



CONFITEA MID-TERM REVIEW MEETING (September 2003, Thailand)
to follow up the Recommendations made at the
Fifth International Conference on Adult Education CONFITEA V
(convened in Hamburg, Germany, in July 1997)

Almost 1500 participants came together in Hamburg in July 1997 to debate and advance an integrated and holistic vision of adult learning which cuts across all sectors and is based on partnerships of governmental and non-governmental actors and the private sector in the perspective of lifelong learning. While being a UNESCO inter-governmental meeting, the conference for the first time did not only allow for the participation of (national and international) civil society organizations in the official forum and working groups, but equally granted the representatives of Civil Society the right to speak side by side with the delegates of UNESCO's Member States and to contribute to the consensus-building process. Two documents were adopted at the closing session: the ***Hamburg Declaration*** and the ***Agenda for the Future***, detailing a set of recommendations in ten thematic areas.

Despite the enthusiasm and the wide-spread global recognition for the importance of ***adult learning*** and ***non-formal education*** as part of education for all created by CONFITEA V, recent prioritizing at international and national level tends to neglect the role of non-formal education and adult learning in educational planning.

The ongoing Mid-Term Review process is addressing this situation. Hence, the overall aim of the international **CONFITEA Mid-Term Review Meeting** in September is to ***create the momentum to bring adult learning back on the agenda*** of countries, of UNESCO and other international agencies. The meeting will review developments since 1997 and identify new trends and issues in **adult basic education, adult literacy and adult and lifelong learning** – at policy, programme and institutional level.

Concrete Objectives of the CONFITEA Mid-Term Review:

- To ensure the accountability of countries (governments, NGOs & social partners) and international agencies, and to check the developments in legislation & funding;
- To **review developments** since 1997, and to identify **new trends**, targets, challenges, innovative elements and future directions;
- To take stock of and re-energize existing and emerging **networks**, and to create synergies between them;
- To capture the **role of Civil Society** and the **interplay** between governments, civil society and international agencies (“shared responsibility” - “division of labor”);
- To contextualize lifelong learning within **democracy, critical citizenship & human rights** – sustainable development – quality education – networking & information dissemination;
- To **link the CONFITEA agenda with the EFA movement and the UN Literacy Decade**, particularly by including lifelong learning as an overarching framework;
- To prepare the **CONFITEA VI** national assessment & reporting mechanism by setting concrete future objectives **for 2009** by identifying benchmark indicators.

The objectives of youth and adult education, viewed as a lifelong process, are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities – in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society in order to face the challenges ahead.
CONFITEA Hamburg Declaration, 1997, § 5

We commit ourselves to:

Encouraging greater recognition, participation and accountability of non-governmental organizations and local community groups:

- (a) by recognizing the role non-governmental organizations play in awareness-raising and empowerment of people, which are of vital importance for democracy, peace and development;
- (b) by recognizing and appropriately funding the growing role of non-governmental organizations and local community groups in providing educational opportunities for adults in all sectors, in reaching the most needy and in contributing to an active civil society.

CONFITEA Agenda for the Future, 1997, § 14

The reviews will examine countries, regions and themes (following the ten CONFITEA themes) and the **perspective from and on Civil Society**.

Taking place at mid-term between the Fifth and the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (foreseen for 2009), the Mid-Term Review Meeting will **revitalize the CONFITEA follow-up process**, strengthen **regional and thematic networks**, and prepare the ground for a **thorough assessment of adult learning realities in 2009**.

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