



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



6th International Conference on Adult Education Asia and the Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference

Building Equitable and Sustainable Societies in Asia and the Pacific :
The Challenge to Adult Learning

Seoul, Republic of Korea, 6-8 October 2008



- Total 128 participants including:
- Ministers of education and other representatives of governments from 28 Member States.
- Representative of eight multilateral agencies and international NGOs.
- Experts and stakeholders from the private sector, universities and the media.

General Context

- The region has witnessed the rapid pace of change and the rise of knowledge economies.
- The region is home to 60 per cent of the world's population and has the largest concentration of people in extreme poverty, and the majority of the world's two billion people who live on US\$2 or less daily.
- Increasing migration and structural shifts in the economy.
- Many countries are affected by political instability, conflict and violence.
- Environmental degradation, in the form of rising sea levels and climatic change, has a serious effect on the lives of vast numbers of people.
- There is an increasing proportion of older, retired or semi-retired people.



Adult Education Context

- Many countries are facing the challenge of high population growth, large numbers of non-enrolled children and early primary school-leavers.
- A special concern is to take into account the diversity of cultures, languages and economic development, and the geographical dispersal of island states.
- Overall progress in adult education has been constrained by the lack of specific policies and strategic implementation plans.
- Access to high-quality literacy and adult learning – especially for women – is still a major challenge.
- Lifelong learning for the older age-group is assuming new significance.
- In some countries, less than one per cent of the education budget is allocated to adult learning and education, including literacy programmes.

Key recommendations (1)

– On inclusion and participation

- **To build learning communities and societies to provide high-quality learning opportunities for all throughout life.**
- **To establish multi-pronged affirmative action strategies to address inequality issues such as gender, poverty, age, disability, ethnicity, displacement through conflict and migration.**
- **Accessible adult learning and education programmes should be created that are free or subsidised by government, with incentives for learning, including paid study leave.**
- **Networks of multi-purpose community-based learning centres should be established to form a base for offering adult education.**

Key recommendations (2)

- On policy and governance

- To confirm the primary responsibility of governments to enact and strengthen appropriate legislative frameworks.
- To ensure that adult education policies are designed with sector-wide approaches and integrated with EFA, MDGs, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and national development plans.
- To establish a national high-level oversight body to mobilise and coordinate the efforts of all ALE stakeholders.
- Strong partnerships should be built between government and NGOs, CSOs, as well as ALE providers.

Key recommendations (3)

- On financing

- Governments should allocate 6 per cent of GNP to education. Allocations to adult education, at least 6 per cent of the education budget, should be further increased.
- Development partners should increase and prioritise aid to adult literacy and life skills for youth and adults.
- Development partners should fulfil their commitment to filling the financing gaps in EFA by contributing at least US \$2.5 billion to ensure the achievement of the EFA goal of improving adult literacy levels by 50 per cent by 2015.
- The EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) should include adult education, non-formal and literacy component, and ensure efficient and prompt delivery of financing support.

Key recommendations (4)

- On literacy and other competences

- Literacy and adult education programmes should be integrated with income generation activities and innovative community development projects.
- Free assessment services should be provided and labour market information disseminated to motivate potential learners.
- Local wisdom, knowledge, methodologies as well as mother-tongues should be valued and applied in ALE programmes.

Key recommendations (5)

- On quality

- To ensure the relevance of curriculum, materials and pedagogy to meet social and individual needs.
- To build the knowledge base on adult education through systematic research for innovation, replication and mainstreaming.
- To assess and develop human resource capacity for professionals in adult education in partnership with research and higher education institutions.
- To establish and strengthen equivalency frameworks through national quality accreditation and quality standard-setting.

Key recommendations (6)

- On the way forward

- To encourage Member States to establish and strengthen data collection and information management systems at local and national levels.
- A regional/global monitoring mechanism should be developed by UNESCO and implemented to check progress in meeting CONFINTEA VI targets.
- A *Global Report on Adult Education* should be produced frequently, and should include regular national reporting and assessment.
- A Mid-Term Review should be conducted in 2015 (coinciding with the EFA and MDG timelines) to report on national implementations of CONFINTEA VI initiatives.



Many
Thanks