commitment to make provision “for all”. And when we look at the detailed targets we find that the one covering youth and adults is to “increase the number of young and adult women and men with the skills, including technical and vocational needed for work”.

This formulation of a Lifelong Learning goal – as yet only illustrative – fails to meet the challenge the High Level Panel set in their overview. They say: “Education can help us reach many goals, by raising awareness and thus leading to mass movements for recycling and renewable energy, or a demand for better governance and an end to corruption. The goals chosen should be ones that amplify each other’s impact and generate sustainable growth and poverty reduction together.”

Again, reporting on what young people told the panel, they note that what is wanted is “for education beyond primary schooling, not just formal learning but life skills and vocational training to prepare them for jobs ... they want to be able to make informed decisions about their health and bodies, to fully realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights. They want access to information and technology so that they can participate in their nation’s public life, especially charting its economic development. They want to be able to hold those in charge to account, to have the right to freedom of speech and association and to monitor where their government’s money is going.”

The proposed goal addresses hardly any of that agenda. Nor does it address the challenge identified in goal 2: “Empower girls and women and achieve gender equality”. There the Panel notes: “A woman who receives more years of schooling is more likely to make decisions about immunisation and nutrition that will improve her child’s chance in life; indeed more schooling for girls and women between 1970 and 2009 saved the lives of 4.2 million children.”

The report fails to mention adult literacy as an issue at all. Nor does it recognise that for all those currently excluded, or who missed out on quality education in the past, the right to a first or second chance education for adults – lifewide as well as vocational – is essential if no one is to be left behind.

What next?

For me, a key challenge from all the work so far is how to find a better voice for adult learning and education in the education community itself. We need to ensure that the energies of our colleagues in the wider educational community understand enough, and are convinced to include the case for adult learning and education (ALE), which is rights-based, and includes the right to literacy, vocational, democratic and civic education, education for well-being; for sustainable lives, that is alive to arts and culture, intergenerational learning, and respects diversity and difference. That was, of course, the essential vision of the UNESCO World Conferences on Adult Education CONFINTEA V and VI, but it is not yet a vision colleagues working in schools and universities automatically include in their advocacy. Adults, like children, need quality education from properly trained teachers. Children do better in school when their mothers learn. Early childhood education works better when families are engaged. We need to be better at stressing our common and interrelated goals, but also at explaining our own clear priorities.

Related to this, we have a major task in helping the wider development community to understand better the role education of adults has in securing other goals for overcoming poverty and securing a better quality of life. An early task for us is to enumerate for each of the 12 universal goals proposed in the High Level Panel report just how adult learning makes a difference, backed ideally by hard evidence – of the kind the Wider Benefits of Learning Research Centre in the University of London’s Institute of Education pioneered, and OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) has taken up. It will be important not to over-claim, but work in building that case would be a constructive use of the virtual seminar ICAE will run with DVV International following the publication of the journal. *[For more information, click here: http://www.dvv-international.de/index.php?article_id=1510&clang=1].*

Of course, the most important task of all, in my view, is to frame concrete proposals for a clear and easy to understand Lifelong Learning target, and to articulate the indicators that can be measured. Mine would include just a modest change to the High Level Panel report goal adding “for all” to the current formulation – to read “provide quality education and

Lifelong Learning for all". This will then inevitably involve recognition that Lifelong Learning covers formal, non-formal and informal learning.

My three indicators would start with adult literacy. It is a fundamental right – and we should secure universal literacy by 2030, with the number of adults without literacy halved in every country by 2020, and halved again five years later, with an immediate priority given to eradicating the gender gap in access to literacy. Given that the new targets are to cover the industrialised as well as developing world, it also needs to recognise that literacy skills are context specific, and the millions with poor literacy skills should be identified, and their numbers reduced.

ICAE, like DVV International has a commitment to decent learning for decent work. Access to fit for purpose education should be accessible to people working in the formal and informal economy, and the participation gap between the numbers reached in the most affluent quintile of a country's population, and those in the least affluent 20 percent should narrow with each five-year measurement of progress.

Thirdly, education for democratic engagement needs to be a priority. But since that is so hard to measure, and since the power of learning to leak from one domain to another is so strong, I would settle for an overall participation target – measured by household surveys, and with data disaggregated by all the groups highlighted in the HLP report. Then the indicator would again seek to secure a reduction in under-representation by marginalised groups.

I have concentrated here on the High Level Panel report, since it is the first attempt to bring the full range of issues together. But the parallel work of the Secretary General's Open Working Group on sustainable development targets will, doubtless, shift the debate again in different directions, and we must be ready to argue the case for education for sustainability to include the themes discussed here. And then there will be a parallel process to identify Education for All targets for the world after 2015. There is, without doubt, a great deal to do. But the vision of a learning society where everyone can learn to know, to do, to be and to live together, laid out in the Delors report in 1996 has yet to be achieved, and it is well worth working for.

Reference

High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (May 2013): A New Global Partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development. The Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Available at <http://bit.ly/1aF1nGJ>

(* The article is part of the *Adult Education and Development: Post 2015 publication*
http://dvv-international.de/index.php?article_id=1460&clang=1



Comments

Daniel Baril, IALLA I
Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICÉA)
Canada

Reading Nélida and Alan contribution, after 45 minutes of snow shoveling, in this Canadian surprised march snow storm morning, it appears to me that we might be faced with a paradox. As Nélida underlined, policy implementation has not followed the rhetoric. That should bring us to strive to have a strong and practical commitment for adult education policy implementation in the next Agenda post-2015. But, as Alan point out, a focus on a major international instrument (ex.: MDG) has, as a secondary effect, to bring government to marginalise other instruments (ex.: EFA and CONFINTEA). So, what should be our strategy, taken those thoughts into consideration? Some caution seems to be called for.

At a minimum, the post-2015 agenda will have to be explicitly and strongly linked with other instruments, like CONFINTEA VI and the next recommendation on the development of adult education. Ideally, a detailed action plan, with specific disposition for adult learning will be included in the post-2015 agenda. But memory tells us that the CONFINTEA V Agenda for the future was such a specific and detailed action plan for adult education. Two decades later, we are still hoping to go beyond rhetoric. It seems to me that we need to find a way to move from a leap of faith to a quantum leap. I still don't know how to translate that into strategic action. But, like Albert Camus said about the fate of Sisyphus, hope keeps him striving et happy.

Babacar Diop Buuba
Dakar, Senegal

Excellent contribution, good analysis of trends with objectivity and a clear and relevant commitment for progress and solidarity. In a word, dialectics working. Congratulations, dear Alan.



Reflection from a Caribbean perspective

By Alison Cross - VP, ICAE representing the Caribbean Region



“The more things change...the more they remain the same”.

The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is partnering with DVV international in presenting this set of essays and reflections on the issues under debate and discussion as new goals, targets and indicators are worked on for the period 2015–2030.

I offer a short reflection of where the Caribbean region needs to focus on in seeking to influence the post-2015 global development targets, and review issues that need attention over the next year, as the UN system shapes its final proposals for overall goals, and a parallel process is developed for Education for All (EFA) beyond 2015. I will also comment briefly on the article by Heribert Hinzen DVV International, Laos “Lifelong Learning for All – A potential global goal for the post-2015 education and development agendas!”

Background information:

The Caribbean Council for Adult Education (CARCAE) is a regional body of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). It officially came into being in 1978 at the ICAE Executive Meeting held in San Jose, Costa Rica, the decision was taken to recognize the Caribbean, not as a sub-region within the Latin American region, but as a region in its own right. One year later, at the ICAE General Assembly held in Helsinki; the non-Spanish speaking Caribbean was given full recognition as a region. Thus CARCAE serves twenty-two countries within the Dutch, English and French speaking Caribbean region. Unfortunately in the last few years, since the CONFINTEA VI held in Brazil, CARCAE has been dormant.

The Jamaican Council for Adult Education (JACAE) is a, not-for-profit, civil society organization whose members are organizations and individuals involved in a wide range of adult and continuing educational activities in both the formal and non-formal education sectors. The member organizations include government agencies, universities and colleges, the media, private sector organizations, as well as other civil society organizations. For over twenty-five years JACAE has been committed to promoting and sustaining the development of adult continuing education and lifelong learning for individual and national development and to uniting adult educators in Jamaica. In the last year JACAE has been relatively inactive due to significant challenges experienced with its executive members.

Guided by the EFA & MDG Roadmap

In his article, Hinzen reminds us that ICAE and DVV have been actively involved, participating in all the major adult education committees over the last fifteen years to ensure that the voice of adult learning and education receives priority status within the broader context of the agenda issues. The frustrating challenge for those of us in the Adult Education community is that youth and adults and their learning and training needs have been for the most part put on the “back burner”. This is not acceptable for ICAE or DVV nor is it acceptable for the majority of us in the field of adult learning and education.

Realistic POST-2015 Debates

There is a global babble, which is increasing in intensity, on the successes and lack of achievements regarding the outcomes of the MDG’s and the EFA Goals. *What have we achieved? What should we focus on? How should we organize or re-organize to achieve successes at the global and more specifically at national levels?*

Hinzen suggests that as we explore which global goals are needed for post-2015, that it may be time for countries to become more vocal and more involved in setting their own “national” or “context-specific” targets with related indicators. Of course this makes sense! Can you imagine if the English speaking Caribbean came together on the 3rd and 4th goals to start with: Goal 3: Promoting learning and life skills for young people and adults; Goal 4: Increasing adult literacy. In Jamaica alone, we are so fragmented with our efforts, each movement operating as if within a “silo” rather than with a more effective collaborative vision and action plan. I know Vision 2030’s National Development Plan has set the tone for functional collaboration – but this is for the large part not working for adult and youth education and learning.

I agree that the Caribbean should use the momentum of the post 2015 debate to focus on the interconnectedness of the different goals recognizing that: *Healthier people learn better, better educated youth and adults are less vulnerable.*

There are many possible themes being discussed as the major focus for the agenda post-2015, the Adult Education community is already weighing in on the main goals that we believe will achieve the greatest successes for the next fifteen years.

The ones that seem to have the most traction include:

- an education-specific agenda covering all aspects of schooling, training, and learning;
- that education must be everywhere in the implementation of the development agenda;
- that we must have a holistic lifelong lifewide learning framework.

If I close my eyes I can actually see Hinzen articulating in his firm, calm manner the charge to us in the Adult Education community that we MUST, "...step up our efforts if we are to influence future goals." ...before he adds, perhaps with a half-smile on his face, "Luckily, all of us are invited to join the discussion." This is where I begin to get concerned. Sure, we are all invited to join the discussion. I can predict which of my colleagues worldwide who will join in – the European region, the Asia-Pacific region, the African region, and of course the Latin American region will be very actively present....but where will the English speaking Caribbean's voice be? We are quick to accept invitations to all kinds of agendas, but not so quick to participate in the agenda for adult and youth education. This is so very worrying.

Where is ALE in the Caribbean today?

The debate on adult learning and education in the Caribbean has been one of the best kept secrets to the general public within the Caribbean context. There has in fact been much research and articles written on this topic by the following groups: UNESCO, the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CaPRI), PREAL, OAS, USAID, UNICEF, the Caribbean Development Bank, our local Universities, the Ministries of Education, and I could go on and on. The question is...what do we do with the information we glean? How do we use this information to influence the process of adult learning and education within the Caribbean context? The results of all this research and publications are marginally tangible (if at all) and are not visible, so what is the point??

CARCAE and JACAE need to be revitalized. We need more voices represented in the Adult Education community. If we don't have active Adult Education communities, we cannot participate. If we don't participate, we will be left further and further behind.

Here I go back to Hinzen's article and endorse his challenge to those of us in the Adult Education community to strengthen our position and to join this discussion. This is a special plea for the Caribbean Adult Education community to reach out, to participate...we have a strong and powerful voice...we need to use it now more than ever.

For ease of reference to my brothers and sisters in the Caribbean I will borrow two of the points from Hinzen's article on potential issues covering the **education** as well as the **development agenda** focusing on **youth and adult learning and training** which we could raise in the Caribbean context:

- What are the alternative paradigms in and for education and development that transcend the limited orientation towards economic growth?
- How can civil society at the national, regional, and international level get better involved in these debates, and thus support the efforts by ICAE and others?

In the Caribbean region, what are the issues affecting youth and adult learners in the EFA process, and what kind of action is necessary to influence the process? We need to respond to these questions within the Caribbean regional and specifically at the National levels?

What Next for the Caribbean region?

In reading Alan Tuckett's article for this debate, "The world needs a clear target on Lifelong Learning for All for another world to be possible", I recognized that one of the many challenges facing the Caribbean Adult Education community is that as a collective group in the Caribbean, perhaps we don't fully understand enough about **the case for adult learning and education (ALE)**, which is rights-based, and includes the right to literacy, vocational, democratic and civic education, education for well-being; for sustainable lives, that is alive to arts and culture, intergenerational learning, and respects diversity and difference. This is **not** a vision articulated by policy makers – at any level and in any field.

Perhaps our role in this DVV / ICAE virtual seminar and other discussions is to help foster the wider Caribbean development community to understand better the role education of adults has in securing other goals for overcoming poverty and securing a better quality of life.

The Caribbean pulls together to achieve monumental milestones in sports, in music and in many other contexts. We **can create**, through a stronger more active Caribbean Adult Learning community, **a Caribbean worth living in**.



African Adult Education CSOs' Presence in the Post-2015 Process Needs a Revamp

Reflection by Robert Jjuuko, IALLA III Graduate, Uganda (1)



Introduction

Horizontal and vertical partnership amongst African NGOs and other civil society actors in the field of adult education has zigzagged for too long. This rather imprudent crisscrossing needs a closer examination if African civil society is to make a mark on the post-2015 education agenda. In their articles for this virtual seminar, both Hinzen (2013) and Alan (2013), imply a greater participation of civil society individual actors and groups in shaping the global education and development agenda since the 1990s. The engagement of Adult Education-based CSOs in the post-2015 debates is more crucial today than 20 years back given evidence of increased subordination of the sub-sector from 2000s.

The fronts of engagement are multiple and diverse. The well known and claimed versatility of CSOs is at a test. For instance, as Alan (2013) puts it, *we need a better voice for adult learning and education in the education community itself*. This better voice ought to have local, national, regional and global legitimacy and cohesion. As advocates, we all agree that collective voices are better heard. Global voices are no substitute to regional voices. Regional voices and no substitute to national voices, and indeed national voices do not replace local views. Where are the African civil society voices in the global education debates, particularly those related to adult learning and education (ALE)? If you are familiar with the African adult education terrain, you could be having an idea of several attempts to create and nurture civil society voices at national, regional and continental levels.

The earlier attempts of the 1980s

The African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE) is arguably the most pronounced platform created in the 1980s to advance the promotion of literacy and education on the continent. There are pointers to significant achievements made by AALAE despite the huge ideological and management quagmire that befell it in the 1990s. With its collapse and eventual closure of its headquarters in Kenya, signs of a 'successor' network began to emerge. The Pan African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (PAALAE) was born to drive forward a similar agenda. Based in West Africa, PAALAE struggles but its muscle to bloom the storm is rather debatable.

The attempts of the 1990s and 2000s (EFA)

The EFA boom brought tremendous steam and hope. Indeed, there was a feeling of renewed interest in adult literacy / education. The hope for increased resource mobilization and financing for education motivated individual citizens and groups. New and old International initiatives such as the International Council for Adult Education and Global Campaign for Education, wantonly and unwittingly tickled many. Networks and Associations such as the Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) became visible at the continental level with national chapters in some countries. Apparently ANCEFA, by practice, has a strong inclination to formal schooling and the push to offset the effects of EFA boom.

In the early 2000s, REFLECT practitioners and theorists formed a network called PAMOJA Africa REFLECT Network. Besides, the preoccupation to promote and nurture a hybrid of psycho-social and Freire radical approach to literacy learning, PAMOJA was a useful platform for linking literacy practitioners. Apparently, there seem to be PAMOJAs in East Africa, PAMOJA West Africa and the block for South Africa. The discussion about intra-PAMOJA linkages is outside the scope of this conversation though signals indicate some challenges to live to the original vision.

The attempts during the CONFINTEA VI build-up

In preparation for the CONFINTEA VI Preparatory Meeting for the African Region, some four networks (ANCEFA, FEMNET, PAALAE and PAMOJA) established a loose super network called African Platform for Adult Education. This platform was instrumental in preparing a civil society input (CSO shadow report) which was shared during CONFINTEA VI Regional Conference held in 2008 in Nairobi Kenya. Visibility of this Platform was only felt during the CONFINTEA VI pick of activities. Yet it seemed like a new springboard for bolstering African adult educators' voice!

What are the issues?

The 2015 EFA Agenda was debated and concluded on African soil. The super education goal proposal 'Lifelong Education and Quality learning for All' was agreed in 2013 in Dakar through intensive discussions involving NGOs. Of course an audit to identify the contribution of African NGOs is not something I want to propose but it is worth thinking about. Something must be done by African adult educators. On a continent, where the pioneer President of ICAE was born, we must reflect on the previous attempts to generate collective voices to influence global debate. We need to identify lessons from our past to inform our imaginations and strategies to influence the post-2015 education and development debates. It is important that we address one of the key questions of the virtual seminar which I have tailored to fit my contribution. *How can African civil society at the local, national, regional level get better involved in these debates, and thus support the efforts by ICAE and others?*

Of course numerous local and national initiatives abound the continent. Thousands of CBOs and local NGOs engage in diverse advocacy initiatives to ensure that the right to education becomes a reality for millions of non-literate youths and adults in Africa. But these initiatives are rarely documented and disseminated. Actors do not inform each other of what works and does not. The time is now to once again profess and declare our willingness and preparedness to network within and beyond our borders. In his article, Hinzen (2013) says that it should be clear that opportunities and time for bottom-up debates are running out very quickly.

I think our effective engagement in the Post-2015 education and development processes entails a real paradigm shift. This shift involves rethinking and vigorously tackling the tensions and interests that often undermine the growth and development of national and regional adult education networks. There is a greater need to share and nurture linkages to generate an African voice. Whether the African Platform or some form of loose connections amongst ICAE members or IALLAs, something has to be done and done differently for that matter. If administering mega-networks or associations is problematic, could we explore possibilities of issue-based linkages between and among actors? Could we explore how interested individuals and organizations across the continent can for instance track and report on how AU and other regional inter-governmental bodies are engaging in the Post-2015 official negotiations?

We ought to remain true to the universal conception of lifelong learning by broadening our adult education / literacy advocacy messages and targets to include decision makers and colleagues in ministries of education, primary and secondary schools, universities, ministries of labour. For over two decades, we are painfully paying for isolating ourselves and taking our actions to the periphery of mainstream EFA and MDG policy dialogues. We need to resolve to do certain things differently. For instance, we better declare never again to engage in international literacy day celebrations that target decision makers from only those Ministries responsible for adult literacy. The plight of semi and unskilled workers who as human being deserve decent work terms and conditions are often not included in our advocacy programs because we ordinarily think this is a preserve of trade unions. Intersectionality should be seen to be in force. Synergies between and among promoters of education and learning in all their facets is what we should help to build.

Thank you Prof Alan and Prof Hinzen, I have read your articles with keen interest. They have stimulated my imaginations. I wish to associate myself with many of the issues you raise.

(1) About the Virtual Seminar Participant (March 2014)

He is an educationist, research and development worker. He is the Executive Director of Education and Development Initiatives Uganda (EDI Uganda). He teaches research methods, community education methods and project planning and management at the Department of Adult Education of Kyambogo University. He is an IALLA III Graduate.

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Comments



Inayatullah from Pakistan President of PACADE

Dear All,

While I generally endorse the points made regarding Hinzen's most perceptive paper, as far as the achievements of EFA Goals in developing countries is concerned, unless governments in these countries make very special efforts and provide adequate funds (at least 4 percent of GDP), the possibility of realizing these goals will remain a distant dream. Take for instance Pakistan which is required to attain Literacy rate of 86% by 2015, claims to have reached hardly 58%. At this rate it will take more than 2 decades for it to reach the targets.

It is also unrealistic to expect that the civil society/NGOs can make any substantial contributions. Exception apart, only government has the resources to establish tens of thousands of centers to speedily spread adult literacy.

In Pakistan currently 60 million people of age 10 and above are totally illiterate.

Instead of laying down and in fact repeating known ideas and strategies for Access and Quality of Learning, in general terms, it is time that ICAE and its regional components concentrate on some of the countries left far behind the rest of the world and focus efforts on advocacy and mobilization of funds to ensure that governments and civil societies in these countries are substantially helped to launch the necessary plans and programmes.

Merely restating or recounting the need for undertaking good programmes and desirable strategies will not be of much use.

To repeat, efforts must be focused on laggard countries, as suggested.

High Regards,

Inayatullah - President PACADE

Ex-Chairman National Commission for Literacy and Mass Education, Pakistan

Carmen Campero from Mexico

IALLA VII

I want to acknowledge the important work of ICAE in various current international scenarios, mentioned in different contributions to this seminar, to position the education of youth and adults (ALE) in global agendas, from a broad and comprehensive view, based on the exercise of human rights, which largely outlines the action Plan for the Future of CONFINTEA V.

This task performed by ICAE, along with other networks, associations and foundations, is also key because in national education policies of many countries, including Mexico, ALE takes second place, and a compensatory approach centered in achieving quantitative targets in terms of literacy and basic education (primary and secondary) certificates predominates in its proposals, leaving aside the quality of educational processes and other areas of action included in this educational field. In this context, we do advocacy based on the commitments made by Mexico in the international level, in other socio-educational practices and in the results of researches conducted from different methodologies.

I would like to highlight two aspects mentioned by Heribert and Alan.

The first one relates to the importance that decision makers at national and international level understand the contributions of young and adult education in overcoming poverty and the efforts to ensure a better quality of life for many of them, for the exercise of their rights: in other words, we need to have evidence that supports that education makes a difference in the lives of people. This is where research from different methodologies, incorporating qualitative research and that related to popular education such as the systematization of experiences and action research, regain importance. Therefore, it is also essential to position the importance of promoting policies to encourage research in ALE that promotes diversity of strategies and methodologies to produce knowledge beyond many stuffy proposals by the "academy". It would also be very good that Alan shares the league of the Research Center on Major Benefits of Learning of the Institute of Education, University of London.

In this sense, in the short term, in order to have evidence of the importance of ALE, it would be positive to launch a broad initiative to get testimonies from young people and adults about how education has made a difference in their lives (the axis and strategy should be specified), something like those presented in the issue of the DvJ Journal Education and Development, which is the basis of this seminar, but they should be shorter. A similar experience is the call made by CLADE a year ago, for videotaping interviews with literate people which are part of the "Amplifying Voices" project.

A second comment refers to Alan's proposal of suggesting a clear and understandable goal and defining measurable indicators, he particularly intends to do so from the objective of "Providing quality education and lifelong learning for all"; I would propose "... for the entire population", to use inclusive language and make women visible.

If this proposal is adopted, there is a concern about it: that some studies in relation to Latin American show that the region does not speak of lifelong learning, but of education or teaching and learning processes with young people and adults, making reference to the programs and actions that take place in multiple spaces and modalities and that target diverse sectors of the population. For some colleagues, a concern of speaking only of "lifelong learning" is that this might imply, implicitly, to relieve from governments the obligation to promote specific policies and programs for realizing the right to education of all persons, as well as neglecting the importance of professionalism - training and working conditions - of educators working in this field of education. I consider these two aspects would have to be incorporated into sub goals and indicators, in order to avoid those risks.

Two other issues to discuss are the importance of the use of inclusive language to make visible boys and girls, young men and women as well as adult people, many of whom are women, as another means for positioning the gender perspective

and its inclusion in the agendas. Taking into account the distinctive features of each language, we have to search for terms that make women present; for Spanish these could be: population, adult people and sometimes mention at least in some parts of the documents: men and women, men and women educators...

Finally, to be aware of participating in face to face and virtual spaces to position our proposals, as the one convoked by Carol from UIL.

All best wishes from Mexico.

Carmen Campero Cuenca

National Pedagogical University and Youth and Adult Education Network



Learning for All: The World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020 (*)

By Elizabeth King

Director of Education in the Human Development Network of the World Bank.



Education is one of the most important drivers for ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Since 1990, targeted actions by a number of countries and their development partners have helped reduce by half the number of out-of-school children around the world. Yet 61 million children today are not in school – and there is abundant evidence that learning outcomes in many developing countries are alarmingly low, especially among disadvantaged populations. Because growth, development, and poverty reduction depend on the knowledge and skills that people acquire, not the number of years that they sit in a classroom, we must transform our call to action from Education for All to Learning for All. Learning for All means ensuring that all children and youth – not just the most privileged or most clever – not only can go to school but can acquire the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy and productive lives, secure meaningful jobs, and contribute to society. Learning for All is exactly what the ten-year World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020 (World Bank Group 2011) emphasises:

- Invest early because the ability to learn throughout life is best acquired in early childhood.
- Invest smartly because national, family and donor resources are limited and must yield results.
- Invest for all because a nation can prosper only when all students – including girls and disadvantaged groups – can learn.

In 2010, the World Bank Group embarked on a year-long, comprehensive process of global consultations and technical work to shape the Bank's Education Strategy 2020. From Argentina to Mongolia, extensive consultations were held with stakeholders from more than 100 countries. In these conversations, representatives of governments, development partners, students, teachers, researchers, civil society, and business shared their views about the emerging education challenges facing developing countries and how the Bank can best support countries to expand both education access and quality.

What did we learn from this process?

First, foundational skills acquired early in childhood make possible a lifetime of learning. The traditional view of education as starting in primary school takes up the challenge too late. The science of brain development shows that learning needs to be encouraged early and often, both inside and outside of the formal schooling system. Prenatal health and early childhood development programmes that include education and health are consequently important to realise this potential. In the primary years, quality teaching is essential to give students the foundational literacy and numeracy on which Lifelong Learning depends. Adolescence is also a period of high potential for learning, but many teenagers leave school at this point, lured by the prospect of a job, the need to help their families, or turned away by the cost of schooling. For those who drop out too early, second-chance and non-formal learning opportunities are essential to ensure that all youth can acquire skills for the labour market.

Second, getting results requires smart investments – that is, investments that prioritise and monitor learning, beyond traditional metrics, such as the number of teachers trained or number of students enrolled. Quality needs to be the focus of education investments, with learning gains as the key metric of quality. Resources are too limited and the challenges too big to be designing policies and programmes in the dark. We need evidence on what works in order to invest smartly.

Third, learning for all means ensuring that all students, and not just the most privileged or gifted, acquire the knowledge and skills that they need. Major challenges of access remain for disadvantaged populations at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. We must lower the barriers that keep girls, children with disabilities, and ethnolinguistic minorities from attaining as much education as other population groups. Learning for All promotes the equity goals that underlie Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Without confronting equity issues, it will be impossible to achieve the objective of Learning for All.

Seeing Results

Since we launched our global education strategy in April 2011, World Bank-supported programmes have:

- *Helped countries accelerate progress toward the Millennium Development Goals for universal primary education.* Over the past two years, the Bank has provided more than \$2.7 billion in financing from the International Development Association (IDA) for basic education in the poorest countries. We are working closely with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) – the Bank supervises the implementation of most GPE grants, and has provided IDA co-financing in a number of countries.
- *Reduced inequality in education.* Some examples include enabling private-public partnerships to expand access and quality of education for low-income children in Pakistan; providing stipends for girls to go to school in Bangladesh; and job training programmes for young women in Ethiopia and Jordan.
- *Improved the quality of service delivery.* The Bank is supporting performance grants to secondary schools based on test scores and teacher attendance in Nigeria; school grants based on achievement of school plans in Indonesia; expansion of training in priority occupations aligned with employer demands in Rwanda; and is helping a number of countries like Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, Zambia, Armenia, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Vietnam build regulatory and quality-assurance frameworks to strengthen their student assessment systems.
- *Generated new evidence to improve learning outcomes.* Through our Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)¹, the Bank is building a comparable, worldwide database on education policies and institutions so countries can assess and benchmark themselves in key policy areas such as teacher policies, student assessments, school management, and workforce development. The Bank is also building a unique provider-level database on the quality of service delivery in African countries.

Expanding Students' Horizons

Our strategy stretches to 2020, but who knows what the world will look like seven years from now?

We must prepare our youth today for the world we hope to realise: A world in which people can escape the bonds of deprivation and disadvantage to become their own agents for development and prosperity. To get there, we know that investments in education must focus not just on inputs like new classrooms, teacher training, textbooks, and computers, but also on all the policies, incentives, and financing that make education systems work.

To ensure that developing countries can be competitive in today's global marketplace, we must equip the next generation with the essential cognitive skills and the skills for critical thinking, teamwork, and innovation. Knowledge and skills can expand the horizons of our youth and enable them to take advantage of emerging opportunities. We must also measure what students learn, and hold governments and educators accountable if they don't.

(* article published in "Adult Education and Development" 80/2013 http://www.dvv-international.de/index.php?article_id=1473&clang=1

1 Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER). Available at <http://bit.ly/12cM1IV>

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For more details on the progress of the World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020, please visit: <http://bit.ly/fSCttF>



Comments on the article by Elizabeth King "Learning for All: The World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020"

By Sérgio Haddad and Filomena Siqueira - Brazil



The presence of economists in the field of education is not new, particularly in the debate on the relationship between education and development. Depending on their thinking and their ideological position, they end up by placing themselves among those defending education as a factor responsible of development or, on the other hand, among those who see in development a factor necessary to achieve a good education. The first ones, who are closer to liberal and orthodox ideas, eventually identify in the internal factors of each country and the "quality" of their members, the drivers of processes of collective development, while the second ones, more heterodox, tend to see in macroeconomic factors and international relations between countries factors enabling a favorable environment for the development of quality education systems.

The article by Elizabeth King, principal spokesperson of the World Bank in terms of education for developing countries, summarizes the document of Education Strategy 2020, produced by her organization, entitled "*Learning for All. Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development*". From the name of the document itself we can perceive the position in which the Bank and its spokesperson are located in the aforementioned debate.

It is not new that the Declaration of Human Rights, promoted in the environment of the United Nations with its consequent international legislative divisions and improvements and in every country, recognizes education as one of human rights. Recognizing it in this statute means not to dissociate it from the realization of other political, social, economic and environmental rights and consequently, from the collective role they play in building more just and sustainable societies in their also multiple social, political, economic and environmental dimension.

The World Bank's 2020 Strategy, however, leaves aside this fundamental starting point to define education as a "tool for children and youth to acquire the knowledge and skills that they need to secure meaningful employment in the labor market of the XXI century". In that sense, it reduces the human right to education to a tool to achieve a purely economic objective, leaving aside the comprehensive and education dimension of human beings for political and civic participation, for life in society, for the preservation and sustainable use of natural assets.

At the same time, when focusing the attention on children and youth, and even recognizing as one of the objectives of the 2020 Strategy that "everyone has opportunities to learn", nowhere in the document there is reference to the nearly 770 million adults in the world who can not read or write, or suggests a strategy to overcome the denial of the right to education of that portion of the population. So, the document does not recognize another feature of the human right to education: its universality.

The World Bank's position is clear when it comes to defining its role in the development agenda by focusing and reducing its efforts to learning aimed at the labor market and focusing on early childhood education. By indicating among its strategies that it is necessary to "investing early, because the ability to learn throughout life is acquired during early childhood" and "invest smartly, because domestic and family resources, and those allocated by donors are limited and must be productive", it uses a productivist language rather than a comprehensive language that embraces and guarantees the right for all people regardless of their class, race, age, where they live and their physical and mental development.

It is also worth noting that by reducing the field of education as a major factor for developing countries to be "competitive in today's global marketplace", the World Bank eventually holds the student and youth responsible for that task. In the words of Mrs. King, "We must prepare our youth today for the world we hope to realise: A world in which people can escape the bonds of deprivation and disadvantage to become their own agents for development and prosperity." That's too much responsibility!

The question of quality

Many of the assessments developed in recent years have shown that, although there has been an increase in enrollment in basic education, the quality of education has not improved, which makes that many children and youth, despite spending years in school, they do not have minimum command of writing and mathematics. Based on this fact, the World Bank's strategy highlights the importance of "quality learning". The concept of quality for the World Bank is, however, reductionist, understood as the possibility for children and youth to acquire the skills that they need to meet the demands of the world of work and its values.

To ensure that quality learning proposed, the Bank considers it essential to implement evaluation systems that may indicate the progress of the students. Therefore, standard test to measure the results have been adopted and encouraged to monitor the development of students.

The consequences generated by this model are almost always negative: it does not recognize the cultural differences of each country, it does not consider the educational path of each student and the stage in his learning, it gives priority to disciplines considered to be more important, like grammar and math, at the expense of other less valued in the logic of the market.

At the same time, the incentive to privatize education is also presented as natural and desirable in the 2020 Strategy to provide education for all. In this sense we note that the concept of free education, another characteristic of education as a right, is at stake in the current debates through the incentive of low cost schools ("*lowfee Private Schools*") at the expense of the expansion and strengthening of the offer of free public schools by the National States.

Finally, values that encourage competition and individualism at the expense of solidarity and cooperative approach, eventually appear in mechanisms of bonds appreciation of learning processes as we see in the examples cited by the author in relation to improving the effectiveness in spending and outcomes:

"In Nigeria, the Bank is supporting performance grants to secondary schools based on test scores and teacher attendance; in Indonesia, the Bank finances school grants based on achievement of school plans".

"Expanding Students' Horizons"

The expansion of horizons referred to in the article, aiming at promoting prosperity through learning, means economic prosperity and education as a tool available to the market. The World Bank and other international agencies of global influence argue that this growth is the starting point for all other issues (social, political and environmental) which are results to be achieved from economic needs.

The World Bank's 2020 Strategy is not usually anchored by international standards and norms, built through years of struggles and debates in conjunction with its various actors - government, civil society and other stakeholders - ignoring the assumption of the human right to education, dismissing the accumulation built in documents such as the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000, and the CONFINTEA meetings, among others.

Given this situation, it is necessary to hear and evaluate the initiatives of various organizations and movements of civil society that have built an alternative agenda and for decades have advocated the concept of education as a human right as, for example, the current ones towards the post-2015 in which they state: *"Every human being is entitled to the right to education. The aims and objectives of education are the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the effective participation of all persons in a free society, the promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups and the maintenance of peace, enabling everyone to participate effectively in a democratic and pluralistic society. Because education is a human right, all human beings are equally entitled to it"* (*).

(*). Civil Society Joint Statement: "The Human Right to Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda". Available at:

<http://www.icae2.org/index.php/en/home/13-news/65-civil-society-joint-statement-the-human-right-to-education-in-the-post-2015-development-agenda>



Challenges and opportunities with regard to lifelong learning for all as the post-2015 education goal

By Ulrike Hanemann, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)



The post-2015 debate is currently being conducted in the form of many different processes that involve a diversity of actors and relate to a variety of international frameworks and commitments. This contribution, however, will focus on education and UNESCO's position on the post-2015 education agenda which should, of course, be an integral part of the broader international development framework.

Since 2000 this broader development framework has been the United Nations' set of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), one of which (Goal 2) specifically concerns education, namely universal access to primary education. Unfortunately, this does not reflect the scope of the Education for All (EFA) goals – the Dakar Framework for Action – adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, also in 2000. The commitment to EFA requires meeting the basic

learning needs for all: preschool-age children, school-age children, adolescents, young people, and adults, including the elderly. In most countries nowadays basic education goes beyond primary education. It covers at least lower secondary education, but often also upper secondary education, and increasingly a year of pre-school education. In any case, EFA is not as limited to children as MDG 2 is. [i] Despite being critical in contributing to development, adult literacy and adult learning and education were not included as a MDG.

In December 2009, the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), took place in Belém do Pará in Brazil. Its guiding principle was “Harnessing the power and potential of adult learning and education for a viable future”. The Belém Framework for Action (BFA) adopted by the representatives of 144 member states of UNESCO at this conference, included the acknowledgment of the critical role of lifelong learning in addressing global educational issues and challenges. Furthermore, the BFA contains the recognition that adult learning and education represent a significant component of the lifelong learning process, which embraces a learning continuum ranging from formal to non-formal to informal learning.

Lifelong learning is founded on the integration of learning and living, covering learning activities for people of all ages (children, young people, adults including the elderly, girls as well as boys, women as well as men) in all life-wide contexts (family, school, community, workplace and so on) and through a variety of modalities (formal, non-formal and informal) which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands. Education systems which promote lifelong learning adopt a holistic and sector-wide approach, involving all sub-sectors and levels to ensure the provision of learning opportunities for all individuals. [ii]

Basic education and basic skills (as defined by EFA) are vehicles to support the achievement of the MDGs and to empower in particular the poor. Most if not all MDGs involve knowledge, change of habits and attitudes, and of course learning: Without a largely educated population, it is difficult to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases and ensure environmental sustainability. Education and learning are among the most powerful ways of improving people’s living conditions. Education is a way of reducing existing inequalities and achieving personal, social, economic, political and cultural development. Therefore, reflections on the post-2015 agenda must take the link between education and development into consideration.

After taking stock of achievements and shortcomings of EFA, and analysing emerging trends, challenges and changing requirements in terms of the type and level of knowledge, skills and competencies required in today’s world, UNESCO has developed a “Position Paper on Education Post-2015”[iii], which will be presented to Member States for discussion and consideration at the upcoming 194th Executive Board session in April 2014. In this paper, UNESCO advocates for a clearly defined, balanced and holistic education agenda which should take a lifelong learning approach.

This objective includes the challenge of how to develop post-2015 education strategies which are clear, simple and measurable, and at the same time address the lifelong learning approach. Looking backwards to better understand the nature of this challenge, I would like to illustrate how difficult it has been in policy and practice to address, for example, literacy (EFA Goal 4)[iv] in a lifelong learning perspective.

The development of reading, writing and numeracy skills involves a continuous process of sustained practising and application in order to advance from the ability to perform most simple tasks towards higher-level, more demanding and complex tasks. Even if a high level of literacy and other skills has been achieved, there is no guarantee that (for different reasons) people retain the skills level they have already acquired. Evolving demands may even require the acquisition of new skills, or the development of a higher level of proficiency of existing ones. Therefore, literacy learning is an ageless and continuous activity. The acquisition and development of literacy takes place before, during and after primary education, it takes place inside and out of school, through formal, non-formal and informal learning. It is a life-wide and lifelong learning process.

Therefore the achievement of literacy for all requires working simultaneously on at least five complementary fronts:

- 1) Laying strong foundations for later learning and addressing disadvantage through good-quality early childhood care and education programmes.
- 2) Providing universal good-quality basic education for all children (in formal or non-formal settings).
- 3) Scaling up and reaching out with relevant literacy provision to all young people and adults.
- 4) Developing literacy-rich environments and a literate culture at local and national level.
- 5) Dealing with the root causes of illiteracy (mainly poverty, societal injustice and all kind of disadvantages) in a deep structural manner.

This approach reflects the interconnected nature of the six EFA goals. It also calls for sector-wide – and even cross-sectoral – approaches to promote literacy as a foundation of lifelong learning. Linkages and synergies between formal and non-formal education systems need to be created and used in order to promote learning and to break the intergenerational cycle which reproduces low levels of literacy. Family literacy and community learning programmes – as examples for intergenerational and integrated approaches to learning – have proven to be successful approaches which involve whole

families and communities in the effort to promote basic skills development and to work towards literate and learning families, communities and societies.

We know from experience what is necessary to make this work, for example that political commitment from the highest level is essential, as are well-defined government policies. Governments must clearly assign responsibility for adult literacy, which is often diffused across several ministries. Implementation also involves many partnerships at all levels of government and with civil society organisations. A continuous dialogue mechanism needs to be developed among literacy stakeholders to build consensus around viable and integrated approaches to learning. However, reality demonstrates how demanding it is to work with a lifelong learning approach. Education systems tend to still function in fragmented ways where sub-sectors do not cooperate to ease transitions from one level or modality to the next or to offer integrated and holistic learning opportunities which suit individual needs and life circumstances.

In its Position Paper, UNESCO recommends to its Member States that “Ensuring equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030” might be a suitable overarching goal. This is then translated into ten specific global targets to which countries would commit, a commitment they could be held accountable for, and for which corresponding indicators need to be agreed upon. The ten suggested targets are organised into six priority areas: basic education, post-basic and tertiary education, youth and adult literacy, skills for work and life, quality and relevant teaching and learning, and financing of education. After a closer look at the specific targets and possible indicators within these priority areas, it becomes obvious that it is extremely difficult to avoid overlap if the lifelong learning approach is consistently applied. Basic education should be the minimum foundation for all, not only children, while literacy skills should not be a concern only for young people and adults. Actually, literacy lies at the heart of basic education and constitutes the foundation of lifelong learning. In addition, literacy can no longer be perceived and dealt with as a stand-alone skill. It should rather be seen as one component of a complex set of skills and competencies which are necessary to perform in the modern world of work and learning societies. Therefore, it is complicated to draw a clear line between the priority areas of youth and adult literacy and skills for work and life.

These are only some examples that demonstrate how easy it is, on the one hand, to use the lifelong learning paradigm in the discourse, and how difficult it is, on the other, to apply it consistently in practice. The principle of lifelong learning does not seem to automatically help in overcoming the trend of fragmentation and stand-alone interventions in education. Its application requires bold if not radical thinking which may lead to completely new systems, strategies and mechanisms. The current post-2015 debate illustrates the conflicting roles of UNESCO: while acting as an intellectual “think tank” in terms of developing educational visions such as the lifelong learning paradigm in the Faure[v] and Delors[vi] reports; at the same time it takes on a rather bureaucratic-technical role to promote a narrow approach of functional skills for development such as the one advanced by the international aid community. The post-2015 debate is also an opportunity to strengthen UNESCO’s role as a forward-looking and visionary organisation against the pressures to reduce it to a development agency which is producing measurable results. Civil society organisations around the world, including the ICAE, can play an important role in this process.

[i] MDG 2, Target 2A: “Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.”

[ii] UNESCO Education Sector Technical Notes, *Lifelong Learning*, February 2014, p. 2.

[iii] <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002266/226628e.pdf>

[iv] EFA Goal 4: “Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.”

[v] Faure et al. (1972) *Learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow*, UNESCO, Paris.

[vi] Delors et al. (1996) *Learning: The Treasure within*, UNESCO, Paris.



Adult and lifelong learning and the post-2015 Agenda – opportunities and challenges

By Werner Mauch, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning



At a time when post-2015 strategies are taking shape the situation may look quite optimistic and promising from the CONFINTEA perspective: Many of the actors present at Belém in 2009 were already well aware of the fact that the mid-term point of the Belém Framework for Action (BFA) (i.e. six years after CONFINTEA VI, 2009) would coincide with the expiry of the EFA and MDG time-lines in 2015. With its (implicit) perspective oriented towards CONFINTEA VII in 2021, the BFA was hence already predestined to represent an element of international educational cooperation reaching beyond

2015 while reiterating the relevance of adult learning and education for future global efforts in connection with providing

lifelong learning for all. The BFA's central message that "the role of lifelong learning is critical in addressing global educational issues and challenges" [i] seemed to be perfectly in line with the growing worldwide interest in lifelong learning and its relevance within education agendas. Meanwhile a strong recommendation has been put forward concerning the new UN Development Goals to aim for quality education and lifelong learning in order to end poverty within a truly universal approach. [ii]

The UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy 2014–2021[iiii] provides another promising perspective for the years to come. For UNESCO's Education sector three strategic objectives are formulated which comprise a) developing systems to foster quality lifelong learning for all, b) empowering learners to be creative and responsible systems, and c) shaping the future education agenda, explicitly in order "to ensure that education remains a global priority beyond the 2015 target date, as a basic human right and as a prerequisite for peace and sustainable development"[iv]. UNESCO's new position paper on education post-2015 also includes a strong proposal to support youth and adult literacy with the aim that "All youth and adults achieve literacy, numeracy and other basic skills at a proficiency level necessary to fully participate in a given society and for further learning"[v].

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) will play its role within UNESCO according to its mandate, namely "to promote the recognition of and create the conditions for the exercise of the right to education and learning". To that end it will "undertake research, capacity-building, networking and publication on lifelong learning with a focus on adult and continuing education, literacy and non-formal basic education". [vi]

Within this context, the ground should be prepared for assuring that adult learning and education will be a crucial element within the efforts of the international community to strive for a peaceful and sustainable future.

Are the perspectives really that bright?

A closer look at the proposed new development goals mentioned above shows that three out of four indicators on the proposed Goal 3 ("Provide quality education and lifelong learning") focus on children and formal education [vii] – only! And indicator no. 4 addresses the development of skills "needed for work" – only! Adult literacy as a field of necessary action is virtually absent, despite the evidence that more than 780 million people do not have at their disposal the basic skills they need to actually participate in their communities and to take their life and destiny "into their own hands". Despite all efforts to help understand universal literacy as a condition for sustainable development, adult literacy is still far from being recognised as a decisive field for further investment of (notoriously scarce!) resources. A few coins might end up in the hands of those who attempt to improve their standing vis-à-vis the labour markets. Consequently, adult learning and education would be reduced to skills development only.

UNESCO's present precarious financial situation has implications for its programme implementation. The underlying assumption is that in principle it will be possible to maintain the foreseen programmes by just reducing their scope. Further efforts will be invested in raising extra budgetary funds which should help to bridge the gap but would also increase dependencies on donors. As usual, this will furthermore mean that "structures" will become "leaner", but that at the same time further cost will be incurred in terms of available human resources (not to mention consequences concerning "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" motivation) as well as in terms effectiveness of programmes. It is important to note that programmes in support of lifelong learning policies and literacy have still been rated high by UNESCO Member States and have consequently been prioritised. Lower priority, however, is given to the promotion of the right to education, an area where regular funding has been reduced.

UIL has just finalised its programme for the coming years, during which the Institute will continue to build on its three programmes [viii] and their achievements. The focus of the ALE programme will remain on the CONFINTEA Follow-up. For the nearer future, the following principal activities are foreseen:

- 1) Completing the cycle of Regional Follow-up Meetings (by the meeting for the Arab States in September 2014) and consolidating the results of those regions where follow-up meetings have already taken place, i.e. Latin America and the Caribbean (2011), Africa (2012), Asia and the Pacific (2013) and Europe and North America (2013.). The key objective will be to support the further implementation of the Belém Framework for Action with a focus on priority action points identified by the regional meetings.
- 2) Revision of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education as requested by the Belém Framework for Action.
- 3) Preparing the next issue of the Global Report for Adult Learning and Education (until the end of 2015), i.e. collecting and analysing national progress reports.

With its limited resources UIL will rely on increased cooperation within UNESCO (with HQs, Field Offices and Institutes) as well as building on further cooperation with partners. In general it seems likely that there will be a wide range of opportunities to further promote the translation of the concept of lifelong learning into educational practice. At the same time we will also see more competition among actors in the search for funding for activities that are using "lifelong learning" as an accepted label. In the field of adult learning and education there might be increased opportunities for supporting work which is related more or less directly to skills development and youth. At the same time provision of

literacy for those women and men who are most at risk to be neglected by educational practice may even become more difficult. Realisation of the right to education and learning for all is likely to remain more of a long-term expectation than a valid operational aim. These tensions are not new, the mission of making adult learning and education a recognised and indispensable component of lifelong learning systems will continue. UIL will take on its role as mandated by the Belém Framework for Action – and continue to foster its long-established partnership with ICAE and its branches to that end. All this is being undertaken in the conviction that the power of adult learning is in fact the key energy for living and learning for a viable future as stated in Belém.

[i] See *Belém Framework for Action* (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002266/226628e.pdf>) p.5, pt. 7.

[ii] See the *Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*
http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf

[iii] UNESCO 37 C/4, *Draft Medium-Term Strategy 2014–2021* <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002200/220031e.pdf>

[iv] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[v] See <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002266/226628e.pdf> p. 4

[vi] From the statutes of UIL, p. 2, see:

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001448/144880e.pdf#xml=http://www.unesco.org/ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?database=extd&set=5325EEFE_0_17&hits_rec=3&hits_lng=eng

[vii] *Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, *op. cit.*, p.36.

[viii] *Lifelong Learning Policies and Strategies (LLPS), Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) and Adult Learning and Education (ALE)*.



Comment by Mr. Mor DIAKHATE (*) Executive Director of the NGO ALPHADEV. Dakar- Senegal



We recognize the relevance and quality of the productions presented in the yearbook, but also this great initiative of ICAE to open and run this virtual seminar.

As head of a Senegalese organization working on adult training and education, we would like to make our modest contribution on two aspects namely the financing of adult education and the place of national civil society in the post-2015.

What balance should be found between adult literacy programs and the massive expansion of education?

Literacy is not an end in itself; it is a fundamental human right and a development tool. <... literacy as education in general, is not the lever of historical change. It is not the only way to liberation, but an indispensable tool for all social change> (Declaration of Persepolis in 1975)

In the argument developed by Elisabeth KING, of the World Bank group, three major themes are developed and funding of education is considered an investment in human capital. Developing countries need to build their development policy based on this aspect if they aspire to become emerging countries.

We agree that the development of early childhood should be a priority for developing countries but at the same time we must be aware that our nations cannot overcome underdevelopment with illiteracy rates higher than 50% and less than 1% of the education budget allocated to this sector.

At this level, a better budget arbitration is essential for a more equitable education system.

As Elizabeth says, to ensure that developing countries can become competitive on today's global market, we must provide the next generation with key cognitive skills and all the necessary skills to critical thinking, teamwork and innovation. Meanwhile, we must also ensure that the current generation receives quality training enabling them to compete in the labor market.

Internationally, there is no agreement on the methods and means of achieving universal education for adults, but we can however conclude that basic education programs for people of all ages are needed.

The hopes of some Ministries of Education that illiteracy will be defeated through universal primary education or a national law establishing a compulsory education are overturned by the large number of children who leave primary school before reaching written communication skills.

Studies on adult education have proved that in general educated parents encourage their children to continue their education and statistics show that school attendance of children of literate parents or of parents who went to school is higher than those whose parents did not receive any formal education.

The balance between adult education and primary education probably varies, but it is necessary everywhere and this need must be clearly stated in the document of education policy in different countries.

The success of literacy programs is closely linked to national policy. It is achieved when, in a country, the vast majority of individuals constituting the nation are literate. Experience in some countries has shown that success is possible through many different methods and varied financial means. However, it is the political determination which, in all cases, is crucial. As Mr Amadou Mokhtar Mbow, former Director-General of UNESCO in 1975, said:

<The victory over illiteracy can only arise from the political will of the country concerned. It is obvious that whenever a governor tackled this issue because it was a prerequisite to other social change, the results were positive>

Which organizations of national civil society for the post-2015?

Dakar 2000 had raised great hopes at country level with the establishment of national coalitions as a space that could take over advocacy for EFA.

But not far from 2015, it must be recognized that many networks or coalitions at national level can show a brilliant assessment on adult education management in national policies.

Since CONFINTEA VI, no concrete action nationwide is conducted in our countries for the development and implementation of the action plan as recommended by the BRAZIL conference.

National civil society in most countries has not been able to make our leaders to meet commitments assumed at CONFINTEA VI.

This situation can be explained by the proliferation of structures of civil society disorganized and receiving no expertise, which finally weakened it in the eyes of public authorities that do not recognize them as actors performing a public service.

Added to this is the proliferation of frameworks and networks of society organizations which weakened their position regarding the state and partners.

Another grievance include the lack of strong leadership that has also helped overshadow civil society organizations in the development and implementation of policies for adult education.

Finally, there is the lack of influence and advocacy for adult education policy despite the involvement of civil society by the state in the reflections and analysis.

If we want to build a huge grassroots movement to make a difference as David Archer suggests, we must have, at national level, very strong and representative civil society organizations capable to lead and conduct a genuine political dialogue with policy makers.

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The post-2015 prospects for social movements in adult education **By Ronald Cameron-Director General of ICEA** **Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes** **Montreal, Canada**



The debate on the definition of the post-2015 development objectives is entering a critical phase. According to the report of the meeting of the UNESCO Executive Committee held on 28 February, the World Education Forum, scheduled in Seoul in May 2015, is the occasion to adopt a common position before the final adoption of all the objectives at the UN Summit in September 2015.

In such a context, and regardless of the appointments that are expected until then, the possibilities of improving the objectives are becoming increasingly limited. We believe that it is important to initiate a shift without delay, to start looking at the strategy for the post-2015 period, which will follow the adoption of the objectives.

A mixed picture of the progress in adult education

The experience of consultations we conducted with formal and non-formal adult education networks in Quebec demonstrates concerns similar to those expressed around the world and which are summarized in the Second Global Report on Adult Learning and Education - GRALE by the UNESCO Institute for lifelong learning.

Mrs. Bokova, Director-general of UNESCO, states in this report that the field of adult education tends to reduce to literacy or to training related to work in terms of policies and definitions of guidelines by governments around the world. She notes the lack of resources that undermines the development of local capacity. These findings are entirely consistent with a number of points raised also by the special issue "Adult Education and Development".

In Quebec, we find that the diversity of training needs of adult populations and their paths emerge strongly. We also note the significant diversification of background and training locations, paths, modes and forms of learning, systems and levels of education, tools and stakeholder organizations, including those from cultural organizations. In short, we conclude that it is a waste of time to try to determine a simplified strategic perspective.

Subscribing to a broader vision in order to promote the full exercise of citizenship

The enhancement of lifelong learning requires a much broader and inclusive vision than that emerging from the results observed in the assessment by the UNESCO Institute. Reading in "Adult Education and Development" under the pen name Mrs. King, representative of the World Bank, that the priority of the intervention of such an international institution boils down to early childhood is very worrisome.

Any practical experience must move away from these simplistic perspectives! Methods command intersectoral approaches and partnerships between networks and social actors. What encourages us in our commitment to the right to education for all is not the level of scholarship that an individual may acquire, but a prospect of developing a more just world with a full exercise of citizenship and the rights of the entire population.

The basis of our commitment aims for the empowerment of peoples and the improvement of individual and collective living conditions of the greatest number of people in the world. In a context of growing social stress, given the impacts of environmental change, the challenges of social justice intersect, more than ever, the path of action in favor of the right to education for all.

Being prepared to act after 2015

We must prevent the international movement on adult education from focusing only on the post-2015 development objectives plan and from reducing its perspective to the vision of international institutions. If the time frame in May 2015 is a decisive moment of conclusion of the work, the adult education movement must now begin to define the perspective of its action beyond 2015. This requires defining the political action of social movements in the States and in the field.

Whatever the definitions used about development objectives, the challenge for the development of a culture of learning for all remains dependent on post-2015 mobilizations in different social occurrences. From this point of view, it's not so much to internalize targets set by the UN, but to locate the strategy to develop an action aimed at social transformation within states. The idea is to develop a perspective to act on the power relations internal to the different nations.

Collaboration between different social actors must be based on the development of claims to governments, likely to contribute to change this power relations. It is a question of moving beyond a minimalist vision of targets that will not be, indeed, easier to achieve. It is much more to develop a political battle that focuses on outcome indicators!

Like David Archer, the question of financing policies remains a critical issue that expresses the political will to recognize the importance of learning for all. We know that the distribution of wealth through progressive taxation is based on power relations in society. We believe that the conditions are given to initiate a movement capable of taking a stronger position on both public and political scenes on this plan in each of the social occurrences. The international cooperation that we need is really about establishing a common and shared will to act at the political level in favor of greater social justice.



The Privacy of the Arab world

By Iqbal elSamaloty

Secretary General of the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education



Very happy to hold this Seminar under the auspices of ICAE, which is an indication of the prominent role in the exchange of experiences in the field of continuing education for all.

From Egypt the headquarters of the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education, which includes in its membership 15 Arab countries and 56 non-governmental organizations and leading figures.

We send our regards to all colleagues and partners in the field and we adopt a vision of the Arab countries that are undergoing revolutionary transformations and democratic.

The only way to achieve our goals is the continuous learning and learning for all using the comprehensive developmental approach including the (economic - cultural - social) aspects in addition to the full participation of the target group and the priority for the young and female actors as entrepreneurs, not as just recipient of the service.

The Illiteracy remains a significant impediment to achieving a comprehensive Arab development despite the fact that governments and civil society initiated in nearly half a century to take practical steps to eliminate this phenomenon, which is spreading among young and old alike, male and female.

According to the Arab Organization for Education, Culture (ALECSO) in expressing these concerns, based on what was in the "Report of the challenges of development in the Arab countries" for the year 2011 at the rate of literacy in the Arab countries reached 9.72 % , which means that the illiteracy rate of up to 1.27 % , of which nearly 60 % among females.

The Global Monitoring Education for All report in 2012, issued by the UNESCO indicates that the population of Arab States reached 353 million and 800 thousand people, of whom 256 million and 946 are acquainted with reading and writing, which means that the number of illiterates in the Arab countries up to 96 million and 836 thousand illiterate.

The literacy observers in the Arab world emphasize that the elimination of this phenomenon in all the Arab countries will not come before 2050, if something goes efforts in this regard to what it is now. However, a number of Arab countries, which recruited a huge potential for this purpose has impressive results, and can completely eliminate the spread of illiteracy by the year 2015 and in the introduction of these countries UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

In Egypt, was the launch of the National Campaign for Literacy, "together we can" under the auspices of the UNESCO Regional Office in the Middle East, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education as well as the launch of the Adult Education Initiative in the early new year 2014 under the slogan "2014 general literacy" Egypt hopes these efforts to achieve their target in the framework of the objectives of Education for All.

Therefore, the adult education still has not received as worthy of attention by the Arab states, where stands illiteracy a real obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of the plan of education in the Arab world, adopted by the Arab summit held in Damascus in 2008, which was considered ALECSO "they" represented a major step on the road to find a political decision, which was always a demand for the various bodies concerned with literacy in the Arab world."

In this context it has issued the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education set of recommendations, which may be taken in promoting literacy and face high rates of illiteracy in the Arab world, as follows:

- 1 - Work to achieve quality formal education to reduce dropout rates and directly linked to illiteracy rates.
- 2 - Improve the learning conditions for illiterate women, especially in remote areas and areas of armed conflict, which has spread in recent times because of the revolutions of the Arab Spring.
- 3 - oriented vision , mission and new and innovative mechanisms and flexible working to achieve learning for life by using the human rights approach and developmental literacy to enable the student to achieve socially, economically and culturally, and the availability of different options enabling him .
- 4 - Work on the experiences of successful mainstream through international and regional organizations, taking into account the cultural specificity of each country separately.
- 5 - To work through a plan of action to ensure uniform progress towards the desired goals and coordination between all parties in the case, the actors at all levels, national, regional and international.
- 6 - Experimenting with some successful models offered globally such as “learning cities“ and follow-up and evaluation in preparation for circulation.

God bless ,

Prof / **Iqbal elSamaloty**

Dean of the Higher Institute of Social Work in Cairo, "the former" President of the Association Hawaafuture.
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Some elements of our collective reflection so far

By Cecilia Fernández – ICAE Secretariat



It is 10 days already since we started this collective reflection that attempts to answer some questions about the post-2015 process and to share different views and proposals. We are more than 1050 people from all regions of the world participating in this virtual space. In an effort to synthesize some of the many things that have been said, and to gather this knowledge and opinions we share a partial preview of what was expressed so far.

“Where are we now?”

This is one of the questions that have guided the exchange and generated different reactions from different regional contexts and perspectives of analysis. We need to share a lot of information to participate in a strategic and collective way. But, as Heribert says, the opportunities and time for bottom-level-up debates are running very quickly.

What then are the key issues for us in this debate? Alan suggests to start thinking about “how should advocacy energies be focused in the eighteen months before new targets are established? And what energies can we draw for the longer journey of work beyond 2015 with youth and adults to create the other possible world to which we are committed?

It is clear that global targets are important, said Alan in his introduction to the virtual seminar. It appears to be a general agreement that a global goal is necessary, and some versions have raised, with slight variations in wording. But there is also a clear tendency to agree that a goal is not enough to move from rhetoric to action.

Ulrike informs that UNESCO has developed a “Position Paper on Education Post-2015”, which will be presented to Member States for discussion and consideration at the upcoming 194th Executive Board session in April 2014. In this paper, UNESCO advocates for a clearly defined, balanced and holistic education agenda which should take a lifelong learning approach, and recommends to its Member States that “Ensuring equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030” might be a suitable overarching goal

On the other hand, Werner Mauch, from UIL, affirms that the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy 2014–2021 provides another promising perspective for the years to come. The Belen Framework for Action central message, that “the role of

lifelong learning is critical in addressing global educational issues and challenges” seemed to be perfectly in line with the growing worldwide interest in lifelong learning and its relevance within education agendas.

For UNESCO’s Education sector the strategic objectives formulated, include shaping the future education agenda, explicitly in order “to ensure that education remains a global priority beyond the 2015 target date, as a basic human right and as a prerequisite for peace and sustainable development”.

A closer look at the proposed new development goals mentioned, Werner Mauch says, shows that three out of four indicators on the proposed Goal 3 (“Provide quality education and lifelong learning”) focus on children and formal education – only! And indicator no. 4 addresses the development of skills “needed for work” – only! Adult literacy as a field of necessary action is virtually absent.

The debate on the definition of the post-2015 development objectives is entering a critical phase expressed Ronald Cameron, and the possibilities of improving the objectives are becoming increasingly limited. He believes, that it is important to initiate a shift without delay, to start looking at the strategy for the post-2015 period, which will follow the adoption of the objectives.

We must prevent the international movement on adult education, says Ronald, from focusing only on the post-2015 development objectives plan and from reducing its perspective to the vision of international institutions. The adult education movement must now begin to define the perspective of its action beyond 2015. This requires defining the political action of social movements in the States and in the field.

“The past teaches us ...” is something to consider when developing strategies for action.

A key conclusion of the EFA developments to date pointed Alan, is that EFA suffered from the separation of the MDG and EFA processes. For the collective voices of NGOs supporting EFA it has been a central demand that a single overarching education goal in the MDG/SDGs post-2015 be supported by an EFA mark 2, where the elements of the overall goal can be disaggregated, and monitored, and that UNESCO should have that responsibility.

Daniel states that as wide as a political space be, adult education will always have to fight to be included in policies, legislation and financing priorities.

In this sense, too, Robert says that “we need to identify lessons from our past to inform our imaginations and strategies to influence the post-2015 education and development debates.

A way to strengthen the always fragile place of adult education in the global agenda that the post-2015 agenda, says Daniel, will have to be explicitly and strongly linked with other instruments, like CONFINTEA VI and the next recommendation on the development of adult education.

He thinks that the international adult learning community has another specific forum to advocate for the defense of the right to adult education: the actualization of the 1976 recommendation on the development of adult education. We could expect being consulted in the near future, he adds, regarding the place of adult education in the joined action plan to the next Agenda post-2015 that will be proposed, and on the newly Recommendation on the development of adult education that will be adopted.

The precise comment of Carol Añonuevo from UIL gives us clarity and provides information about the process that is underway. She informed that a draft revision of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (RDAE) will be presented to the UNESCO General Conference in 2015 for approval and the Institute is now preparing a process to arrive at a revised RDAE. An expert meeting will be held next May, to be followed by an online consultation in June and a formal consultation process to Member States starting September.

Carol also affirms that the timetable of the revision of the 1976 RDAE is also coinciding with the Revision of the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education. The expert meeting in May will address the two Recommendations and therefore bring together experts in AE and TVET.

“Education as a factor responsible of development- development as a factor necessary to achieve a good education”

The presence of economists in the field of education is not new in the debate on the relationship between education and development, Sergio and Filomena affirm. They say that The World Bank's position, is clear when it comes to defining its role in the development agenda by focusing and reducing its efforts to learning aimed at the labor market and focusing on early childhood education. “The expansion of horizons” referred to in the article of King, aiming at promoting prosperity through learning, means economic prosperity and education as a tool available to the market.

What are the alternative paradigms in and for education and development that transcend the limited orientation towards economic growth? asks Heribert.

Subscribing to a broader vision in order to promote the full exercise of citizenship implies for Ronald, intersectoral approaches and partnerships between networks and social actors. "What encourages us in our commitment to the right to education for all, he says, is not the level of scholarship that an individual may acquire, but a prospect of developing a more just world with a full exercise of citizenship and the rights of the entire population". "In a context of growing social stress, given the impacts of environmental change, the challenges of social justice intersect, more than ever, the path of action in favor of the right to education for all."

Nélida, in turn, says a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach is essential to overcome the causes of illiteracy, such as social injustice and unequal distribution of wealth in the continent.

"Collective voices are better heard"

Heribert asks how can civil society at the national, regional, and international level get better involved in these debates, and thus support the efforts by ICAE and others?

In this sense Alison asks herself where is ALE in the Caribbean today. The debate on adult learning and education in the Caribbean, she says, has been one of the best kept secrets to the general public within the Caribbean context. And she affirms that we need more voices represented in the Adult Education community. If we don't have active Adult Education communities, we cannot participate. If we don't participate, we will be left further and further behind.

Where are the African civil society voices related to adult learning and education (ALE) in the global education debates asks Robert. And he affirms that collective voices are better heard, thus "The time is now to once again profess and declare our willingness and preparedness to network within and beyond our borders". To conclude, he states that something has to be done and done differently for that matter.

The only way to achieve our goals, says Iqbal elSamaloty, is the continuous learning and learning for all using the comprehensive developmental approach including the (economic - cultural - social) aspects in addition to the full participation of the target group and the priority for the young and female actors as entrepreneurs, not as just recipient of the service.

For Ronald, the challenge for the development of a culture of learning for all remains dependent on post-2015 mobilizations in different social occurrences. From this point of view, he thinks that it's not so much to internalize targets set by the UN, but to locate the strategy to develop an action aimed at social transformation within states. It is a question of moving beyond a minimalist vision of targets that will not be, indeed, easier to achieve. It is much more to develop a political battle that focuses on outcome indicators!

To take into account

Some of the elements and proposals that begin to be drawn from the inputs and comments:

- * An early task is to enumerate for each of the 12 universal goals proposed in the High Level Panel report just how adult learning makes a difference, backed ideally by hard evidence – and following the guidelines adopted by the OECD.
- * To make an explicit and strong link with other instruments, like CONFINTEA VI and the next recommendation on the development of adult education.
- * Follow up of regional initiatives such as the Observatory of ALE in Latin America (EDULAC Portal) in partnership with the UNESCO Regional Office in Santiago, UIL, OEI, INEA in Mexico and CEAAL / ICAE for CONFINTEA VI, in order to establish parameters, compare data and promote a space for cooperation and coordination between the 33 Member States of the region.
- * Track and report how African union and other regional inter-governmental bodies are engaging in the Post-2015 official negotiations.
- * Target decision makers not only from those Ministries responsible for adult literacy. "The plight of semi and unskilled workers who as human being deserve decent work terms and conditions, are often not included in our advocacy programs".
- * Speaking of "lifelong learning" could relieve from governments the obligation to promote specific policies and programs for realizing the right to education of all persons, as well as neglecting the importance of professionalism - training and working conditions - of educators working in this field of education. These two aspects would have to be incorporated into sub goals and indicators, in order to avoid those risks.

* The use of inclusive language to make visible boys and girls, young men and women as well as adult people as another means for positioning the gender perspective and its inclusion in the agendas. The inclusion of gender in education, in a cross-cutting way, even if it is now included in some constitutions in the region (such as Ecuador and Bolivia), it is not included in education systems that have not adapted at all for these rights to be real and effective.

The virtual seminar continuous, we still have many documents and comments to share!
We invite and encourage you to continue thinking and acting together!

Cecilia Fernández
ICAE Secretariat



Input by Cecilia "Thea" V. Soriano, ASPBAE Programmes and Operations Coordinator



The year 2015 is a landmark for renewed commitments to Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) coupled with a continuing review of actions under CONFINTEA 6.

The confluence of the three global platforms as well as the ongoing education post-2015 processes present both opportunities and challenges in charting a vision and agenda for quality education and lifelong learning beyond 2015. Bringing the voices of the marginalized into the public debates remains a daunting task. Bridging global discourses with the realities in countries and creating more spaces for dialogues within countries remain to be seen. Translating rhetoric to concrete goals and targets for

lifelong learning even before 2015 is a key concern for governments and civil society alike. There is clearly a consensus amongst stakeholders to ensure that policy development is translated into education programs and commitments NOW, leading to even more steadfast support for education beyond 2015.

A case in point is the Post-2015 education agenda presented by UNESCO in the last EFA Steering Committee. The overarching goal of "Ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030" is definitely an agenda that will make a difference in the lives of children, youth and adult should it be accompanied with concrete targets and financing. Not to be overlooked, amidst the discussions around education beyond 2015, is the urgent support for the "Big Push" to start addressing the unfinished EFA agenda.

The Asia Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) believes that the agenda and the multi-stakeholder processes leading to agenda setting are equally important. As a regional network of more than 200 organizations in Asia Pacific dedicated to youth and adult education practice and advocacy for Education for All, it persistently gives prominence to the voices of the people in education issues, especially the marginalized children, youth and adults in the region. Its education post-2015 agenda is grounded on the realities and articulation of civil society in the more than 30 countries where it has a membership base.

ASPBAE believes that education is a right. It transformed the meaning of 3Rs for EFA:

- Right of children, youth and adults regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, geographical location, culture and socio-economic status
- Responsibility of the government to guarantee and for multilateral institutions to support education so that no one is left behind
- Resources adequate to finance quality education and lifelong learning for all that strategically support formal, non-formal and informal education as well as other education systems (such as the indigenous learning system)

To move forward with EFA and to ensure that people are able to learn throughout their lives, it is imperative to have clear, definitive and stand alone goals for education beyond 2015.

Education is equally an enabling right. For one, it must be integrated into the SDGs of poverty eradication, inclusive growth and sustainable development. The SDGs will only be achieved when people are empowered through education and lifelong learning, when their potentials are harnessed so they are able to participate with dignity in the economic and social spheres of their family, work and community life.

The Asia-Pacific Contexts

Amidst the promises of strong economy and growth, the Asia-Pacific region is punctuated by severe inequality. The marginalized is the majority in Asia-Pacific. Clearly education and lifelong learning will be an equalizer:

- Of the 774 million adults (15 yrs old and over) illiterate worldwide, 63.8% are women,

65% or 518 million adult illiterates are in Asia-Pacific (53% in South and West Asia, 12% in East Asia and Pacific)

- Asia-Pacific is experiencing a youth bulge, with over 60 percent of the world's youth or more than 750 million young women and men aged 15 to 24 years old residing in the region
- Unfortunately, of the approx. 75 million youth worldwide without work (2011), 45% is in Asia Pacific with more women among their ranks (except in East Asia)
- It is a region most vulnerable to the effects of climate change as evidenced by the onslaught of typhoon surge, tsunami, earthquakes and floods in recent years
- ASEAN 2015 will signal the free flow of goods, services and labor within the sub-region. However, the promise of growth will be elusive to many marginalized people who are not capable of contributing through expertise and skilled labour. ILO reports that people with more education are able to migrate and work abroad but those from the marginalized are either trafficked or exploited in hazardous work outside of their country.

Education Post-2015 Agenda in Asia Pacific

Asia-Pacific presents unique education situations with its diversity of cultures, languages and histories. To ensure access to quality education and learning throughout life for all, ASPBAE calls on governments, multilateral institutions and other decision-makers in education to rethink and act together for EFA, CONFINTEA 6 and SDGs. Towards transformative education envisaging inclusive growth, active citizenship and sustainable development, it is imperative for decision makers to act on:

- **Expanded Access**

- Education should go beyond schooling. Following the lifelong learning rhetoric, governments should invest heavily and side by side with ECCD, primary and secondary education, in youth and adult education, as part of the basic education.

- Expanded access means education for all mediated through formal, non-formal and informal education. Making these pathways to education work for the marginalized means expanded structures for education as well, where government needs to invest in community learning centers (CLCs), museums and libraries as sites of learning.

- Expanded access has implications for support systems that need to be in place to encourage learning. Day care centers and counselling, for example are pivotal for women's participation in empowering literacy programs. Education support can also be in the form of transportation, food subsidies and other social protection measures that hinder marginalized sectors' participation in education.

- **Quality education and lifelong learning**

- Quality education measured not only in terms of efficiency but more importantly defined by what matters. Eradicating poverty, ensuring healthy lives, sustainable economy as targeted under the Social Development Goals can be a starting point for which quality of education can be anchored on.

- Quality education, aside from the core competencies, encompasses developing knowledge, competencies, and values to achieve the individual's full potential; promoting innovation, creativity and critical thinking; and contributing to society in promoting peace, democratic citizenship, good governance, non discrimination, and in building a just and sustainable world.

- Lifelong learning for children, youth and adults to be accessible and relevant to all should be provided through formal, non-formal, informal education and through other education systems such as the indigenous learning systems.

- With more than 3,200 languages in Asia-Pacific, multilingual education plays a major role in realizing access to quality education and lifelong learning for all

- **Government financing of fully-costed youth and adult education and learning programs**

- National budgets for education and adult learning and education must be increased drastically from its current average government spending in Asia which is one per cent (1%) of the education budget to at least three to six per cent (3-6%) of the national education budget

- Review policies on privatisation of education and public private partnership in education as evidences indicate threats to the right to education and further marginalization of the poor and excluded.

- Governments should also invest in the necessary setting up of education structures that will ensure quality assurance, teacher training and development, differentiated learning assessments for children, youth and adults, and realizing multiple pathways to learning.

- **Participation of civil society and youth in education governance**

Civil society participation has been proven pivotal in realising change in society, not only acting as watch dog but in realizing needed reforms in government and governance. In education, there had been leaps in civil society participation in the last 13 years. In Asia-Pacific, fourteen (14) coalitions in 14 countries have been formally engaged with government in different facets of education governance. In countries like in Cambodia, the Philippines, Nepal, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea, civil society is part of the government mechanism for EFA.

ASPBAE believes within the dynamic CSO participation in education in the region, it is important to highlight the importance of Youth participation and Learners' voices in the education sector. At the center of quality education and

lifelong learning are the learners, not only as beneficiaries of education but as active participants in policy development, defining quality in education, ensuring quality assurance in provision and in education governance as a whole. Quality education and lifelong learning should respect and address the different learning needs and styles of children, youth and adults.

As governance heavily impacts on delivering efficient and effective education and lifelong learning, there should be clear goals towards monitoring governments' adherence to good governance in the EFA goals. There should be clear indicators on 1) Transparency, where education policies, programs and information are disseminated publicly, accessible and clear to all 2) Accountability, where education resources are managed efficiently and effectively and delivered by institutions and officials for the common good 3) Participation, where all stakeholders including learners, parents, teachers and civil society organizations are strategically engaged in policy development, implementation and monitoring of education and 4) Justice, where those who were denied education be at the core of the EFA agenda, where governments reach out to learners who missed out on quality education, addressing layers of marginalization that impede the people's access to quality education and lifelong learning.



Africa Education challenges an POST-2015 Agenda

By Limbani Eliya Nsapato

ANCEFA Regional Coordinator



I present my reflections on Africa's Education challenges and post-2015 agenda after having followed consultations and debates facilitated or jointly organised by Africa Network Campaign for Education for All (ANCEFA) since September 2011. For some of our readers who would be reading about ANCEFA for the first time, ANCEFA was founded after 2000 Dakar EFA forum with a mission is to promote, enable and build the capacity of African Civil Society to advocate and campaign for access to free quality and relevant education for all. The network is working on this mission with National Education

Coalitions (NECs) in 35 countries across Africa including 10 NECs in the Southern Africa Region. ANCEFA recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the African Union commission and is a key partner within the UNESCO led EFA Steering Committee and the Coordination Group of the Collective Consultation on Nongovernmental Organisations on EFA (CCNGO/EFA). ANCEFA is thus a key voice on the continental and global education policy issues in general and post-2015 agenda in particular.

The debates on post-2015 agenda continue to rage on in the count down to 2015 when it is expected that a new strategy for education and development will be agreed at the United Nations General Assembly. African voices mean a lot to the development of the global framework for education after 2015. Why? The major reason would be that given the centrality of education in the fight against poverty, global development cannot take place without addressing Africa's concerns. In fact Africa is host to the majority of out- of- school children and has a significant number of the illiterate adult population. The second reason is that although across the world education is taken as a fundamental human right, the people of Africa gaze at education with another lens in line with the African Union (AU) vision. The vision of the AU is that of "an integrated, peaceful, prosperous Africa, driven by its own people to take its rightful place in the global community and the knowledge economy" (AU Second Education Decade: 2006, 1). In this regard, the AU Second Education Decade for Africa (2006-2015) to which African member- states are party, underlines that education is a critical sector in Africa since it is a major means by which Africa's citizenry would be prepared to achieve this vision (Ibid).

Furthermore, Africa has a number of challenges socially, politically, economically, demographically among others and any discussion of post 2015 agenda should consider addressing such challenges. For instance, Africa's has myriad education as pointed out in numerous analytical work by United Nations agencies (UNESCO for instance), civil society organisations, research institutions, development partners and the African Union in reviewing the progress on EFA. Some of these challenges are related to access and quality, management and financing.

According to the UNESCO 2013/14 Education For All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR), out of the world's 57 million out- of- school children, half of them lived in conflict-affected countries and most of these are in Africa. The report estimated that in 2011 around 22% of the region's children were still out of school. The report also cited that in sub-Saharan Africa, only 23% of poor girls in rural areas were completing primary education. Furthermore, in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of illiterate adults increased by 37% since 1990, mainly due to population growth, reaching 182 million in 2011. By 2015, the report estimated that 26% of all illiterate adults would live in sub-Saharan Africa, up from 15% in

1990 (UNESCO, GMR, 2013/14-Summary: 10). In 2012 UNESCO projected that at least 31 countries in Africa were to miss the EFA goals in 2015 (UNESCO BREDAs case-studies of Countries, 2012).

As far as education quality is concerned most countries in Africa face huge challenges. Globally, it is estimated that at least 250 million children cannot read or count, even if they have spent four years in school (GMR 2013/14). In Africa recent studies by Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) and West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) have demonstrated that pupil performance in reading and mathematics is not good in many countries in Africa. SACMEQ study results in 2010 showed that the majority of pupils tested across 15 SACMEQ countries in reading and writing could not achieve a minimum score in the reading and mathematics skills. In addition, WASSCE studies have shown that in 2011 for example in Sierra Leone around 40 per cent of candidates failed to obtain a credit in any subject and only 10 per cent obtained four credits or more, while 5 per cent obtain five credits or more translating into 2,486 students (UNESCO BREDAs, 2013:). There is therefore an urgent need for better quality and improved learning outcomes in education systems across Africa.

Most countries in Africa need to recruit qualified teachers procure and distribute sufficient teaching and learning resources, develop infrastructure and ensure effective management and governance of their systems. However, for these to be addressed, another major challenge crops up and is linked to funding gaps. The UNESCO GMR 2013/14 observed that the global finance gap to achieve good quality basic education for all by 2015 reached US\$26 billion, putting the goal of getting every child into school far out of reach. Most of these shortfalls are in Africa. Recent studies have shown that there is a funding gap in education of about US\$11 billion mainly because most Sub Saharan African countries were not allocating the 6% of GDP until 2005 and 9% of GDP thereafter or 20% of annual national budget required to achieve the EFA Goals. The education funding gap is also exacerbated by most development partners failing to honour their commitments to finance education especially due to the global financial crisis of 2008, as well as the Euro-zone crisis of 2010 (ANCEFA, Report of EFA status in Zambia and Sierra Leone, 2012). These two crises have reduced the amount of resources that donor agencies and cooperating partners receive from their financiers, as the financiers have to deal with their own internal financial problems caused by the crises before they can extend aid to African countries. UIS 2013 estimated that global aid to education declined by 7% between 2010 and 2011 (ibid).

Against the facts and figures stated above, it is clear that Africa post-2015 education and development dreams cannot come true if the challenges cited are not tackled. In addition, given that EFA is a pipe dream in most countries on the continent, the post-2015 agenda goals, sub-goals and objectives as well as targets need to consider that EFA is an unfinished agenda in Africa.

Consequently, stakeholders in Africa including members of the civil society and representatives of the member states of the Africa Union have considered the need to have a holistic picture of education. ANCEFA for instance at its general assembly held in Dakar in 2012 adopted a policy motion that should look at priorities in six areas. These areas include 1) inclusive expanded basic education; 2) Early Childhood Care and Education; 3) Expanded equitable access for secondary education, 4) Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher education; 5) Quality education for all; 6) Strengthened youth and adult education and learning; and 7) Investment in Information, Communication Technologies (ICTs) and skills development for employability.

In February 2013, a stakeholders' conference on post-2015 convened jointly by African Union, Save the Children and ANCEFA considered an overarching goal of achieving equitable access to Education. Such a goal should have a focus on marginalized populations including pastoralists, girls, ethnic minorities, communities in hard to reach areas, in emergencies, and children with disabilities. The conference participants therefore proposed three critical priorities and sub-goals. The first priority aiming for quality education with focus on attainment of learning outcomes at all levels (early childhood development (ECD), primary, secondary, technical and vocational training (TVET), and tertiary education). The second priority aimed at achieving equitable and inclusive access at basic, secondary, and tertiary levels; and equitable provisions to reach the most excluded and marginalized. Lastly, the third priority aimed at literacy, numeracy and skills development – focus to address illiteracy and skills development amongst those who have missed out. (African Union, Stakeholder Position Paper, Addis Ababa, 27-28 February 2013).

In January 2014, the African Union Heads of State summit in Addis Ababa adopted an overall post-2015 position based on a report by Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia and Chairperson of the High level committee on the post-2015 Development Agenda. The report featured education as key for development in pillar 3 of the six pillars of development considered by the summit.

According to the report, Pillar 3 focuses on People-centred development which should include Eradicating poverty; Education for developing human capital ; Providing universal, equitable access to quality healthcare; Gender equality and empowering women ; Responding to population dynamics and development ; Harnessing the strengths of Africa's youth and Expanding access to sustainable human settlements (African Union, 2014: Common Position on Post-2015).

Furthermore, under education, the position considers as its priority focus, the need to achieve excellence in human resources capacity development through an improvement in the quality of education and training by: investing in learning infrastructures; increasing the use of ICT; ensuring higher completion rates; promoting pre-schooling, integrated adult education and tertiary education; and improving the quality and conditions of service of educators and trainers (ibid). The position also aims at enhancing equity and strengthening curricula.

In relation to financing Africa's post-2015 education there is a shift in perception towards increasing domestic financing and moving away from donor or aid dependency which has been a big factor over the 50 years in post independent Africa. While not ruling out aid, there is a general understanding that aid is not a solution to the continent's financial sustainability of its development initiatives. There is also the need to tackle corruption and promote transparency, accountability and good governance.

As we can see from the above discussion the needs and aspirations of Africa post-2015 are many. While some of the themes can reverberate in consultations in other regions like Asia and Latin America, the needs of Africa are unique and need to be integrated into the overall global agenda being developed by various agencies including UNESCO and the UNDP. Thus it is important to underline that as observed by the AU common position on post-2015, it will be critical for African citizens to "actively participate in the global debate on how to provide a fresh impetus to the MDGs and to examine and devise strategies to address key emerging development issues on the continent in the coming years" (African Union, January 2014).



Towards an Arab Adult Education Spring: Post-2015 Developmental Vision

By Zahi Azar

**Secretary General Arab Network for Popular Education (ANPE)
Ecumenical Popular Education Program (EPEP)**



The so-called "Arab Spring" took place under essentially political themes. Millions of deprived people revolted to take down longstanding dictators in power.

What appeared in the beginning of the uprising to be a success concerning the existing social realities, did not last long. In most of the concerned countries, social reality can hardly follow politics to consolidate the revolution. Dictators have marginalized to such an extent the impoverished and illiterate majority keeping them in an incredible state of underdevelopment that access to power is rarely possible and the generations of youth who took part in the uprising find themselves crushed between a return of the old guard or the arrival of their synonyms with Islamic hats.

Although the social reality is unable to sustain the political, the new godfathers of the "Arab Spring" are unanimous about one essential point and that is the absence of a real social agenda for the renewal of Development, of Education (Adult Education) and the dynamics of their interdependence.

The socio-political vacuum created a long time ago by dictatorships, is more discernible after the revolutions, and Arab societies will need several years to mature and to constitute "civil societies", able to considerably participate in building and leading the "offer" in Education, Adult Education and Development.

Today, although the long-time dismantled civil society here and there is starting to take initiatives, the state or the fragments of the old regimes continue to dominate any initiative with the old, the outmoded, the historical and the insignificant programs in Development and Education.

Although the "Arab spring" has become set in the political, many social benefits allow us to realistically dream about the post-2015 period, in order to renew Adult Education in the new Arab world.

For this, the following are required:

A. At the theoretical level

1. To renew the concept of Development in a participatory way, including cultural development towards an integral vision of a Development that can be only based on Education.

2. To liberate Development from the unique objective of the “global” or “national” market, especially in order to make larger room for Education and Adult Education. The essentially economical definition that dominates Development holds back the value of apprenticeship and of school.

3. To include Education for Development in a strong and dynamic network where this type of successful experiences can benefit the Arab world. In this post revolution context, an opening at the international level can only be extremely beneficial in a society that tends to regenerate the old political or ideological power relations.

4. To take the big revolutionary step to read correctly the surprising failure of Adult Education in the Arab world, to draw lessons, and to analyze them with a view of initiating new renewal proposals.

B. At the level of Adult Education Programs

1. To elucidate an integral pedagogical vision including Adult Education and its major literacy component, within a programmatic approach, that is measurable and that can be tested.

2. To redefine the role of international organizations at the qualitative programmatic and exchange levels, in order to adequately communicate successful experiences worldwide, and to contribute to the elaboration of Adult Education programs at the level of NGOs, but also at the government level in each country.

3. To prioritize and allocate budget lines for building human resources/cadres in Adult Education and to ensure their durability in the civil sector or within state institutions.

4. To take into consideration the percentage of women beneficiaries (80%) in the Arab world in the elaboration of Adult Education programs, and at different levels, including “Human Rights”.

5. To note that the “Human Rights” dimension must be a transversal component of all trainings, as well as to programs linked to Adult Education in the Arab world, in order to meet, strengthen and teach the values promoted par the revolutions in the different contexts.

6. To include the economic project component (individual or collective) to any elaboration of new Adult Education programs, in order to complete the apprenticeship, to master competences, and to ensure a practical outcome to the educational process, thus contributing to Development (while maintaining the ethical dimension).

A good new Popular Education formula (for post-2015), could include the following:

- Human Rights (Women’s Rights)
- Qualitative Education
- Collective Social Action
- Training on economic projects

Lead to

- Individuals Contribute to Development
- Mastering Competences and Apprenticeship
- Human Vector of Values
- Social Agent for Change

It is clear that in order to concretize these proposals in the actual socio-political turmoil of the Arab world, a transitional period, as difficult and delicate as it is, is needed.

This transitional period necessitates:

1. A different awareness raising and sensitization on the necessity to overcome the different forms of failure in Adult Education in the Arab world, and engaging in the adventure of post-2015 in order to renew the pedagogical approach to Adult Education and link it to Development.

2. Dialogue with international organizations concerned to actively participate in this transitional period (even in its definition) in order to prepare for a new post-2015 momentum in the Arab world.

3. Calling for a coalition of enterprises between public and private sectors, in each country, and of international organizations to conjugate efforts in view of reforming Education in general, and Adult Education in particular, without forgetting to ensure the funding needed in order to sustain this enterprise.

4. Building the capacity of state institutions, as well as that of NGOs, in a participatory way, to be able to engage in this important renewal and to maintain it, since the human element and the cadres are at the core of a successful outcome.

Towards a “Pedagogy of Hope” in the Arab world

The “Pedagogy of Hope” used by Paulo Freire can still be today, the subject of meditation and action in a politically, socially and economically exhausted Arab world, and I dare say pedagogically, that even the revolutions of youth and of marginalized people, were not able to restore minimum economic and political dignity required.

Could a “Pedagogy of Hope” still save the desperate? This is our commitment, the commitment of us all, to renew the Pedagogy in order to recover Hope.



Upstairs, downstairs: a view from below

By Timothy D. Ireland

UNESCO Chair in Youth and Adult Education - Federal University of Paraiba, Brazil

Individual member of ICAE



I warmly welcome the opportunity offered by the ICAE virtual seminar to debate issues raised by DVV International’s recently launched yearbook “Adult Education and Development”. The Yearbook is an excellent but, by nature, static platform for launching themes and questions for discussion which the seminar, as an inherently more dynamic forum, complements. Congratulations to the DVV International and ICAE for this concrete example of partnership.

The debate has so far raised several important questions on what is a huge theme for discussion – the international agenda for development and education post-2015. I was particularly encouraged to read the Arab statement by Iqbal elSamaloty. Whilst general discussion on the place of lifelong education for all in the agenda is fundamental, I believe we also need to concern ourselves with practical issues related to strategy. Given the criticisms which have arisen, especially with regard to the human capital approach of the World Bank, how can we seek to change and influence opinions? I would like to underline three issues and related strategic proposals which I consider pertinent: one related to the Post-2015 Agenda debate and the lack of resonance between international and national spheres, a second which refers to the CONFINTEA process and a third which concerns the vexed issue of learner participation.

It is my impression based on the situation in Brazil and other Latin American countries that general interest in and discussion of the post-2015 agenda is largely absent from national government circles and, in particular, Ministries of Education. That is, there exists a large divide separating the international debate and those taking part in it, from national and regional debates. To what extent do those ‘representatives’ taking part in the international debate effectively represent and interact with national positions? Hence, in strategic terms, advocacy efforts need to be invested in translating the global issues into national issues. Ministries of Education must be encouraged to engage in the debate and to ‘internalize’ it.

Secondly, as Nélide Céspedes stated in her contribution based on the CEAAL analysis of country reports submitted to the second GRALE, international rhetoric related to the CONFINTEA process and to the principle of adult lifelong education finds very little concrete expression in education policy in many countries, especially in the south, where it provides at best elegant phrases for political discourse. Brazil hosted the Sixth CONFINTEA in 2009 but the Belém Framework for Action has disappeared from the political agenda completely in recent years. The UNESCO Brasília office will publish a Portuguese translation of GRALE II in an attempt to revitalize the process. In this respect I consider that we need firstly to think of GRALE in strategic terms. Whilst the data collected by and published in the Report is important, the process by which it is collected is even more important. For the production of the next GRALE, greater emphasis must be given to strategies which use the collection of data as a means of mobilizing society and posing policy questions on youth and adult learning and education. Secondly, it would seem to me that the Observatory of Adult Education promised in the Regional Confintea Follow-up Meeting in Mexico City in 2010, could be an excellent instrument if only it were made available. We are now a year away from CONFINTEA + 6 and the Observatory remains on the side-line. Thirdly, Werner Mauch refers to the importance of the role of the UNESCO regional and field offices in contributing to the CONFINTEA process which UIL on its own, cannot be expected to carry forward. It would be salutary to know how OREALC (UNESCO’s Latin American Regional Office) intends to contribute to this process.

Thirdly, the question of participation rears its controversial and sensitive head again. To what extent do discussions taking place in the extremely complex structure generated by the UN contemplate and express the interests and demands of the young and adult learner? And to what extent do they have a voice in this process? What happened to the Global Network of

Adult Learners which presented its International Adult Learners' Charter during the Conference in Belem? Without a ground swell, there is a tendency for the distance between rhetoric and action to grow further and to become distorted. Street and popular protests in different parts of the world recently have shown a strong distrust of political mediation. Whilst the international agencies provide certain established mechanisms for participation, all of these are at best cautious and tend to be conciliatory. Hence, the role of civil society to produce alternative and more radical positions and strategies. I would suggest that ICAE could consider an AVAAZ approach to the inclusion, for example, of lifelong education for all, in the post-2015 agenda. The UN needs to be bombarded with messages from individuals and civil society organizations defending this position.

The intricacies of the UN process should not be used as an excuse for delegating responsibility for the future of lifelong education, and within it, youth and adult education, to that small elite group which is taking part in this international debate as it has in many others. The stakes are too high. In order to achieve the world we want by means of the education we want, there is no substitute for participation. This seminar represents one such space which needs to be replicated at national, regional and local levels. The title of ICAE's newsletter translates this perfectly "Voices Rising".



Comments



Sagestine L. Gandhi. Pamoja Sierra Leone

Thanks Limbani for bringing out these salient challenges facing education in Africa. I wonder whether our people in governance in Africa do take their time to read and or follow the trend. Let us advice our governments to do more to change this ugly face - your suggestion for increased local funding can go a long way to shift the goal post to the better.

Isolina Centeno Ubeda from Venezuela

Excellent approach in the presentation of Zahi Azar.

Graciela C. Riquelme and Natalia Herger from Argentina (1)

The Education, Economy and Labor Program recognizes in its researches the right to lifelong education and training for work of the young and adult population excluded from the educational system.

Researches carried out in recent years have resulted in the development of the concept of Social Education Debt, which expresses the existence of groups of children, adolescents and adults with very low education levels or with low quality education; thus, the social education debt is a challenge for the expansion of school offers with a view to ensuring access for all excluded populations and their permanence in the system.

Certainly, recognizing this problem implies adopting an educational policy approach that places the right to education as the long-term goal given that not all proposals of policy recognize this problem. Especially when, as the basic articles of the Virtual Seminar clearly outline, defining policies and programs that take care of the population from early childhood to teenagers, youth and adults does not appear to be a real priority on the international agendas, which oppose the education of children and adolescents to their parents' education.

As was developed in studies performed by ICAE-GEO, the approach to take care of the social education debt to the young and adult population can be understood as the number of people aged 18 years and older not attending school and who must complete the primary and secondary levels, and should consider the following dimensions:

- (i) Sociodemographic characteristics, those of social origin and occupation of the population with low-level education;
- (ii) Spatial location, defined as the differential access and permanence of the population in local areas;
- (iii) The scenes for work-oriented education and training and the supply of institutions organized according to the segmentation in the allocation of school resources and the existence of differential circuits according to social groups;
- (iv) The resources to respond to the social education debt as estimation exercise that accounts for the necessary amounts in relation to public sector expenditures on education and some social and employment programs.

The notion of taking care of the social education debt is a genuine instance and complementary to other policies aimed at social inclusion such as the promotion of employment and access to social services (health, housing, drinking water, etc.) by allowing to operate: (i) the characteristics of the population, (ii) the spatial differentiation, (iii) the scenes of work-oriented education and training and (iv) the necessary resources.

This type of approaches and ideas can be the basis of the negotiation with political sectors and also provide technical criteria for the allocation of resources to the different kinds of policy and programs. In turn, these analyses of educational policy programs demonstrate the possibilities of a hierarchy of goals and, in such case, the feasibility of an internal redistribution among the various approaches as a way of obtaining budgetary resources. These exercises become essential to those negotiations and empower technical and political groups of the national and provincial Ministry of Education in the discussion for those assignments. In turn, the community and social groups involved would therefore have accurate information to advocate for the right to education.

The estimation performed for the case of Argentina is an exercise that, in itself, constitutes the proof and claim that the attention given to education as a social right is an unresolved social debt. As a consequence, the idea of a model of attention and estimation of the necessary resources and the different alternatives to cover it is developed. The case of Argentina may be the same of other countries or provinces or municipalities, and this may be an alternative strategy to be applied in different contexts.

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It is worth mentioning: Project "Work-oriented education and training. Social debt with youth and adults and short-term market for illusions" (2011-2014 GC Scientific Programming UBACyT) and - Project "The social debt on work-oriented education and training in Argentina: Design of models of taking care of right to education" (2008-2010 Scientific programming UBACyT).

Riquelme, G. C and Herger, N. (2009) Social Debt in Youth and Adult Education. Assessment of Necessary Resources. International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). Montevideo, Uruguay.



The MDGs post-2015 The crucial issues By Paul Bélanger Former ICAE President

Having read with great interest all contributions since today, a consensus is emerging: we will not succeed correcting the proposal on the table without a large citizens' movement asserting what is missing to make this world agenda an efficient guide for global and national development efforts to be taken during the next 15 years.

Something clear is emerging from our seminar: in health, in environment and in education as well as in an economy that could meet people's everyday needs, no real and sustainable change could happen without the active and creative participation of women and men, and, consequently, without opportunities for all to improve, all along their life, their capacity to act individually and collectively.

For example,

- * Without lifelong health promotion and education, how can we increase the health status of women and men in all social groups and thus control the exponential rise of curative care budgets?
- * Without possibilities for local citizens to increase their awareness and monitoring competencies, how could we modify the heavy ecological trends now taking place and thus reduce the foreseen costs?
- * Without parental education, thus without intergenerational cooperation, how could it be possible to democratize education, that is to increase the participation of first generation school students?
- * Without relevant education and training available to all people at work, how can we improve the productive level of our economies and thus be able to redistribute the benefit of such sustainable economic development?
- * Without agricultural extension, how can we achieve agrarian reform, increase agricultural productivity and do so in an ecological ways, thus helping solve the current food crisis?
- * How could we reduce growing economic social and cultural inequality and hence poverty, without giving people opportunities to participate in work oriented adult learning and education?
- * Without prison education, how could we enhance the socio-professional insertion of former detainees and thus helping hundreds of thousands of people to become productive citizens?

Empowerment through education is an enabling right that should be associated to all development goals, if these goals have to be achieved. We need, through such examples, to underline the inadequacies of the current Post-2015 proposal. Its narrow approach restricting the required skills to be developed and limiting the publics or age groups to have access to education and learning opportunities will have serious negative economic and socio-cultural impact.

Though the current version of Post-2015 statement recognizes lifelong learning, we need to explain that lifelong learning cannot be efficient if it does not become life large and life rooted. Our concern is to ensure the concrete implementation of all universal goals. Such vision of lifelong learning and hence of adult and youth education make the difference between top down policies or dry statements and efficiently implemented priorities. Precisely to be efficient, we could not limit the education agenda to primary education.

Moreover, two transversal priorities need to be underlined. First, the right to learn without discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, class and disabilities, including the right of education and learning of migrant women and men, as well as the rights of women operating in the informal economy and in the so called "traditional" role. Second, the right to literacy of the forgotten 775 million of adults deprived of this 21st century essential skill. How, for example, can the Pakistan society achieve the other MDG without, as Inayatullah said, giving its 60 million so called illiterate citizens a real opportunity to master this basic competency?

It is not too late to act. It is not too late for local individual initiatives and international intervention, for reaching out other social movements and for making use of official and social media, for connecting with officials doing advocacy through evidence based policy recommendation.

As Alan Tuckett said on the 10th of March, we need during these coming crucial eighteen months to join other citizens' organisations and, all together, actively participate in this global debate. Our collective voice, coming from all continents and all areas of human activities, needs to be expressed and resonated at all levels in order to make a much needed difference in the on-going global debate. Our objective is to ensure that the POST-2015 goals will constitute a real and efficient development agenda.



Education in the national consultation process of the Brazilian civil society on the Post-2015 Agenda

By Damien Hazard

ABONG Co-executive director – Brazilian Association of NGOs



ABONG - (Associação Brasileira de ONGs) Brazilian Association of NGOs entered the discussion process of the Post-2015 Agenda in 2012, through international links of the Latin American and international civil society. Along with the different types of consultations made by the UN, global networks of social organizations and movements such as the international campaign Beyond 2015,

GCAP – Global Call for Action Against Poverty, FIP – International Forum of NGOs' National platforms and CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizen Participation have independently articulated in this debate and have promoted other national consultations. In Brazil, Abong - Brazilian Association of NGOs - led this process in the first half of 2013. The result included in the report "The world we want Post-2015" ("O mundo que queremos pós-2015"), available at <http://www.abong.org.br/final/download/pospt.pdf> (Portuguese) and <http://www.abong.org.br/final/download/posen.pdf> (English), was disseminated in August 2013. It proposes a set of recommendations for the Brazilian government and the United Nations. At that time, it was submitted to various ministries of the Brazilian government, including the Minister for the Environment, Izabella Teixeira, Brazil's representative at the UN High Level Panel.

To carry out the consultation, Abong chose to implement a strategy in two successive phases: the first one of visibility and engagement, which main objective was to disseminate the campaign, as the subject was little known among organizations in the field. In that first moment the principles that should guide the preparation of the Post-2015 development frameworks were defined, e.g.:

CONSISTENCY: to take over commitments already made by Brazil in international treaties and conventions related to development, especially in relation to those made in the context of the UN Cycle of Conferences in the 1990s.

EFFECTIVENESS: to ensure space for civil society participation in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the post-2015 development framework; to ensure political commitment to the funding of agreed targets; to ensure that goals reach the structural issues that prevent development.

REPRESENTATION: to ensure the prominence of vulnerable segments in the elaboration of the Post-2015 development framework; to use the capillarity of advocacy organizations and movements to ensure plurality in participation; to use the work already done by movements and organizations on issues related to the consultation.

The second phase consisted of the development of thematic workshops in three large Brazilian cities, in a coordinated way with related associations, organizations and movements. The topics of the three workshops were respectively: Childhood and Youth (Brasilia); Confronting Racism (Salvador); and HIV/AIDS and Gender Equity (Recife). A total of 78 organizations, movements and networks participated in this consultation.

This process of consultation of the Brazilian civil society did not focus specifically on education issues, but a number of recommendations included that dimension. A selective reading of the report allows us to highlight some of these proposals and identify key issues for realizing the right to education, specifically in regard to segments of young people and adults.

The question of universal education was obviously pointed out as essential: "The new strategic Objectives of development should ensure universal access to quality, secular and free education, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, immigration status, gender identity, sexual orientation, among others."

Access to education should consider the most vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, women, black population... In order to ensure that access, affirmative policies should be implemented, for example, quotas for black people in universities, or even for apprentices in companies and public bodies. In general, participation and inclusion of those groups traditionally excluded demand a cultural change within institutions. This is what the following recommendation specially points out: "Create and implement mechanisms to combat institutional racism and sexism, including governance institutions, with the effective participation of the black movement and other groups historically outside power and decision-making spaces".

The appreciation of human diversity within educational spaces and processes requires the implementation of contents and methodologies that can meet this goal. In that sense, there is need for "education with methodologies that integrate people with disabilities and encourage their learning" and more, "promote an education that responds to demands related to cultural differences: indigenous, traditional communities", etc.

Thus, education must be understood as a cultural right and it imposes the creation and implementation of "cultural policies that affirm diversity and difference as a tool to fight and transform rooted ideas and thoughts that are related to exclusion". Among such policies should be cited "policies for the preservation and valuation of historic sites and places of black culture".

Education should encompass various fields, e.g. adequate nutrition and food, or even sexual education. In that sense, the new objectives "should ensure young people to have access to a friendly and comprehensive sexual education (including spaces beyond formal education) to enable them to challenge harmful gender norms, to prevent themselves from HIV and gender violence, teen pregnancy and unwanted pregnancy, to plan their lives and make well-informed decisions about their sexuality".

The dimension of access to education is also intrinsically linked to access to the world of work, rather than the labour market, that focuses only on its more formal aspects. In that sense, it is necessary to "strengthen and foster development model paradigms that include forms of production and trade based on solidarity and practiced by traditional peoples and communities, such as indigenous populations, as well as agroecology, the preservation of the environment and the defense of rights".

Education and management of common goods are also linked. This is what the recommendation on the management of water resources shows, which considers "that the fundamental role of women in community water resources management can be effective for the introduction of sanitary education and hygiene programs, which can help to reduce the incidence of diarrheal diseases".

Education, participation, human diversity, culture, world of work, food, human rights, democracy ... All these issues are linked, are inseparable ... but current trends in the process of building the new development framework leave doubts as to the ability of governments to delineate interconnected and so ambitious goals as those defined by civil society organizations in Brazil, and generally in the world. Unfortunately, the final document produced by the UN Open-Ended Working Group is trying to reduce the number of points to a set of sustainable development goals. That document focuses on growth as the only factor of development at the expense of human rights and inequalities in developed countries. Under these conditions, the global civil society is challenged, more than ever, to increase their pressure on governments and international organizations.



Education in Itaparica and in Brazil: statistics that hide more than they reveal

Comment by Alex Pegna Hercog. Salvador - Bahia, Brazil



The School and its islands of challenges

Itaparica Island, municipality of Vera Cruz, Bahia, Brazil. To get there, departing from Salvador, you must cross the Bay of All Saints by boat, which takes about 50 minutes. Getting off at Mar Grande, you need to continue by car for a few more minutes to finally reach one of its beaches, which name I will keep secret for ethical reasons.

By the end of 2013 I was in a state public school in that beach, on the Itaparica Island, with a privileged view of an infinite sea from the coast. At the entrance, students painted the walls with drawings and poems. I was welcomed and I finally had the opportunity to talk with the principal.

Soon, the words of the teacher became a lament, complaining of lack of resources or misuse of resources. She admitted that the level of education of the students was not satisfactory, even for those who were already in more advanced courses. According to her, many students got to high-school without knowing how to write well or solve simple math problems.

Even without the necessary conditions to take certain courses, students were passed. On the one hand, the harassment by the Government of the State, that puts pressure on schools; approval avoids the need to open new places, apart from saving the cost that student implies in one year. On the other hand, the complacency of the school itself, which believes it is better for the student to finish his/her studies - even with a learning deficit - than failing and probably leaving school.

For many of these young people, school is their only support. Of precarious social conditions, many of them get involved in drug trafficking. Teenagers aged 13, 14, 15 and older are dropping out of school seduced by the promises of traffic: money, respect and protection of their group, in addition to the status any teenager want that is made viable with the money coming from the sale of drugs. Faced with having to choose between working in drug trafficking - with their short-term advantages - and their studies, many have chosen the first option.

Even if the school has few opportunities to act, it fulfils its role and calls the families of children who are in that situation to inform them - in a subtle way, without being direct to avoid causing constraint, but making itself understood. According to the headmistress, "goes in one ear and out the other", is referring to the reaction of the parents.

Before drawing conclusions, she explained. These families live in poverty. They are parents and children often living with minimum wage or government aid like the "Bolsa Familia". Suddenly, the parents see their child coming home carrying a kilo of beans, rice, meat, milk. That is, basic products on which they depend. What would be the reaction of a father or a mother? To reject them? The situation of emergency is filled with the immediacy that money from traffic provides. Parents pretend not to know anything. And children are increasingly distancing from the school environment. What would be the solution? To make them fail? Not for the school. It is better for this young to have a high school diploma and the possibility to be accepted in school, than to act severely and finish by getting him away. The school is powerless to face some of the paths its students decide to follow. Therefore, even if it cannot resolve the problems, at least it tries to reduce the damage caused by the course the young decided to take. That is the situation of the school located in one of the beaches on the Itaparica Island, according to its principal.

Dropouts, investment and quality of education in Brazil

According to the 2012 Development Report, published by the United Nations Development Programme, Brazil has a dropout rate of 24.3%. In Latin America, Brazil is just ahead of Guatemala (35.2%) and Nicaragua (51.6%). 93.75% of the dropouts belong to the public school.

As regards the illiteracy rate, the number of young people over 15 years who did not complete literacy dropped from 12.4% in 2001 to 8.7% in 2012, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE. Analyzing some data, it can be noted that Brazil is one of the countries in the world that has increased most its investment in education. Between 2005 and 2009, expenditure per pupil in primary and secondary education grew by 149%, according to the OECD. In total, expenditure on education in the country account for 5.5% of GDP, and what is recommended by the National Education Plan is a minimum of 6.23%.

Contrary to the data, a research published on March 24, 2014 by the Data Popular Institute, in partnership with the Union of Teachers of Official Education of the State of São Paulo, brings disturbing information. According to the survey "Quality and Education in state schools in São Paulo", 46% of students said they had been approved without learning the subject. 75% of students and 94% of parents are against the approval of the students who did not attain the minimum grade required to pass the course.

Brazil is an island

Comparing the statistics on the educational situation in Brazil with personal experiences on the Itaparica Island, it is possible to identify common aspects between a school in the beach of the Vera Cruz municipality and schools in the largest city in Brazil, São Paulo. Data of approval do not reflect the quality of education. Success in literacy rates or completion of basic and secondary courses does not mean success in training students.

However, it is clear that this criticism is recurrent in many countries. The desire to reach the Millennium Development Goals that establish that by 2015 all children should have completed basic education, but especially the desire to raise the Human Development Index (HDI), which considers the number of enrolled students and non-failure, has made that much more value was given to statistics than to quality of education.

The need to fulfil the goals has led various governments (federal, state and municipal) to forge a reality simply to produce numbers. Between the Ministries of Education and the students we find the schools, which are incapable of overcoming this problem. They are powerless to promote such changes within the required system. And they have the challenge to prevent dropout and to fulfil its basic role: educate. External issues such as the poverty of the families of the young and the harassment of drug trafficking make difficulties faced by the schools, their principals, teachers and officials even more complex. The scenario is not very encouraging. Not even in our most beautiful islands!

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A reflection from Chile about the need of dialogue between student's movement and adult learning advocates

Reflection by Sebastián Vielmas [1]



Since 2006, in my country, Chile, there has been a strong student's movement that advocates for a free, universal and quality education guaranteed by the Government as a right for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. The context is that our country is on the top ten of the most unequal countries in the world and our education system is one of the most privatized in the world, there are no free public universities, for example.

The response from politicians from these movements has been slow. During Bachelet's first term (2006-2010), she wasn't able to deliver an educational reform that break with the neoliberal paradigm because of constitutional restrains from Pinochet's era and a fragmented coalition that included for-profit education advocates. Her government opted for a consensus with the right-wing opposition, which came to govern for the last 4 years under Piñera's leadership (2010-2014)

During the presidency of Sebastián Piñera, the push for –even- more privatization and deregulation of education was stopped by the biggest social movement in Chile since the end of the Dictatorship. There has been an increase on the relevance of social movements on the social sphere, as we can see with the embracement of Bachelet of the student's movement agenda as an integral part of the electoral program that presented on the last election, in which was elected in a landslide.

I wanted to make this contextualization in order to bring an issue: the lack of presence of adult education issues on the public debate about education in Chile. It has been also a difficulty on the debates about the post-2015 agenda, as far as I read on this seminar. The reason for this, I believe, is the lack of awareness of education being a process for the entire life.

There is a conception that education is an issue that only affects to young people, implying that adults have finished their educational process in life. We know that is not true, adult education is not important only for persons who weren't able to finish school when they were kids, but also for every adult that wants to enrich himself or herself alongside their life.

How to break this order of things? I believe that through a dialogue between student's movements and adult learning advocates. A key part of this reflection, is to invite student's movements to leave behind the narrow focus on students as young people and changes in the primary, secondary and higher education, in order to put the focus on an encompassing social movement for the right to education. We also need to make a dialogue between younger activist, and their organizational ways, and older NGO's. I strongly believe that each generation of activist can enrich each other, thus going beyond the 'generational divide' that comforts so many of the establishment that wants to keep the status quo.

So, briefly put: in order to think for a post-2015 agenda, we need to build bridges between student's movements and adult learning advocates in order to build majorities that puts a holistic paradigm of education on the public agenda. Otherwise, the student's movements will keep on fighting with a narrow worldview that excludes adult education issues and adult learning advocates will be isolated in their own world.

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Reflection by Sofia Valdivielso Gender and Education Office of ICAE, Spain



I would like to start my reflection by congratulating ICAE for this initiative. These virtual seminars are a good tool for the exchange of views. I would also like to congratulate the various presenters for their contributions, without which this small and modest contribution would not have been possible. Your opinions have helped me think what I outline below.

We all agree that we have not reached the goals that we set in the late twentieth century. There are many reasons for this failure and they are scattered in all areas and at all levels. There is an institutional failure to the extent that governments have not been able to implement policies aimed at achieving those goals, but I also think there has been a failure in the ways of acting, naming reality, constructing the meanings or implementing alternative discourses to help us build a better world possible.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2005) says that we are in a time in which there is no relationship between our expectations and the real possibilities of implementing them and this, among other things, because the great truths of the twentieth century have become, in the words of Bauman (2009), fluid. We live in a fluid world for which we are not prepared. We do not have the skills to deal with the complexity of today's world, we have no skills to deal with the uncertainties. We continue to believe that education is the key to solve the problems we face. In my opinion, this is a partial truth and our mistake has been to make it the whole truth. We have confused the part to the whole.

We continue to believe that education is the foundation to improve productivity and that productivity is the engine of progress. However, the crisis in which Europe and USA are immersed for a number of years now reveals that this statement is not entirely true. For example, in the countries of southern Europe, the expectation that more education means better quality of life has become false. In Spain, for instance, the generation between 25 and 35 years old today is the best formed ever, is the one that has reached the highest educational level and yet more than 50% of these young people have no expectations, no work, they still live with their parents and have no chances to start their adult lives autonomously. They are competent; however, they have become disposable population according to the criteria of global capitalism. The labour market tells them they are overqualified and offers them jobs with no expectations at all of building careers, apart from being poorly paid.

I have referred to this case as an example of the contradictions in the discourses. I am aware that this is just a part, that if we look at the whole picture there are still millions of people without access to literacy, millions of women who have no access to health care, millions of children who do not have the possibility to go to school. Of course, reducing or even eliminating this must remain one of our goals, must remain one of the headlights to illuminate our path.

Public resources need to be invested in reducing the gap between those who have access to rights and those without access to rights. In recent decades, we have focused too much on "what" do we want and we have not spent much time thinking about "what for" do we want that. We have focused on "what", and "what for" has been defined by others who are convinced that productivity and economic growth are the reasons for investing in education and training. I mean, this "what for" is colonized by the discourse of growth and productivity as ideas, as forces that set out the path. We have spent years using the same words. We continue naming the world inflating the perspective of productivity and growth, even knowing that they are responsible for the crisis we are living. International agencies continue to claim that more education means higher productivity and greater wealth.

Our minds are colonized by this thought. How much longer will continue revolving around the same? How much longer will we continue using the same words that, for using them so much, they have lost their meaning? What do those who have been silenced, excluded or made invisible say? How do they name the world? What words do they use? What actions do they execute? How do they solve problems? If we accept that there is not an only way of naming reality, not a single direction towards the future, then we should also accept that those who have the power to speak should shut up and listen. Listen to those other ways of naming the world and, from there, start a true intercultural dialogue that helps us build a better world taking into account, as we are taught by South epistemologies, that there is no global justice without global cognitive justice. Therefore, there is no democracy without recognition of the diversity of knowledge. Recognizing this diversity will help us to develop another kind of logic based on mutual recognition, job-sharing and intercultural dialogue. Walking through these new paths will help us move from a monocultural vision of reality to a greener vision that draws from different world views and different knowledge.



Comment by Carmen Colazo GEO/ICAE/REPEM. Paraguay



I find it extremely interesting to consider a correlation between the UNDP concept of Human Development and the 2015 and post-2015 EFA from the perspective of a civilizational change. Especially when the concept of human development today is understood from its multidimensionality. But I think it's also time to "go down" to more specific strategies and mechanisms, differentiated and located in all cases and globally, considering the different processes of development, the different paths to follow in each situation (taking into account possible social disaffiliations in some

"developed" countries, the exclusions / inclusions in other countries, and the specific features of each situation to contribute to a regional, national and global balance).

If more specific strategies and mechanisms are not studied, we will continue repeating the situation assessment and major strategies to follow, but we will not succeed in making progress "from the smallest level", that is, from the "bottom-up" situations. We must also work on better indicators and benchmarks (ICAE and GEO have made contributions to this respect, something that needs to be analyzed in depth).

The MDGs have not reached the results expected (at least from the point of view of gender and education), have not achieved the expectations towards 2015. We need to work from "complexity", by recognizing the "exchanges between realities and data". In this sense, the dimensions of gender, race, ethnicity, poverty, urban / rural, access and appropriation of ICTs are essential. Greetings to everyone! Carmen Colazo (GEO / ICAE / REPEM. Paraguay).



Working out ambiguities: lifelong education in the post-2015 definition process: MDGs and EFA

By Jorge Osorio V. - ICAE, Chile



After months of discussions and preparation of documents in relation to the new framework agreements for the MDGs and EFA goals by various stakeholders, it is not yet possible to identify the real sense of the rhetoric of major international agencies. While there is consensus regarding the evaluations of the results of both strategies, there is no consensus on the kind of diagnosis performed on the "development crisis" and on the context in which new goals should be defined. It is not easy to define this framework as various actors perceive the state of the "global issue" from different perspectives and analytical tools, which is evident when comparing the statements of global citizen organizations to those of international agencies. However, we also found that among the latter there are different approaches, internal debates and increasing pressure to adjust the proposals to the cycles of the global market and the contradictory dynamics of the finance global government. The results of the work done by the groups of experts convened by the Secretary General of the UN is an example of what we say.

A first "sensitivity" (or "approach") is distinguished because they value the strategies of the MDGs and EFA into a perspective of necessary global transformations in response to a crisis that goes beyond financial aspects and shows radical new phenomena that require to look at "what is global" from a viewpoint of change in civilization. Thus, the MDGs and EFA are evaluated as important global efforts to achieve a more just world, but the challenges that should guide the debate according to this "approach" are "how to move forward" and that this "how to move forward" be, indeed, a collective action, including governmental, multilateral and civil society actors. All this through: a) a transformation agenda (with real reforms); b) the national appropriation of the new goals; c) the recognition of civil society organizations in monitoring agreements and goals.

The most important aspect of this "sensitivity" is its recognition of the existence of far-reaching global problems in civilization that are not resolved with minor reforms, such as: a) climate change, b) the extension of the concept of welfare (which exceeds the purely economic view), c) the challenges of the phenomena of migration and human displacements by environmental or political reasons, and those arising from natural disasters. This perspective of "what is global" allows us to understand that the post-2015 agenda will be developed as a field of dispute, in some aspects with high ambiguity, depending on the perceptions of "global risk" of stakeholders, as well as geo-political interests which in recent months are becoming more relevant in the definition of a "common future" of humanity and safety and sustainability of the planet.

As regards education, its "utopia" is to develop societies based on free flow of knowledge, distributing it socially through formal and non-formal methods, throughout the life cycle of individuals, in order to generate comprehensive skills in all areas of fulfilment of people and human communities, in coincidence with human development approaches promoted by UNDP and "education societies" promoted by UNESCO.

Another "sensitivity" (or "approach") is the one based on the logic of progress: the idea is to ensure the conditions for economic growth, successful targeting of social spending and a favourable option for education to be a central concept of this process, mainly because of the importance of generating individual skills in the society that are useful in the world of work of a "new social capitalism" that some like to call "society of opportunities". And besides, it is considered that it must be continuing education ("lifelong education"), implemented not only by way of school schedules, but also by offers from social, religious and business entities in the context of a policy of combined (public and private) provision of education. This approach also considers the importance of developing new security and governance mechanisms of the global financial system and the implementation of instruments of social distribution of knowledge, access to new technologies, as well as gender equity in the world of work and the experimentation in participatory management of common goods of nature (not so much for ecopolitical beliefs but due to the demands of managing the "risk" and the administration of the territories subject to conflicts between transnational corporations and local communities).

However, let's be cautious about this identification of the two "sensitivities": the post-2015 debate process will surely bring greater complexity and diversification in the treatment of the subjects.

Both ways of looking at the post-2015 have common issues in relation to education: the paradigm of "lifelong education" is recognized, but with ideological nuances and subtle differences regarding conceptions of human development and its relationship with the planet's sustainability. Therefore, we must identify consensus as well as some of the setbacks. A source and way to illustrate this target is the reading of the 2013 EFA Global Monitoring Report.

A first issue posed by the reading of this report is the confirmation of the importance of referring "quality education" to Development Goals, particularly the eradication of poverty. The key point in this discussion is the definition of development. It can not be reduce to the eradication of poverty. The multidimensional character of development is not in question right now in international organizations. The UNDP is at the forefront in this sense. It is not enough to repeat the slogan that economic growth and job creation is Development in itself. The several dimensions of human welfare and the importance of connecting the good living of people to the access and benefits of cultural and technological goods, to the recognition of cultural, gender, ethnic and age diversity, to democratic participation and respect for human rights and environmental sustainability of the planet invalidate restricted conceptions of development. And this also impacts the debate on education: Right to restricted education or right to extended education? "Lifelong education" just to avoid being left out of the dynamics of the market, or "lifelong education" to access all the benefits of knowledge and ensuring human and civil rights?

The EFA Report synthesizes its outlook for the post-2015 by posing the concept of "equitable education", which turns out to be very relevant and can be a good base to define post-2015 paths on education, as it uses the following criteria:

- a. Capacity building for the "world of life" (citizenship, health, food) and to improve job training
- b. Social empowerment of vulnerable and excluded groups
- c. Educational policies defined by the attention paid to learning, and criticism of the definition of Goals only to measure "educational levels"
- d. Ensuring equitable access (for everyone) to quality education provided by the State and its public educational delivery systems
- e. Strategic importance of training good teachers and investment in their training

The approach of UNESCO, expressed in its document 37/C56 of November, 2013 (Education beyond 2015), is not much different. However, something very encouraging and promising should be noted, that the starting point of its proposal is that "quality lifelong education" is a guiding principle for post-2015 education, as a pillar of "inclusive, sustainable and prosperous societies", placing into a strategic continuum: a) the development of children (preschool education), b) primary and post primary education, c) "education for life", developed through various formal and non-formal modalities (including civic, environmental and peace education and non-discrimination), and d) vocational training.

However, along with the statement of this principle, the UNESCO document also highlights three issues of great importance in the strategic debate on the future of "what is global" and of "development" that we consider very interesting to place as topics for discussion in this seminar:

- a. The (MDGs and EFA) post-2015 programs should not be restricted only to the eradication of extreme poverty, therefore, they should include in their goals the problems of middle-income countries as well as those of more developed countries subject to socially regressive policies. This initiative reveals the importance of looking at post-2015 issues from an approach of change of civilization and incorporating a more comprehensive and realistic collection of new forms of poverty, exclusion, inequality, violence and restrictions of human rights (such as those that social movements have been demanding since 2011 in all continents)
- b. Education is a human right, a public good, and the State has the obligation to guarantee and deliver it by way of institutions providing quality education, leaving no room for those who may claim to commodify education based on new socio-liberal formulas, reducing government spending and transferring the initiative of "lifelong education" to private (companies) and institutions.
- c. Educational policies, both globally and in each country, must be defined from the aspirations of communities and citizenship, which are not only reduced to quantitative aspects (coverage, for example) but also (or mainly) when they are raised from qualitative aspects of logic: living together, citizen participation, access to knowledge, peace and security, environmental protection, non-discrimination, which have been expressed in the recent global and national mobilizations. In a direct way, this statement recognizes and encourages the democratization of the process of debates and agreements towards the post-2015.



Second synthesis of collective reflection By Cecilia Fernández – ICAE Secretariat

Dear all,

We have reached the end of this virtual meeting that thanks to your participation and excellent contributions, has allowed a fruitful exchange, has extended our framework and context of analysis, clearly pointing out some of the challenges we have to influence the Post-2015 development agenda and even more, to demand its subsequent implementation.

Different views have emerged, which is always refreshing, as well as elements for rethinking our strategies, challenges and questions that will surely continue calling us and requiring our imagination, determination and persistency.

As Cecilia affirms, the confluence of the three global platforms as well as the ongoing education post-2015 processes present both opportunities and challenges. 2015 is a landmark for renewed commitments to Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) coupled with a continuing review of actions under CONFINTEA 6.

As had already been raised in the first part of the seminar, a big challenge is how to ensure a standalone education goal within the SDGs, because although the interim report of the OWG Co-Chairs indicate education as one of the 19 focus areas, the conception of education as a cross-cutting issue rather than a goal exists at the same time, and this weakens the priority to education.

There is agreement in relation to the fact that the agenda, and the multi-stakeholder processes leading to agenda setting, are equally important.

“The unfinished EFA agenda”

EFA is a pipe dream in most countries on the continent, says Limbani, the post-2015 agenda goals, sub-goals and objectives as well as targets need to consider that EFA is an unfinished agenda in Africa.

And he brings up that “In January 2014, the African Union Heads of State summit in Addis Ababa adopted an overall post-2015 position...it is important to underline that as observed by the AU common position on post 2015, it will be critical for African citizens to “actively participate in the global debate on how to provide a fresh impetus to the MDGs and to examine and devise strategies to address key emerging development issues on the continent in the coming years”

Whilst general discussion on the place of lifelong education for all in the agenda is fundamental, I believe, says Timothy, we also need to concern ourselves with practical issues related to strategy

For Cecilia from ASPBAE, the participation of civil society and youth in education governance is essential, and there should be clear goals towards monitoring governments. Clear indicators are needed on Transparency-Accountability, Participation - where all stakeholders including learners, parents, teachers and civil society organizations are strategically engaged in policy development, implementation and monitoring, and Justice, where those who were denied education be at the core of the agenda.

In this sense Graciela and Natalia refer to the concept of “Social Education Debt” which has been developed by researchers in recent years, which expresses the existence of groups of children, adolescents and adults with very low education levels or with low quality education; thus, the social education debt is a challenge for the expansion of school offers with a view to ensuring access for all excluded populations and their permanence in the system.

The notion asserted by the fact of taking care of the social education debt is a genuine instance and complementary to other policies aimed at social inclusion such as the promotion of employment and access to social services.

“The contradictions in the discourses”

We continue to believe that education is the key to solve the problems we face. In my opinion, says Sofia, this is a partial truth and our mistake has been to make it the whole truth. We continue to believe that education is the foundation to improve productivity and that productivity is the engine of progress.

There are still millions of people without access to literacy, millions of women who have no access to health care, millions of children who do not have the possibility to go to school. Eliminating this must remain one of our goals, must remain one of the headlights to illuminate our path. But currently in the countries of southern Europe, the expectation that more education means better quality of life has become false. The labor market tells the generation between 25 and 35 years

old, they are overqualified and offers them jobs with no expectations at all of building careers, apart from being poorly paid.

"What for" has been defined by others who are convinced that productivity and economic growth are the reasons for investing in education and training. I mean, continues Sofia, this "what for" is colonized by the discourse of growth and productivity as ideas, as forces that set out the path. We have spent years using the same words. We continue naming the world inflating the perspective of productivity and growth, International agencies continue to claim that more education means higher productivity and greater wealth. Our minds are colonized by this thought.

After months of discussions and preparation of documents in relation to the new framework agreements for the MDGs and EFA goals by various stakeholders, it is not yet possible to identify the real sense of the rhetoric of major international agencies" affirms Osorio, and while there is consensus regarding the evaluations of the results of both strategies, there is no consensus on the kind of diagnosis performed on the "development crisis" and on the context in which new goals should be defined.

It is not easy to define this framework as various actors perceive the state of the "global issue" from different perspectives and analytical tools, which is evident when comparing the statements of global citizen organizations to those of international agencies. However, Osorio adds, we also found that among the latter there are different approaches, internal debates and increasing pressure to adjust the proposals to the cycles of the global market and the contradictory dynamics of the finance global government. The results of the work done by the groups of experts convened by the Secretary General of the UN is an example of what we say.

"Voices Rising"

There are multiple languages and forms of expression, but paying attention to these signals requires unconventional mechanisms that seem not to have emerged yet ... Some talk, others listen, others actively express their discontent, and large blankets of silence live together in this attempt to achieve human rights and the right to education

The SDGs will only be achieved when people are empowered through education and lifelong learning, and are able to participate with dignity in the economic and social spheres of their family, work and community life, states Cecilia.

To what extent do discussions taking place in the extremely complex structure generated by the UN contemplate and express the interests and demands of the young and adult learner? Timothy asks himself.

In order to achieve the world we want by means of the education we want, there is no substitute for participation, he adds.

What do those who have been silenced excluded or made invisible say? Sofia asks herself. If we accept that there is not an only way of naming reality, not a single direction towards the future, then we should also accept that those who have the power to speak should shut up and listen.

The example of consultation Damien shares from Brazil is very interesting, as it shows that a total of 78 organizations, movements and networks participated in the process of consultation of the Brazilian civil society.

The question of universal education, he says, was obviously pointed out as essential: "The new strategic Objectives of development should ensure universal access to quality, secular and free education, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, immigration status, gender identity, sexual orientation, among others."

Education, participation, human diversity, culture, world of work, food, human rights, democracy ... All these issues are linked, are inseparable ... but current trends in the process of building the new development framework says Damien, the global civil society is challenged, more than ever, to increase their pressure on governments and international organizations.

Some challenges ahead

Timothy points that the Post-2015 Agenda debate suffers of the lack of resonance between international and national spheres, in strategic terms, advocacy efforts need to be invested in translating the global issues into national issues. Ministries of Education must be encouraged to engage in the debate and to 'internalize' it. And, as was previously said in the first part of the seminar, not only Ministries of Education should be involved if we really want to make a change.

If more specific strategies and mechanisms are not studied, says Carmen, we will continue repeating the situation assessment and major strategies to follow, but we will not succeed in making progress "from the smallest level", that is, from the "bottom-up" situations. We must also work on better indicators and benchmarks. Translating rhetoric to concrete goals and targets for lifelong learning is a key challenge

There is still a conception that education is an issue that only affects to young people, says Sebastian from Student's Federation of Chile. He believes that to break this order of things a dialogue between student's movements and adult learning advocates is needed. A key part of this reflection is to invite student's movements to leave behind the narrow

focus on students as young people in order to put the focus on an encompassing social movement for the right to education.

He proposes to make a dialogue between younger activist, and their organizational ways, and older NGO's. He strongly believes that each generation of activist can enrich each other, thus going beyond the 'generational divide' that comforts so many of the establishment that wants to keep the status quo.

He concludes that in order to think for a post-2015 agenda, we need to build bridges between student's movements and adult learning advocates in order to build majorities that puts a holistic paradigm of education on the public agenda. Otherwise, the student's movements will keep on fighting with a narrow worldview that excludes adult education issues and adult learning advocates will be isolated in their own world.

Towards a "Pedagogy of Hope"

Zahi affirms that dictators have marginalized to such an extent the impoverished and illiterate majority keeping them in an incredible state of underdevelopment, that access to power is rarely possible...and that Arab societies will need several years to mature and to constitute "civil societies", able to considerably participate in building and leading the "offer" in Education, Adult Education and Development.

He added that to dream about the post-2015 period is required, to liberate Development from the unique objective of the "global" or "national" market, and make larger room for Education and Adult Education.

The "Pedagogy of Hope" used by Paulo Freire can still be today, the subject of meditation and action in a politically, socially and economically exhausted Arab world...Could a "Pedagogy of Hope" still save the desperate? This is our commitment, the commitment of us all, to renew the Pedagogy in order to recover Hope.

It is not too late to act affirms Paul. It is not too late for local individual initiatives and international intervention, for reaching out other social movements and for making use of official and social media, for connecting with officials doing advocacy through evidence based policy recommendation.

Last but not least, we hope that this process of collective reflection and action will continue in the various forms we have to perform this, at national, regional and global levels.

It is everyone's task to build another world possible, with dignity, economic, social and environmental justice.

Gracias!!! Thank you!!!! Merci Beaucoup!!!

Cecilia Fernandez
ICAE Secretariat

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