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## THE FINNISH SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH ON ADULT EDUCATION 70 YEARS

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## TEN YEARS OF GRUNDTVIG

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## LLINÉ REVIEW

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A WORLD OF LIFELONG LEARNING: ASIA

LlInE 4/2010 launches a thematic series where each year one issue will be devoted to a particular part of the world and the topical lifelong learning themes in that region of the globe. The issue at hand focuses on Asia, particularly South and Southeast Asia. The material is co-edited with Professor Heribert Hinzen, director of the Laos Regional Office South and Southeast Asia of the German Adult Education Association’s (DVV) international branch. Much of the work of dvv international in Asia has to do with development through lifelong learning. Material gathered by Professor Hinzen from his organization’s networks enables us to contemplate the links between learning and development and active civil society, making this an important subtheme of our issue. Other contributions draw our attention to human resource practices in Chinese companies, the history of lifelong learning in India and the effect of Confucian ideas on the concept of competences in South Korea, to mention a few examples.

Heribert Hinzen

COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE IN ADULT EDUCATION: THE CASE OF DVV INTERNATIONAL IN SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

In his own article co-editor Heribert Hinzen provides a background for the discussion on learning and development by offering a glimpse into the daily work of dvv international and its partners. At the same time the article charts the characteristics and challenges of lifelong learning in Southeast Asia.

Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan

COPING WITH REGIONAL CHALLENGES: THE ASIA SOUTH PACIFIC ASSOCIATION FOR BASIC AND ADULT EDUCATION (ASPBAE)

This contribution, from the secretary general of ASPBAE, is another insider’s view into the interplay of poverty alleviation, civil society building and adult education in the context of Asia-Pacific. Secretary general Khan charts one year of her organization’s activities, highlighting the consequences of the economic crisis on many poor countries in the Asia-Pacific. At the same time she describes how her own organization is adapting and reacting to the changes in the operational environment.

Mohammad Muntasim Tanvir

FINANCING LITERACY: MECHANISMS, DONOR STRATEGIES AND TRENDS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Of all the world’s illiterate adults, South and West Asia accounts for more than half. Governmental support for literacy suffers from neglect globally in general and especially so within the Asia-Pacific context. Mohammad Tanvir looks at the literacy situation and the financing aspects of basic education of the region, and goes on to present an appraisal of reforms and innovations that are being currently proposed to rectify the situation.

Dong-Seob Lee

LIVING FOR ONESELF OR WITH OTHERS? AN ORIENTAL VIEW ON THE KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

South Korean scholar Dong-Seob Lee draws inspiration from oriental, Confucian philosophy of learning as he proposes an alternative, holistic, process-driven model of competence development to the European Qualifications Framework.

Sylvia van de Bunt-Kokhuis

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND TALENT DIVERSITY – A CHINA CASE STUDY WHERE EAST MEETS WEST

Talent development in contemporary Chinese businesses is inspired amongst others by the multiple Intelligences theory formulated by Howard Gardner. Dutch researcher Sylvia van de Bunt shows that Gardner’s thought combines elements of both Western and Eastern culture. Traditional Chinese thought on leadership also bears many attributes of the so-called servant-leadership ideal. Dr van de Bunt examines the links between these approaches to leadership and HR management and concludes with a discussion on comparative research implications into these linkages.

Pradeep Kumar Misra

LIFELONG LEARNING IN INDIA: A CHRONICLED JOURNEY

There are two vital issues overlooked in education research concerning India: how has lifelong learning evolved over the years in Indian society, and why India still lacks an exclusive and well-defined policy of lifelong learning. Pradeep Misra’s paper follows the concept of lifelong learning through India’s long history and also discusses the need of a national policy of lifelong learning in the country.

THE FINNISH SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH ON ADULT EDUCATION 70 YEARS

Rainer Aaltonen

CHALLENGES OF ADULT EDUCATION IN A CHANGING FINLAND

To celebrate the 70th birthday of LlInE’s co-publisher, Professor Rainer Aaltonen takes a look into the status quo of Finnish adult education science.

TEN YEARS OF GRUNDTVIG

LlInE interview

MR. GRUNDTVIG LOOKS BACK AND FORWARD

The European Commission’s mobility and training programme Grundtvig is at its 10-year-mark. LlInE talks to the programme’s coordinator Alan Smith about Grundtvig’s scorecard for the past decade and future prospects.

Radu Szekely

A DECADE OF GRUNDTVIG

Radu Szekely coordinates a study of Grundtvig in-service training activities for the European Commission. He is in a good position to look back at the achievements of the programme. He argues that the aims and actual ‘fruits’ of Grundtvig, professional development, mobility and a developing European community of adult educators, are significant in times when short-term interests in vocational know-how risk marginalising the vital need for learning for life.

LlInE Reviews

Larissa Jõgi

‘SO HOW DO YOU LIKE SCHOOL?’ NEXT GENERATION VALUES ON LEARNING

Ninth Graders’ Values, Goals and Views about Learning and School. A Comparative Analysis in Three Countries: Finland, Russia, Estonia. ’ Sirkka Laihiala-Kankainen, Ulve, Kala-Arvisto, Inger Kraav & Svetlana Raschentina (Eds.)
Asia, education and development – a call for dialogue

All countries in the European Union have the obligation and mandate, and are on different levels and in a variety of approaches and experiences involved in international cooperation, and the complexities of development aid given to countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Education and lifelong learning does not play the important role it should play within the development agenda. It should be placed much higher, and we should work towards a more prominent place. Often, in the past and in present day policy making and advocacy we ask: could the professional expertise of the adult education institutions be made available to the development agencies as well as to partners in the fast and rapidly changing developing world?

It would be interesting to deepen the dialogue within adult education organisations in Europe on issues of development, and how they are responding to the changes in the world. At the time, it would be of great interest to know more about the realities and the aspirations of Asian adult education organisations and their view on cooperation, within Asia, cross border, in regional contexts, but as well in the global orientation of South to North, or East to West.

Apart from the individual cooperation of adult education organisations from country to country there is the already existing cooperation of the respective partners on a continental level: the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) has a younger, but strong sister, the Asia Pacific Association of Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE). Their cooperation within the global oriented International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is of great importance as the civil society voice on adult education on the regional and international scene. As we are preparing this thematic issue of LLinE on adult education within lifelong learning in Asia, the process of preparing for the ICAE World Assembly ‘A World Worth Living in. Adult Learning and Education – the Key to Transformation’ in June 2011 in Sweden, is under way. ASPBAE and EAEA, among other stakeholders, will have to play a major role in this process.

The Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an important process where 27 European and 16 Asian countries cooperate, and prepare for a much enlarged and deeper collaboration in the future. And this concerns all walks of life, including of course education. Whether this is deep and fast enough, and comparable to all the other sectors of life remains still to be seen. To this end, ASEM has started its own Education Secretariat, along with a number of interesting activities like ACCESS and ASEMUN-DUS in higher education especially. And the ASEMEducation and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning with its secretariat based in Denmark, has a considerable record of meetings and studies to deepen the reflection on lifelong learning in this Asia – Europe dimension. It would not be too late to explore further how the provider level of adult education organisations, especially members of EAEA and ASPBAE, and the regional organisations themselves would explore the needs and options further.

The reader of this LLinE issue will find quite a wide variety of articles discussing development in Asia, several of them with some European connection. It is thus a rich source to prepare for reflection, and future initiatives. However, we should be quite clear that this is a starting point only in several directions as we neither cover the rich field of adult education, nor can we say to cover Asia by not looking into what is emerging in Central or West Asia, or the Pacific.

But let us take it as a start, and make sure that follow-up will come. The diversity of cultures and education in the world is vast. There is lot to learn from each other. Why should this learning not include much stronger adult education organisations, and last but not least – the learners themselves. And again, the dialogue on the benefits of this exchange as well as the information on which initiatives and instruments work best, should be intensified. The organisations to follow-up on this are there. And the options to dialogue on this, and to disseminate related experiences and best practise are there as well. We just have to do it.

HERIBERT HINZEN
Co-editor of LLinE 4/2010
dv international,
Director
Regional Office South and Southeast Asia,
Vientiane, Lao PDR
Euro Crafts 21 – Developing Competencies for Sustainable Management in European Handicraft

The Euro Crafts 21-project (Leonardo da Vinci project ‘Euro Crafts 21’: project number: LLP-LDV/TOI-08-AT-0015) aggregated together 18 small and medium size companies and nine organizations from six European countries to work together for better sustainability management.

The project started in November 2008 and will end the 31st December 2010. The project’s target group consisted of trainers and teachers in vocational and professional education, entrepreneurs and executives of the handicraft and design sectors and multipliers such as consultants and chambers.

EuroCRAFTS 21 – making European handicraft sustainable

Lifelong Learning Programme

Sustainability is a megatrend and, at the same time, the main challenge of the 21st century. Businesses increasingly consider aspects of sustainability management as a factor of success for their future development.

Sustainability education is not found at all or exists only rudimentarily for the large number of employees in small and medium sized enterprises of the European handicraft branch. In the future the importance of such education will only increase.

When we are talking about the handicraft sector, we have to remember that it has a different content depending of the country. In Finland handicraft sector refers to art crafts and traditional craft work like ceramics, accessories, small scale fashion design, jewellery etc. In Central Europe handicraft industry can refer to also e.g. bakeries, hairdressers, automobile services, dental technicians, or different kinds of services for the industries.

CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

In the project, aspects of sustainable management were integrated into qualification and training concepts in the context of vocational education for small and micro enterprises of the European handicraft branch. The partnership engaged substantial know-how and competencies in the areas of innovation transfer, handicraft and design, education and sustainability management for the project implementation. The contractor organization was ‘plenum – society for holistic sustainable development’. Project coordinator came from ‘Factor 10 Institution’, both Austrian organizations. The project partners came from Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Spain and Finland (Savonia University of Applied Sciences, Kuopio University of Design). The Academy cooperated with the Taito Group, Craft Association of North-savo and Upper-Savo, Finland.

EURO CRAFTS 21 QUALIFICATION AND CONSULTING CONCEPT

The main idea of the Euro Crafts 21-project was to integrate aspects of sustainability management into the range of qualification and consulting concepts in the European handicraft sector. This was achieved through the innovation transfer of an already completed pilot project – aiming at the development and testing of an overall qualification and consulting concept for sustainability management in the handicraft branch of North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany). This concept consisted of: Train the Trainer (TrT) element, working methods and training materials.

A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

The EC21-project was divided into three main parts: Train the Trainer, pilot projects and producing a new CD-ROM and web pages for the consultancy and training. The first steps were the TrT sessions. About 50 trainers in 6 countries were trained to the use of the concept. Consulting and training sessions were organised by intensive individual and general workshops and some also included independent exercises. At the same time trainers designed new training modules exploiting best practices from cooperation with the enterprises.

All this became concrete in the main result of the project: ‘Euro Crafts 21 Qualification and Consulting Concept - CD-ROM (available on the internet: www.eurocrafts21.eu). It offers a large resource of information and working materials for sustainable management in enterprises. The two Basic Modules ‘Sustainable Development’ and ‘Self-Check Crafts-sustainability self-assessment in crafts enterprises’ show general aspects and opportunities of sustainable management. It is an instrument for trade and handicraft companies to find out how sustainably they operate.

The ‘Special Modules’ of the CD-ROM includes contents on customer needs, marketing, process management, communication, product cycle and usability, project management, innovation etc. while ‘Trainer information’ includes the Train-the-Trainer concept as a guideline for trainers and consultants for using the Euro Crafts 21 - materials in practice. The main language of the materials is English while some materials are also available in other native languages.

All the partners have plans to continue the collaboration after the project, for example in consultancy activities and further education, or in new projects and other developing activities. For further information, see: www.eurocrafts21.eu.

RAISA LEINONEN & SIRPA RYYNÄNEN

Savonia University on Applied Sciences, Kuopio Academy of Design, Finland
PISA or the Programme for International Student Assessment, is an evaluation carried out on 15-year old school pupils in thirty-or-so OECD countries, measuring the students’ performance in reading, mathematics and science. No consensus exists whether PISA is the best way to compare school systems. Nevertheless, success in the Assessment prompts international attention towards the educational system of any top-scorer. So it has been for Finland, number one from 2006: scores of foreign delegations have filed through Finnish classrooms in a quest to tease out the success factor.

At the time of writing, early December 2010, the much-awaited PISA results are just out. A newcomer dominates the scoreboard in every test. To the surprise of many pundits, Shanghai has managed to outperform all OECD countries.

The partaking of three Chinese regions, Shanghai, Hong-Kong and Macao is a PISA test drive for China. The success of Shanghai is hardly representative of the quality of schooling in all of the country but its meteor-like performance demonstrates the immense potential of the country.

LiME talked to Zhang Minxuan, Deputy Director General of Education Commission of Shanghai and coordinator of the PISA testing in November. Dr Zhang shed some additional light on the reasons the megalopolis wanted in on PISA.

The Shanghai educational system is in the middle of a huge development project. In primary and secondary schooling the city wants to diminish class sizes and enable (Ed. note: government-approved) web access for most of the students. Most of all, however, the emphasis is on encouraging new learning strategies.

According to Dr Zhang, Chinese students tend to be more passive and learn exceedingly based on memorizing as opposed to active student engagement. Dr Zhang hoped that PISA would be a trouble-shooting tool in this development work used to highlight shortcomings in learning strategies. It remains to be seen whether PISA success will diminish the sense of urgency for educational reform or just help it gain momentum.

The education development plan for the city also includes aspects of lifelong learning. In 2006 the central government declared lifelong learning to be right of everyone, wherever in the country.

At present, vocational adult education in the city is largely taken care of by Shanghai Open University, where many businesses also have their branches. Normal universities also run evening classes for the workforce. Four ‘universities’ for senior citizens represent liberal adult education in the city. Development challenges include delivering the promise of lifelong learning for all. This is no easy task in a city with a constant stream of guest workers from other parts of China and increasing demands from businesses for skills upgrades.

Shanghai, a 20-million-people megalopolis, enjoys some autonomy from central government in education matters.
Cooperation and Exchange in Adult Education: The Case of dvv international in South and Southeast Asia

dvv international is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV). The organization pursues the aim of global sustainable development through learning. Co-editor for this issue, Heribert Hinzen, heads the organization’s Regional Office of South and Southeast Asia. In this article he offers a glimpse into the work of dvv international and its partners. At the same time the article charts the characteristics and challenges of lifelong learning in Southeast Asia.

Heribert Hinzen
INTRODUCTION

Adult education and learning is a very personal affair and an obligation of society as well. It is part of the education sector, and it requires all the support and regulations as other subsectors. International cooperation helps in understanding the world, and contributes to learning from each other. *dvv international* is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV), operates nationally and internationally, and is supported since 1969 by the German Government in the non-formal education sector for development cooperation. It pursues the aim of global sustainable development, in which priority is given to combating poverty, securing peace and achieving fairer globalization in one world. The programs, projects and initiatives *dvv international* conducts in cooperation with its partners are focused on and involved in literacy and basic education, non-formal vocational training, environmental education, materials and media development, training of adult educators and capacity development. A larger part of the work is done in South- and Southeast Asia for quite some time. Many partners in several countries are involved in this cooperation, and the experiences are highly recognized. Recent changes have led to the opening of a new regional office, which is creating challenges and opportunities for further developments.

There are many forms of international cooperation in the field of adult education in Asia. You could look at UNESCO and their CONFINTEA conferences. The last pre-conference that took place in Korea provided an excellent forum for information and exchange (Manzoor, 2008). One could concentrate on the processes of Education for All (EFA) (see glossary box on page 221), the perspectives of the World Forum on Education which met first in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1999, with an even broader mission coming from the meeting in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, and study the developments since then through the Global Monitoring Reports that are published yearly. The 2006 one was on Literacy for Life, and for 2012 there will be one on skills (EFA GMR, 2005). Or one would try to understand better all the different forms of bilateral cooperation which can be cross-border, South to South, North to South, or as development aid packages in the form of bi-lateral government to government, or via non-governmental organisations (NGO) with a diversity of backgrounds (GRALE, 2009).

This article looks at a special case of a specialised institution which in the year 2009 celebrated 40 years of work (Hinzen, 2009). It is called *dvv international*, and it is the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV). It serves national, European and international goals, functions and practice. A part of its activities are run in Asia, and there are quite a number of new developments and changes ahead on which this article will concentrate.

The international work of DVV has been supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) since the late 1960s. Even today, the funding for its project work comes largely from grants from the BMZ and the Foreign Office in Germany, as well as from the European Union (EU), member countries of the EU, and other donors of public funds. *dvv international* sees itself as a professional partner working in youth and adult education for development through cooperation, and contributing its experience and resources to joint projects and constantly learning from its partners.

THE DVV AND THE VOLKSHOCHSCHULEN

The DVV (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.), founded in 1953, is the federal association of the 16 regional associations of community adult education centres (Volkshochschulen, VHS) in Germany. It represents the interests of its members and of the 1000 or so VHS at federal, European and international level.

The historical roots of the VHS go back to the beginnings of the workers’ and popular education movement in the late 19th century. Today, the VHS are the central public continuing adult education centres maintained by the local authorities; they operate nationally throughout Germany within easy access of everyone, are open to all citizens and provide a wide range of general, vocational and cultural continuing education and training. Each year, they attract some 10 million participants.

The Institute for International Cooperation is not the only subsidiary of the DVV. There is the TELC which develops and markets The European Language Certificates; it is a subsidiary company of the DVV. AGI is a media institute which presents the Adolf Grimme Prize and the Grimme Online Award; the DVV is its founder and principal shareholder. DVV is funded by different ministries in Germany, especially the Federal Ministry for Education and Research.

BEGINNINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION AND WORK

In the 1950s, shortly after the war, reconciliation and understanding between peoples were major goals of international contacts and partnerships. In the 1960s development-oriented adult education was a component of the educational aid provided to support decolonization. Contacts were quickly made, and experience exchanged with partners in Africa and Latin America, leading the DVV to establish a Department for Adult Education in Developing Countries in 1969, its name being changed in 1975 to the Department for International Cooperation. And on a global level: DVV was a co-founder of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) in 1973.

Interest in international exchanges of experience increased in the 1970s, in
response to the growing importance accorded to development cooperation, which led to greater commitments being made to partners in Africa and Latin America, and its extension into Asia. The changes in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe in the late 1980s, and the process of European integration in the 1990s, created new demands and challenges, which have been taken up since by the newly organized Institute for International Cooperation of the DVV (formerly abbreviated by IIZ/ DVV and now using devv international) in numerous initiatives and projects. (Hinzen, 1994) These included projects in the areas of intercultural learning, dialogue between Europe and Islam, crisis and conflict prevention, the fight against poverty, and European adult education beyond the European Union.

ADULT EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND COOPERATION
There are some principles, values and understandings that are guiding the work of devv international. The most interesting document to read in this respect is “Youth and Adult Education in Development Cooperation as a Contribution to ‘Social Structure Assistance’. Strategic Aims and Service Profile of devv international” (devv international, 2010). It contains the discussion on how adult education contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development as these aims and issues are related to the German national budget vote where devv international’s work is mainly funded.

Information leaflets, publications and the Institutes website have again and again stressed major aims and values: education is seen as a universal human right. It is a basic need and an essential prerequisite for development. Adult education plays a key role in the process of lifelong learning by offering general, vocational, cultural and academic continuing education. As a result of globalization, technological change and the development of knowledge and information-based societies, there is a need for lifelong learning. This is increasingly the case in both developing countries, countries in transition and industrialized countries.

Successful education systems, even more so if they aspire lifelong learning opportunities, are built on four equal pillars: school education, vocational education and training, universities and adult education; flexible transition between these pillars is essential. Non-formal and out-of-school education programmes for young people and adults fulfil complementary functions. Projects which deliver participation in social development by broad sections of the population, especially the poor, and strengthen partners’ capacity for self-help, have a positive impact on the development of social institutions.

The guidelines of devv international emphasise adult education and
• its emancipatory importance for social and individual development
• as an important component of lifelong learning, providing orientation and training leading to qualifications
• the historical and cultural factors governing its aims, content, forms and methods
• the aim of enhancing professional quality through cooperation based on partnership.

devv international pursues the goal of global sustainable development, in which priority is given to combating poverty, securing peace and achieving fairer globalization in one world. The organization clearly identifies its work with the interests of the poorer sections of the population in its partner countries. In fulfilling its national and international role, the DVV follows the principles of the promotion of women and gender equality.

MAIN FOCUS OF OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES
Before looking into the specific issues related to the Asia region it may be important to provide some deeper understanding of the global perspective. For devv international there can be no doubt that institutional improvements in the provision of policy, legislation and funding, and the professionalization in theory and practice, are crucial elements of successful projects in development cooperation for the adult education sector. They require cooperation with ministries, universities, specialist organizations, voluntary associations and NGOs. Cooperation in Asia, as elsewhere, aims at strengthening providers, enlarging their services for learning activities and skills development. The emphasis in the content of the work is on basic education and literacy; health education and AIDS prevention; environmental education and sustainable development; human rights and democratization; migration and integration; managing conflicts and crisis prevention.

The vocational focus provides a bridge between education and employment, aims at integrating people into work and occupational positions, works towards improving incomes, and provides training for working in self-help groups and cooperatives.

The programmes, projects and initiatives conducted jointly with our partners
• focus on initial and in-service training for adult educators
• facilitate practice-based evaluation and research
• promote the development of teaching and learning materials
• support the institutional and material infrastructure
• offer advice on organizational development
• contribute to recognition of adult education through lobbying activities
• foster regular cooperation with regional and international organizations.

Among the partners are ministries, government agencies and university institutions, and committed NGOs and professional associations.

Projects in individual countries are combined into regional and programme areas, which are jointly planned, managed and evaluated to establish their
impact. The country and regional offices of dvv international in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe structure the local cooperation with partners.

The international programme Education for All (EFA), the International Conferences on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (see glossary box on page 221) provide important guidelines for cooperation in joint activities and networking. What is important, and often missing, is the careful analysis of the linkages between their goals and agendas (Duke & Hinzen, 2008). For all those working in youth and adult education and learning it was again a rather surprising, and of course disappointing, reality that in the recent 2010 MDG Summit the whole sector of adult education and learning was again kept out of any of the more direct goals and indicators, leaving the question unanswered whether processes and activities towards development could not be more successfully implemented by better educated and trained youth and adults with a lifelong learning perspective.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS AND COOPERATION IN ASIA

Let us start by looking at the very East and Southeast of Europe, its borders and neighbouring countries in an historical context. When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s new options of cooperation developed for dvv international in the countries which later called themselves the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). There is now a strong cooperation with countries of the Southern Caucasus in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia (Kvatchadze, 2009). These countries are members of the Council of Europe, and the adult education partners are members of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

Cooperation with countries like Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in Central Asia started in 2002 when the regional office in Tashkent was opened, and there is a stronger move now that partners from these countries become members of the Asian South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPCA). A most recent conference on ‘Quality Assessment in Adult Education’, organised by the regional office in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, provided the chance for representatives of adult education NGOs in Central Asia to meet colleagues from ASPCA, to deepen the ties for further cooperation. These ties will again be strengthened in November in Jakarta, Indonesia, where ASPCA hosts a workshop on their quality framework. Participants will come from all over Asia Pacific, and re-meet partners from Central Asia. These are important new ventures, and they are complementing efforts despite the differences when you are looking at developing and transformation countries, especially in the area of vocational education and training for youth and adults (Gartenschläger, 2009).
Ever since 2002 *dvv international* is joining efforts to help develop adult education in Afghanistan, and ever since its foundation in 2005 ANAFE, the Afghan National Association for Adult Education, are together running a project of support to adult education which is specifically designed as a contribution to stability, security and reconstruction of the country. As can well be imagined from the more than difficult situation in most parts of the country, there is a serious attempt by Afghan partners, including the Afghan Women Network, to implement literacy work on several levels, empowerment of women, income generating and skills training activities, all backed by close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the University. All this work has been funded by the Foreign Office in Germany.

**EARLY STARTS IN SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

However, the main developments of cooperation with Asia began already in the middle of the 1970s. ASPBAE, which was founded in 1964 developed a range of new activities with a series of regional conferences with a first kick-off in Chiangmai, Thailand in 1977. This is when the first agreement between ASPBAE and *dvv international* came into implementation (Duke, 2003). This was almost parallel to the beginnings of work in several Asian countries:

- 1976 cooperation of *dvv international* with partners in India went ahead. Initially KANFED, the Kerala Association for Non-formal Education in Development, and a little later Seva Mandir in the state of Rajasthan received support in areas of literacy, and the training of adult educators. In the mid 1980s the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) joined the partnership, and is there until today. The areas of cooperation have changed according to different priorities. However, the capacity development of individuals, the support to organisations, and the running of publications, research, and evaluation has stayed on until today. Other partners in India are UNNATI, the Organisation for Development Education, working in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in 1993 SAHAYI, the Centre for Collective Learning and Action, which was set up in 1990 in Kerala, entered cooperation with *dvv international*. NIRANTAR, a Centre for Women and Education based in Delhi, and working in Uttar Pradesh joined in 2003. Their work is highly recognized, and they received a UNESCO prize for literacy last year.
- Work in Nepal started in 1997 when World Education / Nepal became partner for extensive work in literacy. Since 2004 DidiBahini, a Nepalese women’s NGO is the only partner of *dvv international*, and through their work towards empowerment of women they constructed a network of resource centres in which they provide services in literacy and create opportunities where women inform each other and exchange experiences.
- Cooperation in the Philippines followed in 1991 when ASPBAE held its general Assembly ‘Adult Education in the 90s: Unity in Diversity’ in Tagaytay, and several Philippine NGOs participated. Two of those were the Centre for Environmental Concerns (CEC) which, until today, has remained an important partner with outreach activities in several provinces, and CWR, the Centre for Women Resources, which is a distinct gender and women’s support organisation. PILCD, the People’s Initiative for Learning and Community Development, is based in the North of the country; they have just been honored by EAEA, the European Association for the Education of Adults and the Grundtvig Award for innovations in adult education outside Europe. Finally, Community Awareness and Services for Ecological Concern (CASEC) is an organisation that carries out practical activities and training to support rural self-help groups and preserve the environment and traditional cultures in Bohol and surrounding islands.

The World Bank funded large scale non-formal education projects in Thailand and Indonesia in the late 1970s where ASPBAE played a very important role to bring inputs as ‘oil to heavy machinery’, and bridging the gap between Governments and their efforts to develop and strengthen the non-formal sector. Thailand today is known for their strong non-formal education framework, based on non-formal Education Legislation, the provision of finances, their institutionalized system of non-formal education centres and reading rooms with literacy and skills training opportunities across the country.

- In 1998 *dvv international* started work in Indonesia with PPSW, the Center for Women’s Resources Development based in Jakarta which thus could enlarge its work in women’s education centres towards providing advice on setting up self-help groups in urban and rural areas and training to strengthen these institutionally. In 2001 cooperation with Perkumpulan Sada Ahmo (PEASADA), a NGO mainly working in Northern Sumatra, again with a clear focus on women, their rights and on gender equality, could be added. The Dana Mitra Maluku Foundation (DMM), based in Ambon, became a partner in 2005, and set up training centres on several islands, to train in organic farming, and entered seaweed farming as an income and food supply venture. The Flores Institute for Resources Development (FIRD) followed as a network of NGOs working on several islands. Based in Jakarta, the South East Asia Popular Communication Programme (SEAPCP) is a network of experts in community organising from several countries in Southeast Asian countries that use popular media, regional exchanges and training.

It has been mentioned earlier that *dvv international* receives most of its funding from the German Government via the BMZ, or the Foreign Office. All
Official Development Assistance (ODA) of countries in the OECD (Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development), including Germany, Finland and the United States, have to follow certain common rules. Recently there has been debates and decisions on the criteria of development aid giving and that of aid receiving countries, especially with the list used by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, and the range of implications of partner countries as well as priority thematic areas within bilateral agreements. As a reaction to these debates, dvv international took the decision in late 2009 to phase out the country programs in India, Indonesia and the Philippines in 2011, and not to include these countries in the Asia proposal to the BMZ for the years 2012 to 2014 again. No doubt, this phasing out is a very difficult situation for all the partners involved.

NEW PARTNERS IN LAO PDR AND CAMBODIA

An evaluation on the strategic partnership of ASPBAE and dvv international was implemented in 2007, and as one of the results BMZ suggested to have Laos and Cambodia as new partners, and a regional office for the work in South- and Southeast Asia in Vientiane, the capital of Lao PDR.

Both countries still suffer from the legacy of the Vietnamese war. In Cambodia an unknown figure of between 2 and 3 million people died during and after the Pol Pot regime of the Khmer Rouge. That means that in almost every family you have people that suffered, and were involved in either way, directly or indirectly. The struggle over land ownership is tense, especially in the absence of land titles. Laos is the most heavily bombed country on earth per capita, receiving more than Japan and Germany together in the Second World War. Out of the more than 200 Million bombs and mines 80 Million still remain unexploded to this day. Every day people are killed or hurt, especially children while playing in the forest or collecting scrap metal, and farmers while working on the field or searching for new land to be cleared for farming. Both countries deserve the best international cooperation possible.

The overall objective of the BMZ funded project for Laos and Cambodia is ‘Adult Education contributes to poverty alleviation and sustainable development’, which in the log frame is followed by the project objective ‘Strengthening of an efficient structure of adult education organisations, which contributes to a development-oriented system of adult education through networking, adequate concepts, functional programs and solid institutions’. On the result level this should lead to the following outcomes:

1. Adult education is improved and adult educators are trained.
2. The institutional capacities of partners and networks in the region and in the countries are strengthened.
3. Policy dialogue and advocacy work on local, national, regional and international level foster the recognition of adult education in policies and budgets.

Looking at the implementation level at this early moment of the projects a few remarks can be made that are not in any way trying to assess or evaluate outcomes:

- In Lao PDR the main partner is the Department for Non-formal Education (DNFE) of the Ministry of Education. In 2010 several activities with the DNFE commenced: A national conference on new policies in non-formal education brought together the national, provincial and district level of all important offices and their staff; a workshop looked into the organisation and management of provincial non-formal education centres; literacy primers and handbooks for teachers are printed. Together with the Weltungerhilfe a non-formal education component is introduced into a broader agricultural and community development project in Southern Savannaketh province which started with a base line survey on the situation in the villages, and the interests of the people, including their learning and training needs. A similar approach is taken with two other German organisations, the GTZ and DED (German Technical Cooperation and German Development Service) in the area of non-formal vocational training, using the infrastructure of the Integrated Vocational Training Centres and of vocational schools to provide skills training on district and village level. Again, a proper training needs analysis is in place. Additionally, the Vocational Teacher Training Division, Faculty of Engineering of the National University of Laos is getting involved through a tracer study of what has happened to those who were trained earlier, and this may even inform the process of curriculum revision. All in all, dvv international is well placed in the framework of the bilateral governmental Lao-German Cooperation where education and training is an important feature. As a member of the Education Sector Working Group there is additionally an excellent chance to inform and exchange with all other international stakeholders in the country.

- In Cambodia there is currently an interesting process of Cap EFA (Capacity Development on Education for All) going on, organised in close cooperation between the Ministry of Education and their DNFE and UNESCO Phnom Penh office, concentrating on non-formal education, whereas in Laos the CaP EFA has three more components including teacher training, primary education, and vocational training. In the Cambodian context substantial groundwork is done through Cap EFA, starting with a capacity assessment of the Ministry on national and provincial level and a study on the providers of non-formal education. dvv international is in a consulting role, and prepared for deeper cooperation. However, several activities are in cooperation with other partners. It started with NEP, the
NGO Education Partnership, a member organisation, providing services for all organisations running education projects in Cambodia. *dvv international* has agreed on a special component covering initiatives towards more and better non-formal education. YRDP, the Youth Resource Development Programme is a partner for a project on ‘Youth Engagement in Inter-Ethnic and History for Peace and Justice’, an important area of engagement of the DED within the reach of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, and which may result into more projects with other partners in this field of reconciliation and remembering for the future (Ivanova & Klingenberg, 2010). To add on, there are scholarships for the Master of Education Program of the Royal University of Phnom Penh in their current specialisation of leadership, organisation and management, and consultations on the possibilities of a new specialisation looking more into the requirements of non-formal, youth, adult, and continuing education. An environmental and community development project with a non-formal education component is supported in the Northern Ratanakiri province in cooperation with Welthungerhilfe.

**THE ROLE OF THE NEW REGIONAL OFFICE**

Regional offices of *dvv international* serve a multitude of functions. A major one is to add regional cooperation components on top of all the in-country collaboration with partners. Apart from all the management and administrative advantages, the chance to provide technical expertise based on experiences related to adult education in Germany, in Europe, and indeed from all the global alliances is crucial.

In the case of the South- and Southeast Asian office the first and foremost regional cooperation is with ASPBAE, the major regional organisation for adult education NGOs. In consultation with ASPBAE thematic areas and future initiatives for the regional office were identified, and collaborative work on them has started:

1. Policy, legislation and financing – looking at existing frameworks, new policies within lifelong learning, laws and regulations, and support structures.
2. Universities and their training of adult educators – comparing the diversity of approaches and degree programs, exploring options for cooperation.
3. Non-formal vocational education and re-training – looking at the world of work, and what skills are relevant for jobs and life, how to access and acquire them.

For results let us briefly look at the last example managed by the Centre for Environmental Concern (CEC) from the Philippines playing the convenors role. A new network has created its Statement of Purpose, including the logo and a name as CLIMATE Asia Pacific (Climate Change Learning Initiative Mobilizing Action for Transforming Environments in Asia Pacific). The network is just completing a scoping study on environmental education materials that are available in the countries of the region, the construction of a digital library with all relevant environmental education documents, which will be uploaded on the virtual platform, the preparation of case studies in
ten countries, and a regional consultation.

Another major joint venture of partners (ASPBAE, PRIA and dvv international) in the region is the development of a virtual platform, a space for sharing best practice and the collection and dissemination of materials (texts, documents, videos) from all partners in the region, later to include more communicative forms of exchange as well, and link all the many websites of partners for the development of cooperation, and at the same time of policy and practice of adult education. The platform is open to everyone, hosted and administered by PRIA as www.adultlifelonglearning.org.

Two other areas of regional collaboration should be mentioned. One is based on thematic areas. Let us take the whole issue of skills, be it as life skills, livelihood skills, or vocational skills, placed in the context of competencies and qualification frameworks, especially when defining the inclusion and rightful place for informal or non-formal capacities. In the Asia Pacific region there are several organisations, networks and groups that are working on related issues. Major stakeholders are ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) or SEAMEO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation) who have got involved in preparing for regional and national frameworks. The Asia-Europe Meeting is in the background of the ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning which is currently undertaking several networks and researches.

The regional office of UNESCO in Bangkok is supporting End-of-decade notes for EFA, and those looking into skills and literacy are of great relevance for dvv international and its partners. And some of this work will feed into the EFA GMR 2012 which will be on skills, hopefully in the broader context of life and livelihood skills for youth and adults, contributing to income generation, poverty reduction, and a better life in general.

A second area is formed by the frequent chances for cross border, country to country, or regional meetings, workshops or visits. Three could be mentioned here: A smaller initiative was taken by the regional office to bring together partners from Laos and Cambodia as well as ASPBAE in order to inform each other on what works, and how help could be provided horizontally such as ‘sharing for learning’. On the occasion of the Shanghai International Forum on Lifelong Learning which took place as an UNESCO event in the context of the EXPO in 2010, travel fellowships were provided for about ten colleagues from different countries and organisations to contribute to the first follow-up meeting to CONFINTEA VI. And finally, a substantial group of colleagues from Laos, Cambodia and other countries of the region could participate in the International Conference on Languages, Education and the MDGs thus getting a first hand and up-to-date knowledge of the current policies and practices in these extremely important areas.

**STILL A LONG WAY TO GO**

No doubt, the processes of globalization are moving fast and deep. They reach almost everywhere, and touch all sectors of life. Some of them come earlier and others may follow a little later. But there seems to be no way to escape, and actually no reason to try either. This could be true for globalization in the cultural domain, including education, learning and training.

International cooperation in the field of adult education and lifelong learning should also be growing faster and deeper. It is therefore of utmost importance to reflect on where we are, and therefore exchange on the different and diverse range of opportunities and experiences in respect to adult and lifelong learning. This is true for developing countries, so-called developed countries, or countries in transition (World Bank, 2003).

**dvv international** is operating nationally and internationally, at least trying to comply with the global challenges. It may not be that each village and town in Germany that has a VHS as the local adult education centre to provide learning opportunities and skills training for youth and adults throughout life is in dire need of access to the global world of learning. However, it does not need more than to plug in the computer even in the remotest place and you are connected to a world of information and learning. And even this is a challenge for the adult education institutions - or a chance.

One project of **dvv international** which is being run now for more than 30 years also is what is called ‘Global Learning at Volkshochschulen’. There is an attempt to assist younger and older participants of these local community adult education colleges to understand the changes in the world, and provide opportunities of learning. This includes the global orientation and work of **dvv international**. Several evaluations and materials show that often there is a sense of surprise that adult education and learning is something you find everywhere in the world. The phenomenon exists globally, but varies across regions and cultures. As we hear often in this part of Asia – , same, same, but different.

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Coping with Regional Challenges:
The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)

This article is an introduction into the work of ASPBAE (Asian South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education), a regional non-governmental organization (NGO) which now comprises of more than 200 members from about 30 countries. ASPBAE works towards poverty alleviation and a stronger civil society in the Asia-Pacific region emphasising the role of adult education and learning. The organization has a broad scope of activities on a diversity of thematic concerns, predominantly realized through a set of regional interventions which are carefully planned, implemented, and evaluated. This article looks at the context in the region, and at what has happened in the year of 2009 through the lense of a secretary general on to four broad priority areas and provides selected examples of activities and events.

Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan
THE CONTEXT: DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE CRISIS

The year 2009 began with a high degree of trepidation: the world was after all reeling from the impact of the global financial crisis. The MDG (Millennium Development Goals) (see glossary box on page 221) report observed that while data on the full impact of the crisis is not yet available, studies already reveal a trend of stagnation and reversal in meeting the MDG goals on account of the crisis.

- Advances in the fight against extreme poverty from 1990 to 2005 are likely to have been stalled. During that period, the number of people living on less than $1.25 a day decreased from 1.8 billion to 1.4 billion. In 2009, an estimated 55 million to 90 million more people will be living in extreme poverty than anticipated before the crisis.
- Likewise, the encouraging trend in the eradication of hunger since the early 1990s was reversed in 2008, largely due to higher food prices. The prevalence of hunger in the developing regions is now on the rise, from 16 per cent in 2006 to 17 per cent in 2008.
- The financial crisis and high prices for primary commodities have eroded labour markets around the world. The ILO forecasts that the global unemployment rate in 2009 could reach between 6.3 per cent and 7.1 per cent translating to an additional 24 million to 52 million unemployed people worldwide, of which 10 million to 22 million will be women.
- The crisis has also meant dramatically reduced opportunities for new entrants into the workforce at almost all levels of skill – giving rise to massive unemployment of young people (Chibber, Gosh & Palanviel, 2009)
- The crisis disproportionately impacts on the poor. Studies on the impact of the financial crisis on the poor by UNDP have indicated that during 2006 to 2008, the purchasing power of poor households in the Asia-Pacific region decreased on an average by 24% while that of rich households fell only by 4%.
- What is more worrying is that in view of the higher expenditure on food and fuel, the poor households are compelled to cut down their expenditure on education and health (www.undp.org).
- While richer countries can respond to the crisis with large fiscal interventions, most developing countries, especially the poorest, lack fiscal capacity to respond.
- To raise user charges for public services in order to reduce fiscal deficits has meant reduced access to crucial public services. When combined with the effect of losses of livelihood and wage incomes, the effect can be disastrous.
- In Least Developed Countries, the drying of ODA (official development assistance) (see glossary box on page 221) in the aftermath of the crisis has also played an extremely adverse role in reducing the possibility of countercyclical fiscal policy.
- Richer country governments and successive summits of the Group of 20 and Group of 8 have moved financial mountains to stabilize financial systems, but have provided an aid molehill for the world’s most vulnerable people. Much of the reported support provided to the poorest countries is in fact repackaged or reprogrammed aid.
- Violence and conflict continued to characterize the context of the Asia-Pacific in 2009 – bringing untold misery, suffering and death to thousands of people. Conflict breeds poverty for millions. Violent conflict also denies millions their right to education and poses a great barrier to achieving the EFA goals.
- The effects of climate change have been catastrophic to many communities in several parts of the Asia-Pacific region. Several areas of the Pacific small island states are in clear danger of sinking; whole livelihoods and settlements threatened with extinction.

THE SCORE CARD ON EDUCATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Education for All is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. Launched at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, it was evaluated after ten years and found, that many countries were far from having reached this goal. The international community which reconvened in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 thus re-affirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by the year 2015 and agreed on six key education goals to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015.

Every year the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR 2010) is providing an analysis of the developments towards reaching the EFA goals. This time the theme was ‘Reaching the Marginalized’. Embedded in the report are the most up-to-date data on developments in education. Here are some highlighting the situation of the Asia-Pacific region:

- The Copenhagen conference in December 2009 provided no confidence that catastrophic climate change will be averted or that poorer countries will be given the money they need to respond. Leaders put off agreeing a legally binding deal until the end of 2010, leaving open the potential for them to backtrack even on the weak agreements reached.
against the declining world trend.

- The gender gap in primary education is narrowing. In South and West Asia, the expansion of primary education has gone hand in hand with progress towards gender parity. Getting girls into school demands concerted action to change attitudes and household labour practices. Keeping them in school once they reach puberty poses another layer of challenges, especially in countries where early marriage is common and where girls’ disadvantage interacts with other aspects of marginalization, such as poverty or ethnicity.

- The global crisis may have pushed skills up the political agenda but vocational programmes, by and large, still suffered from a combination of under financing, poor design and weak links to labour markets. Traditional apprenticeships and on-the-job training are by far the most important routes to skills development for the majority of South and West Asian youth, but they tend to be biased against women and the very poor.

**Traditional apprenticeships and on-the-job training are the most important routes to skills development for South and West Asian youth.**

- Some 8.4 million primary school teachers have to be recruited and trained worldwide to replace existing teachers expected to retire or leave their posts before 2015; South and West Asia accounts for 19% of that total.

- A new data set on education marginalization by the GMR 2010 reveals that factors leading to marginalization do not operate in isolation: wealth and gender intersect with language, ethnicity, region and rural-urban differences to create mutually reinforcing disadvantages.

- The global EFA financing gap stands at around US$16 billion for basic education: South and West Asia alone accounts for 27% of this gap, or US$4.4 billion.

**PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND INTERVENTIONS**

It was within the context of these compelling challenges in the region and globally, that ASPBAE and its partners pursued their work in 2009, persisting in their mission to advance the right of all citizens to quality education and learning opportunities throughout their lives – towards poverty eradication, sustainable development and a lasting peace.

**LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN ADULT AND BASIC EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

ASPBAE continued its twin tracks of leadership and capacity development in: 1) advancing innovative, pro-poor, rights-based and gender sensitive adult education practice especially attentive to the needs of marginalized groups in the Asia-Pacific region; and in 2) demand-driven, context-based capacity-building for campaigns and advocacy on the right to adult education and on EFA. The main achievements in the year are:

1. **Expanded efforts to build a wider pool of trainer/facilitators in the Asia-Pacific region**

   ASPBAE has a long-term multi-level strategy to build and expand the ‘leadership corps’ in the region, committed to advancing the right of all to learn, and to promote the learning needs and interests especially of the most marginalized groups. In this context, ASPBAE conducts a Basic Leadership Development Course periodically to enhance the effectiveness and capability of ASPBAE and the education movement in the region, to further strengthen the adult education network and to ensure leadership succession within ASPBAE and the adult education civil society movement in the Asia Pacific.

   The ASPBAE Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC) was organized in Chiangmai, Thailand. The curriculum of the BLDC was reviewed and customised to suit the training needs of the participants and aligned with ASPBAE’s current priorities and strategies, and reviewed to ensure a stronger underpinning of the framework on education for sustainable development in its content areas.

   The BLDC currently covers the following content areas: principles of adult learning, frameworks of and for transformative adult learning, the global and regional development and policy context for education, leadership in learning organizations, network-building, policy advocacy in education and learning, and an overview of ASPBAE’s work in the region.

   The efforts to build the ASPBAE Training Institute for Empowerment and Solidarity (ASPBAE TIES) gathered momentum in the year. The design and curriculum for the NEXT – an intensive 18-month long learning process – was mooted by the Core Faculty in its meeting on in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The NEXT, envisaged to build a cadre of regional trainer-facilitators will involve essentially three components: 1) a Regional Facilitators Course; followed by 2) a one year long Mentoring programme at the national level and opportunities for internship and apprenticeship in ASPBAE’s sub-regional and regional events and processes; and 3) at the end of the mentoring phase, a Sharing and Learning Meet to harvest, share and consolidate learning based on the experiences of the participants during the course of the 18 month period.
2. Re-alignment of ASPBAE thematic programmes towards a common platform advancing Quality Adult Education and Learning

The Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) revealed serious challenges in advancing the case for the right to learn. It has been a challenge to define what constitutes adult learning and adult education in the vast differences in learning contexts of the world; more so in defining what ‘quality’ adult education and learning means.

These difficulties in arriving at common understandings or frameworks of understanding had blunted efforts of adult education advocates to argue against the predominant tendency to push adult education as the ‘poor quality education option for the poor’. Efforts to argue for greater funding for adult literacy that is meaningful has also been challenged by the inability to provide robust evidence of what constitutes ‘quality’ adult education – impeding reliable estimates of the financing requirement to meet policy and programme targets in adult education. The exemplary attempt of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) to define benchmarks on quality adult literacy provide a much needed starting point to define clear standards for quality adult learning in its various expressions and milieus. The adult literacy benchmarks identified spanned the areas of costs per learner, public spending on adult literacy, ratios for learners and facilitators, appropriate wages for trainers, to name some.

In this context, ASPBAE organized a Regional Workshop on ‘Building a Shared Understanding of Quality Adult Education in the Asia Pacific’ in Jakarta, designed to bring together ASPBAE members active in its thematic programmes to deliberate on ‘what constitutes quality adult education in the Asia Pacific region’ - drawing from the very rich experience of CSOs in the region and likewise harvesting from ASPBAE’s own work in the thematic programmes spanning adult literacy, women’s education, peace education, HIV/AIDS education, migrants education and citizenship education. Following intensive discussions, the group collectively arrived at a framework for analyzing ‘quality adult education’ – centered in a rights-based, gender-just and empowerment core principles - envisaged to guide a proposed benchmarking process of quality adult education in the Asia-Pacific region.

3. Enhanced internal capacities to respond to the emergent issue of climate change, within the framework of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Cognisant of the serious impacts of climate change in the region, ASPBAE has begun to develop its strategy and an appropriate response to the crisis. Its partnership with the Asia Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) as a Centre of Excellence for advancing the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) provided a very useful space to begin to craft a strategic response. The spaces also offered by the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference which included the 15th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) in the region and globally also facilitated ASPBAE interaction with networks and civil society organizations working on the issue of sustainable development and climate change from an education perspective.

ASPBAE participated in the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (see glossary box on page 221), convened in Bonn, Germany. The UNESCO World Conference was organized to take stock of the achievements of the first half of the UNESCO Decade of ESD (DES) and identify challenges that need to be addressed in the second half of the DESD. The Conference agreed on a Bonn Declaration which included a call to continue to develop stronger links between EFA and ESD. This is particularly relevant for ASPBAE: with its ongoing campaign and capacity-building work, it is in a vantage position to work with its membership and partners to see that achieving EFA goes hand in hand with the achievement of quality education informed by the principles of ESD.

ASPBAE also participated in a workshop organized by the Centre for Environment Concerns, Philippines (CEC) and ASPBAE member, entitled ‘Training of Asian Grassroots Trainers on Climate Change’ in Bangkok to coincide with the UN climate change talks leading to the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. The workshop brought together 18 grassroots organizations implementing local and national climate change projects.

4. Deepened national level support for education campaign coalitions in institutional strengthening for effective education advocacy

The Asia Pacific Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) was launched in 2009 with ASPBAE hosting its Regional Secretariat in the Asia-Pacific. The CSEF is an initiative steered by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) which aims to provide support to the core work of national education coalitions in EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) (see glossary box on page 221) and FTI eligible countries over a 2 year period so that they can more fully engage in the development of education sector programs with government and donors and track the progress of national governments and local donor groups in working towards the EFA goals. The EFA Fast Track Initiative is a global partnership set up to mobilize the resources needed to meet the financing gaps in achieving the EFA 2015 goals and targets. The partnership encourag-
es low-income countries to develop national education plans and to commit greater political and financial resources; in turn, donor countries commit to provide the necessary funding and expertise to reach national education targets.

The CSEF is steered regionally through three regional coalition partners of GCE (ANCEFA in Africa, ASPBAE in Asia and CLADE in Latin America). It is envisaged that within the three years of this programme, the foundation for setting up National Civil Society Education Funds be built towards greater sustainability of education advocacy work. NCSEFs are envisaged as country-level civil society-led Funds that will offer sustained financial support to CSOs engaged in education policy and advocacy work so they are able to participate effectively in education policy and can hold governments to account in meeting their obligations to secure the right to education for all their citizens. GCE is in dialogue with donors and other agencies on the ways to generate resources for these Funds. While there can be diverse ways of generating these, one approach proposed involves a restructuring of aid to education so a percentage of aid is additionally earmarked to support civil society advocacy work for education.

5. Sustained sub-regional and regional capacity-building for education advocacy and lobbying

Within the year, ASPBAE continued to provide mentoring and over-all support to education campaign coalitions and member organisations of ASPBAE involved in education advocacy work through sub-regional and sub-regionally coordinated capacity-building activities. A South Asia Workshop on Budget Tracking Toolkit was organized in Islamabad, Pakistan in February 26-28, 2009 to deliberate on the key content areas of the Budget Tracking Toolkits developed from the Education Watch.

practice. The toolkit is expected to be finalized within March 2010, after which it will be shared widely.

6. Capturing the experience and lessons from the ‘Real world’ approach to capacity-building for education advocacy

From 2003, ASPBAE, along with the Global Campaign for Education and its other regional partners has been pursuing an initiative called the Real World Strategies (RWS) programme, designed to provide structured facilitation and capacity-building support to Southern civil society groups wishing to improve the focus, coherence and creativity of their advocacy efforts to increase impact at the national level and get countries on track in achieving all the EFA goals and targets. Innovating a capacity-building approach for advocacy, ASPBAE has offered demand-driven, context-based support to national education campaign coalitions – where capacity-development was embedded in the ‘real world’ of education campaigning, lobbying and advocacy.

Approaching the end of the second phase of the programme, structured information and experience exchanges between the RWS programme and the academic world, specifically the University of Amsterdam’s International Development Studies Masters’ Programme were organized for deeper organizational learning on education advocacy partnerships especially between teachers unions and NGOs. The Transnational Advocacy Research Project was undertaken with ENet Philippines and NCE India in 2009. Graduate students from the University of Amsterdam’s IDS programme documented the experience of the two coalitions in education advocacy, especially highlighting the partnerships with teacher unions in education campaigns. These studies were envisaged to be part of the evaluative exercises conducted with the Government of Netherlands Directorate of Development Cooperation (DGIS) who are funding RWS.

In late 2010, ASPBAE began to develop an RWS Creative Narratives and Knowledge Sharing Project for joint reflection and documentation of the RWS 2 (2006-2010) experience. Planned as a capacity-building activity for coalitions as well, the exercise is envisaged to 1) Gather the experiences, milestones, stories, and learnings of national coalitions; 2) Transform the RWS-2 knowledge-base into a popular advocacy material intended for reporting, publication and dissemination; 3) Enhance capacities within the national coalitions in the areas of internal evaluation and creative documentation; 4) Develop a baseline of inspiring practices on education policy advocacy for campaigners and actors.

POLICY ADVOCACY FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND EDUCATION FOR ALL

7. From rhetoric to action: Asia-Pacific civil society advocacy for concrete adult education policy gains in CONFINTEA 6

ASPBAE sustained a strong drive through 2009 to secure meaningful outcomes to CONFINTEA 6 to better secure the right of all citizens, especially those from marginalized groups, to quality adult education and learning opportunities throughout their lives. Several preparatory processes were thus launched in 2010 to strengthen the possibility of policy change gains for adult education, during the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), in Belem, Para, Brazil.

Global Action Week: As part of the CONFINTEA preparatory work, ASPBAE members and education campaign coalition partners participated in the Global Action Week on Education led by the Global Campaign for Education.
A WORLD OF LIFELONG LEARNING: ASIA

(GCE) which focused on youth and adult literacy. As a part of this event, education coalitions around the world organized the Big Read and other innovative events to highlight the power of lifelong learning.

BoCAED: ASPBAE collaborated with dvv international, EAEA and ICAE in organizing the ‘Conference on Financing Adult Education for Development’ in Bonn, Germany. The conference brought together key representatives, decision makers and practitioners in adult education and lifelong learning with representatives of donor agencies, ministries and foundations. The Conference participants agreed on a Bonn Declaration on Financing Adult Education for Development which highlights key advocacy on adult education financing debated within the Conference and which offers an advocacy tool to strengthen lobbying on adult education financing in Belem.

Participation in the Global Advisory Committee for CONFINTEA VI: ASPBAE was one of the three civil society members, and the meetings were critical in strengthening the Conference preparatory processes so they are accountable, facilitate rigorous, meaningful debates and discussions towards concrete, progressive policy outcomes.

E-9 Seminar on Literacy and Adult Learning in Rural Areas: ASPBAE attended the seminar in Beijing, China, organised as part of the Literacy for Empowerment (LIFE) programme, steered by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), the seminar brought together government representatives from E9 countries, representatives from UN agencies involved in literacy and other UNESCO offices to agree upon a future strategy with the aim to consolidate a mechanism of South-South cooperation to achieve the EFA goals.

Participation in the International Civil Society Forum (FISC): ASPBAE joined ICAE and others in convening the International Civil Society Forum (FISC, for its Portuguese acronym) in Belem, Brazil. Planned to coincide with CONFINTEA VI, the event which mobilized more than 1000 on education activists, researchers, NGOs and adult education advocates from more than 80 countries all over the world, was organized as a space for joint reflection on the policy and practice of youth and adult education and as a mechanism to facilitate a coordinated civil society organization input to effectively influence the CONFINTEA VI processes and outcomes.

Participation in CONFINTEA VI: ASPBAE very deliberately organized its participation in the CONFINTEA 6 processes to enable its effective lobbying and influence of the Conference policy outcomes. The organized presence of ASPBAE and its members was most felt in harnessing support from the heads of government delegations to the civil society organization positions. The unfinished agenda of CONFINTEA VI however points to the need for attention to critical issues that can provide a strong framework for achieving real progress on adult education:

- There is an urgent need for governments to commit to a 6% target as an equitable share of the domestic education budget to be earmarked for the education of adults and young people.
- Northern governments need also to commit 6% of their education aid budgets for the education of adults and young people.
- There needs to be a stronger recognition of the role of adult education in ensuring gender justice and a clear recognition of gender as an integral and cross-cutting issue.
- Action is also needed to address the macro-economic policies which presently block countries from investing adequately in education, particularly in the context of the financial crisis, which has discredited past prescriptions from the IMF.

7. Expanded global, regional and sub-regional lobbying and campaign efforts on EFA (EFA, see glossary box)

ASPBAE aligned with different campaign groups and civil society networks in developing a civil society analysis and response to the global financial crisis and its impact on the poorest in the region. ASPBAE attended the Civil Society Forum organized to lobby the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) 42nd Annual Governors Meeting in Indonesia. Alongside, partners jointly convened a Workshop on Education Financing during the Regional Forum on Global Economic and Financial Crisis.

ASPBAE collaborated with CAMPE Bangladesh in convening a South Asia Civil Society Consultation in preparation for the South Asia Education Ministers Meeting in Bangladesh. Representatives from education coalitions and other civil society organization groups in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed on a Charter of Demands – or a set of recommendations to the Education Ministers, highlighting the need for greater resourcing for basic education. The civil society organizations called for an allocation of 6% of GDP or at least 20% of the national budget for education to ensure education for all.

They also urged the governments to allocate at least 6% of the education
budget for adult education, half of which should be earmarked for literacy initiatives. The Charter of Demands was formally presented in the Education Ministers’ Meeting.

ASPBAE continues to be a civil society organization representative in the UN Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) Global Advisory Committee, and ASPBAE’s representative presented the conceptual framework of the ASPBAE-UNGEI joint project on developing a South Asia Gender Equality Report in New York. The Gender Equality Report, developed along the lines of the ASPBAE Asia EFA Report Card, appraised and rated countries in South Asia along a set of key indicators, analysed within a framework of gender equality, characterised in three critical dimensions of capabilities, access to resources and opportunities, and security. These are 1) the capabilities domain or the freedom that a person has to make life choices for survival and avoidance of harm, such as ensuring household food security and nutrition, providing children with basic education and access to adequate healthcare during pregnancy; 2) access to resources and opportunities - or those inputs and services that enable a person to acquire basic capabilities and use them to expand their wellbeing in education; and 3) security – or reduced vulnerability to violence and conflict, which can result in physical and psychological harm and prevent individuals from attaining their full potential.

Northern governments need to commit 6% of their education aid budgets for the education of adults.

9. Building on policy research in EFA: Popularising evidence and deepening analysis

Important policy documents developed in the earlier period and in 2009 were popularized and disseminated for lobbying purposes during FISC and CONFINTEA VI, and are available for further use:
- The results of the questionnaire-survey covering 11 countries in the Asia-Pacific, assessing country performance along the GCE-ActionAid Benchmarks on Quality Adult Literacy were developed into a pamphlet.
- The Education Watch outcomes and key recommendations were summarized in a booklet, and the full studies made available in creatively packaged flash drives for ease in circulation of substantive documents.
- ASPBAE published a series of papers on the impact of national education policy on indigenous peoples earlier. These country studies and an earlier published Indigenous Peoples Poverty Alleviation Community Action Tool have also been packaged in flash drives for wide dissemination within ASPBAE’s membership and partners.
- Two substantive policy briefs on Literacy and Women Empowerment, and on Pursuing Adult Literacy: the Cost of Achieving EFA Goal 4, were circulated.

BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ADVANCING ADULT EDUCATION AND EFA

10. New partnerships forged with dvv international

In partnership with dvv international (the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association DVV), ASPBAE was successful in securing European Union (EU) funding for its proposal ‘Innovating Advocacy Approaches in Promoting Adult Female Literacy’, under the EU Investing in People facility. The 2 year programme will begin in March 2010 and will be pursued with ASPBAE members Nirantar in India, Enet for Justice Indonesia, Enet Philippines and PEAN in Papua New Guinea. The programme involves 1) research - set of country level researches involving policy scans on women’s literacy, cost-benefit analysis using existing data, documentation of innovative women’s literacy practice; 2) tools development based on existing work; 3) country and regional level capacity-building workshops on advocacy for women’s literacy; 4) policy development - consultations with key stakeholders to formulate and develop consensus on policies and actions to address female illiteracy; 5) advocacy on women’s literacy – public information campaigns, lobbying and policy engagement nationally and in regional spaces i.e. UNESCO, Pacific Forum and SAARC, the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation.

11. Sustained global and regional partnerships

The number of partnerships, networks and coalitions ASPBAE is engaged in are many; here are mentioned some of them:
- ASPBAE continued to serve in the Boards of the Global Campaign for Education and the International Council for Adult Education.
- ASPBAE continued to play a strong role in GCE as coordinator of its Real World Strategies programme in the Asia-Pacific and as Secretariat for the region of its Civil Society Education Fund.
- ASPBAE’s partnership with the Open Society Institute Education Support Program, UK continued through the period with the programme, ‘Achieving Change: Deepening Civil Society Capacity for Education Advocacy in South Asia’. This programme aims to enhance civil society participation in education policy across South Asia with a particular focus on Pakistan and Ne-
The partnership enables ASPBAE to sustain its efforts in budget tracking and in pursuing policy and campaign work on education ODA including a review of the sector-wide approach (SWAp) in education aid. In these budget tracking exercises, ASPBAE partners with civil society organizations in monitoring education budgets – tracking how effectively and efficiently funds flow within the system to meet their intended uses; appraising if the resources reach the target groups – and observing differentiated reach and impact to marginal communities. Working with school management committees and teachers, these processes foster local accountability in planning and school budgeting.

- ASPBAE also reconnected with the East Asia Forum network during the CONFINTSEA VI events. Several member organizations of ASPBAE from the developed countries of East Asia have become more active in this network following ASPBAE’s emphasis in AE work in developing country contexts. Discussions have started on how ASPBAE and the East Asia Forum may explore partnerships in the future especially along CONFINTSEA VI follow up activities.

- ASPBAE partnered with PRIA and dvv international in setting up the Virtual Platform on Adult Learning, http://www.lifelongadultlearning.org/ a resource base for adult education learning materials, researches, data-sets on adult education.

While it has been successful in securing new resources, it has to be seen that these constitute short-term funding support. ASPBAE faces a particularly urgency to step up efforts to secure longer-term funding. The administrative processes to respond to ASPBAE expansion and institutional changes were set in stream in the period with strong coordination between the ASPBAE Secretariat and ASPBAE’s Corporate Secretary in the Philippines where ASPBAE is legally registered.

THE END IS THE BEGINNING
This overview on the aims and activities of a regional adult education association in the Asia and Pacific has shown some of the challenges and opportunities with the diverse range of partnerships in the different countries. In as much as has been achieved within a certain year, it has to be seen that this is a never ending venture, serving the ever growing number of youth and adults as well as their learning needs.

However, it has been an underlying approach of this article that readers should have an as much as possible detailed information and analysis as possible so that they can better understand the other articles – often thematically overlapping with the work of ASPBAE – in this special issue of LLinE on adult education in Southeast Asia and Pacific.

At the same time there was an interest to show that ASPBAE itself is a learning organization, and which is well on the way to celebrate 50 years of service in only a few years to come.

ENDNOTE
1 Writing the Wrongs, International Banchmarks on Adult Literacy, GCE November 2005

REFERENCES

Financing Literacy: Mechanisms, Donor Strategies and Trends in Asia and the Pacific

Of all the EFA goals, literacy suffers from neglect and thus a chronic lack of funding, globally in general and pronounced within the Asia Pacific context. This paper looks at the literacy situation and the financing aspects of basic education of the region, and attempts a classification of financing mechanisms available for literacy. It then looks at how literacy is viewed in donor strategies, the dominant trends in literacy financing, with a summary of reforms and innovations that are being currently proposed in different forums and concludes with the importance of literacy financing in the region.

Mohammad Muntasim Tanvir
OVERVIEW OF THE CONTEXT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

This section briefly examines the literacy scenario and the state of financing in Asia and the Pacific region in light of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010 (the annual report from UNESCO that reviews the state of education worldwide and tracks the progress of achieving education for all) and the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) (a new initiative from UNESCO that focuses on the state of adult education world wide, based mostly on progress reports submitted by national governments).

A. The State of Literacy

Asia, especially its Southern and Western parts, faces the staggering and at times overwhelming challenge of addressing the major portion of global illiteracy.

South and West Asia accounts for more than half the world’s 759 million illiterate adults: an estimated 36% of its adult population, or 391 million adults, lack the basic literacy and numeracy skills needed in everyday life. India has the most adult illiterates in the world, with 270 million; Bangladesh and Pakistan rank third and fourth. The adult literacy rate is 28% in Afghanistan. On a positive note, Sri Lanka has reached an adult literacy rate of more than 90% and Maldives near universal literacy. An estimated 7% of the adult population in East Asia and the Pacific, or nearly 108 million adults, lack the basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Gender disparities contribute to high adult illiteracy rates, with women accounting for 63% of the region’s adult illiterate population. In India, Nepal and Pakistan, women are twice as likely as men to be illiterate. In Afghanistan, 87% of adult women were illiterate in 2000, as opposed to 57% of men.

The idea that countries are unable to address adult illiteracy effectively is refuted by the positive experience of some countries. In South and West Asia, the regional adult literacy rate increased by seventeen percentage points between 1985–1994 and 2000–2007 to reach 64%. With the world’s largest illiterate population, India has been making progress. In 1985–1994 not quite half the adults were literate. The figure is now slightly above two-thirds. Since the adult population increased by 45%, this indicates genuine progress. It also suggests that the country’s Total Literacy Campaign, under the auspices of the National Literacy Mission, may be having an impact. In East Asia and the Pacific, adult literacy rates increased by nearly 14% between 1985–1994 and 2000–2007. While most of that change was driven by a 20% rise in the adult literacy rate in China, increases of nearly 13% in Indonesia and nearly 11% in Malaysia also occurred.

At the current rate, South and West Asia will not reach the literacy target (set in the World Education Conference in Senegal, by the participating UNESCO member States) for 2015. Projections indicate that the adult illiteracy rate will have fallen by 29%, rather than the intended 50% reduction goal. Despite the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–2012), literacy continues to receive insufficient attention and financial commitment and is often not incorporated into wider poverty reduction strategies. Failure to achieve the Dakar adult literacy goal will translate into very large deficits for many countries. In India, the target will be missed, on current trends, by around 81 million people. Bangladesh will have 16 million more illiterates than it would if the 2015 goals were achieved. East Asia and the Pacific should be close to reaching the literacy target set for 2015: the projected adult illiteracy rate is 4.6%, while the target is 4.1%. This indicates that the adult illiteracy rate may fall by 45% between 1999 and 2015, nearly reaching the 50% reduction target.

B. The Financing landscape

Declarations of international conferences, like the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), have highlighted the necessity of financing adult education. However, most declarations do not include indicative benchmarks for financing (Abuja Declaration in 2007 being an exception, which advocated for a minimum of 3% of education budget for adult literacy). To add to this, in adult education, even in its most familiar content, adult literacy has been sidelined since declaration of Millennium Development Goals at the inception of the new millennium and subsequent formulation of EFA –FTI (Fast Track Initiative)(see glossary box on page 221). This is clearly visible in the financing practices of basic education, especially literacy of the region.

In addition to domestic public and private spending, there is approximately $11 billion per year of official development assistance (ODA) (see glossary box on page 221) for education plus some significant flows of non-concessional external financing, especially from the World Bank and the regional development banks. The ODA tends to benefit middle income countries and higher education more than low income countries and primary education. Fragile states, large countries and francophone countries tend to have the greatest needs but to receive the least funding. A high proportion still tends to go for external technical cooperation. Aid for basic education represents only about US$4 billion per year. Aid for education, like aid in general, tends to be driven by historical patterns and geopolitical interests – thus European countries’ aid for education is largely focused on former colonies in Africa.
and US education aid is increasingly targeted on Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. The share of education in total aid has remained roughly constant at about 12% this century, hence increasing as aid has increased.

Asia and the Pacific’s progress towards achieving the EFA goals has been facilitated by sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. But the economic downturn has begun to affect education systems in the region. There is a potential danger that the budgetary pressures and rising poverty caused by the global financial crisis will undermine progress in education. Moreover, while overall aid is rising, several major donors are falling short of their pledges. A concerted effort on the part of donors and recipient countries is critical in the current volatile economic climate.

Averaged over 2006 and 2007, total annual aid to education to South and West Asia amounted to US$1.3 billion, up from US$0.9 billion a year in 1999 and 2000. However, although education accounted for 13% of total aid flows to the region in 1999 and 2000, its share was only 8% in 2006 and 2007. Basic education remains an area of particular concern. While aid commitments have increased by 19% since the beginning of the decade, the share of basic education in total aid to education fell from 53% in 1999 and 2000 to 49% in 2006 and 42% in 2007.

East Asia and the Pacific receives a relatively small share of global official development assistance, accounting for just 10% in 2006–2007. In addition, Australia, Japan and New Zealand are major donors, accounting for 2%, 13% and 0.3%, respectively, of global ODA provided by members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) in 2006–2007.

In the first decade of the new millennium, donor policy has largely favoured the achievement of universal primary education (UPE). The general picture is one of financial neglect, and this has reduced progress in achievement of literacy objectives. The picture is however, not entirely bleak. UNESCO, through its LIFE programme, has helped to access funds from bilateral and multilateral agencies to meet funding shortfalls and support a major literacy drive (e.g. in Afghanistan and Papua New Guinea). Since the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has received sizable amounts of aid to restore its education system. With support from many non-government organizations, donors and United Nations agencies, the government has responded to the high demand for education from the Afghan people. Afghanistan benefits from a US$13 million aid package from Japan to improve literacy, which is expected to reach 600,000 illiterate youth and adults.

There are also some important examples of bilateral and multilateral agencies working with governments to improve institutional capacities and provision (such as Government of Japan support for Papua New Guinea). On the basis of a sector-wide approach, the UK Department for International Development stands by its 2001 position that ‘improved adult literacy encourages parents to send their children to school. This mean UPE cannot be achieved and sustained in isolation’ and provides ongoing assistance for adult literacy including programmes in India, and China, as well as specific commitments to increasing adult literacy provision in South Asia. USAID has made investments in adult literacy, family literacy, and non-formal education, including programmes in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Some Asian countries (apart from Japan, a strong player in ODA) are emerging as strong players in the ODA field. The Republic of Korea, the latest entrant into the DAC family, has a strong focus on infrastructure for social services. Education is one of the seven priority sectors in the country’s Mid-Term ODA strategy and accounted for 14% (US$70 million) of its bilateral aid in 2007. In September 2008, Saudi Arabia has pledged US$500 million in concessional loan financing for basic education – its first such undertaking and one pointing to a greater share for basic education in its overall lending. China has also increased its support for training in its external aid, which can be classified under adult education.

As noted in the Literacy Decade midterm assessment, there are some major limitations and weaknesses in the ODA support for literacy:

1) The Scale of Assistance: In general, the ODA has been grossly insufficient to meet the adult literacy challenges.

2) Institutional Mechanisms and Capacity: The current ODA mechanisms are not adequate to enable funds to be dedicated to adult literacy. This has most clearly been evident in the EFA Fast Track Initiative, where it has been difficult to obtain funds for adult literacy.

3) Sustained Commitment: Many of the key multilateral and bilateral donor organizations lack sustained commitment to adult literacy. This is most clearly evident in terms of funding for literacy programmes, which are not scaled-up and sustained in the longer-term.

The human and financial resources in most other bilateral and multilateral organizations (those engaging with UN Literacy Decade) are insufficient to meet the needs for financial appraisal and management of adult literacy. Reliable data on actual financing of adult literacy and education is extremely difficult, if not impossible to get, as seen in the preparation for CONFITEA VI, when only 57 out of 154 participating countries provided data on financial allocation, and even then these were inconsistent responses making them not very useful in forecasting and planning for resource mobilization.
II. CURRENT FINANCING MECHANISMS FOR LITERACY

A limited number of financing mechanisms are available for funding literacy initiatives, the range of which is attempted to be captured in the following brief description. The idea behind this attempt is to have a glimpse of the gamut of financing options available and then position ODA in its appropriate niche.

A. Global Level

Fast Track Initiative (FTI)

While named as EFA FTI, the only significant multi-lateral funding mechanism for education focuses solely on primary education. Being anchored by the World Bank has also affected its efficacy and acceptability, as the difficult to comply procurement policy of World Bank had slowed it down to unacceptable levels in its first phase. There are only two cases of financing adult literacy (in Benin and Burkina Faso), none of which is in Asia, out of all the endorsed countries. The FTI has undergone a review recently, which has come up with a long list of recommendations for making this initiative more effective and efficient.

UNESCO Initiatives

The United Nations General Assembly resolution of 2001 set up the Literacy Decade. It was a clear indication that the countries of the world wished to give literacy a still higher profile and stimulate greater efforts.

Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) is the major response of the UN system to the literacy decade. Initiated and coordinated by UNESCO and its Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), LIFE addresses 35 countries where the adult literacy rate is below 50% or where there are more than 10 million non-literate adults. Together, these countries represent 85% of the non-literate adults in the world. As a framework for new partnerships and action in three phases, LIFE has already catalyzed new efforts in the target countries.

Traditional statistics on literacy do not reveal how people apply their acquired literacy skills they acquire; the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) has been piloted to arrive at a more complete and detailed assessment of current levels of literacy levels among populations, as a basis for better analysis of the challenge and more targeted action. In the area of literacy provision, the Non-formal Education Management Information System (NFE-MIS) has been introduced in eight countries in order to maintain an inventory of national and sub-national programmes in NFE, including literacy, as a basis for more rational planning and more systematic coverage.

These have been mostly focused on literacy, and on strengthening means (national action plans, assessment mechanisms) rather than ends (funding quality programmes). So, their success lies in increased coordination in ensuring coherence of initiatives, rather than mobilizing greater resources.

B. North-South Cooperation

The dominant form of North-South Cooperation has been in the form of aid (grant and soft loans) by bilateral organizations, geared towards skilled human resources that can contribute to poverty reduction through economic growth. Key players have been Regional Banks like the Asia Development Bank (ADB), which grant soft loans, but rarely have broad visions around education. Too much focus on the MDG (see glossary box on page 221) has led to dwindling aid allocation to adult education in general.

C. South- South Cooperation

Countries in the South with experience in adult education share financial resources and technical expertise. The Cuban government has supported the ‘Yo sí puedo’ audiovisual literacy training method in 19 countries, with a further 9 countries in discussions about use of the method. With Cuban technical guidance, programmes range from national campaigns, as in Venezuela, to experimental programmes, as in some African countries. As part of its cooperation with the lusophone countries of Africa, Brazil supports capacity development (also in Haiti) through workshops in monitoring, evaluation and gathering data on literacy, training of facilitators, materials development, use of local languages and financing of literacy and NFE. Unfortunately, no similar initiative of similar stature is currently ongoing in this region. However, with the emergence of new players in ODA in Asia, this doesn’t look like a distant reality.

D. Governments

Financial commitment from governments is the main source of funds for adult literacy, and one that is most readily sustained. However, many countries only spend as little as 1% of their national education budget on adult literacy, and a minuscule percentage of GDP (India spends 0.02%, even though there is a recent upward trend in investment), with consolidated statistics unavailable for adult education. A recent practice of a few government-managed “national funds for literacy” with support from diverse fund providers gives reason for hope in other countries as well.

E. Private Sources

- Multinational corporations engage in adult education as either corporate social responsibility or as skill-enhancing courses through franchises, which often charge fees that act as cost barriers, resulting in sideling those having the most need for it.
- Philanthropic foundations also fund literacy initiatives, even though consolidated information on those is impossible to locate.
- Religious organizations are also
engaged in adult education initiatives, but allegations of proselytisation and indoctrination can sometime mar their efforts.

• **Universities** also can play a vital role in promoting literacy. The Talloires Declaration of 2005 expressed a new commitment on the part of higher education institutions to promote their civic roles and social responsibilities. The resulting Talloires Network, now with a membership of over 50 major universities worldwide, has a special focus on promoting literacy. In 2006, the Global Education Consortium of Colleges and Universities came into existence, as an interest group of over 125 academic enterprises involved in supporting Education for All (EFA). Both networks work with UNESCO around collaborating on capacity development, curriculum development, university literacy mentoring programmes and a research agenda emphasizing policy-makers’ needs.
• **Finally, individual and community beneficiaries** (‘Adopt a Student’ campaign in Brazil by AlfaSol, by which one can finance the literacy process of a learner).

**III. LITERACY IN DONOR STRATEGIES**

Multilateral agencies and donors have continued to support adult literacy activities in ways consistent with their principal aims; among multilateral agencies, adult literacy is part of the core mandate only of UNESCO, and donors have in general given adult literacy a relatively low policy profile.

As seen in a survey conducted by the EFA GMR team for the Report focused on literacy, most bilateral agencies and development banks refer to literacy as an instrument for attaining other ends, such as eradicating poverty (e.g. the European Commission, New Zealand, and Norway). Sweden sees literacy at the heart of basic education and any economic and social development effort, but also part of broader adult basic education needs and learning activities. Most donors endorse EFA without explicit reference to literacy, although some see it as a primary goal of good schooling (e.g. Canada, the European Commission and the United Kingdom) or as a skill at the heart of basic education (e.g. the United States). The Danish, German and Japanese agencies, and the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank discuss literacy in the context of non-formal education, even when they have a priority for universal primary education, and see no obvious synergy between the two. In terms of policy commitment, the contribution of the World Bank to literacy has been limited, and does not reflect its significant institutional role in education in general. The World Bank’s policy stance on adult literacy can best be described as cautious commitment, in recognizing the instrumental role of adult literacy in expanding primary education, and in processes of poverty reduction, and economic growth. Denmark argues for integrating literacy for youth and adults into the programming of other sectors. Japan’s aid agency emphasizes the importance of literacy for advancing development projects, while Sweden’s is guided by education sector priorities with emphasis on the EFA goals; one of these priorities as seen in their strategy document is ‘enhancing literacy for all – children, youth and adults – through formal and non-formal education, as well as informal means, such as books, newspapers, and libraries’.

The United Nations agencies understandably approach literacy in relation to their specific mandates. For the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), literacy is important in increasing demand for reproductive health services and women’s empowerment. For the ILO, literacy is a core work skill. UNICEF considers literacy a key outcome of a high-quality education, especially for girls. These and other approaches come together in the International Plan of Action for the UNLb, with literacy seen as a crucial element of the right to education.

Assessing how these broad statements translate into programmes and funding allocations is problematic. It is almost impossible to extract literacy-focused or -related programme data from the OECD-DAC databases, as literacy is part of ‘basic skills for youth and adults’ and some donors support it within broader integrated projects. Very few agencies have disbursement data on literacy, and those that do give caveats regarding its accuracy (e.g. the Japanese agencies and that of Norway). Similar difficulties apply to the United Nations agencies. The data must be interpreted with caution, as each agency used different criteria. From these limited data sets it is clear that literacy in the broad policy sense of literate societies is not widely embraced by donor agencies. For some, youth and adult literacy, and the promotion of literate environments are simply not priorities for aid budgets. For others, literacy is judged as a tool for specific development ends, or receives only marginal attention in policies and programmes, much as in national development strategies and sector plans. Whatever the reason, the fact that no agency surveyed by EFA GMR team could quote with confidence a single figure to illustrate its level of funding to literacy indicates the low priority assigned to literacy in aid budgets.

**IV. TRENDS IN FINANCING PRACTICES**

Even a casual analysis reveals some patterns in the financing practices in literacy in most countries.

• **It is often not incorporated into resource and budget planning as an integral component of the entire education system or poverty reduction strategy.** Rather it comes as an afterthought.
• **Higher income countries with high literacy rates invest in broadening the lifelong learning framework.** In contrast, low-income countries find it necessary to invest in literacy-only projects, even though these are less likely to succeed or be sustainable.
• Funding is project-based, often dependent on time-bound external assistance, rather than based on a longer-term national programme. So, it leads to a dichotomous understanding of adult learning, with a magic line to cross from illiteracy to literacy towards educational enlightenment.
• Funds are channelled through and managed by multiple ministries without an overarching framework or plan, leading to coordination problems, reducing the efficient utilisation of already insufficient funds.
• Double standards exist as potential funders of adult education attribute their reluctance to low quality. However, low quality in primary schooling never leads to reluctance in investing.
• It remains extremely low on the priority list of policy makers (dismisseringly termed as ‘investing in a lost generation’) and becomes a victim whenever budget constraint is faced. The pall of global financial crisis can further reduce the already dwindling financing of adult education.

V. PROPOSITIONS FOR REFORM INNOVATION

Based on the discussion in various forums on adult literacy financing, the following threads of policy recommendations (applicable for both the donor and recipient countries) have emerged as recurring and dominant themes:
• Reform the EFA Fast Track Initiative to proactively promote adult literacy and education, or opt for a multi-lateral funding mechanism that avoids skewed funding and is inclusive of adult education (e.g. US commitment for a Global Fund for EFA, to be initiated with an additional US$ 2 Billion in the start up).

Literacy, termed as investing in a lost generation, remains a low priority for policy makers.

ASPBAE, the regional education network in Asia and the South Pacific has been tirelessly working on linking ODA and literacy and the policy recommendations to the donors and the governments from them are –

• Budget/Finance targets for adult literacy and education should be agreed upon. Governments should allocate 6% of GNP to education and at least 6% of the Education Budget for adult education. Where needed, at least half of that (3% of national education budget) should be allocated for adult literacy programmes.
• The indivisibility of the EFA goals must be kept in mind while allocating resources.
• ODA for adult literacy and education should be increased in the framework of the EFA goals and targets. Donors should mobilize resources in accordance with indicative standards: at least 15% of ODA should be allocated to education, with at least 60% of this allocated to basic education including adult literacy and life skill programs for adult and youth. Aid should become more responsive, transparent, participatory and untied – without conditionalities. The EFA Fast Track Initiative should include adult education and literacy components, and ensure efficient and prompt delivery of financing support.

Source: ASPBAE Discussion Paper for CONFINTEA VI

The governance and problems of FTI must be solved to make it a functional body for channeling efficient aid.
• Broaden the funding base by appealing to countries in the region which are success stories in poverty reduction (China, Korea, and India) and which are transforming into aid-giving countries.
• Explore public-private partnership options, but at the same time being conscious of the danger of promoting a privatisation agenda. Adult literacy and education should not be reduced to a narrow skills enhancement courses, but should address learner needs within a broader lifelong learning framework.
• Rather than the tendency to finance one-off literacy campaigns, opt for financing expansion of adult education and learning opportunities (especially with a literate environment).

VI. INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION: THE BEST BAIL-OUT PACKAGE

In any crisis, education tends to lose out most, as it is felt now. With weaker economic growth, the peril of budget and aid cuts leading to reversing the hard won gains in recent times seems very real. To combat this threat, increasing only the flow of ODA will not suffice, rather more work needs to be done in increasing the quality of aid and prudent deployment of that aid in well-planned literacy initiatives. The benefits of literacy, not only for individual and social development, but as an engine of growth also need to be kept in mind. One extra year of education can raise average GDP growth by 0.37% and increase individual income by 10% (GMR, 2009). Collective benefits are even greater. A study in the Philippines estimated that the government could potentially save US$285 million per year if it invested in a literacy programme for the very poor which would increase skills, employability and earning capacity to a level that is above the poverty line. So, the best bail-out package in any crisis would be increased spending on education. The cost of not financing literacy is much higher than financing it.
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GLOSSARY
EFA
Education For All (EFA) is a global movement led by UNESCO. Its mission is to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. Universal primary education for all by 2015 is a Millennium Development Goal (MDG). This work is built around six goals focusing on e.g. free primary education for all, education for disadvantaged children and eliminating gender disparities in education.

EFA goals 3 and 4 focus on youth and adult education. Number 3 states that the learning needs of all young people and adults should be met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes. Number 4 states that a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy should be attained by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults should be provided.

EFA FTI
EFA Fast Track Initiative. The FTI, launched in 2002, is a global partnership between donor and developing countries to accelerate progress towards EFA goals.

ESD
Education for sustainable development. The ESD is not an organization or a programme. It is term used by, among others, the UN to describe the practice of educating people for sustainability in their actions and thought processes.

MDG
Millennium Development Goals are eight international development goals that all UN member states have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. They include eradicating extreme poverty, reducing child mortality, fighting epidemics, and developing a global partnership for development.

ODA
The ODA does not refer to the aid of one particular country. Rather it is a statistic compiled by the OECD to measure aid with the aim of furthering economic development and welfare in developing countries. ODA is widely used by academics and journalists as an indicator of international aid flow.

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Living for Oneself or with Others?

An Oriental View on the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

This article aims to re-interpret the competences in the context of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and to reconsider how the concept of competences for lifelong learning is differently defined in the oriental context. It then draws an alternative model of competence development which is more conducive to the learning process for individual learners. In this article, the model, inspired by oriental thought, for building competences is drawn with an analogy to our holistic body and leads to the question whether the oriental view for the competences emphasises living for oneself and with others. This will shed new light on the concept of competences for the EQF.

Dong-Seob Lee
In a constantly and rapidly changing post-industrial society, competence at one’s place of work is more highly prized than at any other time. It is evident that the individual learners continue to develop their personal and organizational, social and societal competences to keep employability in the international labor market.

Under such circumstances, there have been numerous attempts at the transnational, national, and regional levels to develop standard competences to arrange complex qualifications suitable for the different sectors aligned with industry skills and competencies. In spite of these efforts, it is still uncertain how the comprehensive qualifications framework for lifelong learning will affect the internal variety and cultural diversity of education and training in a world of turbulence, uncertainty, and insecurity.

In Europe also, with the recent development of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the concept of knowledge, skills, and competence toward the common model has become important and has raised the vital question as to whether the different models of national qualifications are sufficiently compatible with the one-size-fits-all nature of EQF (Ensor, 2003, p.344; Heikkinen, 2008). The EQF is a comprehensive qualification framework based on eight vertical levels covering all education areas from compulsory school to the tertiary level.

The key competences for lifelong learning in which the individuals are to be classified by their performances of objective and measurable ‘learning outcome’ rather than ‘learning process’ also raise doubts how one can measure the degree of the competences and the hidden aspects of person’s personality within a short period of performance.

This article aims to re-interpret the competences in the context of EQF and to reconsider how the concept of competences for lifelong learning is differently defined in the oriental context, and to draw an alternative model of competence development which is more conducive to the learning process for individual learners. This will shed new light on the concept of competences for the EQF before measuring the competencies of learning outcome.

MULTIFACETED COMPETENCE REFLECTED THROUGH DIFFERENT WORK CULTURES

Over the last two decades, ‘competence’ was generally seen by society as a holistic and unifying model of what a person was actually able to do or achieve, connecting with a mixture of skills, knowledge and attitudes even though the notion has been differently interpreted in different cultures, contexts and historical developments of education and training systems.

The concept of competence refers to persons’ being qualified in a broader sense. It is not merely that a person masters a professional area, but also that person can apply this professional knowledge – and more than that, apply it in relation to the requirements inherent in situation which perhaps in addition is uncertain and unpredictable. Thus, competence also includes the persons’ assessments and attitudes, and ability to draw on a considerable part of his/her more personal qualifications. (Jørgenson 1999, 4).

In public administration, competence is mainly a formal and legal matter, which gives a person a legal right to make decisions in certain area.

Besides knowledge and skills, competence is seen as a third central factor for comparing learning outcomes and a means of the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy. (EC, 2008, 11).

This makes it more difficult to grasp the meaning of competence due to the fuzzy way of using the singular and the plural of competence. However, it is generally agreed that competence is doing the required things needed by standard behavior in the workplace and competencies can be defined as what one does and how well one performs based on learning outcomes. Therefore, competence in a job means being competent in all aspects of each function of the competency required to be performed within the role of a given task.

Faced with the challenges of the ambiguous concept of competence in different contexts, the European Union has defined it in the EQF in more comprehensive and instructive terms, not narrowly referring to the technical skills, from a perspective of education and training. In this respect, the variance of concept poses delicate questions as to who and how one defines, formulates, and develops the concept of competence.

FOR WHOM ARE THE KEY COMPETENCES OF THE EQF DESIGNED?

Since the Lisbon strategy in 2000, European Union member states have been charged with the task of enhancing full employment and strengthening social cohesion by 2010. In particular, the European framework for ‘key competences for lifelong learning’, specialized in the Recommendation of European Commission (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council in 2007,
Globalization has changed the concept of competences both in the West and the East from self-advancement to a mechanism for survival.

thirty I had planted my feet upon firm ground; at forty I no longer suffered from doubts and perplexities; at fifty I knew what were the biddings of heaven; at sixty I heard others with docile ears; at seventy I could follow my heart’s desire without transgressing the norm (子曰 学而时习之，不亦说乎。有朋自远方来，不亦乐乎。)

The following section of my article withdraws, reflects and develops the personal, organizational, and national competences for lifelong learning from a perspective of oriental culture. The perspectives of Habermas’, Bauman’s, and Rifkin’s views lead us to go beyond boundaries and to build empathic citizenship equipped with the international competences.

The demand of learning and learning society: human odyssey

Competences for lifelong learning in the East have been influenced by Confucianism. Confucianism emphasized the love of learning, morality in government policy, having proper social relationships and virtue in human beings.

In Confucius’ Analects, whose emphasis is on lifelong learning, it is written: ‘Learning always as if you could not reach your object and always feared lest you should lose it (子曰 学如不及 猪恐失之，8:17).’ Referring to learning for personal growth and development, Confucius also said: ‘At fifteen, I set my heart upon learning; at

2010, and 2020, identifies and defines the key skills that everyone needs in order to achieve employment, personal fulfillment, social inclusion and active citizenship in today’s learning economy. These key competences include (1) communication in the mother tongue, (2) communication in foreign languages, (3) mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, (4) digital competence, (5) learning to learn, (6) social and civic competences, (7) sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, (8) cultural awareness and expression. However, the competences designed in line with Delphi method on a scale from 0 to 10 are based on the importance of learning outcome and pose plausible questions as to how and to what extent these generic competences are guaranteed for individual learners. The Delphi method is originally designed for the principle that forecasts from a structured group of individuals are more accurate than those from an unstructured group (Rowe & Wright, 2001).

Furthermore, the EQF, adopted by European Parliament and Council in 2008, whose structure is a comprehensive qualifications framework (i.e. competence is just one part of the comprehensive framework, the other parts being skills and knowledge) not a competence framework, encourages or re-devise and to establish their National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) within the context of EQF by 2010 and to ensure that all new qualifications issued from 2012 carry a reference to the appropriate EQF level. In practice, EQF would contribute to creating a truly European workforce that is mobile, flexible and functioning as a translation device making qualifications more readable for both learners and workers. However, it is still doubtful if the EQF can provide the overall frame-work within which the standards are developed and adopted at the level of national education and training systems.

Ultimately, the policy of EQF, which underpins the discourse of anthropology, focuses on society rather than individuals in the respect that its main aim is to overlook national or internal diversity. Because all individuals are subjected to ‘power and knowledge’ within boundaries of spatial dimensions, their relationships are influenced by them. Nevertheless, Habermas’, Bauman’s, and Rifkin’s views lead us to go beyond boundaries and to build empathic citizenship equipped with the international competences.

...
nomic activity. In short, in traditional times in Eastern culture focus was on demand of learning. Now it is on demand of earning.

**LEARNING FOR PRIVATE GOOD VS. LEARNING FOR PUBLIC GOOD**

Korean Scholar Jeong Yakyong (1762–1836), living in the period of Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910), was a forerunner of vocational education and referred to ‘human learning’ not only as an internal process to acquire individual competence but as an interactional process in social, cultural, economical and political environments to develop societal competence. The former is for learning to become a successful but a selfish individual and the latter is for learning for others in keeping with the principle of humanitarianism to govern a society with pragmatic disciplines such as politics, law, military studies, and agriculture. Only while building internal (general) and external (vocational) entity together, can the world stand upright.

Therefore, it is epitomized in the oriental culture that the individuals are regarded as holistic, universal, and as totally social beings and the concept of learning starts holistically from body and mind together while developing self-competences. In this respect, our body can be a part of profound universe as well as cosmic totality.

The above figure 1 illustrates the conceptual expansion of ‘oneself’ using a theory of body to become a human-being through a process of learning, education and training. In the process, one can develop a profound sense of responsibility for the fate of the whole planet considering the ecological dimension and also for the wellbeing of the entire human family. This extends to loyalties and a greater sense of belonging and wholeness of the community. In other words, without self-discipline starting from the physical body, one can’t manage one’s family, clan, tribe, state, and nation, etc.

In a similar way, Confucius had also mentioned in his book of Greater Learning, that: ‘when you refine yourself which means academic and spiritual refinements, you can get married which usually refer to putting one’s household in order. When you achieve this goal, you can govern the state/nation which mean landing a job in the government and becoming a bureaucrat. When you achieve all these goals, you will flatten your enemies and bringing lasting peace to the world (修身齊家治國平天下, YL 23: 533-534).’

Confucius pointed out that there are few possibilities to become a greater learner or governor without self-discipline or self-governing.

From all the considerations, we can finally draw an alternative, oriental-inspired model of competences potentially beneficial for the EQF in relation to learning, education and training, which ultimately leads to social, economic, political wellbeing. In the final section of this article, the concept of competence between the East and the West will be embraced, integrated, and developed with an emphasis on the internal and external learning process.

**EMBRACING THE EAST AND THE WEST TOGETHER**

The current global standard for competency based on the learning outcome has generally emphasized the educational role for economic and individual growth without serious consideration of changes in workplace and social-economic policies such as equal opportunity. Hence, the following conceptual and analytical tools drawn from oriental thought helps in building the internal and external competences for growth and change of both learners and society.

"EQF focuses overtly on the learning outcome while a model of competence inspired by oriental thought highlights the learning process."
The following figure 2 presents how this new competency model can be developed through a bottom-up and an adaptive network approach embedded with the spatial ontology. The EQF focuses overtly on the learning outcome while a model of competence inspired by the oriental thought highlights the learning process. Focusing on the outcome betrays an economic rationale, but we should look at learning in a societal context, learning for collective wellbeing.

As mentioned above, the learning process here too starts from one’s body while continually filling up the ‘empty vessel’ and developing self-competencies. In order to cultivate one’s virtue and to develop key competences, one should ASK (I will explain the significance of this word later) and interact with others on the questions one is wondering and contemplating. It is written in the Bible: ‘ASK for, and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you’ (Matthew 7:7–8). Without wondering, inquiring, reflecting the questions of what, why, and how, any competence would not be given.

As figure 2 shows, we need to fill - from the bottom-up like in a spiral - our ‘minds and brains’ up with the three virtues of the truth, the goodness, and the beauty. I use the analogy of the body to map out my alternative competency model now: the ‘mouth’ is for the ability of communication in domestic and foreign languages, speaking out of the abundance of the heart. Thirdly, the ‘right hand’ is using for the skills for job and the ‘left hand’ is for the knowledge management. Hence, the ‘internal’ competencies corresponding to (1) to (5) in the European framework extends to ‘external’ entity of the key competencies (6) to (8) in a learning process. In other words, (1) to (5) of the key competences for lifelong learning in the European Framework are in the realm of the ‘individual’ and ‘body’ and then extends to the societal context in (6) to (8).

Ultimately, when individual learners build up internal competences, which entails both education (Bildung) and training (Ausbildung) and achieves academic and spiritual refinement through brain, mouth and hands, the ability to ASK (Ability of communication, Skills for job, Knowledge management) extends to manage successfully one’s family or organization which, in keeping with our analogy of the body, we can place on the abdominal region in our body. When individual learners can achieve to manage family or organization with all these competences, they can also successfully carry out their mission to govern the nation and make the world peaceful and equal society with their feet, while learning the attitudes, beliefs, values, customs, art, history and culture of other peoples.

Billett also pointed out in a similar way within the mainstream of lifelong learning that there is considerable shift of focus from cognition of individuals’ use and manipulation of knowledge and skills to include the importance of the physical and social contexts (Billett, 2010, p.7). In this respect, the tacit or explicit skills and knowledge can be transferred to other learners in a process of mapping out and interacting with
them in the community, asking how they can go about solving humanistic, economic, societal, and environmental problems in their regional areas. The social competence underpinning the community values is able to enhance the individual learners to develop their active citizenship and the education and training providers to engage in a local community.

The following figure 4 explains my proposed collaborative learning environment which enhances deep learning and helps to develop key competences. In the learning process there are four areas of the ‘learning dimensions’ interacting with the disciplinary place. That is, the disciplinary place (the source of learning), meeting place (where learning is discussed with others), the discovery place (discovery of oneself through learning), and the changing place while embracing, integrating, and developing one’s key competences.

Learners first find an environment for discipline (e.g. a work place), then meet good teachers and colleagues who can give feedback (meeting place), respond to questions, and mentor, coach, and supervise, and be taught while continually refining, discovering and transforming themselves (discovery place, discovery of one’s self) like a mirror image, and educate and train posterity how to solve one’s problems. In this continuing process of learning, education and training, one can produce ‘mode 3 knowledge’ bottom-up and realize the desirable learning society while observing and interacting with more experienced colleagues in the work place (Jiménez, 2008; Smith & Mockler, 2009).

Therefore, we can conclude from the perspectives on the competences of EQF that the oriental model is more adapted to develop social and political cohesion which brings about change and growth. The holistic and universal view, which starts from one’s body and leads to social and political wellbeing, contributes to embrace all multi-leveled actors/sectors and coordinates their relationships harmoniously while building internal and external balance of competences, and anchors the ethical value and culture of the learning, education, and training proposed.

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Servant-leadership and talent diversity – A China case study where East meets West

In this article servant-leadership is highlighted in relation to nurturing the diversity of talents. Talent diversity means developing multiple competencies in individuals and in teams. Servant leadership is a philosophy and practice of leadership, where leaders achieve results for their organizations by giving priority attention to the needs of their colleagues and those they serve. Servant-leaders are key in enhancing the full talent potential of learners.

Exploring and building talent competences is a lifelong process in learning communities like the home, school and the corporate workplace. In the case of China their current fascination with Multiple Intelligences theory (MI) can be traced back to historical influences of, amongst others, their rich Confucian heritage. Culture specific angles with roots in Confucianism and other philosophies are meaningful to help understand the 21st century multicultural workplace. Future educational research can provide understanding of how servant-leadership may enhance talent diversity and create added value in learning communities.

Sylvia van de Bunt-Kokhuis
With the increased globalisation of the workplace, talent development in the perspective of cultural diversity has become an imperative. The new lifelong learning generation is not only diverse in age, gender, language and cultural background. They may also differ in their learning competencies and ambitions. If the learning environment is inspiring, their leaders may nurture their talents, like servant-leaders do. Talent diversity and servant-leadership are considered here in the context of lifelong learning, where learners are motivated to get the most out of their life, study, work and leisure.

There is not one overarching talent dimension. Talent diversity is a composition of various human competences of equal value, nurtured by servant-leaders in educational and business settings. In this article we will take a closer look at local talent practices in the case of China. We will learn from the different talent development priorities, needs and concerns. How can (educational) leaders anticipate on this, and what if talent nurturing is hindered in a communist regime? From Confucian history we learn that Chinese education is devoted to promoting all-round talent development: morally, intellectually, physically and artistically. In China today a remarkable revival of these historical educational values can be noticed, reshaped by new 21st century insights. First we will identify the meaning of talent diversity nurtured by servant-leadership. Subsequently we will be able to apply the concept of servant-leadership to the context of talent diversity in the case of China.

What is servant-leadership? In recent decades, an international knowledge network on servant-leadership has developed. The originator of the idea of servant-leadership is acknowledged as Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970s. It is a growing movement in the business world, public (school) organisations and academia. In addition, there are leadership developments that are not explicitly labelled ‘servant-leadership’ but have a lot in common with the principles of servant-leadership, such as ethical leadership and transformational leadership.

Servant-leadership is multi-dimensional and enhances more than ever before the human and ethical factor in (school)organisations. Traditional leaders tend to be focused on tasks, control and processes in organisations whereas servant-leaders are connected with people in an ethical way, reconciling dilemmas and empowering them as team members, employees, customers, pupils, students or citizens. The servant-leader is keen to contribute value to other people to let their talents grow. The served people e.g. school teachers and pupils become healthier and more autonomous. They are more likely to develop a sense of responsibility to others. Major attributes of servant-leadership can be found across cultures, like in the case of China. Moreover these major attributes contain an ethical dimension and can be specified in:

1. Listening. Unbiased listening to the other to also get in touch with one’s inner voice and the desire to know what the other is thinking; being flexible and adaptive and exercising caution in the act of listening before speaking.
2. Empathy. Understanding others, accepting and recognising their special and unique behaviours.
3. Healing of relationships. He/she genuinely cares about other people and their welfare; healing is a powerful ethical force for transformation and integration.
4. Awareness. Achieving mindfulness through reflection. General as well as self-awareness creates a better understanding of power, ethics and values in groups. The leader knows what is going on in the organisation, the team or the situation and adjusts accordingly.
5. Persuasion. Convincing rather than coercing others, effectively building consensus within groups and helping other people to understand and learn.
6. Conceptualisation. Thinking beyond day-to-day realities, seeking a delicate balance with conceptual thinking; helping others to see the bigger picture and how everything relates.
7. Foresight. Understanding the lessons of the past, the realities of the present and the likely consequences of the future. The leader has a vision and wants others to embrace and embody the vision.
8 Stewardship. Holding the trust of others in order to serve the needs of all; by serving in a mindful and ethical way, a good leader gains the trust and confidence of others.
9 Commitment to the growth of others, committed to their learning and improvement.

The concept of servant-leadership includes surprising dilemmas. Servant-leaders serve their followers with compassion. At the same time servant-leaders are accountable for the performance of their organisation, like a company, school, church, or even a nation. Each investment of the servant-leader in the wellbeing of the other is at the same time an investment for the benefit of the common good. The leader’s skills appear in bridging the contrasting dilemmas of leading and serving, courage and caution, control and compassion, power over and commitment to others. This article will demonstrate that from an historical point of view Chinese servant-leaders have the skills to reconcile these dilemmas. Trompenaars and Voerman (2009) show that servant-leadership can be found across modern and ancient cultures such as in India, Greece and in our case China. Thus, for example, Aristotle stated that the essence of life is to serve others and do good. Within the concept of servant-leadership, leading and serving are two sides of the same coin. Despite the cultural diversity among people and their talents, there is a common basis, namely, being human. According to Trompenaars and Voerman, servant-leaders are not tempted into making a choice between two opposite (cross-cultural and/or ethical) values. In other words, servant-leaders avoid choosing an unsatisfactory compromise. The servant-leader will choose a solution where both opposing value sets – like love and power – are combined in a dialectic process. Through thesis and antithesis, the servant-leader achieves the synthesis, which enriches the intercultural context of the common good.

CHINA’S TALENT APPROACH IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

China in the global economy
China entered the international market economy during the last few decades. Today it is the world’s second-largest economy. Many Chinese companies are very successful since the complex and multi-faceted market reforms in the People’s Republic of China. China is not only interconnected with the external market economy but, subsequently, also with the international world of training and development - only to mention the East-West university linkages and the many (imported) MBA and in-company courses. China’s entry into the international market was made possible through a policy of ‘open doors’ that accompanied the economic reform in the late 1970s. Given the importance of China in our interconnected global economy and its human potential (with a total population of 1.3 billion), it is essential to get to know more about China’s talent approach. China has a long history of Confucianism, Taoism and various other cultural influences. It affected Chinese thinking and behavior, also with respect to education. Despite China’s emerging superpower status of today, the former plan economy and ancient cultural influences like Confucianism are still visible in many aspects of society.

Confucianism, leadership and education
Confucianism in ancient China originated over 2000 years ago. The traditional culture of Confucianism is inte-
grated in and visible through a.o. the style of leadership in current Chinese (school) organizations. Respect for wisdom and seniority is an important layer in Confucianism. In early childhood and during a lifetime this value is cherished. Biggs and Watkins (2001) show insights into teaching the Chinese learner with Confucian concepts like ‘filial piety’. In a family the son’s filial duty (and the daughter’s) is to care for and nurture his physical, mental and moral qualities. Each child tries to be as perfect as possible, in order to pay due honor to his/her father. This respectful attitude is visible in adulthood and may influence the style of leadership. Ellis (2004) shows how current Chinese leaders enhance organizational commitment by building relationships with their followers. From Confucian culture true leaders routinely demonstrate caring for their followers and their talents (compare servant-leadership attribute 2, empathy). Western managers need to recognize how in 21st century Chinese organizations the social relationship more often than not comes before the task. True Chinese leaders are role models acting in the spirit of social responsibility. These leaders try to benefit both the local followers’ talents and the larger organization. Chinese leaders try to motivate followers in the Confucian recognition that the individual is inseparable from society (compare servant-leadership attribute 6, conceptualization).

Humility

Zhang and Ng (2009) quote Confucius in the Yi Jing: “If a leader is too full of himself, he will not be held in esteem despite his noble position; he ranks high but no one follows him; he may have wise men under him in the hierarchy, but they do not assist him; the more he wants to make a move, the greater the resistance. He will regret his arrogance.”

Listening

To a Western observer it may seem that the Chinese learner is passive and not participating actively in the classroom. However, the Chinese learner may listen intently, when teachers present or interact with a few other students in a way that few Western students do (Biggs and Watkins, 2001). The listening talent is highly trained in Chinese schools (compare the servant-leadership attribute 1, listening). This listening skill implies that even in large classes the teacher needs to interact only with a few, for the lesson to be experienced by all.

Chinese and Western leaders compared

Zhang and Chua (2009) identify differences between Western and Chinese leaders. Both types of leaders act differently in influencing others and pushing through change. The Western so-called Harvard model of human resource management is characterized by restraint, modesty, and tenacity. The Chinese so-called I-Ching (I-Ching is an ancient classic Chinese book of divinations) model has virtues of prudence, balance, and authority. I-Ching is their essential guide in Chinese leadership by exercising patience, resonance, and balancing. The authors underline the need for leaders in both the Western and Chinese organisations to be aware of the two models so as to enhance their competencies and capacities in maximising change. The Harvard model (which views workers essentially as resources, but as resources that are stakeholders in the company at the same time) is well designed and highly applicable. At the same time the Chinese classics on influential leaders are still relevant in today’s contexts. Western leaders want to control and channel as effectively as possible. In comparison, the I-Ching leaders are cautious and considerate. Winning the trust of the people is considered most important (you fu), as only then their actions would be perceived as righteous by their followers (ge er dang).

I-Ching philosophy

From an historical point of view effective leadership, and how to inspire followers and nurture their talents, is based on the philosophical perspectives from I-Ching (The Book of Changes, Zhang & Chua, 2009). In ancient China the I-Ching findings are expressed in five pairs of qualities:

1. **words and resonance**; effective leadership is not demonstrated through the leader’s superior manner. Instead, it is reflected in the leaders’ actions. The value of integrity implies how words are used and how these words are translated into actions (compare servant-leadership attribute 5, persuasion).
2. **articulation and creativity**; mindful, inspiring others through their clear vision, optimism, and a profound belief in their followers’ ability (compare servant-leadership attribute 6, conceptualization);
3. **caution and trustworthiness**; or a junzi leader with a noble character, sharing values with followers, enhancing a power of positive influence on the followers (compare servant-leadership attribute 9, commitment).
4. **patience and engagement**; leaders are required to maintain calm in conflict situations, despite their emo-
In East-West businesses a major problem is the lack of Western talent development strategies and course material suitable for the Chinese context.

CHINA’S EDUCATIONAL MINDSET

Local talent concerns

In the last decade China has steadily established a nationwide policy of developing human capital and adopting practical measures of implementing talent development (Yang & Wang, 2009). Some Chinese leaders do not feel familiar with the Western blueprints of talent development at all. Others are in a transition phase or have their own specific talent concerns. Thus, for example, there is concern about the urgent need for highly trained technicians (Hutchings et al., 2009) and the need for a new/improved work ethic in state-owned enterprises (Li & Madsen, 2009).

Incompatibility of Western course materials

Talent development has become a strategic necessity in multinational companies in China and joint ventures with Western counterparts. However, in these East-West businesses a major problem was and is the lack of comparable Western talent development strategies and course material in the Chinese context. For example, Liang and Neng Shu (2008) show the lack of applicability of international business school curricula within the Chinese context. Local Chinese companies and their multinational counterparts struggle with transplanting and adopting Western educational insights into the Chinese local context (Wang et al., 2009).

Marketing education

Another example comes from marketing education in China. More practical knowledge and Chinese case materials in the marketing curriculum is required. Basu and Guo (2007) discuss the case of marketing education in China. Their research shows that the development of marketing education is well underway in China. However, a range of severe roadblocks towards innovation of the curriculum can be anticipated. These innovation barriers are caused by China’s limited approach by its educational leaders to nurture marketing talent. The current curriculum is overly theoretical. Practical marketing knowledge that is needed for international talent development is missing. According to Basu and Guo (2007) China’s educational mindsets should change from the ad-hoc to the systematic, and from the tactical to the strategic approach.

We will next touch on some of the current trends in China’s talent development. Without pretending to generalize the findings on a pan-country scale, we will explore, compare and learn from talent practices within China. It may help leaders, practitioners and educationalists in multicultural organizations to better understand educational mindsets based on one’s own and other cultures. A greater mutual understanding of educational mindsets across cultures is needed. A comparison of practices of Chinese and Western talent approaches may accelerate understanding, like the comparison undertaken in this article. These are only first steps to identify tailor-made talent strategies in China. More comparative research is needed with respect to talent-specifics such as learning styles, (team) appraisal, recruitment, and support for performance management, career development, and professional training.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN CHINESE (MULTINATIONAL) COMPANIES

Assimilation or not?

What is the relevance of local talent development in Chinese companies? Why not use the Western blueprints and anticipate on assimilation in the more international global culture? For example, in large cosmopolitan cities like Shanghai local and typical Chinese talent potential has diminished. Gilmore (2003) gives an historical analysis of the creative potential of the city of Shanghai. In the 1920s and 1930s Shanghai was the artistic centre of China. Shanghai’s own traditional and indigenous culture flourished. According to Golmore (2009) the city was a beacon that drew talent from every corner of the world. In the modern Shanghai of today, the city’s unique culture and traditions are sinking under external (Western) influences. Shanghai citizens would now rather assimilate international culture than anything local. Despite the globalization trends –like in the case of Shanghai- the Chinese workfloor and classroom is influenced by the earlier described more traditional Chinese values. Talent development should not only be considered in the context of the quality of the relationships (guanxi) on the workfloor or in the classroom. It is also about maintaining social harmony.
Remuneration

In the former centrally planned Chinese economy, employees were equally paid. The salary was determined by the length and hours of service, rather than on performance or actual skill level and individual talents (Chatterjee & Nankervis, 2007, p.57). Pay differentials to support high performance of talents based on incentives and benefits were usually small. Material salary incentives were strictly limited. However, under the new Labour Law from 1995 onwards (ibid.) the salary structure is increasingly based on individual performance and enterprise productivity, especially in the more wealthy and urban areas.

Local talent strategy required in multinational firms

As has been stated, China’s economy is growing rapidly. International companies start joint ventures or establish business divisions in the Chinese mainland. In practice, Western professionals in China often have to work in a highly complex, ambiguous and uncertain environment. Despite the available Chinese talent pool, there is an urgent need for specific (international) skills and talents. In their study for the McKinsey Quarterly, Guthridge, Komm and Lawson (2008, p.57) show how multinational company leaders in China such as Citigroup, General Electric and HSBC suffer from fierce competition for binding talent against local Chinese businesses. Therefore new local talent strategies have been developed with nurturing facilities for career development, housing, educational benefits and training. Talent shortage – especially those with English speaking capabilities (Chatterjee & Nankervis, 2007, p.36-57) is a major concern in China’s business world today. Binding talent is another problem for leaders within multinational companies that operate in China. Sharon Ruwart, CEO of Elsevier Science & Technology in China emphasises how teamwork is one of the problems on the Elsevier work floor in China (Dijk van, 2008, p.5). The Chinese colleagues at Elsevier did not feel familiar with the Western way of team work and coaching. They were used to and preferred to follow the instructions of their Chinese supervisor, to get the best (team) achievements.

Asymmetric understanding

Cheung (2008) shows how multinational companies in China encounter talent-related problems. From an outsider and expatriate point of view these multinational companies ‘speak for’ their local employees, as if the local employees have no voice of their own. The authors suggest that there is an asymmetric understanding between the Western managers and their Chinese employees. Cheung (2008) hopes that more talent-related studies may help create a platform for a meaningful cross-cultural dialogue between voices from the East and West.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN LOCAL CHINESE COMPANIES

Major talent problems

Even more complex are the talent-related problems in the local Chinese companies themselves. There is a major lack of competent (servant-) leaders and managers in the emerging local companies and training facilities. Wang and Wang (2006) explored the management training practices in China. Talent development for local managers in China tends to be fragmented and lacks coherence. To better understand the causes of the current talent crisis, the authors reviewed practitioner-based literature including the most popular Chinese management trade journals (e.g. Manager, Professional Managers in the Chinese Market, HR World) and a few related Chinese websites (e.g. China Professional Managers Research Center’s Website, China HRD Net, China Training Net etc.). Major talent problems in current China were identified, such as high turnover rate of employees, imbalance between workload and compensation, unfair competition in the labour market, and lack of acknowledgement by the organisation.

Retaining talents

In 1995 a new Labour Law was launched to increase flexibility in the employer-employee relationship (Chatterjee & Nankervis, 2007). The employment contract system was introduced, incorporating efficiency and competitive values in the workplace. To retain talents, work incentives and career development schemes were implemented.

Transition towards market economy

The transition from a planned economy to a market driven economy has created great challenges for local leaders and managers. During the economic transition these managers had to shift roles from bureaucratic administrators to strategic decision makers, from civil servants that follow government decisions and orders (cadre or gong pu) to competitive managers. In practice great resistance to change could be observed. Thus, for example, some Chinese HR (Human Resource) managers may still base their evaluations more on personal relationships than job performance. Wang et al. (2009) show how the Chinese workforce may still be influenced by the more traditional ‘ruling of man’ factor. This means that employee and talent selection is based more on receiving (human feelings) and guanxi(social relationships) than on personal competence. Promotion of employees is executed on the basis of loyalty and social acceptance. Financial compensation and rewards are mostly established on seniority rather than performance. Performance evaluation is largely qualitative and tends to be
subjective. HRM in China is more focused on utilization of employees than on training and development of talents. Last but not least the major task of the HR managers is to support and safeguard the social harmony in the Chinese company (Wang, et al. 2009).

GUANXI IN DAILY LIFE

Above I have described problems of talent development both in international and local Chinese companies. To further understand the context of Chinese talent development, nurtured by their (servant-) leaders, one of the important layers is the concept of guanxi in Chinese organisations. According to Hutchings and Weir (2006), international leaders and HR managers need to get acquainted with the social network of guanxi to improve their operations in China. Guanxi originated from Confucian philosophy and is seen as all-pervasive in Chinese business and social activities. Guanxi differs from inter-firm networking in the West; it plays a fundamental role in Chinese daily life, schools, and business culture. The Chinese focus on relationships is created over longer periods of time and built on frequent social exchanges.

Culture of connections

Whereas in most Western nations business and social positions are often quite separate, in China business and social interactions are viewed as part of a whole relationship. Hierarchical relationships in the workplace are replicated in a social setting. A Chinese individual with a problem, personal or organisational, naturally turns to his or her guanxiwang, or ‘relationship network’, for assistance. An individual is not limited to his or her own guanxiwang. An individual may tap into the networks of those with whom he or she has guanxi. This networking is summed up in the expression ‘duo yige guanxi, duo yitiao lu’—‘one more connection offers one more road to take’ (Weir and Hutchings, 2005). Guanxi created a culture of connections and privileged access to business and career opportunities. According to Lo and Everett (2001), guanxi networking plays an important role in ensuring appropriate codes of conduct for everyone involved in guanxi. Weir and Hutchings recommend that foreign investors should try to understand the power of guanxi networking as this would enable them to deal with the complexities and uncertainties in human transactions in the Chinese workplace and classroom.

Song and Werbel (2007) analysed the role of guanxi in the process of job search. Guanxi has a major effect on the intensity of job search and the methods used by leaders (family members, friends, colleagues) to serve him/her in the job search. Guanxi has a moderate effect as well on the linkage between search intensity and job search confidence. The successful job search of school leavers, therefore, is influenced by the quality and intensity of the following three types of guanxi:

- Chia-jen which means that there is mutual support in a stable relationship with no expectations of return favours. Literally Chia-jen means ‘family members’ who assist you in your job search; therefore no reciprocity in terms of favours is needed.
- Shou-jen is based on social obligation and reciprocity in relationships. It is important to cultivate these relationships, they form the basis for guanxi at work. Literally Shou-jen means ‘acquaintances’ like school, friends, neighbours, colleagues, etc.
- Sheng-jen refers to relationships with people outside the social network. Interactions with e.g. colleagues are considered temporary and functional relationships. Sheng-jen means literally ‘unknown’, thus people you do not know but with whom it is important to build a guanxi relationship from scratch.

THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES THEORY

Character education

What is the impact of this history on China’s more recent education and training? Nowadays conformity and loyalty towards the teacher is still highly valued. At the same time the educational practices may vary enormously, from high tech in the cosmopolitan cities to very traditional in rural areas. In the more recent past educational reforms were initiated by Deng Xiaoping (1978). The current climate of economic and significant social reform has led to a new character education movement. Character education and training refers to and builds on earlier Confucian traditions. Character education is devoted to promoting all-round talent development: morally, intellectually, physically and artistically (Shen, 2009).

Multiple Intelligence theory

The current character education movement in China has been influenced by amongst others the Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory of Professor Howard Gardner, of Harvard University (Gardner, 2005; www.howardgardner.com). Gardner offers an alternative talent-diverse vision for the future of education. MI contains components of both Western and Eastern cultures. It is a pluralistic view of the mind, recognizing many different and discrete facets of cognition. In a way, recognizing and anticipating on this diversity of talents is a feature of servant-leaders (see serv-
ant-leader attribute 7, foresight). MI is a broad view on intelligence far ahead the traditional I.Q. thinking.

**Conceptualization**

MI shows educationalists the bigger picture of how everything is related in talent development (compare servant-leadership attribute 6, conceptualization). The MI educational vision is about a multitude of cultural and social competences of learners which cannot be traced or explained easily via quantitative data by a regular I.Q. test. This lack of quantitative approach weakens the influence of MI theory. MI has to compete with the legitimacy of the established mainstream and test industry, see also the critical and constructive comments on Gardner’s work in Pava (2008). However, MI is an innovative, creative and qualitative way of looking at talent diversity. It supports and gives practical tools to educationalists worldwide—as in the case of China—for reform. That is why we explicitly pay attention to MI theory here, realizing that there are many more innovative developments in China that cannot be discussed in the limited space of this article.

**Diversity of learning styles**

MI acknowledges that learners have different strengths and cognitive styles, described by Gardner (2005, pp. 7-9) as follows:

- **Linguistic intelligence;** the intelligence of a writer, orator, journalist.
- **Logical-mathematical intelligence;** the intelligence of a logician, mathematician, or scientist.
- **Musical intelligence;** the capacity to create, perform and appreciate music.
- **Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence;** the capacity to solve problems or fashion products using your whole body, exhibited by dancers, athletes, craftspersons, surgeons, etc.
- **Spatial intelligence;** the capacity to form mental imagery of the world, the larger world of the aviator or navigator, or the more local world of the chess player or the surgeon; the capacity to manipulate those mental images.
- **Interpersonal intelligence;** the ability to understand others, what motivates them. This skill intrapersonal intelligence; capacity to form an accurate model of oneself - one's strengths, weaknesses, desires and fears- and to use that model effectively in life (compare servant-leadership attribute 4, awareness).
- **Naturalist intelligence;** the capacity to make consequent distinctions in nature, between one plant and another, among animals, etc. It is likely that our entire consumer culture is based on our naturalist capacity to differentiate one car brand from another, one sneaker from another, etc.
- **Existential intelligence;** the capacity to locate oneself with respect to the cosmos, or the intelligence of the ‘big questions’ related to the size of the universum, the future of the planet, love, conflict, etc. (compare servant-leadership attribute 4, awareness).

**HOW MI THEORY HAS SHAPED THOUGHTS IN CHINESE SCHOOLS**

**First observations**

In the 1970s and 1980s Gardner visited China several times to study art and music teaching (Biggs, 1999). He was impressed by the drawing skills of very young Chinese children, far in advance of that of American children of a similar age. Gardner realized that his first observations were simplistic, and that Chinese learning processes were not as they first appear to be. The Western stereotype of education in China was and often still is that of authoritarian teachers, rote learning and memorizing.

According to Gardner (Biggs, 2009) repetitive skill development comes first for the Chinese learner, followed by meaning and interpretation. Repetition is being used in the classroom as the tool for creating meaning.

**Applicability of MI in China.**

The applicability of MI to the educational field and talent development is enormous. For example, Smith (2006) shows how the MI theory can be applied in digital libraries where multiple cultures and contents need to be respected. In ‘Multiple Intelligences around the World,’ (Chen et al., 2009) MI practitioners worldwide describe how MI theory is implemented in their respective countries. The co-authors discuss some of the cultural challenges they faced along the way. Chinese co-authors Chen (2009), Cheung (2009) and Shen (2009) describe how and why MI theory is warmly welcomed by Chinese schools and public. They explain how Howard Gardner made several trips to China from the early 1980s onwards, building a large network of MI researchers and educationalists. In 2002 the Chinese Education Society founded a project entitled ‘Applied Research of Multiple Intelligences Theory on Developing Students Potential’.

More than 150 schools in thirteen Chinese provinces have been involved in the research and practice. About 3500 publications followed from this MI research project in China. Since 2000 a hundred books on MI theory have been translated into or written in Chinese characters (Shen, 2009). The Multiple Intelligences Education Society of China (MIESC) was established as well as the Multiple Intelligences Magazine.

**Why is the MI theory so popular in China?**

According to Shen (2006), MI coincides with Chinese culture and ancient educational ideologies. Confucianism,
Daoism, Buddhism, Christianity and other religions and thoughts have also influenced the Chinese educational tradition. In the Confucian idea of education Yin Cai Shi Jiao means to teach learners using different approaches according to their different facets of talent. This is in line with the more recent MI and talent diversity thinking (Shen, 2006). During Confucian times (551-479 BC) six skills were equally important in education and training:

- Li; rule of property
- Yue; archery (spatial)
- She; music
- Yu; driving carriage (kinaesthetic)
- Shu; writing, calligraphy and painting
- Shu; mathematics

In Confucianism, the human being is primarily a maker of meaning (compare servant-leadership attribute 7, foresight). Human development is a matter of growing into a kind of focus where one engages in the fullest and most fruitful way with society, with nature and with heaven itself. The different learning phases in a person’s life show the importance of lifelong learning (Haydoe, 2006). In this Confucian context any cultural bias against each learner’s uniqueness is rejected. This is in contrast to the China’s Communist period where all learners were considered the same. The acquisition of the six Confucian skills listed above has encouraged individuals to develop their unique personal strengths, or what we would call talent diversity encouraged by servant-leaders. 

**Talent development and serving the family.**

Introducing MI in China built on the momentum of educational reform, its open door policy, and the renaissance of traditional Chinese pedagogy and thought from the 1980s onwards. According to Chen (2009), the implementation of MI in Chinese schools is the result of a strong acculturation process. To understand the acculturation of MI in Chinese education and training we need to learn more about the conceptualisation of intelligence in the Chinese context. In the Confucian tradition human intelligence is attributed to the family rather than to the individual. A proper servant relationship with your parents and family is fundamental in life. Or as Confucius said (translated, The Analects, 1:6, 2004): ‘A young man should serve his parents at home and be respectful to elders outside his home. He should be earnest and truthful, loving all, but become intimate with ren (humaneness or goodness). After doing this, if he has energy to spare, he can study literature and the arts. Only after these things are taken care of is it proper to go off and play at whatever one likes—even if this ‘play’ involves the serious study of some art form.’

According to Chen (2009), MI practices in China involve the whole family. A family intellectual profile is not viewed as separate bar graphs, but rather a dynamic intellectual system in which each member of the family adds, supports and enhances the development and learning (hsueh) of another member. This is in line with servant-leadership attribute 10, building community. In the Confucian tradition, learning is more than intellectual, academic study, or the accumulation of facts, although this aspect is included. Real learning is the process of manifesting one’s ren by developing one’s talents in self-reflection via the various types of human relationships (compare servant-leadership attribute 4, awareness). Or like Zixia, one of the students of Confucius said (translated, The Analects, 1:6, 2004): ‘If you can treat the worthy as worthy without strain, exert your utmost in serving your parents, devote your whole self in serving your prince, and be honest in speech when dealing with your friends. Then even if someone says you are not learned (hsueh), I would say that you are definitely learned.’

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

**Talent shortage and talent development**

Despite the current fast developments in (higher) education and training, China suffers from talent-related problems such as shortage of skilled employees, adequate leadership, and a brain drain of well qualified employees (Benson and Zhu, 2002). Hutchings et al. (2009), consider the critical shortage of skilled technicians in Chinese firms a major bottleneck for China’s economic development. According to Hutchings et al., this problem partly results from failures of China’s (higher) education policy to develop adequate vocational training. China still faces significant problems of limited resources, inadequate processes, and ideological restrictions in providing talent development programmes. In addition, Western managers and investors find it hard to understand the Chinese managers’ conventional approach to learning and talent development. It is a long-term process reconciling diverse international and Chinese organizational and employee needs (Chatterjee & Nankervis, 2007). Furthermore, the loss of linkages between industry and vocational training during the Great Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and the nationwide one-child policy affected the current talent shortage. The situation is getting worse due to the emigration the skilled employees.

**Huge growth of talent programmes**

A huge growth of talent development programmes is to be expected in China in the years to come. The worldwide economic recession is influencing this demand. According to Gordon (2009) there will be a growing job crisis worldwide after the current recession.
Demographic trends in the USA, Europe, Russia and Japan will create a drastic talent shortage. Also China is influenced by this worldwide trend. The need for talent development programmes in China is confirmed by Chuai, and Preece (2008). They argue that talent management in China, especially in the case of multinationals in Beijing, should not be considered as ‘old wine in new bottles’. The authors explore how, since the open door policy of Deng Xiaoping, dramatic changes occurred in China’s enterprises. Not only planning and decision-making processes were decentralized, but also private and foreign-invested enterprises were encouraged, and responsibility systems enhancing individual accountability were introduced. Due to the stronger competition and current talent shortage, more attention is given to talent management. In particular multinational companies are exposed to Western approaches to management.

Future talent development in China

The question can be asked: how did organisations in China anticipate the recent social changes and what are the implications for future talent development? Some (educational) organisations have tried to address this question by building capacity—for example in the area of management development. Over the past few years China has gradually established a nationwide management development system with a renewed emphasis on professionalism, competency development, curriculum planning and innovations in matching management training with organizational strategies (Wang & Wang, 2006, p.189). Since the beginning of China’s economic reforms, more than eight million managers and supervisors have been offered some type of management training (ibid., p.187). Executive and corporate university courses and Western-style MBA programmes have helped to increase their managerial capacity. Organisations in China are more committed to the personal development of their employees. Chinese managers are getting more interested in lifelong learning. This can be classroom-based learning, experiential learning, or learning from work and life practice, according to Wang and Wang.

Tailor-made solutions for Chinese companies and schools need to be designed, where educationalists and policymakers may want to include the popular multiple intelligence insights. The research findings of Li and Madsen (2009) in reformed and state-owned Chinese enterprises reveal major talent-related dilemmas. The Chinese workplace may provide not only a place to make a living, but also a network of social support. This social network often becomes a safety net for the employee in difficult times. This sense of belonging in Chinese firms creates most committed employees: a commitment that is not driven by strategy plans or individual performance appraisal but primarily by social support. Practices like these on the Chinese workplace require a re-thinking of Western talent-related purposes, originating from a more Western market driven ideology. Key in the western talent perspective is the improvement of individual and organisational performance. According to Li and Madsen (2009, p.185), this will not work in China. Tailor-made solutions are necessary, because: ‘Pure performance orientation results in competition, which may break down trust, the building block of the social networks for these workers.’ Further cross-continental research is needed on talent diversity in the workplace.

Guanxi and talent recruitment

Guanxi is a concept that needs further attention from researchers in the field of talent diversity. It is not an isolated phenomenon in China only as many similar characteristics can be observed in other cultures as well. The implications of guanxi and other related cultural phenomena in China are relatively unknown in the West. Despite the relevance in the 21st century multicultural workplace, guanxi, danwei and other similar social phenomena in e.g. the Arab world and the African continent (Hutchings and Weir, 2006) have not yet received much attention from talent recruitment professionals. We have seen how the job search process in China might be full of interdependencies due to guanxi, and other social network relations. The mainstream (Anglo-American) theories about talent recruitment might not be applicable to the culturally specific Chinese environment. Comparative research on these issues might bring an interesting so-called ‘mirror effect’ to the daily practice of Western talent recruitment professionals. Last but not least, one might become more aware how and where strong social ties might influence the recruitment process in more Western organizations too.

Talent diversity and servant-leadership

There is still much to be learned about servant-leadership in the educational environment. The concept of servant-leadership needs further definition and empirical analysis. The interaction between the servant-leader (head teacher, lecturer, policymaker, etc.) and the followers (pupils, students, customers, parents, etc.) needs further examination. In this article we have learned about the talent-related specifics in the case of China. In international and comparative studies, more attention should be paid to the contextual factors across countries and cultures. This chapter has provided cross-cultural insights on talent diversity nurtured by servant-leadership that are both inspirational and ethical. The main attributes of servant-leadership were discussed and related to the Chinese con-
text. The main servant-leadership attributes are listening, empathy, the healing of relationships, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment to others, and community building. In the 21st century educational environment—the online learning environment—it is time to review notions of talent nurturing and servant-leadership. Cross-cultural practices and ethical concerns like those discussed in the case of (ancient) China are just one building block in creating a multicultural body of knowledge. We have seen that servant-leaders create a sense of connection and meaningfulness for their learning community. The sense of belonging is enhanced by the positive social relationships within the learning organization, respecting the talent diversity of its members. Servant-leadership can help to provide an answer to 21st century organisational concerns like school drop-outs, unemployment, ethical conflicts and demotivation. Servant-leadership for talents can be viewed as a cost-effective measure because it enhances the growth and motivation of the learning community. Future educational research can provide understanding of how servant-leadership may enhance talent diversity and create added value in school organisations. Training and further encouragement to develop servant-leaders will emerge in 21st century school organisations. These new leaders, with integrity, dignity and respect, will become the change agents for talent development in a durable society. In conclusion: in educational settings the management is of the mind, whereas servant-leadership is of the heart.

FOOTNOTES


2 The relevance of the above economical issue was underlined by Jean Paul Votron, the CEO of Fortis Bank (Bates & van Wijnen, 2008, 32). Votron argues that some remarkable talent pools happen to occur in Russia, China and India. This should be a wake-up call for the Western world. Training and development in these and other emerging countries should become priority to nurture their talents.

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Lifelong Learning in India: A Chronicled Journey

The importance of lifelong learning has been repeatedly stressed in several educational policy documents and discourses in India. Despite these observations and undisputed importance of lifelong learning for development of Indian society, two very important issues have not been dealt in detail by contemporary academics and researchers. These two vital issues are how lifelong learning has evolved over the years in Indian society, and why India still lacks an exclusive and well-defined policy of Lifelong Learning. In this backdrop, the present paper attempts to fill this knowledge gap by discussing about how lifelong learning has been perceived in different times of Indian society and where it stands today. Besides, the paper also discusses the need of a national policy of lifelong learning in India.

Pradeep Kumar Misra
BACKGROUND

The importance of lifelong learning and education has been repeatedly stressed in several educational policy documents and discourses in India. While the Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) observed that education does not end with schooling but is a lifelong process; the National Policy on Education in India - 1986 (modified in 1992) considered Lifelong Education as the cherished goal of the educational process which presupposes universal literacy, provision of opportunities for youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of their choice at the pace suited to them (Government of India, 1986a; 1992a).

Longworth and Davies (1996) defined lifelong learning as: ‘The development of human potential through continually supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances and environments.’ (p.22) The concept of lifelong learning stresses that learning and education are related to life as a whole – not just to work – and that learning throughout life is a continuum that should run from cradle to grave. According to this concept, lifelong learning refers to all kinds of formal education and training (whether or not they carry certification) and can occur anywhere including education or training institutions, the workplace (on or off the job), the family, or cultural and community settings.

Talking about main characteristics and relevance of lifelong learning, Simmons-McDonald (2009) observes that learning can take place throughout one’s life and that an individual can continue to develop skills, competences and refine behaviours as a result of that learning; educational systems can play an important role in the learning and development of individuals and influence their response and actions throughout life. As a result of learning, individuals can adapt to changing circumstances and contexts in such a way that they can be productive in and derive satisfaction from the different circumstances and situations in which they find themselves.

Instead of these observations and undisputed importance of lifelong learning for development of Indian society, two very important issues have not been dealt in detail by contemporary academics and researchers. These two vital issues are how lifelong learning has evolved over the years in Indian society, and why India still lacks an exclusive and well-defined policy of lifelong learning. The available literature in this regard mainly presents a fragmented story. In this backdrop, it will be valuable to know how lifelong learning has been perceived in different times of Indian society. Ancient education system of India provides us with the first traces of lifelong learning in human history.

EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA: FIRST TRACES OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Education in ancient India began around the 3rd century BC with elements of religious training and impart of traditional knowledge. In the ancient days, sages and scholars imparted education orally and after the development of letters the form of writing was introduced. Education in ancient India originated with the ‘Gurukul’ system. This type of ancient Hindu school in India was residential in nature with the ‘Shishyas’ or students and the ‘Guru’ or teacher living in proximity within the same house. The spread of Buddhism and Jainism in India enriched education in ancient India. In this period education became available to everyone and various celebrated educational institutions were established at that time. The educational institutes, Nalanda, Vikramshila and Takshashila that flourished during the 5th to 13th century AD were known for their educational excellence (Indianetzone, 2010a).

Ancient Indian education system has never given hundred percent credit to formal institutionalized learning. In one of the ‘Slokas’, or religious verses, four sources of education have been identified through which learning takes place: It says: one fourth of the learning is done when the student is with the teacher, one fourth of learning by the learner’s self-study and self-reflection, one fourth of the learning results by peer interaction and the last fourth comes out of time context. The ‘Gita’ in a subtle way gave prominence to self-directed, self-generated, self-initiated learning. It says one should realize one’s goals and aims through one’s own efforts. Educationally this means that the process of education has to be self-directed and self generated (Rajput, 2001). This concept of self-directed learning has paved the way for lifelong learning in ancient India.

Open learning and continuing education which emphasize lifelong learning has been a corner stone of Indian thinking since ancient times. In Indian tradition, there is an injunction that activities relating to teaching and learning should never be abandoned and postponed. There are also other powerful expressions which appear in the holy scriptures, the ‘Vedas’, ‘Upnishad’ and ‘Puranas’. One of the significant utterances of ‘Atharva Veda’ is that the aim and goal of every man’s life is self-growth and self-enrichment and the mechanism for this is continuing lifelong learning. Similarly, in ‘Trayitrya Upanishad’ it has been repeatedly said that self-learning should...
never be abandoned (Rajput, 2001). On the basis of these observations, one can clearly state that the concept of lifelong learning was well documented, perceived and practiced during ancient times in India.

MEDIEVAL TIMES: CONTINUATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING TRADITION

Arab and Central Asian peoples brought Muslim educational models to the subcontinent in both the medieval and early modern periods. Within decades of the Prophet Muhammad’s death in 632 C.E., Arab mariners began to trade, reside, and intermarry with local women in south India. Turkic peoples and other Central Asians raided northern India around 1000 C. E. and thereafter established several foreign-conquest empires. Muslim rulers promoted urban education by endowing libraries and literary societies. They also founded primary schools (Maktab)s in which students learned reading, writing, and basic Islamic prayers, and secondary schools (Madrasas) to teach advanced language skills, Koranic exegesis, prophetic traditions, Islamic law (Sharia), and related subjects (Indianetzone, 2010b).

Besides, there was yet another system, namely, the domestic system of teaching under a learned expert. The house of such a learned expert often developed into a centre of instruction, where people were afforded free board and lodging. Such educational centres, small but numerous, not only provided a field for post-collegiate studies, but were also in many cases the only means by which instruction in some subjects was imparted. This type of instruction with which institutional schools could not compete became popular in the case of arts, crafts and various techniques.

The tradition of oral transmission of knowledge, values and culture of society continued even during the medieval period when the rulers of India provided considerable political patronage and financial support to scholars, saints, teachers, artists and artisans who were actively involved in the spread of the messages of peace and harmony through various art forms, music, preaching and writings (Patwardan, 1939). There is no clear-cut evidence about the advocacy of lifelong learning in medieval times. However, it can be stated that the domestic system of teaching under a learned expert and tradition of oral transmission of knowledge has made it possible for people to learn even at the later stage of life. In a way this practice has strengthened the lifelong tradition of the ancient education system.

COLONIAL PERIOD IN INDIA: EMERGENCE OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Education in medieval India flourished mostly during the ‘Mughal’ rule from the beginning of 1526 until the end of ‘Mughal’ political presence in 1848. In the later medieval era, the British came to India and introduced English education. The ideas and pedagogical methods of education during the colonial period, from 1757 to 1947, were contested terrain. By the early nineteenth century, when English was made the official language of government business, British policy promoted a cheap, trickle-down model for colonial education.

When the British crown abolished company rule in 1858, government universities existed at Bombay (contemporary Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata), and Madras (Chennai). Direct rule did not change the decision to deemphasize primary education to provide occupational training for young Indian men who took jobs both in the lower tiers of the government and in urban, Western-style legal and medical services (Education in Colonial India, 2010).

The colonial period in India brought about a new kind of educational programme popularly named as adult education programme. The Adult Education Programme in India, according to available documents, dates back to the early years of 1920–1921. However, the first official concern reflected in the Royal Commission on Agriculture, (set up in 1926), was to suggest ways to promote the welfare and prosperity of the rural population, and focus on the type of education best suited to the needs of an agriculture population in the rural areas (Royal Commission on Agriculture, 1928). Afterwards, the Auxiliary committee of Indian Statutory Commission that was set up in 1928 to examine the growth of education and estimate the effect both in respect of performance and promise of mass education, highlighted the importance and role of literacy for political education of Indians (Hartog Report, 1929).

The first organized effort in pre-independence India for adult education is reflected in setting up of the Adult Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1939 under the chairmanship of Dr. Syed Mohammad, Ministry of Education, Government of Bihar (a province of India). The committee has given a number of recommendations and conclusions to promote adult education e.g. literacy is a means to further education and must not be regarded as an end itself, and the primary aim of the campaign must not be merely to make adults literate but to keep them literate, etc. The committee further emphasized that illiteracy is not confined to the village, a large proportion of the workers in urban areas is also illiterate. The committee even considered the question of levying a tax on those employers who do not make adequate provision for the education of their employees (CABE, 1939).

These educational provisions and directives clearly reflect that throughout the colonial period, the main emphasis was on literacy and adult education programmes. However, there were hardly any provisions for continuation of educational and learning activities imbibed through these programmes. Irrespective of this major lapse, colonial period can be credited for emphasizing the need of adult education and starting a number of adult education programmes in different parts of India.
EARLY INDEPENDENCE PERIOD: CONTINUATION OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The independent India continued with the idea of adult education programmes. In 1948, Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), appointed a sub-committee to work out a detailed ‘scheme for adult education and literacy’. The committee opined:

that a new orientation must be given to schemes of the education of the adult…..that (it) recognizes the value of the ability to read and write, as it opens to the adult new avenues of knowledge and opportunity....however, the committee feels that the present socio-economic set-up in the country demand a more direct approach.....of improving the standard of life and culture of the adult and turn him into a healthier, happier and better citizen.

During the first three decades of planned development in independent India (1947-77), adult education programs with limited coverage and funds characterized the state’s approach to educating the vast population of adult illiterates. During this period, three types of programme came into existence under the umbrella of adult education: (i) Social Education Program aiming to make illiterate citizens conscious of their rights and responsibilities for building a democratic nation, while incorporating the components of health, recreation, and economic life, (ii) Farmers Functional Literacy Program for upgrading the occupational skills of farmers and inculcating among them modern attitudes, values, and behaviours to attain self-sufficiency in food production, and (iii) Non-formal Education Program for Youth (15-25 years) for providing functionally relevant education in order to prepare them as producers as well as responsible citizens (Patel, n.d.).

The report of the National Board of Adult Education’s Committee on post-literacy and follow-up emphasized that past experiences in this country reveal that though there has always been an awareness of the importance of the programmes of post-literacy and follow-up, they have never been systematically organized. The report suggested for linkage of post-literacy and follow-up programmes with various schemes of socio-economic development, and categorically stated that such programmes should have emphasis for those who have completed adult education courses or who have had education up to primary level (National Board of Adult Education, 1972).

In 1979 a draft policy statement on adult education was issued by the Government of India, which was operationalized in the form of a nationwide program known as the National Adult Education Program. The NAEP aimed at covering an estimated 100 million illiterates in the age group of 15-35 over a period of six years (1978-84). The conceptual framework of NAEP integrated literacy, functionality and social awareness. In the preamble of this programme, it was stated that...

The objective is to organize adult education programmes, with literacy as an indispensable component, for approximately 100 million illiterate persons in the age group 15–35 with a view to providing to them skills for self-direct learning leading to self-reliant and active role in their own development and in the development of their environment..... (NAEP, 1979).

Under the NAEP, adult education projects were implemented nationwide by voluntary agencies, educational institutions (universities and colleges), local bodies (for example, panchayats and municipalities) and the central and state governments. The programme of NAEP underwent a thorough review by a committee under the chairmanship of Professor D.S. Kothari. The committee came out with the report in 1980 and specifically recommended: ‘In the plans of national development, along with universalization of primary education, adult education should receive the highest priority. Adult education should be an integral part of the basic Minimum Need Programme.’ The committee further recommended that all illiterate persons of the age group of about 15 to 35 should be covered in the shortest time possible by the programme of adult education (Government of India, 1980).

The appraisal of these initiatives helps us to understand that during the early independence period, Government of India continued with the policies and approaches of adult education. In a way nothing new was added, as government failed to come up with any comprehensive and complete policy on adult education. Patel (n.d.) observes: ‘Despite massive illiteracy and low level of education in the workforce, the central government after the independence in 1947 neither took any Constitutional responsibility for educating the adult illiterate population nor emphasized adult education within the general educational policy.’ Besides, the government has also missed the chance to adopt the concept of lifelong education that was very much in discussion during the 80’s.

SHIFT IN APPROACH IN 1990S: ADULT EDUCATION TO CONTINUING ADULT EDUCATION

The National Policy on Education (NPE), introduced in 1986 and revised in 1992 has been a major landmark in the history of adult literacy education as it articulated for the first time the national commitment to addressing the problem of eradication of adult illiteracy in a time bound manner with planned, concerted and coordinated efforts. This policy considered lifelong education as the cherished goal of the educational process which presupposes universal literacy, provision of opportunities for youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of their choice at the pace suited to them. The Policy further observed that the critical development issue is the continuous upgradation of skills so as to produce manpower resources of the kind.
and the number required by the society (Government of India, 1986a, 1986b, 1992a & 1992b). The recommendation of NPE, 1986 was translated into practice in educational institutions and a number of adult education programs were planned and implemented by university departments of Adult Continuing Education and open and distance learning institutions.

In pursuance of the mandate of the National Policy on Education (1986), the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988 as a societal and technological mission with the objective of imparting functional literacy to 80 million adult illiterates in the age group 15-25 years by 1995 (Government of India, 1988). In 1999, the NLM was revamped by the central government to attain the goal of total literacy, i.e. sustainable threshold literacy rate of 75% by 2007. However, NLM has modified its approach to achieve its goal (Planning Commission, 2002). This new approach envisages the integration of basic literacy teaching-learning with post-literacy activities to ensure a smooth transition from total literacy to post-literacy on a learning continuum. Some of the current programs of National Literacy Mission include Continuing Education, Mahila Samakhya (Women’s Empowerment), Integrated Child Development Services, Vocational Training Programs, Farmers Education and Training (National Literacy Mission, 2010).

The University Grants Commission of India (UGC) can be credited to emphasize and popularize the term lifelong learning at policy level. UGC began to encourage the universities and colleges to participate in lifelong learning programmes and started funding it. Although the programme made a beginning with adult literacy, its scope was gradually widened over the next three decades to include post literacy, continuing education, population education, refresher courses and a variety of extension and field outreach activities. Simultaneously the UGC encouraged and funded the universities to institutionalize the programme by setting up separate departments with core faculty to undertake teaching and research (UGC, 2007).

In year 2007, the UGC has come up with a detailed policy on lifelong learning and extension and stated: 'The approach during the XI Plan would be not only to continue the ongoing programmes initiated during the earlier Five Year Plans but also to consolidate them and expand them to cover new universities and select colleges. All the different programmes initiated earlier under various terminologies viz; Adult Education, Continuing Education, Extension, Population Education, Student Counseling, Placement Services and e-learning will be reformulated and developed as Lifelong Learning Programmes so as to bring them in tune with fast expanding global knowledge scenario. Since Lifelong Learning has become a fundamental goal of recent educational policies often advocated as a way to achieve socio-economic development and a tool for promoting knowledge based society, the UGC would extend support to this area during the XI Plan (UGC, 2007).

These observations reflect that the necessity to adjust to the prerequisites of the knowledge-based society and economy brought about gradual shift in the approach and now the concept of lifelong learning is shaping again in modern India. But the pace of the shift is very slow and at policy level we are still occupied with literacy and adult education. As observed by Shah (2009): ‘Although the importance of lifelong learning was never overlooked in Indian education policy documents and the Policy Statement on National Adult Education Program (1978) considered continuing education as an indispensable aspect of the strategy of human resource development and of the goal of creation of a learning society, there has been practically no shift from the exclusive emphasis on adult literacy.’

This exclusive emphasis on adult education and reluctance to adopt new measures has so far deterred Indian government to come up with a national policy on lifelong learning.

"It is high time India comes up with a national policy of lifelong learning."

Considering the importance of lifelong learning for the development and prosperity of Indian society, former President of India A.P.J Kalam observed: ‘For India to become knowledge society, it has to be a learning society. From this, it is important that continuous opportunity for improving individual knowledge, skills and competence are provided so that individuals continue to remain relevant and productive in the changed settings of his office, factory, farm or society. For lifelong learning apart from formal education we have to change the settings at the home, work place, community and the society at large. For enabling this to happen we should provide broad range of learning opportunities, recognize and reward learning regardless of where and how it takes place (Kalam, 2005).

The XI Plan Guidelines of University Grants Commission, India on Lifelong Learning and Extension (UGC, 2007) states: ‘The country’s economic performance depends critically on access to and the adoption of new technology and improving the skills of the labor force. Since 92.4% of India’s workforce is in the unorganized sectors, they need regular upgrading of skills to compete in the globalized economy.’ Keese (2007, p. 81) confirms this notion: ‘A range of evidence points to clear economic benefits from lifelong learning
both for individuals and for society as a whole.’ Similarly, Fischer (1999) suggests that lifelong learning is an essential challenge for inventing the future of our societies; it is a necessity rather than a possibility or a luxury to be considered.

McIntosh (2005, p.3) makes another point: ‘With the explosion of knowledge and the breaking down of the old fixed patterns of employment, learners are increasingly demanding a type of education that allows them to update their knowledge whenever necessary and to go on doing so throughout their working lives.’

These observations clearly establish that lifelong learning is instrumental to meet societal or individual developmental challenges in India and clear-cut provisions of lifelong learning to different sections of Indian society is essential to help them to continue developing on a personal level, having greater individual autonomy and making a more active and productive contributor to society. But these goals can not be achieved in the absence of a comprehensive, well defined, and focused national policy of lifelong learning in India.

Therefore, it is high time that India must come up with a national policy of lifelong learning. There are ample reasons behind this demand. The first and foremost reason is that a national policy will bring clarity about concept, objectives and utility of lifelong learning among different sectors of Indian society. The second reason is that it will provide direction and define the role of different sectors to implement and promote lifelong learning in society. The third major gain from this policy will be the revision, reorganization and consolidation of already existing different programmes and schemes under the umbrella of lifelong learning to meet out the demands of knowledge-based society and economy. Above all, a national policy will significantly contribute to take benefit from socio-economic changes taking place within and outside the country, and global discourses on lifelong learning.

CONCLUSION
The global knowledge economy is transforming the demands of the labour market in India. It is also placing new demands on citizens, who need more skills and knowledge to be able to function in their day-to-day lives. Equipping people to deal with these demands requires a new model of education and training. This new model is lifelong learning, as it helps people to acquire new skills for economical and social benefits and remain creative and innovative throughout their lives. The need of the hour is that Indian government must take effective steps to promote and provide lifelong learning opportunities. This is a challenge that has to be met effectively, efficiently and urgently. The first sincere step to meet this challenge will be the introduction of a conceptually sound and practically possible national policy of lifelong learning. The researcher hopes that Indian government will take care of this highly justifiable, socially useful, and economically beneficial demand.

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Challenges of adult education in a changing Finland

PISA-Finland is regarded to be an exemplary country concerning basic education, from which less-developed countries take example, and whose skills in education are being developed into an export to replace chemical pulp. In the newly-published memorandum of the country brand delegation, Mission for Finland, education is emphasised as a strength factor. Finnish adult education is also worthy of the brand. Along with other Nordic countries, the participation in adult education in Finland is among the best in the world. And many countries that are only just developing, such as in Eastern Europe, could benefit from Finns’ experiences as they adopt free civic activity and different kinds of liberal adult education.

Rainer Aaltonen
It is a truism to witness the continuous and often surprising change that characterises modern society: change in the economy, technology, culture, values and way of life. Change has also happened in education – quantitative change, which was typical of the previous century, and qualitative change, which will be pursued in the future. It is difficult to prepare for surprising change, but many trends in change are either already visible or at least predictable. Next we will examine these changes in further detail.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES
The ageing population in all developed countries, also in Finland, will cause a shortage of labour in c. 2020 unless young labour from neighbouring or developing countries is used. Before this, however, ageing generations are to be kept in employment for longer than before through, among others, adult education and the development of working conditions. Actions such as those taken by the Finnish NOSTE project (a skills project for working adults with little or no qualifications) could be an example of this. Women (especially in Southern Europe) and young people must be introduced to working life even earlier.

Because the Finnish education system is built around the needs of the so-called larger generations (those born in 1945–1950), we are now forced to close schools due to the diminution of generations. This can also be seen in adult education facilities, for example the number of adult education centres has decreased by a quarter from peak figures. In addition, regional movement from periphery areas to centres of population increases ‘school deaths’ in municipalities with net emigration and school crowding in municipalities with net immigration.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT
The automation of production and digitalisation of information on one hand causes products to become cheaper, the use of labour more efficient and the need for education to increase, while on the other hand it causes increasing unemployment and the fragmentation of careers (see J. Rifkin: The End of Work). Industrial sociologists have defined changes in professional skill requirements in employment into depolarisation, repolarisation and polarisation theses. In some tasks, professional skill requirements and hence the need for education decreases (e.g. assembly work, process monitoring), while in other tasks the need is increased (e.g. design and maintenance) and low-qualification jobs become differentiated from highly-qualified professions. The role of adult education is, of course, very different in these development alternatives.

INTERNATIONALISATION AND GLOBALISATION
Especially due to the development of information and communications technology (ICT), markets have expanded to deal with the whole world: capital (money), labour and services go to where profit is best. Closed (domestic) markets are being dissolved in almost all areas (WTO), the international distribution of work is becoming ever more differentiated and competition is increasing in all areas. In this case language skills and the ability to work together with different people are increasingly important requirements for the workforce. This is a major task for adult education.

The sociopolitic and educational-political systems in EU countries will soon harmonise. Although for example the EU basic agreement states that education is a matter belonging to the so-called subsidiarity principle, according to which each member state can organise education as it sees fit, it is unrealistic to think that Finland could have a substantially longer and more expensive education system than in other member states. The harmonisation of university and further education in Europe is done according to the so-called Bologna process and is a clear example of such development. Student and teacher exchanges between countries are also increasing.

Freedom of movement means that foreigners make up an increasing share of the Finnish population. All of these factors emphasise the increasing significance of all education, but especially immigrant/integration education.

CHANGES IN WORK AND WORKING COMMUNITIES
Industrial society has changed in a short time to a post-industrial society and is already on its way to a self-service society. For many this has meant one or many changes in profession during their career. Working requires more professional flexibility than previously (quantitative, numerical, functional and economic) and competence in many fields. The internal employment markets of businesses and organisations will segment (John Atkinson’s theory of a flexible firm model), during which staff training will become differentiated. The core workforce receives staff training financed by the employer with complete wage profits, but the periphery workforce must finance and take care of their own training in order to manage recurring job-hunting situations.

A continuous employment relationship, which was previously regarded as the norm, is now less common, especially in the public sector, and so-called atypical employment relationships (‘fixed-term employment’, ‘temporary work’) become typical, especially for young people. A society of paid work becomes a ‘risk society’ (U. Beck), in which responsibility and risks are mainly in the hands of the decision-making individual. The linear career of before becomes like a spiral, in which different phases of life (childhood, youth, adulthood and study, work, free time and retirement) become jumbled and undefined. The traditional tasks of education, qualification for the employment markets, selection into the hierarchies of work and social life and integration into values and ideologies gain new features in the form of stockpiling.
workforce, entertaining and the teaching of survival strategies.

ONGOING CRISIS IN THE PUBLIC FINANCE SECTOR

The collapse of the so-called casino economy in Finland at the beginning of the 1990’s led to a financial crisis, during which the expenditure of especially social care and healthcare as well as education were forced to be significantly reduced, and due to massive numbers of unemployment national debt had to be increased more than ever before. The previous level of expenditure from the beginning of the 1990’s was achieved at the beginning of the current millennium, but the debt is still largely unpaid and a new economic crisis period has begun. This means continuous economic austerity well into the future also in the field of education, since taking on more debt will not be possible for much longer. When both basic education and adult education centres covering cultural work are almost entirely municipality-owned, economic austerity will have an effect on their resources needed to carry out their tasks in the near future. See also: http://www.treasuryfinland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=8481&nodeid=18401

CHANGES IN IDEOLOGY AND VALUES

The transition from the earlier cyclic conception of time to the linear in the Age of Enlightenment (circa 18th century) meant that progressive thought became dominant in Western countries. This era, which lasted until the end of the 1900’s, is called the modern era and Marxism can be considered its most paradigmatic manifestation, as well as the transition of marxist doctrine from capitalism through socialism to a communist society, in which all oppression and exploitation is removed and people live a perfect life, fulfilling all of their potential. In this case progress has achieved perfect proportions. When so-called real socialism didn’t achieve this utopia, the belief in such ‘tall tales’ collapsed and in its place came the post-modern era with its ‘small tales’, which tell – of no more classes or groups – but of individuals building their own identity. Parliamentary democracy and market economy won the competition between the two social systems, the ‘end of history’ was achieved, according to F. Fukuyama.

This meant a transition from the planning-orientated sociopolitical thinking in the direction of a system guided by markets. A change also took place in education politics: among other things, legislation and guidance were relaxed, a transition was made to master budgeting, the selection of schools was made free and schools and educational institutions began to profile and compete amongst each other. The current trend is known as ‘neoliberalist’.

Today’s values are based in a fundamental way on popular culture and images created by the media: ideals and behavioural models especially for youths are taken from the worlds of TV, film and the Internet. The media is today’s most important supplementary guardian and its new social and interactive forms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) have more influential force than school. A good level of all-round education is needed in order to be able to critically set these phenomena and idols into perspective. This progress is the task of the new, still-developing media education. Another important educational task is acquainting adults with the new digital and wiki world.

THE BREAKING DOWN OF MYTHS CONCERNING EDUCATION AND LEARNING

The view of earlier decades, that once education is completed and a qualification achieved, no more is needed, has become outdated once and for all. The idea that one kind of education corresponds to one kind of job and status in society is no longer realistic. One must continually study and learn new things – the ‘completion’ of education is no more.

Age is no longer a barrier to learning, and school is not the only place to study. Our whole life is learning and all contexts are possible learning environments – learning is ‘lifelong’. When the required knowledge both increases and becomes outdated faster than before, the emphasis in learning moves from facts and pieces of information to general readiness and learning how to learn. The criteria for learning change from traditional certificates and degrees to demonstrating actual competence. The concept of teacher also changes: the person passing on information also becomes a learning and resource consultant who encourages and coaches the student. All of these changes are day-to-day life in adult education.

In order to prepare for these developmental trends, some of which have already happened and some which are on the horizon, these changes mean ever more emphasis on research focusing on adult and general education. In economically austere Finland this is a real challenge.

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The Grundtvig programme is a European funding programme aimed at creating a stronger European dimension in the work of adult educators and learners (see also Radu Szekely’s article A Decade of Grundtvig in this issue). Grundtvig supports adult educators’ mobility by funding travel abroad for exchange, network creation and partnerships. The programme is directed at adult educators and their organizations but also learners and their associations.

Launched in 2000, Grundtvig has been around for a decade. For many of those years, the programme has been steered at the Commission by programme coordinator and deputy head of unit Alan Smith. For those familiar with adult education politics at the European level, Smith is ‘Mr Grundtvig’. LLinE met Alan Smith in November to discuss Grundtvig’s past and present, and most crucial, the future.

**LLinE:** Thinking back on the decade of Grundtvig, what would you say are the programme’s biggest successes and shortcomings?

**Alan Smith:** Let me start by saying that the Commission sees Grundtvig as a highly successful programme. Bit by bit, we are witnessing the creation of a real European community of adult learning - despite the fact that the adult education sector is much less institutionalized than other fields of education.

In adult education there are many small organizations working with fragile structures and limited funding. We also have a very broad spectrum to cover, including formal, non-formal and informal adult learning: altogether this is a very multi-faceted field. In addition in adult learning we are often working with the less-advantaged segment of the population, and there is generally quite low visibility for that kind of work. Grundtvig has helped to bring about a culture of cooperation and common identity among this heterogeneous group of adult educators and organisations.

This cooperation has then, for example, helped spread adult education good practices into those new EU member countries, where adult education has a shorter history and weaker infrastructure than perhaps in the older member states.

As for shortcomings, our main problem is really the inadequate budget allocated to the programme: despite increases over the years, this is still much too small relative to the high demand for grants from the adult education community. Another regret, and one which we hope to end in 2011, is that we would have wanted to develop a stronger network of universities working in the field of adult education. Such an academic network has not really materialised yet, despite, for example, the joint production of adult education master’s programmes.

We would like to see researcher mobility as a strong part of the future programme. Researchers and acadeemics, in cooperation with adult education providers, should be the strategic thinkers developing the field further.

**LLinE:** What do you think is the reason behind the lack of a strong academic network?

**AS:** It’s difficult to tell. Perhaps it may be partly due to our not having made it clear enough what we expect from the Networks, compared with the projects. For this reason, we are actually considering a different design for this part of the future programme which would be based on calls for tender. This would enable the Commission to define more clearly the kind of networks we would like to see emerging and then provide full-cost funding to the instances that would be willing and able to put such a network in place.

**LLinE:** You mentioned the future programme: let’s talk about that. The current Lifelong Learning Programme, of which Grundtvig is a part, ends in 2013. What is the fate of Grundtvig after that date?

**AS:** The Commission is now in ‘consultation mode’. There will be a formal proposal for a new programme around late summer 2011. So that is when we will all know more. Having said that, continuity is important: Grundtvig is seen as a success not only by the Commission but also by the national authorities and national agencies. There is also, of course, strong support from the adult education community for it to be continued.

**LLinE:** Education Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou, speaking at the Grundtvig Tenth Anniversary Conference in Copenhagen in September, said that adult learning will play a prominent role in future EU strategies. This has been interpreted in some media as a confirmation that Grundtvig will be extended beyond 2013. Is this the correct interpretation?

**AS:** What the Commissioner said was that adult learning in all shapes and sizes will be strengthened in the future programme. She also com-
mended Grundtvig’s successes despite its meagre resources compared to the other sectoral programmes. I hope very much that this will be reflected in the formal Commission position on the continuation of the programme when the time comes.

**LLinE:** There has also been some concern within the field that the new flagship initiative for Europe 2020 strategy, ‘Youth on the Move’, will draw focus and resources away from adult learning...

**AS:** We are aware of and understand those concerns, but one only has to read the Commission’s policy statements carefully to see that it is not a question of one or the other, but rather an interlinked strategy for the development of lifelong learning as a whole. I’m confident that adult learning will remain and become more important among larger education and training policy goals. It is also of course important to look at the wider picture, including the emphasis the European Social Fund gives to adult education. As for Youth on the Move itself, I don’t see Grundtvig as being outside the frame. On the contrary, many of the programme’s activities focus on improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged young adults and inter-generational learning.

**LLinE:** You mentioned earlier that one of Grundtvig’s achievements has been to root good practices of adult education more firmly in the new EU member countries. What is the ‘ideal type’ of adult education the Commission wants to promote?

**AS:** We don’t believe there is any such thing as an ideal type of adult education, as this needs to be different in different settings - social and geographical. But of course there are common features of what makes for good provision of adult learning opportunities, and our programme should aim to help the emergence of these in a variety of contexts. The key question we have to pose before any programme design is: what is it that we want to achieve?

The answer must be that we want to endorse a holistic view of adult education. This encompasses the vocational side, i.e. the upskilling of the workforce, but also the side of adult education that is so much more than updating our skills. Lifelong learning is a main ingredient in creating a society of inclusion, with an active civil society. Again, this is in line with our policy objectives for Europe 2020. It’s not just ‘Youth on the Move’ or ‘New Skills for New Jobs’, there’s also ‘European Platform against Poverty’ among the flagship initiatives.

**LLinE:** Is there a way individual people in the adult education field can affect what happens next with the Grundtvig programme?

**AS:** Well, if individual people or organizations feel they have benefitted from Grundtvig and would like to see it continued, a good way to contribute is to spread information about the programme informally to one’s networks - including of course people with strategic influence - and to the media. Word-of-mouth information on the programme can potentially reach a wider audience than our official communication. This is because informal networks are far more important in the adult education field than in other sectors of education.

We have also collected ‘user experiences’ and improvement suggestions from people who have been involved with Grundtvig projects in public consultations. We will take this input very seriously into account in future planning. The results of the consultations will be published in the beginning of 2011 and should make a very interesting read!
The Grundtvig adult education sectoral programme has reached its ten-year anniversary. In this article Radu Szekely looks back at the achievements of Grundtvig. The ‘fruits’ of Grundtvig, professional development, mobility and a developing European community of adult educators, are all the more significant in times when short-term interests in vocational know-how risk marginalising the vital need for learning for life.
INTRODUCTION

Background: Views on Adult Education and Learning

On 11 April 1996 the world was told by a former President of the European Commission that

"...in confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, humankind sees in education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice. As it concludes its work, the Commission [UNESCO’s International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century] affirms its belief that education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development. The Commission does not see education as a miracle cure or a magic formula opening the door to a world in which all ideals will be attained, but as one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war. (Jacques Delors in ‘Learning: The Treasure Within’)

For a decade the European Union has taken upon itself the task of putting adult education at the core of the new Europe. Policies for building a knowledge society have been shaped and are being continuously re-shaped, placing social responsibility, cultural diversity and citizens’ participation high on the agenda. Policy makers and the civil society have worked relentlessly to establish a stronger connection between adult education and prosperity, access to social security, environmental well-being, and solidarity. Providers have been encouraged – albeit with limited financial incentives – to offer education programmes with the purpose of fostering a harmonious life between people, to develop full personalities, to build up people’s creativity in science, art and in the social-political dimensions of life.

Adult education is recognised today both as a vital instrument of lifelong learning policy and an essential contributor to economic competitiveness and employability, mobility, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development in all member states of the European Union, the European Economic Area and the EU Accession Countries. Although the value of adult education to securing the EU 2020 objectives of ‘more jobs and better lives’ is clear, adult participation in ‘lifelong learning’ still varies widely across the Union and is at unsatisfactory levels in many Member States. Consequently, considerable efforts have been made – at local, regional, national and European levels - to ensure that participation levels in lifelong and life-wide learning sustain significant increases and that staff and organisations involved in the planning, delivery and support of adult education and guidance improve their skills and professionalism to ensure the quality, credibility and relevance of educational offerings to individual learners. The importance of adult education is further reinforced by the demographic and economic challenges of a growing active elderly population, globalised production and capital flows and the emergence of newly-industrialised and highly competitive countries, like Brazil, India, China and Russia. However, in spite of its importance in a rapidly changing world, adult education does not always enjoy commensurate visibility and recognition, resourcing or policy prioritisation.

Some concrete action has been taken over the past decade at EU level to address these shortcomings. The European Commission adopted a first policy document on adult learning in October 2006, entitled ‘Commission Communication on Adult Learning: It is never too late to learn’. The main thrust of this document is to facilitate the development of an efficient adult education system across Europe: this would be achieved through improvements in a range of key factors including the sector’s governance structures, the quality, efficiency and accountability of its learning delivery mechanisms, support for learners and the recognition of learning outcomes.

This policy document was followed, in September 2007, by an Action Plan on Adult Learning. The Action Plan aims to help remove the barriers that prevent adults from engaging in learning activities and to improve the quality and efficiency of the adult learning sector. A complementary EU Communication called on member states to work together to support the Action Plan on Adult Learning and to ensure adequate levels of investment in and better monitoring of the adult learning sector. Five priorities were identified for concrete actions:

1. To reduce labour shortages due to demographic changes by raising skill levels in the workforce generally and by upgrading low-skilled workers (80 million in 2006)
2. To address the persistently high number of early school leavers (nearly 7 million in 2006), by offering a second chance to those who enter adulthood without any qualifications
3. To reduce poverty and social exclusion among marginalised groups. Adult learning can both improve people’s skills and help them towards active citizenship and personal autonomy
4. To increase the integration of mi-
grants in society and labour markets. Adult learning offers tailor-made courses, including language learning, to contribute to this integration process. Adult learning can help migrants to secure validation and recognition for their qualifications.

5. To increase participation in lifelong learning and particularly to address the fact that participation decreases after the age of 34. At a time when the average working age is rising across Europe, there needs to be a parallel increase in adult learning by older workers.

In spite of the good intentions of such policy documents and particularly in spite of their intended holistic view of the learner, adult education has been continuously endangered by a certain lack of trust, and even competitive approaches, between the various stakeholders involved in its provision. Arguably, education has as one of its main aims preparing people for employment, giving them the skills they need to earn a living and feel thus in control of their destiny. But above that, as Jacques Delors reminded us, education has had since times ancient, the role of preparing people for life on their own and for life with others, for further learning, for networking, and for further developing themselves and the world around them. With the rapid changes societies undergo, these preparations, neither for jobs nor for life, are ever complete; people need to learn and re-learn how to work and how to live in the changing society. And these two aspects must go hand in hand, none being more important than the other. The recognition of this symbiosis is the condition sine qua non for prosperity and social development. The basis of a peaceful and democratic European society remains the acceptance that policies must respond to the needs and democratic rights of all citizens, and the need for and right to a holistic education are no exception.

Today, in the aftermath of one of the worst economic downturns modern society has known, there seems to be a growing precipice between the two aspects of learning: learning skills-for-jobs and learning skills-for-life. In the end of this first decade of the 21st century Europe seems to have become the scene of a tacit battle between vocational education and job-skills on the one side, and the wider holistic, non-vocational education and life-skills on the other. Vocational education, often to the detriment of non-vocational holistic education, has come to be regarded as the magical formula or miracle cure that the Delors-Commission was warning us against. It is seen as the solution to the problems of unemployment and poverty caused by an economic recession that had little, if anything, to do with education. Nobody would openly deny the value and importance of soft skills in adult education, yet acute, short-term interests in vocational know-how risk marginalising the vital need for learning and re-learning life-skills among adults.

Hence, educators today risk making the same mistake that the financial markets made a few years back: look just for short-term profit.

Educators today risk making the same mistake that the financial markets made a few years back: look just for short-term profit.

It is against this background that we should look at the achievements and added value of the Grundtvig sectoral programme of the European Commission’s educational programmes over the past 10 years. We, adult educators, have all learnt a lot in this past decade, and have achieved a lot. We owe it to ourselves to step back for a moment and assess the difference Grundtvig has made.
Firstly, we should evaluate it not from the perspective of status, but from the point of view of what it has done to promote social justice, inclusion, and education that is different from schooling. It has been depicted, more often than not by those working within Grundtvig, as the Cinderella of the education world. However, like that character in the fairytale, the perceived lack of support and attention has encouraged an optimistic resourcefulness amongst its promoters and this has nurtured a spirit of creativity, innovation and experimentation in the design, delivery and promotion of learning that proves the sector is agile, flexible and constantly taking on new challenges. For this reason, it is not surprising that many methods, tools and approaches that emerged from the Grundtvig programme have been customised and ‘plagiarised’ by other sectors to enhance their offerings: this will be self-evident to anyone who has attended a management training programme or observed schoolteachers engage with pupils through the forum of a negotiated curriculum.

Secondly, Grundtvig has driven significant changes in organisations, many of these changes coming from a grass-root level. It is a fact that in comparison with other learning sectors, adult education is more complex and heterogeneous, with a broader variety of providers attempting to define and meet the needs of a diverse and rapidly changing range of learners. The sector is also more dispersed and less institutionalised than the schools, universities and VET sectors, but it is also less well-resourced and has had a much shorter period of benefiting from the support of EU programmes. The Grundtvig funding lines have, nevertheless, contributed over the past decade to the sector’s creativity by supporting transnational projects that have led to the development of know-how, innovative materials and new practices, and it has facilitated the sharing of these materials and know-how. And all these at a very high cost-benefit ratio, considering the small allocations the sector has received relative to the total purse of the educational programmes.

Thirdly, and last, Grundtvig has inspired and motivated institutions and individuals to collaborate and engage in further exploration and innovation. Over the past ten years it has built a very strong network of formal, non-formal and informal adult education providers, be it at institutional or personal level, being a strategic instrument for internationalising adult education and for the professional development of adult educators themselves. In many cases, Grundtvig has given organisations the framework and the incentives to open up to international cooperation, taking them closer to the heart of the new Europe being built. Due to Grundtvig and the people behind it, we have today a visible adult education sector in Europe, one that is there to stay.

**ADULT LEARNING AND GRUNDTVIG WITHIN SOCRATES II AND THE LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME**

The Grundtvig Action of the Socrates II Programme (2000–2006) and its successor sectoral programme within the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–2013) have provided and continue to offer important practical support to the implementation of adult education policies.

The Socrates II programme, which ran from 2000 to 2006, with a total budget of €1.85 billion covering 31 countries, had as its principal objective the construction of a Europe of knowledge that could respond to the emerging challenges of the 21st century: that is, the promotion of lifelong learning, encouraging access to education for everybody and helping people acquire recognised qualifications and skills. In addition, the programme sought to encourage language learning, to strengthen the European dimension in education, to foster cooperation and innovation in the field of education and to promote educational mobility. All types of learning were embraced – formal, informal and non-formal – and all levels, from nursery school to university and continuous adult education. Consequently, Socrates II targeted all actors and participants in education: pupils, students, teachers, educational managers, inspectors, teacher trainers, guidance staff, adult and community educators, trainers and administrators.

The Grundtvig Action of the Socrates II programme was the key policy instrument designed, specifically, to target the adult education sector. Its aim was to increase demand for and participation in lifelong learning activities, improve basic educational competencies, enhance information and support services and improve teacher training and the recognition of competences. The allocated funding of €130 million was modest in comparison with the other Actions and amounted to some 7% of the entire Socrates II budget for 2000 to 2006. Consequently, there was no expectation that its policy level impact would be significant.

Grundtvig’s objectives were implemented through four measures: G1 European Co-operation Projects and Grundtvig Training Courses (46% of the total budget), G2 Learning Partnerships: Exchange of experience/practice/methods (40% total budget), G3 Individual Training Grants for Adult Education Staff (6% total budget) and G4 Networks and Thematic Seminars (8% total budget).
Rather than seeking to impact directly on adult education systems, the Grundtvig Action emphasised the role of greater collaboration in building capacity and in increasing the transfer of know-how among participants in the Action. It was recognised from the start that securing this objective should focus strongly on mobility and staff development (including in-service training activities) as an indirect driver for the professionalization of adult education, which could, subsequently, generate changes in structures and systems. The ‘Joint Report on the Evaluation of the Socrates II, Leonardo da Vinci and eLearning Programmes’ commissioned by the European Commission stated that, overall, it is clear that the Socrates II programme was relevant to the needs in the sector to which it was applied. By extension, the Grundtvig Action not only succeeded in addressing the needs of the adult education sector but also established a sustainable culture and platform for on-going cooperation among adult education institutions.

Building on the achievements of the Socrates II and its predecessor programmes, the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) was launched in 2007 with a seven-year lifespan and a total budget of €6.97 billion. The general objective of the LLP is to contribute to the development of the European Union as an advanced knowledge society, with sustainable economic development, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, while ensuring good protection of the environment for future generations. In particular, it aims to foster interchange, co-operation and mobility between education and training systems within the eligible countries so that they become a world quality point of reference.

Within the LLP, the specific role of Grundtvig continues to be recognised by its identification as a sectoral programme. It also enjoys a more significant level of funding and a more diverse range of activities to which this funding may be directed. All forms of adult education are addressed, particularly the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe and the need to help provide adults with pathways to improved knowledge and competence. This is manifest in the support for the following Grundtvig-specific activities:

- individual mobility, including assistanship exchanges for participants in formal and non-formal adult education, including the training and professional development of adult education staff, especially in synergy with partnerships and projects
- partnership (which Grundtvig Learning Partnership) focusing on themes of mutual interest to the participating organisations;
- the development and transfer of innovation and good practice; networks of experts and organisations (which Grundtvig Networks);
- preparatory visits to enable a representative from an institution to either attend a contact seminar or a meeting with prospective partners;
- and other initiatives aimed at promoting the objectives of the Grundtvig Programme (which Accompanying Measures).

The Grundtvig Effect: Collaboration and Cooperation

The ‘Joint Report on the Evaluation of the Socrates II, Leonardo da Vinci and eLearning Programmes’ commissioned by the European Commission indicates that the Grundtvig Action’s strongest impact was closer, sustained cooperation among institutions. In addition, it highlights the fact that other positive impacts included improvements in the quality of teaching and curricula and approaches to learning and management; enhanced professional skills and stronger networking among adult education staff in Europe; and improved educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

The very act of cooperation may have been more important than the output.

The evaluation of the Socrates II programme also highlights that collaboration and cooperation in the centralised Grundtvig sub-actions (G1 and G4 above) led to increased and sustained cooperation amongst institutions, wider European perspectives amongst organisations and institutions and the emergence of self-sustaining European networks and communities of interest in lifelong learning. A total of 384 multilateral projects, networks and thematic seminars were funded and the most common outputs were exchanges of good practice, partnerships or networks, websites, conferences, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, transnational meetings and new teaching and training materials. These projects engaged nearly 2,000 adult education institutions. Favourable comments are also made on the remarkable diversity and range of these outputs and further suggest that this may be an indication that the primary motivation for participating in Grundtvig is to engage in European collaboration and cooperation. This may also imply that the nature of the collaborative activity for individual
projects was less important than the opportunity to implement that activity collaboratively. In other words, the very act of cooperation may have been more important than the output. This, if true, would be entirely consistent with the primary objective of the Grundtvig Action.

Further evidence of increased and sustained cooperation came from the fact that project coordinators regarded networks as a key output and the Grundtvig Action developed strong learner and institutional networks. The report indicated that there is evidence that the latter enjoyed particular benefits through the development of stronger national and international networks of adult learning institutions. In addition, collaboration to put up international events, whilst beneficial in its own right, was perceived as adding value by creating thematic spaces for various parties – for example, teachers, managers, learners, policy-makers and members of the public – to come together to consider common interests.

All member states seem to have derived benefit from the transnational collaboration that the Grundtvig Action has supported. However, Eastern European states appear to have benefitted most from the emergence of networks. An apparent geographical imbalance is also evident in the fact that 45% of the 455 multilateral projects were co-ordinated by institutions from just two countries – Germany and Spain. However, it is not possible to comment on whether or not this should be a cause for concern - for two reasons. Firstly, since these are multilateral projects, their geographical impact cannot be assessed without further information on the other countries represented in the project partnerships. Secondly, the impact of a project’s outputs often spreads beyond the geographical confines of the partnership.

The structure of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme for 2007 to 2013, the successor to the Socrates II, means that 80% of the available funding is decentralised to National Agencies. However, there is sufficient scope within the remaining centralised Grundtvig activities to ensure that the momentum that has been established in fostering institutional cooperation will be maintained and the new decentralised Grundtvig Learning Partnerships will, surely, contribute to this, too. Figures from the first years of the LLP (2007–2009) seem to confirm this: 215 projects have been funded, with around 1,500 organisations involved as partners.

**GRUNDTVIG MOBILITY**

The evaluation of the Socrates II programme shows that it had a significant quantitative and qualitative impact on education and training in the EU at individual, institutional and policy-making levels. At individual level, and particularly in mobility activities, a positive impact was observed on both staff and learners who broadened their skills (including language proficiency), deepened their knowledge, developed a strong sense of networking across national boundaries and gained a stronger feeling of being European citizens.

During the lifetime of the Socrates II programme and, now, in the Lifelong Learning Programme, the mobility of people of all ages has been and continues to be allocated significant and increasing support. The aforementioned ‘Joint Report on the Evaluation of the Socrates II, Leonardo da Vinci and eLearning Programmes’ indicates that mobility was a significant output of the Grundtvig Action, including mobilisation of partners for meetings and workshops, many of whom experienced their first opportunity for mobility.

Grundtvig supports mobility and networking among actors within all forms of non-vocational adult and continuing education. Mobility opportunities are available for learners, teachers, trainers and other staff involved in adult education, including volunteers, but there is a clear focus on organisations active in the provision of (adult) education for under-represented and marginalised groups who are experiencing or are at risk of social exclusion: specific examples are the integration of migrant groups, adult basic literacy and second-chance education.

The overall budget for Grundtvig has remained relatively small in comparison with other types of mobility supported under the Lifelong Learning Programme, particularly Erasmus, and this is reflected in the number of mobilities achieved. Nevertheless, around 8,000 training staff and 4,000 adult learners undertook shorter or longer periods of mobility with the support of Grundtvig funding.

The Joint Report, mentioned earlier, notes that none of the programmes adequately address the challenge of adapting and up-skilling Europe’s adult workforce and feels that this constitutes an important challenge to be considered within future EU mobility programmes. This could be interpreted as presenting a case for a continuing role for Grundtvig to concentrate on responding to the needs of marginalised groups and supporting, in particular, the contribution made by civil society organisations to this objective. With at least 55% of the Grundtvig sectoral programme’s budget supporting mobility and partnership actions, one of the programme’s main operational objectives is to improve the quality and accessibility of mobility with a view to supporting 7,000 individuals per year by the end of the programme (2013).

Three types of Grundtvig mobility
Ten Years of Grundtvig

Grundtvig Professional Development: In-Service Training Activities

Mobility schemes described above have not only enhanced individuals’ skills but also induced some progress in the transfer of know-how at institutional levels and this is a significant contribution to one of the actions aimed at improving the quality of adult education listed in the Action Plan on Adult Learning. However, many other factors, also, impact on the quality of provision. Policy imperatives, resource allocations, infrastructure, organisation and governance can hinder or help the development and maintenance of quality adult education but, it may be reasonably argued that the key factor remains the quality of the range of staff involved – in terms of knowledge, professional qualifications, competences, aptitude and motivation. In-service training and continuing professional development has and continues to play a vital role in enhancing the quality of adult education staff: not only teachers and trainers but also management and administration, guidance personnel, mentors and others involved in delivering or opening up learning opportunities for adults.

Grundtvig, both as an Action in Socrates II and a sectoral programme of the Lifelong Learning Programme, provided and provides in-service training (IST) to enable all categories of adult education staff to:

- attend structured training courses, ranging in length from 5 days to 6 weeks, in another country: these courses are characterised by a European focus in terms of subject matter and the profiles of trainers and participants involved;
- undergo more informal training such as a placements or observation and job-shadowing in adult education organisations or public or non-governmental organisations involved in adult education;
- participate in European conferences or seminars organised by Grundtvig Networks, Grundtvig Projects, National Agencies or genuinely representative European Associations active in the field of adult education.

Data, available from relevant databases of the European Commission and relevant associate agencies, indicates that around 4,200 IST courses have been made available since the beginning of Grundtvig and some 10,000 individuals received grants to participate in them: the latter figure includes those who participated in more than one IST course. The impact of such mobilities is no doubt significant on individual level, but, to date, a European-level ex-post specific analysis of the impact of the in-service training activities of the Grundtvig Action has not been undertaken. In addition, no robust and transparent methodology exists for assessing and comparing the quality and impact of such mobilities on adult education across Europe.

These courses, generally, have a short shelf-life during which they can effectively transfer innovation and know-how or improve existing competences. The duration of the majority of these courses is limited to one week. Therefore follow-up activities, by course organisers, are minimal for two reasons: budgetary constraints which do not provide additional funds for this and the geographical spread of the participants (which is in fact one aim of the Grundtvig action). Participation in such courses may be encouraged in many countries and their impact well-regarded at personal and institutional levels.

However, in most countries the prevailing perspective is that Grundtvig IST courses are subordinate to regional or national in-service training and programmes of continuing professional development, the short and longer term impact of which is regularly measured systematically and on a larger scale. This would suggest that the impact of Grundtvig IST activities are less likely to emerge in the form of influencing systems or overarching educational approaches but more readily as two features that are specific to European programmes and which are rarely replicated in national programmes:
- Personal and professional development through small-scale transfer of innovation: the Grundtvig Action and subsequent sectoral programme support new and different ideas and approaches in teaching. The decision to take part in Grundtvig IST courses is a personal one and funding is
needed in the modern multicultural
skills, knowledge and competences
providing European citizens with the
long learning and is a crucial factor in
Europe. It forms a major part of life-
tance in enhancing social cohesion in
been gaining more and more impor-
non-vocational adult education have
Few dare deny that Grundtvig and
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service training providers who work at
crease in the number and spread of in-
by the incremental development and in
creation of a European Lifelong Learn-
gers. Moreover, the participant basis
is pan-European, which affords the
ideas that would not and could not
have been obtained through the
mainstream and regionally or na-
tionally planned and delivered staff
development activities.

• Impact through participation in
transnational activities: Grundtvig
IST Courses are generally developed
by transnational teams of trainers
and, as a consequence, they present
fertile territory for the transfer of
ideas, practices and tools across bor-
ders. Moreover, the participant basis
is pan-European, which affords the
opportunity for ideas, tools and
methods that are perceived as stand-
ard practice in one country to be in-
novatively applied, adapted and
transferred to another.

Since these types of Grundtvig IST
activity offer many participants a first
opportunity to participate in personal
or professional European mobility, they
may be regarded as contributing to the
creation of a European Lifelong Learn-
ing Area, which is, in turn, reinforced
by the incremental development and in-
crease in the number and spread of in-
service training providers who work at
a European level.

THE FUTURE: THE GRUNDTVIG
PROCESS?

Few dare deny that Grundtvig and
non-vocational adult education have
been gaining more and more impor-
tance in enhancing social cohesion in
Europe. It forms a major part of life-
long learning and is a crucial factor in
providing European citizens with the
skills, knowledge and competences
needed in the modern multicultural
knowledge-based society. Apart from
its role of developing full, holistic per-
sonalities that act as citizens in a democ-
ratic society, we must also naturally
recognise the role adult education has
in improving Europe’s competitiveness
in the world and in giving people skills
for the labour market.

The next decade of educational poli-
cy in Europe is likely to be driven by
the new strategic framework for Euro-
pean cooperation in education and
training, Education and Training 2020
(ET 2020). It aims to equip education
and training systems to better provide
the means for all citizens to realise their
potentials, as well as ensure sustainable
economic prosperity and employability.
Adult educators can easily embrace the
four strategic objectives for the frame-
work:

• Making lifelong learning and mo-
bility a reality – progress is needed
in the implementation of lifelong
learning strategies, the development
of national qualifications frame-
works linked to the European Quali-
fications Framework and more flex-
ible learning pathways. Mobility
should be expanded and the Europe-
an Quality Charter for Mobility
should be applied;

• Improving the quality and efficien-
cy of education and training – all
citizens need to be able to acquire
key competencies and all levels of
education and training need to be
made more attractive and efficient;

• Promoting equity, social cohesion
and active citizenship – education
and training should enable all citi-
zens to acquire and develop skills
and competencies needed for their
employability and foster further
learning, active citizenship and inter-
cultural dialogue. Educational disad-
avantage should be addressed
through high quality inclusive and
early education;

• Enhancing creativity and innova-
tion, including entrepreneurship, at
all levels of education and training –
the acquisition of transversal compe-
tences by all citizens should be pro-
moted and the functioning of the
knowledge triangle (education-re-
search-innovation) should be en-
sured. Partnerships between enter-
prises and educational institutions as
well as broader learning communi-
ties with civil society and other
stakeholders should be promoted.

The ET 2020 framework also in-
tends to take into consideration the
whole spectrum of education and train-
ing systems from a lifelong learning
perspective, covering all levels and con-
texts, including non-formal and infor-
mal learning. Yet any changes at policy
level in terms of adult education in the
near future must take into account the
significant achievements and the high
cost-benefit ratio of the current
Grundtvig programme, with its partic-
ular concentration on non-vocational,
holistic aspects of learning. Before
merging it into any larger transversal
programmes, it would be wise to let it
consolidate and prove itself further,
with the support of adequate financial
instruments, from public and private
sources. To quote a colleague I recently
heard speak at a conference, Cinderella
should first sit at the same table with
the Prince before considering a mar-
rriage from an equal foot.

At the same time, it is accepted
among education circles that the major
roles education plays in society have to
be backed by processes that strengthen
the involvement of different stakehold-
ers and enable them to contribute to
common goals. The Bologna and Copen-
hagen processes have certainly
made visible the fact that our higher-
education and vocational-training sys-
tems are facing common challenges: ET
2020 calls expressly for greater com-
patibility of lifelong learning policies
with both processes. European youth
will shortly benefit from a programme
aimed at answering their particular
needs, and they are now officially ‘on the move’ - just like Grundtvig put ‘adults on the move’ over the last decade, only without making a loud case for it. Perhaps it is time we, adult educators and adult education providers, defined clearly the solutions adult education can offer to current challenges at European level, how we benefit the common European project of which we are all part. Perhaps it is time for adult education to start a similar process to Bologna and Copenhagen that would further strengthen the sector and provide the opportunity to get even more adults on the move.

The main message of any declaration starting such a process should be that we are on the right track and proceeding well, but we should strengthen the cooperation and mutual support within the field of adult education, and in particular non-formal, non-vocational, out-of-school adult education, which goes back to the principles of popular enlightenment and to the road-opening work of Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig. Such a process would be based on principles that affirm adult education as an indirect doorway to personal maturity and self-knowledge. Those principles also claim that adult education values the education of minds in general over training people for specific jobs or careers in particular, and it ensures people do not simply become experts in one narrow professional field and remain illiterate in other areas of human life. It is not as concerned with convincing the individual learner to memorise and reproduce mechanically certain specialised facts; rather, adult education strives to help the person – the whole person – become a full member of society and a lifelong learner.

If or when adult educators would start a European bottom-up process focusing on adult education, and in particular non-vocational adult education, they would find it useful to focus particularly on four things that the Grundtvig sectoral programme has helped surface over the past decade:

- the high importance and attractiveness of adult education in Europe;
- the need for further development, implementation and transfer of common European tools;
- the need for a more systematic approach to strengthening mutual learning;
- the active involvement of all stakeholders in adult education.

The high importance and attractiveness of adult education remains crucial for creating access to flexible, individualised learning pathways and facilitating a smooth and continuous transition between working life and personal education. We need to create incentives for people to want to go back to learning when time is not always available, when guidance is scarce, and when validation and recognition of acquired skills are not always given as recognition for learning efforts. While improving the quality of adult education, we must also emphasise good governance and we must ensure that the educational offer corresponds to the needs of individuals. The cornerstones are close links with life and a wide range of opportunities to learn outside traditional schools.

The second priority area should remain the development of common European tools. The work already started should be continued in order to pave the way towards a European area of adult education that should strengthen cooperation on quality enhancement. The spreading of the Europass as a system for making learning outcomes readable across the Union, and the further development of Competences Portfolios that assist in recognising and validating skills obtained in non-formal or informal settings should be encouraged.

The adult education systems of European countries differ greatly. Diversity is not to be seen as a weakness - it is an asset and an incentive for mutual learning. In the future we need to take a more systematic approach to mutual learning. For that we need common concepts and agreed definitions at European level. This enables us to make our national solutions, models and standards more easily understood by others. We also need systematic and practical means for identifying, analysing, exchanging and disseminating good practices.

Ultimately, we would need to re-establish trust between the various stakeholders. This trust should be built on mutual knowledge, transparency and support. The financing bodies with an interest in adult education – be it government agencies or the business sector – must be aware of the principles and ways of working in non-vocational adult education, and at the same time must understand that evaluation and quality control within such a varied and dispersed sector, that works more often than not with marginalised groups and addresses challenges that other sectors refuse or are unable to address, cannot be conducted by rigid standards and benchmarks. Such evaluation must always take into account the starting point and the distance travelled – and for that continuous dialogue and trust between the stakeholders is needed.

These are undoubtedly major points of concern that adult educators should raise and address. They – we – have a duty to create a real social movement for lifelong learning in Europe that would address these points. We need to take responsibility ourselves for the lifelong learning process and for its tailoring to the needs of society. In a Europe where adult education is meant to encourage active participation and the individual engagement in society at all
level, adult educators themselves face the challenge of doing what they preach. Should that not happen, and should European non-vocational adult education remain the subject of Sunday speeches rather than Monday’s work, we can only hope that policy makers will listen to the muted calls for a bigger role for Cinderella at the next ball.

CONCLUSIONS

One cannot stress enough the fact that the underlying goal throughout adult education is to help learners become independent members of society, with the required competencies and skills, and to grow wiser – both about themselves and about the world. Its principal task remains, therefore, to educate for life, in the sense of shedding light on some of the basic questions surrounding life today and help people grow as full members of society. The European Commission and its Grundtvig funding lines have been there to support these ideas over the past decade. Non-vocational adult education has become subject of talk at many tables, and Grundtvig has spread the word that it is there to nurture a climate where adult education can emerge, where peoples’ desire to learn can expand freely without being dominated by compulsory pedagogical measures such as marking systems, examination and benchmarking. Grundtvig, if anything, has brought back into the open space the idea that learning should be based on the pleasure of mastering and knowing something - not on the fear of sanctions or on the hope of commercial profit.

To end, let me paraphrase what David Lodge wrote once about higher education, and try to apply it widely to adult learning, lifelong learning, and life-wide learning:

Adult education centres ‘are the cathedrals of the modern age. They shouldn’t have to justify their existence by utilitarian criteria. The trouble is, ordinary people don’t understand what they are about, and they [adult educators] don’t really bother to explain themselves to the community. We have an Open Day once a year. Every day ought to be an open day. The campus […] ought to be swarming with local people doing part-time courses – using the library, using the laboratories, going to lectures, going to concerts, using the Sports Centre – everything. We ought to get rid of the security men and the barriers at the gates and let the people in!

A decade of Grundtvig has got rid of some barriers and let many people in. The next decade of Grundtvig is bound to get more adults on the move. And adult educators might just find the spirit to go for ‘the Grundtvig process’.

REFERENCES


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‘So how do you like school?’
Next generation values on learning


An international group of researchers, Sirkka Laihiala-Kankainen from Finland, Ulve Arvisto and Inger Kraav from Estonia and Svetlana Raschetina from Russia have compiled an interesting, comprehensive and theoretically justified piece of empirical research, that offers readers a comparative picture of value priorities and views about learning of ninth graders and teachers in Finland, Estonia and Russia.

These countries are neighbours and share many social, cultural and historical traditions, but also differences, resulting from history. Nowadays all three countries are facing similar challenges in education and educational policy.

This publication is a result of a long cooperation between the researchers in the three countries and the Finnish Educational Research Association. The reviewed study is part of a larger comparative research project ‘Changing Values and Goals in Education. Pedagogical Cultures in Finland, Russia and Estonia’ carried out in 2001–2006, supported by grants from the Academy of Finland and the Estonian Academy of Science.

The book consists of eight chapters. Theoretical background of the study is presented in chapter two, data and methods are described in chapter three. Results of the study are discussed in four chapters (4–7) and concluding remarks presented in chapter 8.

Values are central to human life. Value orientations develop and are passed down through generations in specific socio-historical contexts. Values are also associated with identity, personal growth, personality development, learning and learning experiences.

The main conceptual point in this research is the concept of pedagogical culture, which is understood as a set of values, norms, customs, rules and codes manifesting themselves in learning and teaching situations within a culture. This concept is used as a theoretical tool for analysing educational values, goals and learning practices.

The purpose of the study is to consider and compare pupils’ values and goals mainly in the context of pedagogical cultures. Readers can find thought-provoking results to questions such as: What kind of values do young people regard as important? What does learning mean for pupils and teachers? What kind of goals would they like to achieve in their lives? Those questions invite the readers of this book also to take stock of their own lives: What do I value most? What should I let go of and what do I want to keep? What kind of person do I want to become?

The general framework of the study is based on the idea of globalization in the context of the enlarging European domain. Its theoretical background draws on theories on transition. The main research questions concerning values are: how similar or different are ninth graders’ values in the three countries? How similar or different are pupils’ value priorities? How do teachers’ values on pupils’ development differ? Which economic, political, social and cultural factors influence pupils’ and teachers’ values and explain the differences between pedagogical cultures in three countries?

Data was collected during 2005–2006 by questionnaires and analysed with the SPSS 15,0 programme. The sample of this study consisted of adolescents studying in their final year of comprehensive school (age: 14–17 years).

Findings of the study indicate interesting similarities and several statistically significant differences between pupils’ groups and value factors. Adolescents’ value orientation in the three countries has much in common. Some value factors are more culture-specific than others. For instance, Russian and Estonian pupils suffered more from the great number of tests and examinations and were more burdened with homework than Finnish pupils. Estonian and Russian pupils felt more comfortable at school compared to Finnish pupils. Finnish pupils differed from Russian and Estonian pupils in four value factors: cognitive, individual, aesthetic and material values. Russian pupils differed from Finnish and Estonian pupils in human values (high ratings in such values as family, God, fatherland).

The study makes a strong argument for further qualitative research in this topic. We still have much to learn about values in human life and learning and this publication can give useful and interesting information for researchers. Results of the study bring out new research questions for academics and researchers which might be interesting also for teacher educators, professional developers and educational policy experts interested in comparative research and education. The book should be useful also for those readers who would like to understand educational practices in a comparative context of lifelong learning.

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