

EDUCATION FOR ALL – LIFELONG LEARNING IN CENTRAL ASIA

Tashkent Regional Conference

Call to Action

4th - 5th June 2003

More than hundred and fifty delegates from Central Asia, Europe and Asia participated in a regional conference on *Education for All – Lifelong Learning in Central Asia* in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 4th - 5th June 2003. Participants consists of officials from ministries, members of Parliaments, representatives of non-governmental organizations, researchers and adult education practitioners. Ministry of Higher and Specified Secondary Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNESCO, the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation and the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ/DVV) supported the Conference.

The Conference fully supported the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA), the Hamburg Declaration and the Agenda for the Future of the CONFINTEA V (1997), recommendations of the World Conference on Higher Education (1998) and the actions of the Central Asian countries for implementation above mentioned recommendations.

A Call to Action

The "Tashkent Call to Action" is being adopted in order to express support for the work done to date on EFA in terms of developing strategies of proper Lifelong Learning Policies (LLL) in Central Asia. While expressing appreciation with efforts to reach the goals of EFA and LLL, participants highlighted the inadequate attention being given to non-formal education and the learning needs of adults in many countries. Participants believe that access to learning is a fundamental human right that must be extended to all, regardless of age or social status. However, there is a tendency that the realization of EFA and LLL goals leads to less attention for the adult population, which may result in a limited understanding of LLL. This is not acceptable for the Central Asia region in a period of transition, where there is higher educational needs of all groups of the population.

The participants of the Conference,

Recognizing that LLL and Adult Education (AE) are key issues for Central Asian countries in the period of transition, including formal as well as non-formal education, which are supporting adults in searching new directions of their professional activities and personal life,

Understanding that LLL should include vocational education and training as well as civic education focused on democratization of society and development of the personality,

Expressing concerns that all so EFA stresses the importance of AE, countries of the region give no sufficient attention to this issue,

Noting that there is no AE mechanism in Central Asian countries, which includes legal aspects, adequate financial support, appropriate institutional structures, effective management systems, quality assessment and the conditions required to support the EFA ideas. Additionally, some positive experiences in the concrete work were notified,

Stressing that in the theory and practice of AE learner-centered approaches and active participation in the learning process are not always present,

Emphasizing the deficits in recognition and accreditation of non-formal education,

All interested stakeholders are called upon:

1. To put high priority to the efforts being undertaken by UNESCO and National Governments to achieve EFA and LLL goals.
2. To give equal emphasis on the delivery of learning opportunities through formal and non-formal education. Partnerships between governmental, international and non-governmental organizations must be fostered.
3. To promote EFA as explicit and integrated element in LLL policies and practices. Governmental institutions, responsible for education, should give higher priority to the creation of the local, regional and national networks and structures that are required for the development, co-ordination, funding, quality management and evaluation of AE needs.
4. To include into the system of basic education the skills development programs, which are necessary to advance each person's ability to participate fully in the social, cultural, political and economic life of their communities.
5. To allocate additional resources to support adult learning programs for active citizenship and self-fulfillment.
6. To give priority to the elaboration of educational programs based on needs and interest of learners, and to encourage the active participation of learners in the learning process from planning to evaluation of education quality.
7. To setup comprehensive local, regional and national statistical data collection systems for the purpose of needs analyses, planning, monitoring, reporting and assessment of performances, as well as for international comparative studies.
8. To develop quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the application of gender sensitive policies in the provision of LLL.
9. To elaborate comprehensive system for the certification and recognition of formal and non-formal AE programs. Procedure for accrediting prior learning should be considered as basis for new system.

10. To extend international co-operation and exchange in the field of values education for the development of tolerance and cultural of peace as well as multilingual learning programs.
11. To use more intensively AE and LLL in order to overcome existing social problems, especially such as unemployment and poverty.
12. To use more effectively the potentials of higher education and science in the region for support LLL policy and practice.
13. To invite donor's organization to give higher priority to the needs of LLL process.

The Call to Action was adopted in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) on 5th June 2003 in Russian language at the First Regional Conference on «Education for All – Lifelong Learning in Central Asia». Participants from the following countries attended the Conference: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.