Review of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

Draft Report
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Executive Summary

The present review aims to assess specific key aspects of UIL’s performance and achievements within the context of the implementation of the overall strategy for Category I Institutes and Centres. More specifically, the review covers: UIL’s mandate and relevance, the results achieved, collaboration and interaction with partners within the UNESCO system and beyond, management and governance mechanisms, and sustainability (including budgetary and staffing issues). It will feed into a summary report on all ED Category I Institutes, intended to inform the Education Sector’s decision-making process to strengthen the overall framework for cooperation with (and among) the Institutes as well as the strategic allocation of resources and capacities. Given the limited scope and resources the review is based on a relatively light data collection approach compared to the previous evaluation in 2005/2006. Findings are based on triangulation between observation, interview data and documentary evidence. The executive summary presents the main findings and recommendations. Additional findings and recommendations as well as the underlying argumentation can be found in the main body of the report.

UIL, UNESCO’s Institute for Lifelong Learning is the second in size among the three global Education sector Institute, and is situated in Germany, Hamburg. In 2012 UIL had an annual budget of approximately USD 5.7 Million and employed over 30 staff members. Since its full integration into UNESCO as a Category I Institute in 2006, UIL had to face a challenging financial situation and was concentrating on raising extrabudgetary funding and on implementing internal reforms in becoming one of UNESCO’s specialized Education Sector Category I Institutes. More recently UIL has been undergoing a more dynamic reform process with the aim of focusing better on its strengths and on re-concentrating on the substantial and subject matters. With the recently developed strategy for repositioning UIL, the Institute is continuing its positive evolution in terms of strengthening its capacities and increasing the focus, outreach and effectiveness of its activities. Moreover, UIL has been successful in securing a sustainable funding base. Nevertheless, a number of challenges remain on the path towards becoming a center of excellence in lifelong learning. A major challenge for the Institute is going to scale and making a tangible impact in the few priority areas that have been defined in its new strategy.

Under the umbrella of lifelong learning policy and practice, and with a focus on literacy, adult and continuing education UIL’s mandate will remain at the core of the Education sector strategy and a key component on the global post 2015 education agenda. UIL is recognized as the only global Institute bringing a comparative perspective in the specialized areas of its mandate and for raising the profile of adult education on national education agendas. Despite a number of remarkable achievements, overall the work of UIL has not been sufficiently recognized within UNESCO and appears underutilized by the UNESCO education sector as its work is currently not clearly positioned within the ED sector’s strategy. Furthermore, UIL’s visibility within the wider education community and beyond has so far been relatively limited. A better clarification and improved communication of UIL’s specific mandate within the umbrella of LLL would help to raise its profile.

Recommendation: In the changing educational landscape and in light of UIL’s limited capacities and resources, the new ED Sector 2020 strategy should clearly refer to the role and positioning of the Institute within the upcoming C/4 and C/5. In addition, the strategy should outline the distribution of responsibilities and expectations of UIL’s contribution to the objectives for UNESCO’s work in Education in the post-MDG context.

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1 33 C/19 and 171 EX/18.
2 The data and figures in the report are based on the status by the time of the assessment of UIL in May 2012. However changes resulting from recent developments in UIL or from its efforts of repositioning UIL and strengthening its strategic focus over the year 2012 have been acknowledged as adequate in the respective footnotes.
3 These are Lifelong learning policies and strategies, Adult Learning and Education, and Literacy and Basic Skills.
Despite UIL’s concentration on literacy, adult and non-formal education, the areas where its expertise lies, the options of intervention within the overall lifelong learning perspective remain rather broad and the strategic focus of UIL has often not been clear for external stakeholders. Given UIL’s increasing dependency of extra budgetary resources, donor driven priority frameworks may bring the risk of diminishing its strategic focus. UIL is currently seeking to define its strategic focus by concentrating on fewer but bigger flagship interventions and is facing the challenge of finding the right balance between the new areas of focus, existing expertise and funding opportunities.

**Recommendation:** Fundamental choices on an improved thematic focus in research, capacity building and policy advisory work should be grounded in a thorough reflection on comparative advantages (i.e. available expertise, UIL’s reputation and recognition among stakeholders, and stakeholder needs). In consultation with its governing body, UIL should clearly identify a limited number of strategic focus areas for the next Medium Term Plan while ensuring close alignment with the Education Sector’s 2020 strategy.

The next section will underline some of UIL’s achievements. The previous evaluation in 2005/2006 highlighted UIL’s strong track record in networking, in capacity building and training activities, as well as as a catalyst for international cooperation⁴, while it suggested strengthening UIL’s research capacities and better exercising its analytical and policy advisory role through a more empirically based and tailored knowledge management approach. UIL has since made a number of efforts to strengthen its research base and has developed innovative knowledge products such as the specialized database on ‘Effective Literacy Practice, or through the effective coordination of ALADIN the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network. Yet the Institute needs to improve in conveying the richness of the available information and knowledge in more analytical and digestible formats, such as via synthetic reviews and analytical products that are tailored to different audiences. The International Review of Exudation, among the oldest and most renowned international journals of comparative education, is among the most important knowledge products of UIL. However, still little is known about the use and effects of UIL’s publications and knowledge products and UIL has not yet utilized their full potential as instruments for leading the discourse in the areas of its mandate.

**Recommendations:** UIL should further develop mechanisms to measure and analyse the qualitative outcomes of its advocacy efforts e.g. via the International Review of Education such as through regular reader surveys and bibliometric assessments, in order to better measure and demonstrate the use of its knowledge products and the extent to which these are influencing policies and research agendas

UIL should strive to produce and disseminate a range of different information and knowledge management products that are better tailored to different customer needs. For this purpose it should carry out an in-depth analysis of clients’ potential needs, habits and preferences.

Although capacity building is at the core of UIL’s mandate, until recently it has not been based on a focused capacity building strategy but was rather an integral element within all its programmes and initiatives, in particular through technical assistance provided within the framework of the CapEFA, or LIFE programmes or via the CONFINTREA follow up process. Already the previous evaluation found that overall it was difficult to recognize a strategic pattern within UIL’s capacity building activities with training activities rather disconnected from each other. It recommended UIL to disengage from the more ad-hoc organized workshop and events culture and shift to a more strategic and research oriented capacity building approach. Despite the recent efforts of developing a strategy for UIL’s capacity building activities for EFA this still holds true and in view of the currently limited senior expertise available at UIL some constraints for UIL’s capacity building function remain. So far still little is known about the outcomes as tol the longer term impact on national capacities and the effect on national policies, as these are not

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⁴ In particular through the CONFINTREA conference and follow up process
systematically measured. The review found that a move to strengthening institutional capacities at national level and providing support in implementing adult education and lifelong learning policies will be crucial, given that adult education and lifelong learning policies, even if agreed upon, are rarely sufficiently backed up by political will and adequate allocation of resources at the national level. Furthermore there is an underutilized opportunity space for closer cooperation with other Institutes such as IIEP, for example by integrating adult education and lifelong learning modules in IIEP’s already well-established capacity building programme or with IICBA, by ensuring a LLL perspective in teacher policies. The review also suggests that current considerations of cost effective delivery of training and the possibility of certification at Master level still require a more careful reflection, for example as to the value of such certification against the constraints of an academic approach versus the current practical and professional approach that can be tailored to the actual needs.

Recommendations: UIL should consider concentrating better on capacity building at the upstream level by strengthening capacities, providing guidance and support for developing and implementing LLL policies at national level. Such initiatives could be considered, for example in cooperation with IIEP training on educational planning and management or with IICBA on ensuring LLL perspectives in teacher policies.

Before engaging in the development of longer term training programmes, and seeking academic certification of its training modules UIL should consider the outcomes from the cost effectiveness study of IIEPs training programmes and lessons learned from other Institutes for ensuring a strategic and feasible new approach.

UIL should find ways of scaling up with limited resources by concentrating on the strengthening of national institutional capacities and working with /through multipliers.

The catalyst for cooperation function has traditionally been among UIL’s strengths and UIL has demonstrated and maintained its strong networking capacities over the years. The networking opportunities provided by UIL are widely considered as essential for Adult Education in all its dimensions, with the comparative advantage of linking the stakeholders at the national levels while providing a global perspective. For example the CONFINTEA conferences and the respective follow up processes have been instrumental for enhancing the political focus on Adult Education and to bring Adult Education on the political agendas, and ALADIN, the specialized library network today closely connects 100 specialized libraries and documentation centers in 51 countries. Nonetheless, stakeholders found that UIL needs to make continuous efforts to exercise its authority in monitoring the results of countries’ advancements in the implementation of the Belem framework for action, as well as to better harness the potential of its networks to exchange experiences and good practice, for example through the establishment of a Community of Practice facilitated by UIL.

Recommendation: UIL should better connect government departments, Institutes and agencies responsible for LLL policies at the national level through the establishment of a Community of Practice in LLL issues that can further facilitate the North-South-South exchange of experiences and good practice.

Recognised as the global research Institute for literacy and adult education, in particular UIL’s literacy research is highly valued by stakeholders. However, in recent years UIL’s research function has been among its weakest areas, and the Institute has not yet harnessed the potential of its rich knowledge

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5 CONFINTEA, the International Conference on Adult Education that is organized very 12 years as a platform for policy dialogue and advocacy on adult learning and non-formal education at global level, it involves UNESCO Member States, United Nations agencies, multi- and bi-lateral cooperation agencies, organizations from civil society, the private sector and learners from all world regions.

6 This includes the CONFINTEA Portal, three annual CONFINTEA Bulletins, regional follow-up meetings, NEWS on UIL website, the draftig of the GRALE, information letters to all National Commissions and Permanent Delegation, CONFINTEA Fellowships, CONFINTEA Scholarships at UIL.
depository to develop a strategic portfolio of policy relevant research and analytical products. The Institute has been drafting the 2nd edition of the GRALE (Global Report on Adult Learning and Education) with the aim of creating links between Adult Learning and Education policies as part of the lifelong learning context; however it faces a challenge in achieving increased visibility beyond specialised circles. The key question for UIL’s research function is how to ensure that research feeds into policy, and how to influence legislation, financing and the legal policy background. Although UIL has exercised some strong influence for example in putting Adult Education on the policy agendas, the previous evaluation already highlighted that UIL’s services could be even more useful and influential if based on a stronger foundation of empirical knowledge and analyses. UIL has been seeking innovative initiatives to strengthen the internal research function and to engage in partnerships for research purposes. In order to influence and eventually lead the policy discourse it will crucial for UIL to both successfully build up a sound (in-house) research capacity to back up its capacity building and knowledge management activities with stronger empirical foundations, as well to engage in strategic research partnerships with influential partners.

Recommendations: As a way of leveraging its scarce research resources UIL should increasingly seek carrying out research through partnerships such as with universities and think tasks. As well as undertaking research itself, UIL should see its role also as influencing the research agendas of donors, academic institutions and individual researchers. It should for example seek closer collaboration with influential partners such as the OECD and the World Bank.

In order to making its research better known UIL should strengthen its communications tools and mechanisms. For example the launch of the GRALE could be organized via highly visible regional and global events that attract media attention with the aim of raising the profile and visibility of the report. Furthermore the visibility of the report should be strengthened through a more effective presentation via the UNESCO website.

More recently the standard setting function has become more of a priority area for UIL compared to most other Institutes, and there is a high potential for gaining high visibility and recognition for UIL in particular through the adoption and implementation by Member States of the recently developed ‘UNESCO draft guidelines on the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning (RVA guidelines)’. The envisaged initiative of creating the Global Learning Cities network demonstrates high ambitions, but with a view to UILLS restricted resources particular attention is required to involving the right audiences and findings ways of delegating the implementation to respective key players.

Recommendation: UIL should develop and make available a collection of best practices of the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning.

Given the limited amount of core resources coming from UNESCO, traditionally UIL has been working in a rather independent manner, fully embracing the concept of functional autonomy to its advantage. Over the last years the relationship between UIL and HQ has been improving and is demonstrated by more regular communication and improved cooperation modalities. Traditionally there has been little overlap between HQ and UIL’s mandate in the areas of Lifelong learning and Adult Education. However there is still potential overlap and competition in particular regarding the coordination and implementation of LIFE, UNESCO’s Literacy initiative. Despite a mutual agreement between UIL and HQ to repatriate the coordination of the Initiative back to HQ, while the research and capacity building functions should be maintained at UIL, the actual division of work continues to be contentious and requires better clarification, in particular as the often changing responsibility and ownership are confusing for outside stakeholders and have proven harmful to the continuity of the initiative. Despite HQ’s appreciation of UIL’s work, the visibility and use of UIL’s capacities by HQ continues to be limited. In a number of areas, most notably fundraising, competition rather than collaboration appear to be the practice, and relations at operational and administrative level have so far been of an individual rather than institutionalized nature. Collaboration of UIL with field offices as well as other Category I Institutes is an important ingredient for realizing UIL’s ambitions to scale up its activities and outreach on the way towards
becoming a center of Excellence. Such collaboration does not only allow for economies of scale in programme delivery but also for providing response to a more demand driven and tailored approach to national and regional needs.

Recommendations: There is a need for a more transparent communication and collaboration in fundraising activities, which among other things would include a clearer positioning of UNESCO towards potential donors and the elimination of harmful competition. The Education Sector should involve UIL in all fundraising activities that relate to UIL’s core mandate. UIL in turn should share and communicate its recently developed fundraising strategy with BSP/CFS and the Education sector.

HQ together with UIL shall better clarify what is the optimal and desired division of roles and tasks in regard to the LIFE initiative and communicate the new work division clearly to outside stakeholders. Furthermore the recommendations stemming from the recent Midterm evaluation shall be implemented in close consultation with UIL in order to build on its recent experience in the LIFE coordination.

There is a need to rethink the role of the Institute within the overall UNESCO network and decentralization structure. UIL together with UNESCO HQ, the field network and other Category I Institutes should identify to what extent there are potential overlaps, incidences of competition or missed opportunities for complementarity and collaboration in the implementation of UNESCO’ mandate.

The financial situation of the Institute shows that despite critical budgetary constraints the financial sustainability of the Institute is relatively stable. Considering that UIL’s budget has consisted already for a long time of approximately 75-80% external resources, the recent budgetary cuts of the UNESCO contribution has had only a minor impact on the budgetary sustainability of the Institute and could mostly be compensated by increasing donor support. Nevertheless within the current restricted funding framework the UNESCO contribution no longer covers the payroll of UNESCO staff and other statutory costs (such as Governing Board meetings) while it would be difficult to justify funding these from donor contributions. This situation may create liabilities for the Institute that can no longer be maintained and alternative staffing arrangements will need to be explored.

Recommendations: With the exception of few core posts UIL should be gradually moving to more flexible staffing arrangements such as ‘project appointments’ that are better aligned with the funding sources of Category I Institutes and allow for greater flexibility in the management of staff, while offering attractive conditions.

There should be reflections by the ED Sector on how to best invest the overall budgetary envelope among Institutes, suitable criteria for allocation of funds should among other be performance based, to reward success and to foster striving for excellence.

Given UIL’s size compared to its global mandate, working with and through partners is crucial. Being confronted with difficulties in the funding environment between 2000 and 2006 UIL has traditionally been very active in reaching out to the donor community, in particular the host country, UN and other implementing partners, and has historically established strong networks with the Civil Society. UIL is very active and takes various initiatives for fundraising for example through organizing a yearly partners day and by honoring relations and holding discussions with donors and potential new donors, and by approaching governments, private organizations and foundations. A major part of UIL’s budgets constitutes (both core and earmarked) extra budgetary funding; however increased dependency on extrabudgetary resources carries the risk of fragmentation of UIL’s portfolio. An evolving educational landscape and future challenges in the funding environment will affect partnership processes and UIL has to continue its efforts to develop a more strategic approach for engaging and working with partners. The host government currently supports the Institute with both institutional and project support and there are promising developments towards potentially increasing funding commitments.
Recommendations: The review acknowledges that UIL has already developed a fundraising strategy which focuses on increasingly obtaining un-earmarked core funding as well as on increasing programme support in a few strategic areas of UIL’s work. The strategy should furthermore define what to achieve via the different types of partnerships, including financial support, collaboration in research, and so on. The partnership strategy should encompass current fundraising initiatives; proposals for new ones and be linked to UIL’s (improved) communication strategy.

UIL should continue its efforts to finding the most appropriate entry points at National authorities; with education matters becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, and structural changes possibly happening at ministerial level, respective line ministries, as well as research, development and labor ministries may have a stake especially in LLL.

Besides the issues summarized above the report also represents a number of findings with corresponding recommendations relating to aspects of a more operational nature such as the Institute’s management and government framework, staffing matters and the level of functional autonomy of UIL.

UIL’s planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation culture has to further mature. While UIL has already made efforts to improve its planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms there still needs to be more attention to the establishment of a results framework (theory of change) that depicts the Institute’s logic of intervention as well as to organizing its activity and decision making processes in the spirit of a results based management. The ongoing efforts towards a more results based monitoring and reporting and the critical in-depth reflection processes on how to best achieve on its mandate show that UIL is on the way of becoming a learning organization that is aiming at a critical scale of resources and capacities and at striving for excellence. For this purpose UIL needs to fully utilize the potential of its comparative advantages and avoid overlap with other UNESCO entities. Despite these positive developments, a number of challenges remain on the path towards becoming a center of excellence in lifelong learning and continued UNESCO support and strategic investment are essential for both sustaining the current reform processes and for helping the Institute to reach the most suitable operating scale that is needed to make a difference at a global level, while ensuring high quality services and adequate funding for its operations.

The review commends that the current process of repositioning UIL and the underlying strategies developed in areas such as communication, staffing and fundraising are closely in line with the recommendations in this review. However it will be crucial that these strategies are effectively and consistently implemented, and in alignment with the reform process going on at UNESCO HQ.

UNESCO is currently in the process of developing its new C4 (medium-term strategy). Moreover, a number of structural reform processes instigated by recent events such as the Independent External Evaluation and the reduction in RP Budget, are currently under implementation. There is a clear opportunity space, a momentum for UIL, in consultation with Education Sector, to take steps to ensure that UIL’s place and role is adequately integrated in the reform process of the Organization. UIL has the potential of taking an important role in UNESCO’s education sector, and will need all the support of the sector and Member States, and the host country to fully benefit from such improved integration and cooperation.
Introduction

UIL, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning was founded in 1952 as a German Foundation (initially as UIE, the UNESCO Institute for Education) covering a wide range of topics from pre-school to adult education. Its mandate evolved over time, geographically, thematically and operationally. Since the 1970s the Institute has directed its focus on literacy, adult and lifelong learning and in the 1980s expanded its geographic scope to all regions. Since then it has established networks of experts and institutions, and increasingly added a wider perspective to adult education, enriching it with aspects of democracy, environmental protection and women’s rights. With the phasing out of the German core funding by 2006, the Institute has been increasingly reaching out to other Member states and donors to compensate for the loss of core funds. Since 2006, UIL has become a fully-fledged UNESCO Category I Institute based on a host country agreement with Germany and has experienced substantial and challenging reform processes.

UIL is now one of UNESCO’s seven specialized Education Sector Category I Institutes, aiming at promoting lifelong learning policy and practice with a focus on adult and continuing education, especially literacy, non-formal basic education and alternative learning opportunities. As such, UIL is an integral part of UNESCO, yet enjoys a high degree of autonomy.

UIL is based in Hamburg (Germany). Its budget is approved on an annual basis by the UIL Governing Board. With a decrease from an overall of 6.1 Million (initially approved for 2012)\(^7\) by the beginning of 2012, the projected annual budget was approximately \$5.7 Million (of which 2.5 Million core budget\(^8\) and 3.2 Million extra budgetary resources). By May 2012 the Institute employed 32 staff\(^9\), of which seven (incl. the Director) have an in-depth senior professional and technical background in literacy, adult and lifelong learning.

An external evaluation of the Institute carried out in 2005/06 found that the overall mission of UIL (to promote literacy, adult and lifelong learning policy and practice) was well-aligned with and an important contribution to the achievement of UNESCO’s strategic objectives, the MDGs, and the EFA goals. It confirmed that overall, UIL has performed well on its mandate. The Institute was also highly appreciated by stakeholders, in particular for its networking, capacity building and training activities, and for linking educational research, policy and practice in the areas of its mandate. Within specialized networks, the Institute was well known and particularly appreciated for the regular organization and follow up process of CONFINTEA, the International Conference for Adult Education, which has helped to raise the profile of adult education on political agendas.

The key recommendations for UIL and UNESCO pointed to:

\(\checkmark\) The need for improved clarification and communication of UIL’s role and responsibilities within the UNESCO network, and a clearer definition and expression of the expectations from HQ.

\(\checkmark\) The strong need to strengthen UIL’s research capacities and to concentrate on its analytical role in regard to policy effects and learning strategies by empirically backing up its knowledge base and operational activities. Given its limited resources, the evaluation suggested downgrading the networking activities, organization of workshops and events in favor of an increased research focus.

\(\checkmark\) Improving internal management structures and strengthening senior management by recruiting a Deputy Director with strong leadership, management and organizational skills.

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\(^7\) the 31% reduction in RP contribution from UNESCO, has greatly been compensated by increased core funding eg from the Swiss authorities

\(^8\) UIL's core budget consists of the UNESCO RP budget contribution and un-earmarked voluntary contributions from Member States

\(^9\) By end 2012 the Institute employed 35 staff (i.e. 27 full- and 8 part-time) of which seven have a senior professional profile
The need for a more focused and tailored approach to promoting UIL’s publications in order to raise awareness among various audiences (i.e. literacy, adult, non-formal and lifelong learning) of the scope of UIL’s areas of research/work, and also to enhance the quality control of its knowledge products.

Methodology:

The present review aims to assess specific key aspects of UIL’s performance, results achieved, management and governance mechanisms within the context of the implementation of the overall strategy for Category I Institutes and Centers. Taking into account progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the previous evaluation, the review aims to identify major achievements, current challenges and recommendations for the future. It will feed into a summary report on all ED Category I Institutes, intended to inform the Education Sector’s decision-making process to strengthen the overall framework for cooperation with (and among) the Institutes, as well as strategic allocation of its resources and capacities.

Given its limited scope and resources, the review is based on a relatively light data collection approach, compared to the previous evaluation in 2005/2006. Findings are based on triangulation between observation, interview data and documentary evidence i.e. a combination of previous evaluation findings, in-depth document review, self-assessment, a field visit to UIL and interviews with UIL management, staff and governing bodies, as well as UNESCO ED senior managers, Field Offices representatives, other ED Institutes and a limited number of external stakeholders, including from the host country.

1. Relevance

This section addresses the relevance and alignment of UIL’s activities, the Institute’s comparative advantage, its visibility and recognition by stakeholders.

1.1 Alignment with UNESCO’s mandate

With UIL’s mandate in the field of lifelong learning, with a focus on literacy, adult and continuing education, its interventions are at the core of UNESCO’s mandate. They are also well aligned with the Institute’s priorities and the broader internationally agreed MDGs and EFA goals. The importance of its mandate is highly regarded within specialized circles. Lifelong learning policies are likely to become a core area of the ED Sector’s strategy and the post-MDG agenda.

UIL’s mandate on lifelong learning policy and practice with a focus on adult and continuing education demonstrates high relevance within the context of UNESCO’s education agenda. It also falls within the global development agenda, i.e. the Education for All goals and the MDGs. Although literacy, adult and continuing education have traditionally been neglected areas on Member States’ education agendas, promoting these areas in the framework of lifelong learning policies will be increasingly crucial for education systems, and will apply within different circumstances to developed and developing countries. UIL’s mandate is expected to remain at the core of the post-MDG debate, particularly in light of increasing demographic challenges and recent trends towards creating inclusive education systems, with a greater focus on ‘quality’, ‘life skills’ and ‘learning outcomes’. Demonstrating the increasing interest in developing national strategies for lifelong learning, “Lifelong learning for all” may become the leitmotiv for UNESCO’s post MDG work.

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10 33 C/19 and 171 EX/18
11 Both linked to increasing Youth unemployment and Ageing populations
12 Considering that the European Commission’s strategy 2020 is focusing on mobility of young people (e.g. in the field of higher Education - Erasmus for all) and the World Bank ED 2020 strategy is highlighting ‘Learning for All’ raising the issue of access and the profile of
UNESCO’s strategic planning documents (36 C/4 and 36 C/5) clearly reflect UIL’s mandate, although the expectations of the Institute are not well specified. One of UNESCO’s strategic programme objectives in the UNESCO 2008-2013 Medium Term Strategy for Education points to ‘developing policies, capacities and tools for quality education for all and lifelong education, as well as promoting education for sustainable development’. With ‘literacy’ among the four major ED priority themes in the previous 35 C/5 and current 36 C/5, UIL’s mandate clearly corresponds to the key priorities of the ED sector. Its mandate is reflected among the Expected Results in the 35 C/5 and 36 C/5 where references are made, such as in 35 C/5 MLA 3 to ‘National capacities strengthened to plan, implement and manage quality literacy programmes, particularly through LIFE, building on enhanced international coordination role of UNESCO for the UNLD’ and in ‘36 C/5 MLA 1(ER2): ‘National capacities strengthened to plan, manage and scale up gender-sensitive, quality literacy and non-formal education policies and programmes.’ UNESCO’s Global Priority Africa is reflected transversally within all UIL’s programmes and while there have been increasing efforts to mainstream UNESCO priority Gender Equality it could be more explicitly addressed through gender specific activities within UIL’s work programme.

However, exactly what the Institute is expected to contribute to the ED sector’s overall objectives remains more vague. For the ED Sector’s new 2020 strategy, which, among others, is expected to highlight ‘fostering lifelong learning opportunities for all’, it is therefore of utmost importance to strategically position the Institute and to clearly define mutual expectations in a complementary manner.

The recent repatriation of the coordination of LIFE (Literacy Initiative 2005-2015) back to HQ reaffirms the interest and importance that the ED Sector places on literacy. There are however differing views to what extent priority areas should be managed by HQ, or regarding the optimal work division in this priority area between HQ and the Institute if based on a distinction between the political and operational aspects. (See also the considerations in respect to the LIFE coordination in Chapter 3 of this report: Quality of interaction and coordination).

On the other hand, consultations on the upcoming UNESCO C/4 and C/5 strategic planning documents did not explicitly provide options for Member States to choose literacy or lifelong learning among the future priority areas in education, which led to disappointment by UIL’s governing board members and was viewed as a sign of inconsistency in the current thinking on the future priorities of the ED Sector. At the same time, the phasing out of the UNLD (UN Literacy Decade) in 2013, and the so far absence of new initiatives might lead to slightly less visibility being given to literacy in the next Medium Term Strategy.

**Recommendation:**
In the changing educational landscape and in light of UIL’s limited capacities and resources, the new ED Sector strategy should clearly refer to the role and positioning of the Institute in the upcoming C/4 and C/5. In addition, the strategy should outline the distribution of responsibilities and expectations of UIL’s contribution to the objectives for UNESCO’s work in Education in the post-MDG context.

In addition to the efforts for mainstreaming gender UNESCO’s global priority on gender equality could take a more prominent role in UIL’s programme. It could be addressed more explicitly through targeted or gender specific initiatives within UIL’s new Medium Term Strategy, while taking into account that an enhanced focus on gender equality could potentially attract funds to UIL.

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13 these are TVET, literacy, teachers and sector wide planning
1.2 Comparative advantage of UIL in lifelong learning adult education and literacy

UIL is considered unique for bringing a global perspective to its specialized mandate and it has achieved significant results in some areas. However, its current scale and limited capacity compared to the diversity of activities restrains the Institute from responding to a global demand in a credible manner. The Institute faces major challenges to scale up and to make a tangible impact at a global level in the few priority areas that have been defined in its new strategy.

There are many definitions provided in literature on the concept of comparative advantage. Within this review, comparative advantage refers essentially to an Institute fulfilling a unique need (or set of needs/priorities) backed up by positive and meaningful results and the necessary capacities and scale on particular areas of expertise to make a difference.

Within specialized circles of adult and continuous education, UIL is highly recognized as the only Institute with a global specialized mandate on lifelong learning with a focus on literacy, adult and continuing education. The global perspective of its mandate offers the opportunity to share experiences and good practice by establishing a South-North-South dialogue. UIL has thus a clear comparative advantage compared to national or regional adult and continuing education agencies or other important players in the fields of literacy and adult education. In this regard, it is appreciated for its ability to raise the profile of Adult Education on national education agendas. However, within the recent efforts in repositioning the Institute and to strengthen UIL’s focus the diversity of its activities in combination with the relatively small size of the Institute are limiting UIL in developing a clearly defined and distinct role in the area of Lifelong learning, a relatively new field of expertise. Its current efforts aim to reposition the Institute as a reference for lifelong learning (LLL) within the global education arena.

In terms of achievements UIL has produced a significant amount of meaningful results, discussed in the separate results chapter below. In line with the findings of the 2005/2006 evaluation, UIL continues to show that it can make a difference through advocating for the global recognition and commitment of adult learning and non-formal education.

Within its reform efforts, the Institute continues to strive for excellence and aims to be recognized as a center of excellence in LLL but the current scale and capacities of the Institute would not (yet) suggest such an attribution. A major challenge this Institute is currently facing is going to scale and making a tangible impact in the three priority areas that have been defined in its new strategy.

In this context there are some issues that need to be taken into consideration:

- The overall shortage of human and financial resources compared to UIL’s global mandate
- The so far still thinly spread senior expertise, in particular on lifelong learning policies
- Despite some flagship initiatives such as the CONFINTSEA process, several other activities have been at a rather small scale. The recent efforts to strengthen focus and defining areas of strategic priorities are aiming to ensure that all of UIL’s activities are clearly contributing to its strategic priorities.
- There remains a challenge for UIL management in providing guidance as to where and on what level of intervention to concentrate on to make a real difference, how to articulate what it wants to achieve and how and at what level to measure and demonstrate its successes.

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14 Such as Commonwealth, DFID, Worldbank, SIDA
15 UIL took lifelong learning as a programme approach from 2001, and it became its main mandarin from 2006.
16 These are Lifelong learning policies and strategies, with a focus on learning cities, and the RVA-Observatory, Adult Learning and Education, with a focus on CONFINTSEA Follow-up, including GRALE, and Literacy and Basic Skills with a focus on CapEFA and RAMAA.
17 By early 2013 negotiations with three specialists on lifelong learning policies to be seconded to the programme are ongoing.
Another issue is linked to the limited efforts on building capacities within the network of stakeholders and agencies working at national level that could potentially be harnessed to increase scale and impact.

The Institute therefore currently does not (yet) have the scale and capacities to cover its global mandate in a comprehensive manner. The still limited availability of financial and human resources, and the so far underused potential of playing a more catalytic role by working with and through national agencies are among the key issues to be addressed.

**Recommendations:**

There is clearly a need to better clarify the concept of LLL within UIL’s mandate, to communicate what the Institute means by promoting LLL policies and to define its focus and comparative advantage within this broader mandate.

1.3. UIL’s global recognition and reputation

UIL is highly recognized within specialized circles however its visibility within the wider education community and beyond has so far been relatively limited. A better clarification and communication of its specific mandate within the umbrella of LLL shall help to raise its profile.

UIL is well known as a global center for adult literacy and adult education and appreciated for the high level of expertise and for linking educational research, policy and practice in the areas of its mandate. It is particularly appreciated for its valuable work in the organization and follow-up of the CONFINTEA and monitoring the Belem action plan. However, its services are not marketed sufficiently and would require better visibility especially among government stakeholders. Some stakeholders found that UIL has not fully developed its potential in exercising authority in the specialized fields of its expertise, for example, developing a feedback mechanism that could give increasing visibility on countries performance within the Belem process.

Considering the above it is also not surprising that UIL’s mandate in the context of LLL is not clear to external stakeholders beyond a relatively small expert community. UIL has gained its visibility, through focusing on the CONFINTEA follow up process and its Literacy work, and in particular UIL’s former coordination role of the LIFE Initiative.

The 60th anniversary celebrations of the Institute in May 2012 offered an excellent opportunity to raise the visibility and profile of the Institute. Despite the considerable cuts of the anniversary budget UIL made substantial efforts for the preparation and for ensuring attendance of some 200 high level representatives. Nonetheless the potential of this event could have been better harnessed to clearly position the Institute and attract attention beyond the specialized circle of attendees e.g. through better global media coverage. It would have been an opportunity to communicate what fostering lifelong learning policies means by conveying a clear key message to the world. In terms of visibility, one would have expected more support from HQ to scale up communication to a broader audience and to attract a more global media attention.

**Recommendation:**

UIL needs to further strengthen its communication capacity to improve the understanding of the importance of LLL for a wider audience and beyond the education community, e.g. to underline the contributions of a learning society to economic growth, social cohesion and poverty reduction.

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18 The Implementation of the Belem Framework for Action (BFA) foresees among other the development of a set of comparable indicators for literacy, the establishment of regional and global monitoring mechanisms take stock and report periodically on progress in adult learning and education; as well as to produce the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) at regular intervals.
2. Results

In this section we discuss the main results of the Institute in recent years, with an emphasis on the previous biennium (2010-2011). UIL does not have a system in place to consistently collect data beyond the output level, i.e. on the effects of its activities, outputs and outcomes. Given the lack of data on results, the review focuses on the Institute’s results profile in terms of fulfilling the five functions\textsuperscript{19}.

The ED Sector considers the roles of Institutes as those of research and foresight, as well as capacity development, and UIL’s Medium Term Strategy translates these functions into four main pillars, i.e Advocacy, Research, Capacity building, Networking.\textsuperscript{20}

2.1 Strategic focus

Despite the concentration on literacy, adult and non-formal education, the options of intervention within the lifelong learning perspective remain rather broad and the strategic focus of UIL is not clear for external stakeholders. Given UIL’s increasing dependency of extra budgetary resources, donor driven priority frameworks may bring the risk of diminishing its strategic focus. UIL currently seeks to define its strategic focus and it will be crucial to find the right balance between the new areas of focus, existing expertise and funding opportunities.

UIL’s mandate still requires better clarification, in particular through defining to external stakeholders to what extent LLL is a separate work stream and/or the umbrella for literacy, adult learning and education. If the focus is on LLL, it currently lacks a critical mass of expertise to cover its mandate in a convincing manner, while if it is on Adult Learning and Literacy the name UIL may not be fully representative. The previous evaluation found that a concentration on survival (i.e. of seeking funds externally) during the critical period from 2000-2006 contributed to a lack of attention to strategic focus. The change of name in 2006 from ‘UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE)’ to ‘UNESCO Institute for Lifelong learning (UIL)’ was an attempt to underline the strategic focus of the Institute on Lifelong learning, while at the same time opened the Institute to other areas, ranging from early childhood to higher education and TVET, that are all falling under the umbrella of lifelong learning, but are outside UIL’s areas of expertise. Given its limited resources, UIL’s current mandate is limited to literacy, adult and non-formal education within a lifelong learning perspective, the areas where its current expertise lies. Still, for external shareholders, UIL can have different meanings and there is the need for improved definition and communication of UIL’s focus.

Although the majority of UIL’s extrabudgetary funds constitute contributions to the Institute’s core funding, some of UIL’s activities are driven by donors’ rather than by strategic priorities, with a potential for contradiction and a risk for fragmentation of UIL’s portfolio. While the recently increasing attention to LLL issues in Europe could give impetus to increased donor commitment\textsuperscript{21} it will also reflect donors’ different priority frameworks. Furthermore, UIL’s mandate is evolving, for example the area of ‘literacy’ is evolving to ‘literacy and basic skills’ and is enlarging UIL’s mandate while resources and expertise remain restricted. Responding in a responsible way to incoming requests means searching for funds externally with the risk of deviating focus from strategic priorities. The main challenge for UIL is therefore to find the right balance between its new and evolving focus, existing expertise and funding opportunities.

Since its integration into UNESCO in 2006, UIL has put a lot of efforts into internal reforms and has now gained a new dynamic that allows it to focus more on its strengths and to concentrate on the substantial

\textsuperscript{19} Clearing house, Capacity builder, Catalyst for international cooperation, Standard setter and Laboratory of ideas.

\textsuperscript{20} One may even question to what extent it continues to be appropriate that the performance of all Category I Institutes is measured against UNESCO’s 5 standard key functions, as suggested in the overall strategy for Category I Institutes 33C/19 and 171 EX/18.

\textsuperscript{21} i.e. by demonstrating the potential advantage for donors in a North-South dialogue, and best practice exchange
and subject matters. Under the new Director, the Institute has reviewed the previous structure of 5 clusters, and by considering UILs strategic focus areas reducing it to three main programmes, i.e. ‘Literacy and Basic Skills’, ‘Adult Learning and Education’ and ‘Lifelong Learning Policies and Strategies’, while integrating Priority Gender Equality and Priority Africa transversally into all three programmes. The knowledge management function that had been a different strand in the past has also become transversal, with a more specifically defined role for publications and library services in support of the thematic areas.

Within these recent reforms UIL has also reviewed its portfolio and clearly laid out its future strategic directions through repositioning the Institute within the current Medium Term Strategy, in particular with a view to the potential opportunities for UIL’s mandate in the post-MDG debate. The new strategy aims to concentrate on fewer but bigger flagship projects with a potential for high visibility and impact within each region including Europe, and is underpinned by number of strategies in the areas of fundraising, partnerships, knowledge management. The main challenge for UIL lies currently in the successful implementation of these new strategic directions. However, UIL has not clearly identified the areas that might need to be discontinued in favor of the new strategic priorities. Historic legacy in some areas as well as the tendency to respond to all incoming requests prevails, while staff need better guidance on where and what to prioritize.

**Recommendation:**

This review recognizes the efforts that have been undertaken to strengthen the strategic focus of the Institute and encourages UIL to continue concentrating on fewer areas of strategic focus where the Institute can gain high visibility and achieve an impact. The Institute should seek to disengage from ad-hoc activities and small scale events that do not directly contribute to the overall strategic objectives to be set for the next Medium Term Strategy. Fundamental choices on an improved thematic focus in research, capacity building and policy advisory work should be grounded in a thorough reflection on comparative advantages (i.e. available expertise, UIL’s reputation and recognition among stakeholders, and stakeholder needs). In consultation with its governing body, UIL should clearly identify a limited number of areas of strategic focus of the Institute for the next Medium Term Plan while ensuring close alignment with the Education Sector’s 2020 strategy.

2.2 Clearing House

As UNESCO’s resource center for Literacy and Adult education, UIL has traditionally performed well in its function as an information broker. While its knowledge management function has undergone significant advances, it still requires improvements such as providing useful and practically-oriented guidance at policy level. UIL could also strengthen its role in managing the discourse in the areas of its expertise.

UIL has steadily invested in improvements and is generally appreciated for its clearing house function. Within the recent reform efforts to strive for excellence, some innovative and valuable measures have been introduced. UIL has expanded the open access database of effective literacy practices, improved its three-monthly newsletter NEXUS, started to use social media to reach out to new users, and upgraded its website features by giving greater attention to updating key information on trends and developments in literacy and adult education. More recently it began to offer access to an online version of an International Directory of Lifelong Learning, a compilation of more than 200 government departments,

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22 see UIL’s repositioning paper for 2012/213
23 as underlined in the earlier chapter on ‘Relevance’,
24 Among these are the follow up of the implementation of RVA guidelines and the establishment of an observatory for RVA systems, the establishment of the Global Learning Cities network, and strengthening UIL’s capacity building profile by developing modules to feed into master degree
25 To a total of 101 case studies available in EN and 96 available in FR
Institutes and agencies responsible for LLL policies at national level, and introduced systematic external peer review for quality control of all publications.

Traditionally UIL collects material, produces case studies and makes these available to stakeholders through its specialised databases such as the ‘Effective Literacy Practise’, an on-line database providing a collection of case studies of innovative and effective practices to improve national literacy polices and it coordinates ALADIN, the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network. Under the new Director there have been several attempts to make better use of UIL’s documentation centre and improve its value along with the very rich library, holding unique historical archives. For example, by introducing a mechanism that ensures better alignment of acquisitions with UIL’s research and capacity development agendas, and by promoting its access to international networks of academics and researchers and the local academic community of the City of Hamburg.

Among the key features of UIL’s clearing house function is to promote research that shall help improve policies and programmes. UIL focuses on the production and dissemination of research studies, such as comparative country case studies on key issues and policy consideration to promote lifelong learning or research on literacy and basic life skills for vulnerable groups. Yet the Institute has been paying less attention to conveying the richness of its information and knowledge in more analytical and digestible formats. For example by producing and quality assuring more synthetic or analytical products tailored to different audiences, such as policy briefs tailored for high level policy makers.

Furthermore there is an issue linked to the International Review of Education (IRE), the journal edited by UIL. The IRE is among the oldest and most renowned international journals of comparative education and a key reference among the education community. However, neither the title of the Journal clearly reflects UIL’s core mandate nor is its content specialised or focused on Literacy, Adult Education or LLL. While it requires a significant amount of UIL’s time and resources to produce, it is not representative of the Institutes’ specialised mandate, and its relevance could be questioned.

However, considering limiting the Journal’s scope to topics of interest to UIL’s more specialized readership would overall narrow the publication’s visibility and UIL’s opportunity to advocate core issues of LLL and Adult Education to a wider audience, and potentially influence significant education discourse. UIL therefore needs to carefully reflect upon finding the right balance between the inputs required and expected results by harnessing the Journal for its own purposes and by maintaining a wider readership. The results achieved should therefore be more closely measured at a qualitative outcome level.

**Recommendations:**

UIL should further develop mechanisms to measure and analyse the qualitative outcomes of its advocacy efforts e.g. via the International Review of Education such as through regular reader surveys and bibliometric assessments, in order to better measure the use of its knowledge products and the extent to which these are influencing policies and research agendas, i.e. to better demonstrate the results achieved.

UIL should strive to produce and disseminate a range of different information and knowledge management products that are better tailored to different customer needs. For this purpose it should carry out an in-depth analysis of clients’ potential needs, habits and preferences.

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26 Access to LitBase steadily increased up to currently 4000 individual visitors by month
27 ALADIN is a network of about 100 specialised libraries and documentation centres in 51 countries
28 The UIL online catalogue has now been fully integrated into UNESDOC
29 The IRE is among the top 5 bestselling education journals out of 50 education journals edited by Springer, it is sold to 7,500 institutions, with an average of 8000 downloaded articles per month.
2.3 Capacity builder

UIL sees capacity building as an integral element of all its activities, but has until recently not followed a comprehensive and focused capacity building strategy. Furthermore its senior expertise is thinly spread in most areas and it still has to find ways to scale up and systematically develop a critical mass of capacities at national and regional levels in a more comprehensive manner.

In recent years, UIL has not demonstrated a specific focus on capacity building activities as a separate strand, but sees capacity building as an integral element within all its programmes and initiatives. UIL’s capacity building role has mostly been exercised in an ad-hoc and demand-driven fashion, in particular through technical assistance funded via the UNESCO Cap EFA or LIFE programmes, or by organizing workshops and conferences for training, dissemination and advocacy purposes. It includes also activities in the framework of the CONFINTÉA follow up process that aim at strengthening national reporting capacities as well as improving capacities for designing national policies, governance, financing and quality mechanism in the field of Adult Education and Learning. More recently UIL has developed a capacity building strategy for EFA and there have been some reflections to further develop specific modules or diploma courses that can be adapted to different needs, different regions and different audiences in the future.

In 2011, UIL put particular focus on building capacities of policy makers and researchers to establish systems for lifelong learning in developing countries, for example through pilot workshops with participants from 5 African and 5 Asian countries. These included the New Delhi conference on ‘Recognizing Prior Learning: A key to lifelong leaning in 2012’, to support India’s efforts for a radical shift from adult learning to lifelong learning, as well as the Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning within the framework of the World Expo 2010 to present the results of the former policy dialogue. In addition short term technical assistance was provided on numerous occasions such as for the South African Literacy campaign.

Since the previous biennium, UIL’s flagship programmes within the capacity building function have included the coordination, jointly with UNESCO–BREDA, of RAMAA (Recherche-action sur la mesure des apprentissages des bénéficiaires des programmes d’alphabétisation des adultes), a multicountry research and capacity building programme on measuring learning outcomes of various kinds of adult literacy programmes across countries. However the initiative was subject to major delays and by the time of the review there has been little evidence of the results achieved beyond the output level. Furthermore this initiative relies heavily on expertise provided by external consultants and quality assurance remains an issue.

Based on shorter already existing training modules, and UILs other capacity building seminars UIL is also planning to develop distant learning modules for a Masters programme led by University of Hamburg on Adult Education, with the aim that these can be accredited. However the funding options appear currently very limited, and it may be questionable to what extent the current limited resources can be dedicated to such a relatively resource intensive activity over the medium to long-term, considering the need for a maintenance, update and quality control of the courses and leaning materials as well as the assurance of proper tutoring of students and moderating of discussion groups.

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30 Since March 2012 UIL has formulated a capacity building strategy for EFA
31 For example UIL has created the APAL (African Perspectives of Adult learning) series as study material for training courses, a pilot course on lifelong learning and UILs CONFINTÉA fellowship programme, a one month course at UIL.
32 RAMAA involves 5 countries from the African and Arab regions, i.e Burkin Faso, Mali, Morocco, Niger and Senegal
33 By early 2013 UIL reported that OECD and UIS (UNESCO Institute for Statistics) have been involved in the initiative and there are plans to develop jointly with OECD a publication on measurement of Adult competences with UIL providing contributions based on the experiences resulting from RAMAA.
Overall it is difficult to recognize a strategic pattern within UIL’s capacity building activities and the actual outcomes in terms of the actually built capacities are not systematically measured. Consequently the question as to the longer term impact of these often high level events on national capacities cannot easily be answered. Furthermore as highlighted in the thematic working group of the UIL GB 2011, one can observe a lack of real political will to implement adult education (demonstrated by a lack of coherence between political statements and the actual allocation of funds) at the level of policy makers and UIL has still to find ways to bridge this gap.

The previous evaluation found that capacity building activities are disconnected from each other and recommended UIL to disengage from the more ad-hoc organized workshop and events culture to shift to a more strategic and research oriented approach in capacity building.\(^{34}\) Despite the recent efforts of developing a strategy for UIL’s capacity building activities this still holds true and in view of the current limited expertise available at UIL a number of constraints for UIL’s capacity building function need to be highlighted:

- the majority of capacity building activities are short term, ad-hoc and have not been following a strategic path;
- the results of the many events and conferences are very difficult to establish and often the different UIL events are followed by the same participants which limits the outreach and leads to UIL moving within limited circles;
- there are currently no consistent mechanisms to follow up and measure the outcome and longer term impact of its capacity building efforts;
- UIL’s intentions for seeking credit for its capacity building seminars at a master level also deserve a more serious reflection. Some stakeholders are questioning the value of UIL offering certified Master’s degree. A certified or accredited qualification would certainly guarantee quality and formal recognition is generally appreciated by trainees, however, external branding can be a risk for the specificity of the training and the tailored needs of participants, i.e. to its highly professional and practical orientation which distinguish it from other HE level programmes;
- Opportunities of working more closely with other Institutes have not been sufficiently explored e.g. by integrating LLL modules into existing training courses for example in the framework of IIEP’s education planning and management training programmes or by developing modules jointly with IICBA for adult training facilitators or LLL aspects relevant for teacher policy development;
- UIL has not been concentrating on systematically building and strengthening capacities at national level e.g. to build up a critical mass of expertise for government departments, Institutes and agencies responsible for LLL policies at national and regional levels – extending outreach and scaling up should become a priority;
- UIL currently does not have the required critical mass in all its areas of expertise to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive capacity building strategy; particularly in LLL senior expertise required for substantial capacity building has been insufficient.

**Recommendations:**
The review commends UIL’s efforts towards a more strategic approach to capacity building and recommends implementing the newly developed capacity building strategy while more and more disengaging from the ad hoc workshop and events culture.

UIL should consider concentrating on capacity building at the upstream level by strengthening capacities, providing guidance and support for developing and implementing LLL policies at national level. Such

\(^{34}\) Such as the CONFINTEA Fellowship and Scholarship Programmes
initiatives could be considered, for example in cooperation with IIEP training courses on educational planning and management or jointly with IICBA on ensuring LLL perspectives in teacher policies.

Before engaging in the development of longer term training programmes, and seeking academic certification of its training modules UIL should consider the outcomes from the cost effectiveness study of IIEPs training programmes and lessons learned from other Institutes for ensuring a strategic and feasible new approach.

UIL should find ways of scaling up with limited resources by concentrating on the strengthening of national institutional capacities and working with /through multipliers.

2.4 Catalyst for cooperation

UIL’s traditionally very strong networking capacities facilitated the establishment of a rich network of potential partners and advocates for the issues within its mandate. In particular the CONFINTÉA follow up processes have been instrumental in fostering the links between relevant actors. However UIL could better harness its connections for setting up a Community of practice in the areas of its mandate and find ways to better exercise its authority.

Given the relatively small size of the Institute and limited human and financial resources compared to its mandate, UIL has to rely on its partners and networks for reaching out to wider audiences and scaling up its activities. The catalyst for cooperation function has traditionally been among UIL’s strengths and UIL has demonstrated and maintained its strong networking capacities over the years. It has built up tight bonds with academic partners, governmental institutions, NGOs and other civil society organizations and can count on a rich network of potential partners and advocates for the issues within its mandate.

Among its networks, UIL is considered as a respected partner and highly appreciated for the high level expertise of its staff. The networking opportunities provided by UIL are widely considered as essential for Adult Education in all its dimensions, with the comparative advantage of a one-stop-shop that is providing a global perspective.

Through the regular organization of the CONFINTÉA conferences, UIL has gained a strong reputation as the global key organization for adult education. In particular the CONFINTÉA V and VI conferences and the respective follow up processes have been instrumental for enhancing the political focus on Adult Education and to bring Adult Education on the political agendas. The regional conferences in the framework of the follow up of the Belem action plan have particularly strengthened the regional exchange and networking mechanisms. As some stakeholders put it ‘the results achieved in the framework to the CONFINTÉA process are proportionally immense compared to the small size of the Institute’. ALADIN as a spin off from the CONFINTÉA V follow up process today closely connects 100 specialized libraries and documentation centers in 51 countries.

Despite this overall positive picture there are some issues that should be taken into consideration:
- Several stakeholders found that despite its recognition as the global center for Adult Learning, UIL could in addition to drafting the GRALE better exercise its authority in monitoring the results of countries’ advancements in the implementation of the Belem framework for action.

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35 CONFINTÉA, the International Conference on Adult Education that is organized very 12 years as a platform for policy dialogue and advocacy on adult learning and non-formal education at global level, it involves UNESCO Member States, United Nations agencies, multi- and bi-lateral cooperation agencies, organizations from civil society, the private sector and learners from all world regions.
36 This includes the CONFINTÉA Portal, three annual CONFINTÉA Bulletins, regional follow-up meetings, NEWS on UIL website, the drafting of the GRALE, information letters to all National Commissions and Permanent Delegation, as well as CONFINTÉA Fellowships, CONFINTÉA Scholarships at UIL. Furthermore UIL has developed a Monitoring Matrix with respective indicators in 2011. The regionals CONFINTÉA VI follow-up meetings are contextualizing this set of indicators.
• Among UIL’s major stakeholders are governments, who are not the best equipped for networking purposes and there may be a need to differentiate UIL’s initiatives for different stakeholder groups.

• UIL has developed a Directory of lifelong learning (i.e. a compilation of more than 200 government departments, Institutes and agencies responsible for LLL policies at national level), however this potentially effective network is so far not harnessed to exchange experiences and good practice, for example as a Community of Practice facilitated by UIL.

**Recommendations:**

*UIL should better connect government departments, Institutes and agencies responsible for LLL policies at the national level through the establishment of a Community of Practice in LLL issues that can further facilitate the North-South-South exchange of experiences and good practice.*

### 2.5 Laboratory of ideas

In recent years UIL’s research function has been among the weakest areas, and the Institute has not yet harnessed the potential of its rich knowledge depository to develop a strategic portfolio of policy relevant research and analytical products. More recently UIL has made attempts to strengthen the internal research function and to engage in partnerships for research purposes. It will crucial for UIL to successfully build up a sound (in-house) research capacity required to back up its capacity building and knowledge management activities with stronger empirical foundations.

UIL’s research function serves primarily the following purposes:

- Contributing to a repository of knowledge on LLL, literacy and adult education topics
- Raising the profile of Adult education and LLL
- Helping closing the gap between policy and practice
- Learning from practice
- Supporting/informing policy makers
- Strengthening research capacities of stakeholders

Recognised as the global research Institute for literacy and adult education, in particular UIL’s literacy research is highly valued by stakeholders. Among recent examples is the research on Youth Literacy and Life skills (jointly with CIDA), the results of which were presented at the Africa policy forum in Bamako 2011. As a contribution to the ADEA Trienniale 2012, UIL prepared two comparative studies, involving 5 countries in each, considering the key issues and policies in promoting lifelong learning and the countries experiences in Recognition, Validation and Accreditation and National Qualification frameworks.

The LIFE Mid-term Evaluation Report, a considerable research project, was among UILs flagships in 2011. It was based on national reports and regional evaluation exercises and provided an analytical framework for assessing the achievements of the Literacy targets. RAMAA, another important research initiative that is combining research and capacity-building through measuring learning outcomes of various kinds of adult literacy programmes across countries, was intended to translate country ownership into national funding, to promote self-learning and inter-learning processes in action research and supported capacity building of national teams. (see also under section 2.3. capacity building.)

Since the last governing board, UIL is trying to closely link the CONFINTEA reporting with the development of the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE). With the drafting of the GRALE, UIL aims to develop a report that shall become a key reference in Adult Learning similar to the GMR or the OECD Education at a Glance. The report has already become a reference in specialised circles but could benefit from better visibility among the education community and government stakeholders.
The Institute has recently analyzed data from 137 national reports as a basis for the drafting of the 2nd edition of the GRALE. The report is an attempt to further raise the profile of Adult Learning and to help creating links between Adult Learning and Education policies as part of the lifelong learning context. While drafting the first version was outsourced to consultants, the second version is being produced internally to utilize existing and further enhance internal research and drafting capacities.

The key question for UIL’s research function is how to ensure that research feeds into policy, and how to influence legislation, financing and the legal policy background. Although UIL has exercised some strong influence, the previous evaluation highlighted that UIL’s services could be even more useful and influential if based on a stronger foundation of empirical knowledge and analyses.

Among the key issues for UIL’s research function are the following

- **UIL’s research appears fragmented** and is not based on a strategic research agenda. UIL therefore has to make some critical reflections on how to best focus its research agenda. Currently there are no consistent criteria or principles to select topics intended to move the policy agenda forward. Regular stakeholder consultations should feed into selecting priorities for UILs research agenda.

- Conducting in house research is time intensive and **requires the necessary core resources** over a medium to long term perspective for rigorous data collection and analysis. Despite the Institute’s efforts to find alternative solutions via country funded secondments, interns and junior staff **UIL cannot guarantee a critical mass of senior expertise in its core areas to fulfill its research function** and its relatively limited core resources and the tendency for increased level of project funding further enhance the risk for limiting UIL’s research capacities.

- As with other Education Category I Institutes, UIL poses the question of **whether and how the Institute shall or can compete or rather collaborate with other research institutions**, universities or think tanks. It needs to reflect to what extent outsourcing or a closer collaboration can be beneficial with a view to influencing the policy discourse on a greater scale with or via influential partners.

- In general **UIL’s research products are not particularly tailored to different key audiences**, and while it needs to instigate research it also has to seriously reflect on how to make it available and understood by different audiences. Overall there is a need for more policy focused research products, for example in the form of well packaged, synthetic and analytical policy briefs.

- Although UIL’s research is greatly appreciated as a resource in Literacy and Adult education, it **has not gained sufficient visibility**. The GRALE should become a medium to increase attention and to raise UIL’s profile, for example via global and regional launch events.

**Recommendations:**

- **UIL should select a limited number of research themes over the next medium term strategy** by focusing its research agenda on topics that are both, critical for developing countries as well as linked to cutting edge issues on the top of education agendas in the developed world, and that can support its capacity building and policy advisory work. As an institute with a global mandate it is vital that its research provides the basis for a South-North-South dialogue while it can utilize this as a potential for identifying funding sources that are dedicated to research.

- **UIL should continue finding innovative ways of how to obtain richness within its research function** as well as maintain and strengthen its in-house research capacities though hiring of senior experts in key areas. To further enrich expertise and networking inflow and outflow of expertise should continue to be
fostered (through fellowships, interns, visiting professors, cooperation and funding agreements with academia and other research partners)

As a way of leveraging its scarce research resources UIL should increasingly seek carrying out research through partnerships such as with universities and think tasks. As well as undertaking research itself, UIL should see its role also as influencing the research agendas of donors, academic institutions and individual researchers. It should for example seek closer collaboration with influential partners such as the OECD and the World Bank.

UIL’s should give more attention to how and in what format its research is made available to different key audiences, in particular by distilling or synthesizing research studies into policy briefs and recommendations for policy makers.

In order to making its research better known UIL should strengthen its communications tools and mechanisms. For example the launch of the GRALE could be organized via highly visible regional and global events that attract media attention with the aim of raising the profile and visibility of the report, and UIL as a whole. Furthermore the visibility of the report should be strengthened through a more effective presentation via the UNESCO website.

2.6 Standard setter

More recently the standard setting function has become more of a priority area for UIL compared to most other Institutes, and there is a high potential for gaining high visibility and recognition for UIL in particular through the adoption and implementation by MS of the recently developed ‘UNESCO draft guidelines on the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning (RVA guidelines)’. The envisaged initiative of creating the Global Learning Cities network demonstrates high ambitions, but with a view toUIL’s restricted resources particular attention is required to involving the right audiences and findings ways of delegating the implementation to respective key players.

The UNESCO draft guidelines of the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning (RVA guidelines) have been among UIL’s key activities in the previous and current biennium. The need for these guidelines has been voiced as a result of the Belem framework for Action and there is a high potential for UIL to play an important role in the implementation of the RVA guidelines, e.g. by developing an RVA observatory for disseminating and collecting best practices at different stages of RVA systems, facilitating policy dialogue, networking and sharing of experiences, facilitating studies from different RVA systems, mechanisms, instruments and through collaborative international research. In response to MS requests for technical assistance and capacity building, the UIL GB sees a role for UIL in strengthening the mechanisms in MS for the recognition of non–formal education, even in countries that do not (yet) have a National Qualifications framework.

The envisaged Global Cities Network is among UILs’ key initiatives with a high potential for visibility and impact, in setting a model of best practice. So far there is a pilot phase concentrating on Asia, financed at a majority by China with SISKO as a potential founding partner. This key initiative is positioned within the ambition of UIL to become a center of excellence with a recognized authority to developing and monitoring indicators and by matching the adhering Learning Cities to the indicators. Despite the potential outreach and success of the Global Learning Cities Network, caution is required in terms of approaching the most appropriate audiences, funding partners for other regions and engaging national and regional stakeholders for taking a responsibility in communication and the successful implementation. The reputational risks linked to this Initiative also need to be carefully considered.
Another area where UIL sees its niche and which demonstrates a high potential for gaining global recognition is the work with OECD on developing the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), by extending the programme beyond the OECD on a global level.

Recommendations:
UIL should develop and make available a collection of best practices of the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning.

UIL should carefully consider who are the right audiences and other key players to be involved in the Global Cities Network to ensure that the Initiative will receive global attention and recognition after the pilot phase in Asia.

3. Quality of interaction and coordination

Overall the relationship between UIL and HQ has improved in particular with the arrival of UIL’s new Director, which is demonstrated by more regular communication and improved cooperation modalities. However there is still potential overlap and competition in particular in the area of Literacy. Despite HQ’s appreciation of UIL’s work, the visibility and use of UIL’s capacities by HQ continues to be limited. In a number of areas, most notably fundraising, competition rather than collaboration appear to be the practice.

3.1 UIL’s relationship with HQ:

a) Quality of relationship
Given the limited amount of core resources offered by UNESCO, traditionally UIL has been working as a very independent unit, fully embracing the concept of functional autonomy to its advantage. In follow up to the previous evaluation, efforts have been made to better coordinate, improve communication and foster closer cooperation between HQ and UIL. The involvement of the Institute Directors in the ED leadership team and a new impetus for the role of the ED sector focal point for Institutes have created an enabling environment for cooperation and understanding of mutual expectations. However, for the Institute the role of the focal point is not yet sufficiently defined.

Despite these improvements, there are signs that HQ does not sufficiently appreciate and value the contributions from the Institute, and at the level of Institute’s staff there is some suspicion towards a hidden agenda at HQ and a strong perception of ‘us’ and ‘them’ rather than seeing the Institute as an integral part of UNESCO. Often the Institute is unaware of how information requested by HQ is used. For example, the Institute feels that their suggestions and comments made on 34 C/4 and 35 C/5 planning documents have not been adequately considered by HQ. Furthermore, the potential of integrating non-formal perspectives into the recently developed UNESCO Strategy for Teachers is also considered a lost opportunity to capitalize on the Institutes’ expertise.

Furthermore the ED Sector’s website or the Sectors’ reporting documentation give little visibility to the actual contribution of UIL and the Institutes in general, if compared with the proportion of the overall approximately 35 % of the ED sector RP activity budget dedicated to Institutes in 36 C/5 and the high importance of the Institutes’ mandates among ED Sector priorities. Furthermore, there is little evidence of UIL products, such as research or publications, being used for UNESCO’s policy work. HQ also needs to define what exactly it expects from the Institute.

Similar to other Institutes, UIL perceives competition with HQ with regard to fundraising. This is an issue felt very strongly about and leads to considerable frustration. Despite general satisfaction with UIL’s services there have been instances where a lack of transparency and insufficient communication between
the Institute, the ED Sector and BSP CFS have led to the Institute not being given enough visibility and being left out in negotiations on frameworks agreements with key partners and potential donors.

The relations at operational and administrative levels are rather ad hoc and more of an interpersonal than institutionalized nature. In general, relations are smooth with examples of regular exchange and support regarding contract management, HR issues. Nonetheless there are instances where the Institute feels that the limited financial contribution from HQ is not in proportion with the requirement of the very strict administrative and regulatory framework of UNESCO and that occasionally this does not fit with the reality and the pace of a small Institute like UIL. Examples are in relation to publications, the length of the recruitment process, the delayed timing of the roll out of financial software\textsuperscript{37}, or the lengthy financial management via HQ for activities that are decentralized to UIL.

b) Division of labor

Traditionally there has been little overlap between HQ and UIL’s mandate in the areas of Lifelong learning and Adult Education. However the coordination and implementation of LIFE, UNESCO’s Literacy initiative has been an on-going issue for a long time. Despite the recent mutual agreement among the Institute and HQ to repatriate the coordination of the Initiative back to HQ, while the research and capacity building functions should be maintained at UIL, the actual division of work continues to be contentious and requires better clarification, in particular as the often changing responsibility and ownership are confusing for outside stakeholders and potentially harmful to the continuity of the initiative.

The following issues are to be considered in this context

- Splitting policy and research (with the coordination role of the LIFE Initiative back at HQ) may seem logical for the organization but gives a bad signal to the outside. For outside stakeholders the new distribution is still very unclear, and some duplication seems unavoidable. Better communication to LIFE countries and closer coordination will be required.

- UIL has been closely associated with LIFE. With the coordination part of the Initiative moving back to HQ, the Institute is losing an important part of its activity and funding. Some stakeholders perceive that there has been too much effort on managing the internal politics and bureaucracies, which makes these appear more important than the actual content issues. This bears a potential reputational risk for UNESCO as a whole.

- Furthermore there are strong concerns in relation to continuity. Following the difficulties depicted in the LIFE mid-term evaluation the change of the coordination role brings the risk of losing the momentum created by the dynamics towards a positive evolution that had been created. Delays with the startup and allocation of resources at HQ, as well as with the implementation of the recommendations have already sent some negative signals.

Recommendations:

HQ should clarify and better communicate the role and mandate of the focal point for Category I Institutes. The role could be further strengthened on issues that require better coordination e.g. at the level of planning, policy coordination and communication. The focal point should encourage and enable strengthening the linkages at both senior and middle management levels, and ensure interaction with the Institute on a more regular basis. The focal point should also be supportive in developing mechanisms for exchange to raise awareness of good practices and ensure these are shared in areas such as knowledge management, publications, website features, research modalities and, staffing.

\textsuperscript{37} The full roll out to FABS still outstanding despite full integration this has been requested by External Auditors.
There is a need for a more transparent communication and collaboration in fundraising activities, which among other things would include a clearer positioning of UNESCO towards potential donors and the elimination of harmful competition. The Education Sector should involve UIL in all fundraising activities that relate to UIL’s core mandate. UIL in turn should share and communicate its recently developed fundraising strategy with BSP/CFS and the Education sector.

HQ together with UIL shall better clarify what is the optimal and desired division of roles and tasks in regard to the LIFE initiative and communicate the new work division clearly to outside stakeholders. Furthermore the recommendations stemming from the recent Midterm evaluation shall be implemented in close consultation with UIL in order to build on its recent experience in the LIFE coordination.

3.2. Relationships of UIL with the Field Office network

UIL has developed good working relationships with a number of UNESCO Field Offices (FO) in particular in the African region, often via LIFE activities that are funded from Cap EFA funding. In some occasions the Institute has been responding to specific requests within its mandate channeled via HQ and the Field Offices that did not have the expertise and capacities to respond, such as to develop a plan for coping with the enormous literacy problems in Nigeria or helping the FO in Juba to develop a Literacy programme in South Sudan. The Institute is considered a reliable and cooperative partner and favors a transparent approach in involving field offices in capacity building and technical assistance activities.

As other Institutes, there are instances where UIL faces a challenge in regard to cost recovery when working with Field Offices. Given the lack of a common and transparent policy, fees have been applied so far on an ad-hoc basis and where an external funding framework is available. A good model in this respect is the CAP EFA framework where fees, travel and DSA can be covered and can be planned from the outset. In other cases the cost recovery need to be negotiated on a case by case basis, and occasionally prove problematic.

UIL together with HQ and other Institutes should establish a common and transparent policy for cost recovery.

In the current context of field reform in the African Region, priority should be given to defining UIL’s (and the other Institutes’) roles in the new decentralization model and field network reform in Africa, in particular regarding UIL’s role in relation to the new multisectoral regional offices in the African region.

There is a need to rethink the role of the Institute within the overall UNESCO network and decentralization structure. UIL together with UNESCO HQ, the field network and other Category I Institutes should identify to what extent there are potential overlaps, incidences of competition or missed opportunities for complementarity and collaboration in the implementation of UNESCO’ mandate.

3. 3. UIL and Institutes

Regular exchange among the three global Institutes, IBE, UIL and IIEP, has become common practice both informally and formally in particular on managerial issues, through their participation in the ED leadership team, by inviting each other to GB meetings, and through regular informal exchange, to inform each other of activities of likely interest. Furthermore IBE and IIEP professional staff are also consulted in the context of CONFINTEA VI questionnaires.

Although IBE and IIEP are traditional partners, in practice there have been relatively few instances where the Institutes have been working together at the operational level. The examples for coordinated delivery are mainly initiated in the field such as a joint initiative involving the expertise of UIL, IIEP, UIS, together with BRED, and Pole de Dakar for activities in DRC managed by the Kinshasa office. It may however be...
worthwhile to examine the possibility of closer cooperation for example with IIEP though mainstreaming LLL into capacity building for educational planning and management as one way to increase its scale, as well as through jointly developing comprehensive funding proposals such as in the framework of the GPE Global Partnership on Education that may be too big for one Institute to compete.

UIL is cooperating with UNEVOC on a regular basis with UNEVOC considered as an ‘organic’ partner in view of the relevance of vocational education aspects for adult and continuing education. The cooperation or exchange with smaller regional Institutes has so far been less relevant. However there is clearly a potential for UIL in working closely with IICBA on training of LLL facilitators and adult educators.

Also on the administrative and central service level there are several good practices UIL could share with other Institutes and facilitate better networking. In the past there has been regular exchange of concerns, experience and good practices during yearly meetings between IIEP, IBE and UIL documentation centers’ staff, which had been stopped for budgetary reasons. However such exchange should be reinitiated, with the help of the focal person and could be maintained as virtual meetings, via Skype or videoconferencing.

**Recommendations:**

*Tele/Video conferencing among the Institutes’ directors should be established as a cost efficient way for regular communication and discussion around specific topics in order to identify potential areas for future cooperation.*

*UIL together with the Education Sector should identify areas for closer cooperation among Institutes and seek opportunities where its specific expertise can be applied in a complementary manner, such as through mainstreaming LLL perspectives in other Institutes’ capacity building activities.*

*The Education Sector should facilitate exchanges of good practices among Institutes, not only at the strategic and programmatic level (as is already the case to some extent), but also covering such areas as administration, M&E, planning and other topics.*

*UIL together with HQ and other Institutes should establish a common and transparent policy for cost recovery.*

**4 Organizational arrangements: Staffing, management and accountability, governance**

**4.1. Staffing**

With the ambition of being recognized a center of excellence, achieving a critical mass of expertise, the right skill mix and a dynamic staffing environment are among the most critical issues for UIL. Despite the appreciated quality of existing expertise and the efforts to increase capacities, senior expertise in certain areas remains insufficient which constitutes a risk for the credibility and reputation of the Institute. Furthermore there is a lack of senior staff with partnership, fundraising and managerial experience. The payroll of UNESCO fixed-term staff positions slightly exceeds UNESCO’s RP contribution. In a context of less predictable core funding in the future this may create liabilities for the organization that cannot be sustained and UIL will need to investigate options for more flexible staffing arrangements.

Staffing levels have been rather constant at UIL since 2006, following the reorganisation in becoming a fully-fledged UNESCO Category I Institute. By May 2012 UIL employed 32 staff, of which seven were

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38 UNEVOC is a UNESCO Category I Centre, located in Bonn (Germany) with a specialized mandate in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. However, UNEVOC was not specifically subject to this review.

39 Except during peak periods for CONFINTSEA preparation with e.g. up to 42 staff in 2010.
on UNESCO staff contracts and 25 on one year renewable local service contracts under German law\textsuperscript{42}. By May 2012 out of overall 19 programme specialists (including 3 librarians), \textsuperscript{43} seven professionals (incl. the Director and Deputy Director) had an in-depth senior professional and technical backgrounds in literacy, adult and lifelong learning. With a relatively stable funding environment UIL’s staffing situation is so far secured and expected to remain stable.

In particular with the arrival of the new Director, the Institute is searching for creative solutions for increasing staff capacity within limited resources, in particular its research capacities. These include internships, fellowships, scholarship, and externally funded secondments, fostering academic advancements of staff\textsuperscript{44}, creating alliances with existing research networks as well as through participation as an associate partner of the Erasmus Mundus programme\textsuperscript{45}. Overall within the Institute there prevails an enabling and stimulating working environment with staff being motivated and highly committed.

However, several issues of concern need to be highlighted:

- Although overall nineteen of UIL’s staff members\textsuperscript{46} constitute the core of key professionals, several stakeholders estimate that these numbers are not adequate to secure a critical mass of senior expertise given the variety of areas the Institute is working in. They perceive this as a constraint if considering the challenges of striving towards a Centre of Excellence at the global level. Capacities and human resources (both in number and seniority of staff) are indeed still too limited (for example, UIL currently has five literacy experts of which only one is senior, and six (including one seconded expert) in lifelong learning policies, of which two are senior). This shows that UIL’s expertise tends to be too dependent on individuals while it still lacks sufficient institutional backup.

- UIL’s research function continues to be perceived among its weakest areas in particular as this is currently backed up via interns and junior staff, given the Institute currently lacks the critical mass of senior researchers. The implementation of a forward looking staff development plan, focusing on improving research and writing profiles in addition to programme management skills, will be crucial.

- Investment in staffing and in particular staff development is critical for the motivation, and high level quality services expected from UIL staff. So far only minor amounts (approximately $ 30,000 per year) have been dedicated to specific training activities, with additional staff development foreseen via paid educational leave.

- With the exception of the senior management team there is a lack of senior staff with governmental, fundraising and managerial experience. Current challenges include identifying training needs, mapping out competencies and developing a focused UIL capacity building strategy.

- Despite the encouragement and incentives for taking different transversal and managerial responsibilities and for working across teams which is beneficial for a more integrated approach in the framework of a Lifelong learning perspective, some hesitation remains among staff.

\textsuperscript{40} By the end of 2012 this number increased to 35, of which 27 are full time and 8 are part-time staff members.

\textsuperscript{41} These are 5 P and 2 G staff.

\textsuperscript{42} including an attractive social security package equivalent to German national level.

\textsuperscript{43} Of these 4 are employed on part time contracts.

\textsuperscript{44} Out of overall 19 professionals 3 have PhDs and 2 are about to finalize their PhD in 2012/2113.

\textsuperscript{45} Erasmus Mundus students will come for 6 weeks internships to UIL and UIL staff will receive research grants for teaching at the Erasmus Mundus programme at Copenhagen, Cordoba, and Melbourne universities.

\textsuperscript{46} This includes a core group of 7 staff with 15-20 years’ experience, and 12 with 3-4 years, 4 of which are employed on a part time basis.
• Given the requirement of developing in-depth expertise in specialised fields within a relatively small entity a number of key staff have been working for UIL over many years, often in the same position without many opportunities to gain experience from outside except through field work. However, the dynamics in the education environment and the potential developments within UIL’s mandate are viewed differently from an outside perspective. While the long term in-depth expertise is a prerequisite for a specialized institute there is also a need for external fresh views and ideas that provide critical input for Institute to remain at the cutting edge. 

• Traditionally the UNESCO contribution has been used to cover UNESCO staff positions, however, with the recent reductions coverage can no longer be guaranteed and may by creating serious liabilities for UIL and UNESCO in the future.

Recommendations:
UIL should carry out a staffing review jointly with HRM that should focus on the assessment of the current versus desired set of individual and institutional competencies and be used to establish the most adequate staffing levels in line with the Institute’s future strategic directions. The modalities on how these can best be achieved include training, recruitment and with the exception of few core posts gradually moving to more flexible staffing arrangements such as ‘project appointments’ that allow for greater flexibility in the management of staff, while offering attractive conditions.

The review recognizes the Institutes’ efforts to establish a more dynamic staffing environment, such as through incoming secondments, fellowships, scholarships and internships. However the Institute should also seek opportunities for staff that have been working at the Institute for many years, to diversify their experience through outside work experience. This could be achieved via increasing short term or limited term secondments to (and from) other organizations (such as OECD, research institutions and academia) or Member States governments. Staff exchanges with for example HQ and /or other Institutes should also be among the options.

There is an urgent need to increase quality and levels of expertise, including consolidating expertise in certain areas such as lifelong learning policies, improving research and writing competences and enabling a more integrated holistic approach in working modalities. A better use of UNESCO internal resources for internal capacity building should be envisaged.

UIL should consider strengthening the current teams and establishing the right mix of skills and expertise, including managerial, fundraising and partnership competences and people management skills. Furthermore there should be incentives for working across teams to strengthen the links within the overall umbrella of Lifelong learning perspectives.

4.2. Management

A strong leadership team with a combination of academic, managerial skills as well as political outreach, fundraising and partnership skills has proven as a key element for the success of a small Institute such as UIL. Recent reforms have helped to improve internal organizational structures and management processes. However, in some instances the level of functional autonomy required for the Institute to operate in a flexible manner, has been interpreted differently by the UIL management, governing bodies and Education Sector senior management.

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47 For example the recent recruitment of the new Director with a high level academic background and a longstanding expertise in adult education and lifelong learning combined with excellent management qualities contributed to launching several reflection processes with a valuable critical consideration from on external perspective.
The Director of the Institute is appointed by the DG on the recommendation of the Governing Board. The DG represented by the ADG ED is responsible for the performance assessment of the Director, and may take suggestions of the Board into consideration. As a result of the functional autonomy of the Institute, the Director carries additional responsibilities compared to other ED Sector managers, including both, for administration and management of the Institute as well as for programme delivery, financial management and fund mobilization. (See Annex 5). The Director’s performance, in terms of personal and professional qualities has therefore a direct impact on the performance of the Institute as a whole, and is thus linked to a reputational risk. Furthermore the highly specialized expertise required of the Institute Director and the need to regularly bringing in new knowledge and ideas in order to ensure a world-class reputation of the Institute and its position at the cutting-edge of research and training would suggest a limited duration of an individual’s appointment to this position. Nonetheless, the Statutes of UIL do not foresee a term limit for the Director’s position.

The previous Director led the Institute through a difficult phase and dedicated great efforts to generating vital extrabudgetary resources and to developing a strategic vision for the Institute. The previous evaluation appreciated this but highlighted the need to fill the Deputy Director post in order to also strengthen the internal management of the Institute. The current UIL senior management team is composed of a D2 Director, in office since mid-2011 and a P5 Deputy Director appointed in 2006. The Institute’s leadership is highly appreciated as a well performing, visionary and strategically thinking team complementing each other with a high degree of technical expertise combined with managerial and decision-making capacities which are among the most critical key aspects for shaping the strategic vision and reputation of a relatively small Institute such as UIL.

With the arrival of the new Director there have also been several structural improvements that created a more effective working environment. A more decentralized administrative role with increasing responsibilities for team leaders, and a delegated supervisory role by the Deputy Director are leading to better ownership at the different management levels. The Institute’s management is open minded to fully integrate and respect UNESCO rules and regulations and has introduced a participatory change management process starting with the mapping out all administrative and financial processes to help streamlining process and defining a table of authority and responsibility. New strategies have been developed in several areas, including IT and communication, travel policy and personnel policy. It is now the time to concentrate on their implementation involving all key staff and ensuring the buy in at all staff levels.

Strategic guidance as well as a sense of stability and clarity within the Institute on rules, processes and modes of operation, and a transparent and participative management style has proven to create an enabling and stimulating environment for staff to perform and aim at excellence. Continuity and the personal and professional qualities of the Institute’s leadership are closely associated with the success of UIL and are contributing to increasingly establishing trust accorded by its governing body, donors and external stakeholders.

As described in Paragraph 32 of the Principles and Guidelines regarding the establishment and operation of UNESCO Category I Institutes and Centres 171 EX/18, functional autonomy is one of the strong assets for Category I Institutes to operate in a more flexible manner and to attract substantial extrabudgetary funding. While recognizing its relationship with UNESCO as a win-win situation, i.e. for the Institute being part of UNESCO as a neutral diplomatic platform opening access to beneficiary countries governments and for UNESCO having a highly respected and specialized Institute contributing to its positive reputation and demonstrating credible results, UIL traditionally practices a high level of functional autonomy to its advantage.

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48 By moving away from five clusters and a more centralized administrative role by the DIR to only three programme task teams that are headed by a coordinator with increased administrative, coordination and budgetary responsibilities.
With the yearly approval of the programme and budget following the careful consideration and discussion by UIL’s Governing Board, the Board expresses full trust in UIL’s management on how to effectively and efficiently implement its activities, and how to adequately manage its approved financial and human resources. A regular exchange and provision of an appropriate level of information is considered a prerequisite for maintaining a collegial partnership and coordination with UNESCO ED sector management. The UIL Director is held accountable and his performance is assessed on the basis of the results achieved.

Nonetheless the discussions on the ‘right’ level of functional autonomy are ongoing and finding the most adequate balance between the Institute’s creativity, responsiveness and the need to adhere to bureaucratic processes often requires clarification and occasionally depends on the quality of personal relationships rather than on well-defined principles. During the course of the review some board members and Institute Directors have raised concerns regarding the allocation of responsibilities for making certain decisions, which at times have been confused between Institutes and ED HQ management. Some examples are with respect to the need for travel approval and limited flexibility in relation to certain aspects of staff management and publications. When searching for solutions the optimal level of functional autonomy and flexibility (one of the key reasons for the success of UIL) should be preserved while ensuring accountability of the Institute’s management to its governing body.

**Recommendations:**

There is a need to map out the critical instances where there is no common understanding of the concept of functional autonomy, in order to establish the adequate conditions for the Institute to function in an effective manner, as required for the implementation of its mandate. Guided by consistent principles, clarification should be sought on the meaning of functional autonomy in a few core areas, such as the definition of financial autonomy, and more specifically on a travel policy, a staffing policy for UNESCO posts, and a publications policy. A working group with representatives from all Institutes, respective central services at HQ and the Education Sector could be established for this purpose.

UNESCO governing bodies should consider introducing a term limit to the Director position at UIL (and all Cat I Institutes) in order to improve the results-based accountability framework of Institutes as well as to ensure regularly renewed dynamics that are essential to keep up to a world class reputation.

4.3. Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation (Accountability)

UIL’s planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation culture still has to mature. While UIL has already made efforts to improve its planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms there still needs to be more attention to the establishment of a results framework (theory of change) that depicts the Institutes logic of intervention as well as to organizing its activity and decision making processes in the spirit of a results based management.

UIL’s planning, monitoring and reporting documents have so far been mainly activity and output based, while a framework for a more results based approach has not systematically been developed. The results (in terms of both outputs and outcomes) are collected in a rather anecdotal fashion, for example via individual feedback on the use and usefulness of UIL’s knowledge products and capacity building activities. However, there is no systematic collection of evidence that could feed into more analytically based reflections, and the tools and indicators used to measure results are very limited and are not systematically linked to a results framework.

Nonetheless there are signs that UIL’s results based management approaches are improving. Most senior UIL staff and management are demonstrating results based mindsets and are aware and reflecting on how to improve the deficiencies in the current approaches. For example, as a result of these reflections, the UIL Annual Report 2011 demonstrates for the first time a results based structure rather than the
traditional listing of activities and events in the different programme strands. However, the systems currently in place do not sufficiently support the continuous reflection process on how and on what basis to measure and demonstrate results and to distill lessons regularly and systematically. On a daily basis and given the restricted resources there is more focus and pressure for delivery and keeping to deadlines. There have been efforts to improve competences on evaluation and monitoring for programme staff, however at the time of the review a number of UIL, especially junior staff members are not sufficiently aware of the basics of results based management and had not received adequate training. 49

Under the new Director the Institute has carried out a retreat to launch in depth reflection processes and created working groups on how to improve processes, working methods and to achieve results in a more effective and efficient manner. These efforts resulted in the development of a series of strategies in the areas of fundraising, partnerships, knowledge management, staff development etc. The major challenge for the Institute lies currently in the successful implementation of these strategies in the framework of the overall renewed strategic directions. However these strategies could be further improved if they were complemented with a clear description of the envisaged objectives, and a monitoring and evaluation framework with specific timelines to measure the progress and achievements.

The evaluation culture at UIL needs to further mature to better recognize the value and usefulness of the outcomes of self, internal and external assessments for feeding into future strategic planning and providing guidance for daily operations and decision making.

**Recommendation:**

The review commends the on-going efforts by UIL for a more results based reporting and to strengthen its M&E framework and practice. The present review recommends the development of an intervention logic (see the example of IIEP) which should become a basis for further reflections on UIL’s M&E framework, and for developing key indicators of UIL’s performance and achievements and identifying the relevant data sources and means of verification. This should lead to the establishment of an institution-wide framework for M&E to underpin any on-going and punctual internal and external assessments.

4.4 Governance

UIL has a well-functioning and effective governing body consisting of subject matter experts that provide excellent support and serious oversight, while maintaining a high level of trust in UIL management and a collegial partnership with UNESCO Headquarters. However, there could be better timing of the Board session in line with UIL’s budgetary cycle and the visibility of UIL at the level of UNESCO governing bodies needs to be raised.

In general UIL has a well-functioning governing body and most stakeholders see little room for improvement while recognizing the Board as an efficient and effective governing body. It consists of 12 members, i.e. two from each region as well as a representative from the host country. By respecting a geographic and a gender balance it is a platform that allows linking education matters from different cultural backgrounds. Board members are not elected but appointed by the DG for 4 years, with the possibility of renewal for another 4 years. One third of the board members are regularly exchanged to ensure both, continuity and renewal.

The group is composed of previously identified high level experts with deep subject specific experience, who are acting in their professional capacity and not representing their countries. Board discussions are deemed of qualitative nature and substance based, not shying away from critical considerations and in-depth discussion are guaranteed through subgroups and side events that are concentrating on specific issues.

49 In follow up of the review UIL has had a two days training workshop held by BSP in November 2012 on SISTER, and a two days training workshop on RBM in January 2013.
With a view to recent budgetary constraints several efficiency measures have been introduced starting with a reduction from four to two meeting days and suspension of translation and interpretation services for the May 2012 meeting. A preparatory event, separate editorial board meeting and side events in small working groups are followed by a donors meeting and network meetings (such as ALADIN) allowing staff to participate in the specific sessions relevant to their portfolio. One meeting per year however is considered as the minimum to ensure that members remain within the discourse of the subject matter discussions and to provide the necessary guidance and advice to the Institute with sufficient continuity.

The Board meeting has usually been taking place in May of a given year with a standing committee meeting towards the end of the year for discussing budget and upcoming specific issues. An active mailing list provides information of progress and opportunity for exchange to all board members. UIL has also been introducing innovative practices to improve the communication between Board meetings, such as a SharePoint site and a virtual chat room for Board members. In order to motivate the Board members to more strongly support the Institute in its fundraising efforts UIL prepared a fundraising paper for GB members to act as fundraising ambassadors by approaching potential donors such as private foundations for UIL purposes.

Despite this overall positive picture reflections on some issues could help to further improve UIL’s governance:

- Despite the overall appreciation of UIL’s governing body the size of the board does not fully correspond to the best practice in proportion to the size of the Institute.
- The timing of Board meetings in May of a given year is not optimal considering the need to approve a programme and budget that has been implemented since January of the same year.
- Ensuring that governing board papers are as up to date as possible brings the risk that GB members often receive documentation only few days before the Board session, which leaves insufficient room for preparation.
- There is so far little visibility of the Institute and its achievements at the level of the UNESCO Member States and Governing bodies.

**Recommendations:**

There is no single optimal board size, however good practice would suggest that a governing body with 6-9 members would constitute a reasonable size for a small Institute such as UIL. While larger Boards with a membership of 10 or more have a tendency to become dysfunctional. UIL jointly with ED sector could review the size of the Board in line with best practices.

The timing of the Board session should be better aligned with the budgetary cycle of the Institute.

The review acknowledges the innovative practices that have been introduced to engage Board members in subject matter discussions on a more ongoing basis; however UIL should make an effort to provide the meeting documentation well in advance i.e. at least 10-14 days before a Board meeting.

UIL should be given more visibility at the level of UNESCO Member States and governing bodies. There should be improved reporting on the Institutes achievements and specific information meetings could be organized in advance to Executive Board and General Conference sessions.

5. Financial Sustainability

A brief description of the financial situation of the Institute shows that despite critical budgetary constraints the financial sustainability of the Institute is relatively stable.
5.1. Budget:

**Overall UIL’ budgetary envelope is relatively stable. Considering that UIL’s budget has consisted already for a long time of approximately 75-80% external resources, the recent budgetary cuts of the UNESCO contribution has had only a minor impact on the budgetary sustainability of the Institute and could mostly be compensated by increasing donor support. Nevertheless within the current restricted funding framework the UNESCO contribution no longer covers the payroll of UNESCO staff and other statutory costs (such as Governing Board meetings) while it would be difficult to justify funding these from donor contributions. This situation may create liabilities for the Institute that can no longer be maintained and alternative staffing arrangements will need to be explored.**

UIL’s budgetary envelope increased steadily since 2002 and reached a peak in 2008/2009 with more than $10.3 Mill.50 It was subject to a slight decrease to $9.3 Mill for the 2010/11 biennium due to a reduction in UNESCO core funding and a decrease in core funding form Germany and Denmark. By beginning of 2012 the projected annual budget was approximately $5.7 Million (of which 2.5 Mill. core budget51 and 3.2 Mill. extra budgetary resources. Among the most important core donors are traditionally Denmark, Germany (providing both the host country premises and program funds), Nigeria, Norway, Sweden, and the Swiss Development Cooperation. Core donors generally guarantee a multiyear core funding. The partly mixed picture of increasing and decreasing resources from bilateral agencies is rather the function of the agencies’ overall development assistance policies and their specific financing strategies towards UNESCO. Additional extrabudgetary contributions52 have been relatively minor with less than 1 Mill. over the last two biennia.

After an increase in 2005/2006 to $2.6 Mill. the biennial UNESCO allocation has steadily decreased since 2006 and amounted to $2 Mill for 2010/11. The percentage of the UNESCO contribution in proportion to the overall budget envelope decreased steadily over the years and amounted to roughly 21 % in 2010/11.

The 31% budget cut of UNESCO funding in 2012 (from an approved $USD 1 Mill to $690.000) constitutes only about 7% of UIL’s overall budget and UIL was able to fully compensate the loss of $310.00053 with increased extrabudgetary and voluntary contributions in particular through additional funding from the Swiss development cooperation, who is supportive of the Institute’s mission and expressing trust in achieving its results. UIL regularly invested in a stabilization reserve amounting to $1.5 Mill by the beginning of 2012.

Considering the above, the most pressing issues for UIL’s financial situation are the following:

- **UNESCO staff costs coverage:** The annual contribution from UNESCO is formally foreseen to cover programme costs but de facto intended to cover the currently seven UNESCO staff.54 It would otherwise be difficult to justify that donors’ voluntary contributions are used to cover UNESCO staff costs and thus indirectly finance UNESCO. However with the 31 % reduction the UNESCO contribution is no longer sufficient to cover the payroll of UNESCO staff as in the past, and may thus be creating liabilities for the Organization that can no longer be maintained.

- **Cost recovery:** Except where an external funding framework is available cost recovery of UIL staff is to be negotiated on a case by case basis and often too costly especially in the developing

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50 Partly due to the preparation of the CONFINTEA VI.
51 UILs core budget consists of the UNESCO RP budget contribution and any un-earmarked voluntary contributions from Member States.
52 Through UNESCO extrabudgetary programmes such as CapEFA and other income including cost recovery.
53 The same reduction was applied for 2013.
54 As well as statutory costs such as GB and SC meetings, and a small part of administration.
countries context. Given the funding restrictions decisions on where to set priorities are sometimes driven by available financial coverage rather than by actual needs. This often makes anticipated planning difficult.

- **Allocation of UNESCO allocation**: As of today, the funding distribution of the overall total of 17.5 Mill USD in 35 C/5 and 18.9 Mill in 36 C/5 (approved) among the Institutes, does not proportionally reflect the scale, delivery capacity or performance of the individual Institutes, but is based on historical levels rather than on objective and measureable criteria. Many board members and external stakeholders questioned the way in which UNESCO allocated funds to the Institutes. Rather than simply maintaining historic levels, it could make more sense to allocate resources on the basis of a) performance and/or b) strategic importance. Either way, the criteria for making allocations should become more transparent and reward success.

**Recommendations:**
With the exception of few core posts UIL should be gradually moving to more flexible staffing arrangements such as ‘project appointments’ that are better aligned with the funding sources of Category I Institutes and allow for greater flexibility in the management of staff, while offering attractive conditions.

The UNESCO cost recovery policy should be rethought and a transparent and fair approach should be agreed upon jointly with HQ and the other Institutes.

There should be reflections by the ED Sector on how to best invest the overall budgetary envelope among Institutes, suitable criteria for allocation of funds should among other be performance based, to reward success and to foster striving for excellence.

5.2 Fundraising and partnerships

Given UIL’s size compared to its global mandate, working with and through partners is crucial. With the out phasing of the German institutional grant between 2000 and 2006 UIL went through a difficult period but the consistent efforts to approach the donor community helped to raise vital extrabudgetary resources to compensate the loss of core funds with increased contributions from among other UNESCO, Member States, and NGOs. The Institute reached again a stable financial situation when fully integrated into UNESCO in 2006.

The previous UIL management directed UIL’s strategic focus on ‘Africa’ and ‘Literacy’, the two UNESCO priority areas that at that time were most appealing for funding from Nordic countries. However, the increasing dependency on extrabudgetary resources also increased the risk for fragmentation of UIL’s portfolio. Furthermore to some extent UIL today still suffers the consequences of being so much focused on MDGs and EFA instead of its global mandate. In particular when considering that principal donors have their own funding structures for development cooperation and are partly moving away from funding via UNESCO, as demonstrated by examples of the UK and some Nordic countries.

Nonetheless UIL has so far been able to convince donors, and among the criteria for its success are the trust in UIL’s leadership as well as convincing implementation of extrabudgetary projects that could showcase its capacities and reliability. For example the Swiss development cooperation is expressing its appreciation and trust in UIL by providing both core and project funding, and despite reductions in
funding for other UNESCO entities. Denmark continues investing in UIL. UIL’s global perspective and comparative dimension are considered an interesting added value, and sharing of ideas and best practice from North and South, e.g., in Adult Education are so far an under resourced area, helps to change mindsets for a more innovative and out of the box thinking also in the developed countries.

With the recent financial constraints the Institute has been facing there is now more focus on increasingly establishing partnerships with developed countries (e.g., OECD), the Arab World and BRICS (e.g., China) by bringing issues in the areas of Literacy and Adult and lifelong learning that are of their concern on the agenda. For example also the EU increasingly recognizes adult literacy as an issue and shows an interest in the potential exchange with other regions. With the new Director creative and alternative solutions are sought to harness existing and create new partnerships that shall help to raise the profile of the Institute. Among these are the development of scholarships funded by famous personalities, externally funded fellowships and secondments of senior officials from member state governments. UIL continues to be active in developing funding proposals to the European Commission, and actively approaches a number of donors for specific initiatives such as the Global Learning Cities Network.

Since early discussions in 2008 there has been some advancement in the partnership with the University of Hamburg on both research cooperation and the development of an institutional MoU, backed up unanimously by the University Council. Based on an earlier contract with the host government and the UN an agreement for setting up a professorship had so far not been honored for financial reasons, but is going to be implemented as of 2012/13 with 50% covered by the University and 50% from individual faculties (i.e., education, economic sciences, natural sciences and higher education) who see a lot of interdisciplinary potential in the role of HE for LLL in areas such as climate research, sustainable development, or, natural sciences. This cooperation is also viewed as a win-win situation, for UNI Hamburg to be associated to a UNESCO Institute as a symbol of a global forum for communication and access to networks, against a strong research capacity at the university to the advantage for UIL. The possibilities of cooperation in relation to joint Master studies are so far rather limited by restrictions in public financing.

UIL is very active and takes various initiatives for fundraising by honoring relations and holding discussions with donors and potential new donors, by approaching governments, and private organizations and foundations. UIL is organizing a yearly partners day, where representatives from major donors, implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders are joining in a dialogue and holding open discussions on the Institute’s mandate, and strategic directions and gives UIL the opportunity of bringing its results closer to the attention of stakeholders and for seeking potential funding opportunities. However, UIL could better use the donor’s day if there are clearly defined strategically oriented funding objectives. The Institute has recently developed a new fundraising strategy as well as a fundraising paper for GB members to act as fundraising ambassadors to approach potential donors such as private foundations for UIL purposes, which could become the basis for a more strategic approach. With close to 80% of UIL’s resources being extrabudgetary, attention is given to engaging in partnerships for funding opportunities, rather than purely strategic and programmatic considerations. (e.g., Saudi Arabia, BRICS).

The UIL Management demonstrates the necessary fundraising skills and is exploring new options. However, specialized fundraising skills among senior professional are still lacking at the institute as they are across UNESCO. The UIL senior management has so far taken its responsibilities but senior staff has not yet fully recognized their role in fundraising and the need to convince donors with achievements.

Fundraising currently requires a substantial time investment of senior management, but it remains difficult for the Institute to compete with HQ. As highlighted earlier there is an issue linked to the lack of

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55. There is also a potential for cooperation on RVA guidelines that exist likewise for Europe, and the EU recognizes the advantage for an update within the framework of an international comparison.
support in fundraising from ED and HQ senior management with the Institute not being given enough visibility and often being left out in negotiations on frameworks agreements with key partners and potential donors. The lack of clear work division between the Institute and HQ leads to competition among different parts of UNESCO when approaching potential donors. When UIL approaches donors, the Institute occasionally keeps it confidential to avoid HQ taking the lead for other purposes, while donors e.g. the World Bank would appreciate a more coordinated institutional approach for funding requests.

Recommendations:
The review acknowledges that UIL has already developed a fundraising strategy which focuses on increasingly obtaining un-earmarked core funding as well as on increasing programme support in a few strategic areas of UIL’s work. The strategy should furthermore define what to achieve via the different types of partnerships, including financial support, collaboration in research, and so on. The partnership strategy should encompass current fundraising initiatives; proposals for new ones and be linked to UIL’s (improved) communication strategy.

UIL should continue reaching out to other important players such as the OECD who are working on similar issues and develop a balanced approach to demand-driven, policy-oriented activities funded by extrabudgetary activities, taking into account such factors as alignment with core UIL programmes and potential reputational risk.

UIL should seek ways to reinforce its fundraising skills at senior professional level, and fundraising should become part of the required competences for new external recruitment.

A recommendation for more transparent communication and collaboration in fundraising activities across UNESCO has already been made earlier in the report (see chapter 3. Quality of interaction and coordination). Furthermore the ED sector should provide more support in accessing funding from Inter-Sectoral Platforms and other extra-budgetary funding envelopes.

6. Host country arrangements

Host country relations are essential to the successful financial stability of all Category I Institutes. Relationships of UIL with the host government have always been on very good terms and were further strengthened over the last biennium. The German national authorities appreciate the presence of UIL and trust the Institutes’ achievements and the relevance for Germany’s adult and lifelong learning strategies. The host government currently supports the Institute with both institutional and project support and there are promising developments towards potentially increasing funding commitments.

With its transformation to a fully-fledged UNESCO Category I Institute in 2006, a new host country agreement was established between the German Government, UNESCO and the City of Hamburg, by changing its status as a foundation according to German Civil Law since 1952/S2, and changing its name from UNESCO Institute for Education to UNESCO Institute for Lifelong learning. Based on the strong historic legacy of the Institute with Germany, the City of Hamburg continues to provide premises and maintenance for a historic building in a very convenient location close to the University of Hamburg, and covers expenses for secretarial support of the recently established MoU as well as some expenses in return of UIL offering open access to the Library and historic archives.\(^{56}\)

UIL has experienced a difficult period in the relations between 2000 and 2006 with the out-phasing of German core funding that led to the Institute functioning in a survival mode over several years. When UIL

\(^{56}\) The funding from the City of Hamburg consists of an in kind contribution for UIL premises of $194,000 per calendar year, plus $40,000 for secretarial support of the MoU and $20,000 in support of the open access to UIL’s library.
was integrated into UNESCO, Germany had faced an administrative problem of double funding, i.e. to both UNESCO and the Institute and proposed project funding in line with then current German foreign policy. UIL’s non-accepted of ear-marked project funding for 2010 created an issue for the relations. However, more recently UIL has regained a strong backing from the German government, i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following the successful implementation of project funding in 2011 UIL convinced the German government of its capacities and to demonstrate the regained trust Germany decided to return to institutional core rather than project funding to ensure UIL’s financial stability and to enable the Institute to concentrate on the contents of its mandate.

The German National Commission is very supportive of the Institute which Germany is very interested to maintain. At the same time German authorities are raising expectations. UIL has to prove and demonstrate its added value also for industrialized countries, such as Germany, by paying attention to bridging the dialogue and mutual exchange despite the different conditions in the industrialized and developing world. UIL therefore is expected to ensure that Germany benefits from more than the prestige of hosting a UNESCO Institute.

Germany also sees particular advantages that can be drawn from the Institute’s experience for its own adult and lifelong learning policies and shows great interest in the global perspective the Institute is providing. Authorities also see an opportunity in sharing its own practice and models within a global network that is accessible via the Institute. To better promote its services and to underline the potential advantages for the host country UIL has produced a brochure in the German language to achieve better visibility among German authorities, academic and research institutes. While this is an excellent initiative, the brochure could have an even better effect if differentiated in diverse formats that are tailored to the needs and interest of different stakeholder groups.

Authorities highly appreciate the expertise and dynamic management and leadership style of the Director, who has established an open and supportive and collaborative environment with authorities in the host country. On the basis of a very trustful relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the help of UNESCO senior management there have been recent efforts to request increased core funding for the Institute. In addition the UIL Director is searching for opportunities to get funding also from different line Ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, who are more familiar with the subject matters of UIL’s mandate. UIL is not sufficiently well known within Hamburg and within Germany more broadly. The fact that it reports to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) does not help as MoFA is lacking the substantive expertise. It will therefore be important to strengthen relations with other line ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Research, for example through relevant work on adult learning with Germany or by organizing an informational seminar with the German Laender ministers of education.

There is also one anomaly for UNESCO in Germany, i.e. having 2 entities (UIL and UNEVOC) located in the same host country that are funded by different line ministries. There have been discussions ongoing since 2006 on a possible integration of UNEVOC in UIL’s structure while keeping it in Bonn. These are based on considerations that TVET is very relevant for continuing education and UIL could envisage integrating UNEVOC as a branch of UIL. However, German authorities appreciate having another international institution in Bonn and there are beliefs that located there is could attract more support. However, UNEVOC has not been subject of the current review, and the related issues have not been assessed in-depth.

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57 In particular the German dual model for TVET
58 The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre is a UNESCO category I Centre, established in 1999, with a specialized mandate in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. As such UNEVOC was not subject to the current review,
59 UNEVOC has traditionally been funded by the Min. of Education while UIL is funded by Min of Foreign Affairs.
Recommendations

UIL should proactively reach out to ministries at state level (German Laender) and to other universities beyond Hamburg to increase visibility and recognition in Germany.

UIL should continue its efforts to finding the most appropriate entry points at National authorities; with education matters becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, and structural changes possibly happening at ministerial level, respective line ministries, as well as research, development and labor ministries may have a stake especially in LLL.

Jointly with the German authorities the UNESCO ED sector needs to critically assess the effectiveness and affordability of having two decentralized bodies within the same host country. Decision making could be supported by feasibility and cost effectiveness study on the possible integration of UNEVOC into UIL.

Concluding remarks and overall recommendation

Over the last biennium UIL has been undergoing a dynamic reform process with the aim of focusing better on its strengths and on concentrating on the substantial and subject matters. With the recently developed strategy for repositioning UIL, the Institute is continuing its positive evolution in terms of strengthening its capacities and increasing the focus, outreach and effectiveness of its activities. Moreover, UIL has been rather successful in securing a sustainable funding base. The ongoing efforts towards improving its results based monitoring and reporting processes together with the ongoing critical in-depth reflection processes on how to best achieve on its mandate show that UIL is on the way of becoming a learning organization.

Nevertheless, a number of challenges remain on the path towards becoming a center of excellence in lifelong learning. Achieving a critical scale in terms of resources and capacities as well as striving for highest quality will be among the preconditions for achieving excellence and for making a tangible impact in the few priority areas that have been defined in its new strategy.

For this purpose UIL needs to fully utilize the potential of its comparative advantages and together with the Education sector define its contribution to the ED sector 2020 strategy by avoiding overlap with other UNESCO entities. Continued UNESCO support and strategic investment are essential for both sustaining the current development process and for helping the Institute to reach the most suitable operating scale that is needed to make a difference at a global level in its fields of work, while ensuring high quality services and adequate funding for its operations.

Finally the review commends that the current process of repositioning UIL and the underlying strategies developed in areas such as communication, staffing and fundraising are closely in line with the recommendations in this review. However it will be crucial that these strategies are effectively and consistently implemented, and in alignment with the reform process going on at UNESCO HQ.

UNESCO is currently in the process of developing its new C4 (medium-term strategy). Moreover, a number of structural reform processes instigated by recent events such as the Independent External Evaluation and the reduction in RP Budget, are currently under implementation. There is a clear opportunity space, a momentum for UIL, in consultation with Education Sector, to take steps to ensure that UIL’s place and role is adequately integrated in the reform process of the Organization. UIL has the potential of taking an important role in UNESCO’s education sector, and will need all the support of the sector and Member States, and the host country to fully benefit from such improved integration and cooperation.
Annexes:

Annex 1: TORs of the Review

Background

This note lays out the methodological approach to be applied in the review of Education Sector Category I Institutes.

Category I Institutes are an integral part of the Organization and as such significant elements of UNESCO’s network. They serve in their fields of specialization as international reference centers and pols of expertise with the aim to provide services and technical assistance to Member States, cooperation partners and also to the network of UNESCO Field Offices. In this context, the Education Institutes are expected to contribute directly to attaining the objectives of UNESCO’s education programme (Major Programme I), and more specifically to implementing the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA) in line with the fields of expertise defined for each Institute (referred to in 31 C/5, article 01300).

There are currently six Major Programme I Category I Institutes with diverse subject specific expertise:

- International Bureau of Education (IBE), Geneva, Switzerland, specialized in development of curriculum policy, contents and methods;
- International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris, France, specialized in the reform and reconstruction of education systems, and the promotion of relevant policy, planning and management capacities;
- Institute for Life long learning (UIL), Hamburg, Germany, specialized in adult and continuing education; (former Institute for Education)
- Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), Moscow, Russian Federation, specialized in the application of information and communication technologies in education;
- Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) Caracas, Venezuela, specialized in higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, specialized in education capacity-building in Africa;

The principles and guidelines for Category I Institutes are set out in the overall strategy for UNESCO Institutes and Centers and their Governing Bodies in the documents 33 C/19 and 171 EX/18 and clearly specify performance expectations for Category I Institutes and Centers, especially with respect to serving as centers of excellence and providing technical support and expertise in their area of specialization.

In the period 2004/2005 evaluations of 6 ED Category I Institutes and 2 Centers have been carried out and the biannual evaluation report on the activities and results of Major Programme I Institutes and Centers was presented to the 174th session of the Executive Board (174 EX/20). The latter document underlines major achievements and challenges and, among other things, recommends strengthening of the Institutes’ research function, the improvement of mechanisms and processes to enhance the coordination between Institutes, HQ and the wider UNESCO network, as well as clarifying the Institutes’ responsibility to reduce actual/potential overlaps in mandates among Institutes, with Field Offices, and with the ED sector at HQ.
Purpose

This review responds to the requests by the General Conference 30 C/ Resolution 83 and Executive Board 160 EX /Decision 6.4 for a periodic review of decentralized bodies and for submission of a biannual evaluation report on activities and results of all UNESCO decentralized bodies in the framework of UNESCO’s decentralization reform. It also responds to the Director-General’s advice to the 36th session of the General Conference, whereby she noted that during the preparation of the strategy to make IBE a center of excellence, ‘it became apparent that all Category 1 institutes are facing challenges to varying degrees, in programme coordination, administration, staffing and financing’. It would therefore be advisable to undertake an internal evaluation to address these challenges and to ensure that all Education Category 1 institutes contribute to UNESCO’s education programme in an integrated way, while maintaining their functional autonomy (36 c/18 addendum, para. 7).

The 36 C/5 Evaluation Plan foresees the review of 6 ED Category I Institutes with the aim of following up on the findings and implementation of recommendations from the 2005/2006 evaluation. A summary report of findings and recommendations shall be presented at the 190th session of the Executive Board in the fall of 2012 (tentatively). Based on these recommendations, IOS and the Education Sector will propose concrete solutions to address the key issues identified and submit them to the appropriate authorities for action. The results of the summary report, in particular in relation to any systemic issues that are identified, shall also feed into the framework of current UNESCO reform efforts.

Scope

The review will cover the following Institutes:

- International Bureau of Education (IBE), Geneva, Switzerland
- International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris, France
- Institute for Life long learning (UIL), Hamburg, Germany
- Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), Moscow, Russian Federation
- Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) Caracas, Venezuela
- International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

A key defining factor shaping the scope and approach is the current budgetary restrictions the Organization is facing. This affects the present review in two principal ways:

1) The review approach: IOS in consultation with the Education Sector have opted for a low-cost review approach instead of a more elaborate evaluation approach. The two differ in terms of costs, depth of analysis and methodological approach. In contrast to an evaluation model, a review approach does not involve elaborate and externally commissioned evaluative exercises, but constitutes a series of rapid assessments of key aspects of concern to decision makers.

2) The content and scope of the review. Given the current budgetary pressures, the review will prioritize those elements which directly relate to the Institutes’ achievements on the core mandate of the Organization.

Given the above, the review will focus on the following aspects:

1) the progress in follow-up of the evaluation recommendations resulting from the evaluation carried out in 2005/2006, in particular in relation to the following criteria:
i. the relevance and scope of Category I Institutes’ activities to UNESCO’s programme priorities in the field of education
ii. the results achieved in the previous two biennia (including indications of geographic remit and scale)
iii. the quality of interaction and coordination with HQ and the UNESCO network in regard to planning, programme implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and communication, with a view to providing mutual support and accountability and to avoid potential overlap
iv. the available financial resources (RP versus XB; quality and type of XB funding) and financial sustainability, including staffing (e.g. taking into account a minimum operating scale for effective operation)
v. the quality of organizational management
vi. the available human resources (including profiles, types and levels of staff contracts, terms and conditions)
vii. the quality of the operational environment (e.g. the host country arrangement)
viii. the composition and functioning of Governing Boards (e.g. efficiency and effectiveness).

2) the progress in the implementation of the overall strategy for Category I Institutes and Centers (2005/2006), covering aspects such as:
   i. strategic planning and monitoring frameworks developed by the Institutes, including results-based planning and reporting mechanisms
   ii. performance on the 5 core functions of UNESCO (capacity building, laboratory of ideas, clearing house, standard setter, catalyst of international cooperation)
   iii. visibility, outreach and communication.

3) the extent to which the Institutes can make a significant contribution to UNESCO’s mandate in the future and how UNESCO can better capitalize on the capacities of Category I Institutes.

Methodology

An evaluation design matrix will be constructed to fine-tune the abovementioned aspects and align them with the appropriate methods for data collection and analysis.

The following methods will be applied:

- **Document Review** (in particular a targeted analysis of the 2005 EXB Summary Report and the individual evaluation reports from the earlier exercise), building upon the systemic issues identified in the previous evaluation
- A **self-assessment** matrix filled out by senior management of the Institute
- **Field work for validation** of the self-assessment matrix and **semi-structured interviews** with key staff from Category I Institutes and (to the extent possible) relevant external stakeholders
- (Possibly the use of) **Online Surveys and/or telephone/skype interviews** to cover a larger network of key stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries
- **Validation of findings and quality control** by an external expert
Annex 2: List of documents reviewed (to be completed)
Annex 3: List of stakeholders consulted (to be completed)
Annex 4: Financial data of UIL  (source: Education Sector, data from June 2012)

1. Budget history in USD

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<td><strong>UNESCO Allocation</strong></td>
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<td>- Denmark</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>904,000</td>
<td>820,000</td>
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<td>- Germany (Host country)</td>
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<td>1,382,000</td>
<td>1,311,000</td>
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<td>premises/program)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>133,000</td>
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<td>- Nigeria</td>
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<td>- Norway</td>
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<td>- Sweden</td>
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<td>811,000</td>
<td>568,000</td>
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<td>- Other</td>
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<td><strong>Extra-budgetary and other Income</strong></td>
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<td>- UNESCO extra-budgetary programmes</td>
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<td>1,123,000</td>
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<td>- Other Income</td>
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<td><strong>Total Budget</strong></td>
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2. Expenditure by activity, absolute figures in USD

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<tr>
<td>Staff Costs</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
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<td>Programme and Activity Costs</td>
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<td>Admin &amp; Governing Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Governing body and standing committee</td>
<td>163,000</td>
<td>176,000</td>
<td>142,000</td>
<td>172,000</td>
<td>218,000</td>
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<td>- General Administration</td>
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<td>211,000</td>
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<td>604,000</td>
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<td>- Premises (2002-2009 in-kind)</td>
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<td>(448,000)</td>
<td>(542,000)</td>
<td>(544,276)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Extra-budgetary projects</strong></td>
<td>2,201,000</td>
<td>2,419,000</td>
<td>2,962,000</td>
<td>1,215,000</td>
<td>773,000</td>
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*including UNESCO staff costs 2002/2003 and 2004/2005/2006 not transferred to UIE and administered by HQ*

3. Historical breakdown: total budget, UNESCO allocation as an absolute and as a % of total budget

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<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>4,714,000</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>5,026,000</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
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<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>6,863,000</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
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<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
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<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>9,128,000</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
</tr>
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<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>8,537,000</td>
<td>2,592,000</td>
<td>3,094,000</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
<td>4,839,000</td>
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<td>UNESCO alloc (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UIL</strong></td>
<td>6,915,000</td>
<td>7,445,000</td>
<td>9,825,000</td>
<td>10,343,000</td>
<td>9,310,000</td>
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<td>1,900,000</td>
<td>2,075,000</td>
<td>2,600,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 5: (to be competed)

Excerpt from UILs Statutes

Excerpt from the rules of procedure of the UIL Governing Board
Annex 6: (to be completed)

36 C5 – first half of 2012 (excerpt from SISTER)