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Note to the readers



Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth
Honorary President of the DVV,
member of the Advisory Board
of DVV International

Dear Reader,

This is the last issue of our journal *Adult Education and Development* (AED). What started in 1973 as an information brief for attendees at our summer schools from Africa, Asia and Latin America developed over the years as one of the most influential journals on adult education globally. Up to 20,000 copies published in English, French and Spanish were distributed to readers in around 160 countries. The main target groups included adult educators, academia and decision-makers, with a special focus on the global South.

During its existence, the journal was able to contribute to and shape many of the discussions relating to the development of adult education and lifelong learning. Key actors of the global adult education movement like Julius Nyerere used the journal to share their ideas. In various cases, the journal was used to prepare and inform important global events such as the ICAE World Assembly in Thailand 1989 or the CONFINTEA V in Hamburg 1997.

From the beginning, another important role of the journal was to serve as a tool for the exchange of experiences among practitioners. New approaches on literacy, skills training, gender issues, education of minorities, as well as civic and popular education, were shared. On the policy level, models for funding and new legal frameworks from various countries inspired the reader. Finally, the journal served as a link between research and the implementation levels by making findings from Universities and institutes in the global North and South accessible to a wider audience.

The concept of the journal was updated several times as the decades passed. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the content was opened to the countries in transition in Eastern

Europe. The design was constantly updated, and key partners were invited to contribute on an editorial board. In the past few years, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) acted as a cooperation partner and arranged virtual seminars to discuss the issues.

AED will be missed by the international adult education community, and we regret that the funding will cease at the end of 2019. At the same time, we feel grateful that we were able to publish this journal for almost five decades. In the name of the German Adult Education Association (DVV) and its Institute for International Cooperation (DVV International), I would like to use the opportunity to express my gratitude to the colleagues who shaped the journal over the years: Prof.(H) Dr. Heribert Hinzen, Dr. Michael Samlowski, Gisela Waschek, Ruth Sarrazin and Johanni Larjanko. And I would like to thank the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for their financial support and the excellent mutual partnership during the last 46 years. We appreciate this reliable long-term commitment very much!

This issue brings an important chapter in our work to an end, just at the moment when we need it more than ever. Adult learners need information and orientation. Don't leave them alone! It is our task to develop new forms of communication to ensure that the necessary fora for exchange, debate and sharing will be available for the global adult education movement. We will do that in close cooperation with our partners around the world.

I close my letter with an encouraging but urgent call to all of us to look for new concepts to learn together, combined with the conviction that we won't give up. This was not our last issue of communication and exchange.



From left to right:

Johanni Larjanko
Editor-in-Chief

Ruth Sarrazin
Managing Editor

The best educator in the world

Technological development is not about machines. Teaching is not about books. Human development is not about GDP. It's about people. We are all connected, and we all depend on each other. Take learning, for example. It is a deeply personal, individual (and lonely) endeavour. It is us, trying to make sense of it all. Nobody can learn for us. Usually nobody can even give us the answers we crave. If someone claims he can tell you the truths about life, the universe and yourself, be very wary. We must face the tough questions alone and try to come to terms with them. This is not to say that we are on our own. As a species we all need to deal with the same questions. We must think for ourselves, and each of us must find out what she or he believes in. Yet we do need others. We need guidance and support. We need someone to challenge us, to push us. Learning thrives in the meeting, in the exchange, in the debate. We need good educators. And while we did not know it yet at the time, we feel that we could not have chosen a better topic for what turned out to be the last issue of a journal called "Adult Education and Development". In this issue, we place the spotlight on the key person, the adult educator.

The job of the teacher is the finest job on earth, if you ask us. It is not an easy one. Demands and expectations come from every direction. In addition, the feeling of personal responsibility weighs heavy. When we set out to do this issue, we naively thought that we needed to look for templates. We thought that we would be able to neatly describe what you need in order to become a good adult educator. We

were wrong. Through many hours of discussion and racking of our brains, we started to see some outlines of the characteristics that we thought were necessary. Unfortunately they are not easy to codify into a curriculum for training teachers. Because how do you teach humour, passion, curiosity? It seems to us that these are personality traits more than learnable skills. You can learn the most intricate pedagogic theories in the world, but you may still be a lousy teacher if you lack these traits. Because teaching is about people. And a good teacher is a constant learner. Because you cannot fail to learn while teaching. We as humans all want to learn and we need those passionate teachers who want to learn with us.

Yes, we did find a holistic model that describes many core competences, and you will find it in this journal. We also found a lot of good examples of teachers, training programmes, cooperation and deliberation. We did not however come up with the definitive answers. What we offer in this issue is instead a kind of kaleidoscope picture. This is because there may not be a universal truth, or a single path to teaching. Teaching cannot be standardised. It has been a learning journey for us, one that has ended in a lot more questions than answers. That is OK. To us, learning is a lot about asking the right questions, and then reflecting, alone and with others. Accordingly, we never stop learning, and we are never done. To coin a phrase, one could say: I learn, therefore I am.



Structuring the thoughts and discussions of an intense working day with our editorial board on “the role and impact of adult education”. Editorial board meeting 2018, Debre Zeyit, Ethiopia

The best journal in the world

This is the last issue of AED, as the funding is coming to an end. We started our work as editors in 2013 and the last seven years have been quite a journey for us. This journal, designed as a tool of exchange and professionalisation, has been a constant learning experience for us as well. We have done a quick calculation: seven issues packed with contributions from 251 colleagues from 81 countries, 2454 pages in total in all the three languages.

With every issue, the world came to our desk, and we felt it becoming bigger and smaller at the same time. Bigger because it is so diverse, exotic and surprising. Smaller because yes, context matters, but it does not determine you. In the end, we are all the same. We all share this same planet, and we are made of the same fabric.

AED helped us to better understand the world.

It has been incredible to work with so many dedicated people on this journal. We would like to thank our editorial and consultancy boards which helped us to look at the topics from different perspectives, to ask the right questions and to think outside the box. They were truly “critical friends”, and their thorough comments helped us to get better with every issue.

We thank all our authors, storytellers, interviewees and columnists for sharing their experiences and expertise, and for making this journal what it was: an open, critical, diverse and happy place.

We also thank the graphic designers for the layout, the artists who made each issue unique, and the translators who

guaranteed the high quality in all three languages with a great deal of linguistic refinement.

And we thank you, dear reader, for reading us. We will miss your handwritten letters and postcards from all parts of the world, and we will miss your insights and constant feedback that showed us that all the work was very much worthwhile.

They say that you should leave when the party is still in full swing. This is what we are doing now. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

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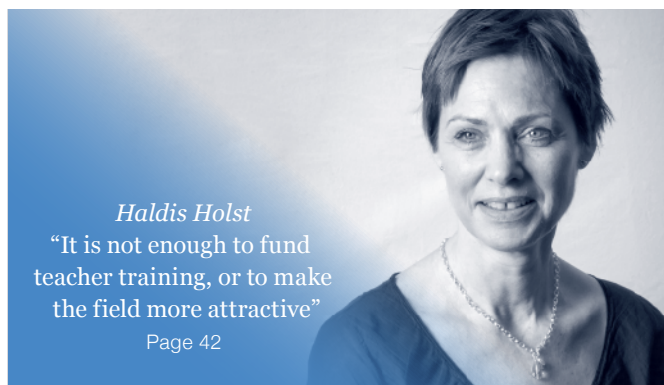


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Introducing the good adult educator



The editorial board of AED at its meeting in Stuttgart, Germany, January 2019

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Abstract – *What is professionalisation in adult learning and education? How do we accomplish it? Why is it important? These questions are as old as the field of adult education itself. They are also the topic of this issue of Adult Education and Development (AED). In this introductory article, several members of the AED editorial board paint a joint picture of a complex and ever-relevant question: Who is a good adult educator? For us this is a decisive actor with manifold responsibilities, but first of all he or she is responsible for the quality of teaching/learning processes and their outcomes. To understand this complexity we will look at some of the aspects that we discussed during our 2019 Board meeting: the overall rationale of professionalisation (what?), the profile of the professional adult educator (who?), his or her motivation (why?), and finally the methods for training professional adult educators (how?).*

What is “professionalisation” all about?

There is a growing recognition that lifelong learning is the philosophy, conceptual framework and organising principle underlying all forms of education. It is based on inclusive, emancipatory, humanistic and democratic values. This concept of learning for empowerment is a central element when it comes to dealing with the rapid changes and challenges that our societies are experiencing. Since we are adults for most of our lives, adult learning and education (ALE) can be seen as the most extended component of lifelong learning. It is necessary for a democratic, just, inclusive and sustainable society. As such, it supports the development of values such as learning to live together, peace and tolerance, and is a critical tool in preventing extremism and promoting active citizenship. Adult learning and education is vital in reaching all of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and many of their targets.¹ Moreover, SDG 4 is about “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all”, thus explicitly mentioning lifelong learning as a field of practice, and implicitly understanding adult learners as one of the crucial target groups of education.

The aims of adult education are to transmit knowledge, competences and skills to overcome social exclusion, and to enable all adults, in different target groups and with different needs in our different societies, to take part. To accomplish this, we need responsible agents who organise or “manage”

the processes of transmission. We need a “well-qualified workforce in adult education” (Jütte, Lattke 2014: 8). The adult educator is to support the development and “updating” of skills aligned to the current and future needs of our societies. These may be foundational skills such as literacy, active citizenship or vocational skills. But they also include competences to address issues in a wide variety of areas such as health, environment, ICT and many other domains. Consequently, a variety of adult education courses exist, such as basic skills courses, second-chance programmes for school drop-outs, language courses for migrants and refugees, training opportunities for job-seekers, courses on digital skills, professional training for workers, etc. Professional adult educators will however be the ones who not only manage teaching/learning in programmes and courses, but who also see to it that such programmes and courses are in fact delivered by a wide range of providers. Adult educators also assist policy-makers in shaping the overall field of practice. Last but not least, professionalisation should lead to the consolidation of educational practice through reflection on practice, i.e. research, and the maintenance of appropriate institutions to that end.

ALE practice is linked in many places to empowerment processes that are intended to help people overcome situations in which they are placed at a disadvantage. There are often close links between ALE organisations and players in civil society organisations that aim to change the life circumstances of a wide range of target groups. Professionalisation should help adult educators to play this role effectively so that they themselves are conscientious about their role and capacities as change agents, while at the same time being able to make others aware of circumstances and potentials of resistance and change (“conscientisation”). They themselves should also obey principles of non-discrimination.

Professionalisation is therefore about creating conditions for delivering good practice on the basis of appropriate concepts, ideally in the framework of an enabling policy environment. Such policies will look into institutional structures that are needed. Higher education will play a key role when it comes to enabling the conceptual development and research in ALE, while ensuring that the link to teaching/learning practice remains active.

This link will be relevant in both the initial and continuing training of adult educators. Unambiguous criteria are crucial for managing both strands of training. This close link between conceptual development/research and ALE practice, leading to supportive conditions of capacity building, is of key importance to the whole field of professionalisation in ALE.

Who is the adult educator?

The question of who the adult educator is cannot be adequately addressed without acknowledging the diverse contexts within which the education of adults occurs.

Inequality exists not merely within and between countries. True, inequalities of income constitute one factor, but those of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and other di-

mensions make the experience of those inhabiting the multiple axis of inequality more vulnerable than others. Environmental disasters – droughts, floods, tsunamis and earthquakes – exacerbate such inequalities. Conflict that stems from ethnic, racial, religious and other political tensions and economic distress has led to ever-increasing numbers of migrants (rising from 173 million in 2000 to 258 million in 2017 according to the United Nations’ International Migration Report). It is against this heterogeneous context of inequality of opportunities, arising from disasters, conflict and migration to name only a few, that we seek to define and understand who the adult educator is.

The teaching experiences of adults are therefore complex and multifaceted. Teaching takes place in the non-profit, private and public sectors; in formal, non-formal and informal settings. It is virtual or face-to-face; conducted at different levels that are of significance to the learner. The target group is broad, and it includes young adults, older adults, retirees, persons with disabilities, persons with special needs, refugees, workers and community members.

“Adult educators go by various names as diverse as the contexts in which they operate.”

It therefore comes as no surprise that adult educators vary in their practices, in their philosophical perspectives, and in their beliefs and feelings about the purpose pursued in educating adults. Rather than discussing a set of prescriptions regarding who the adult educator is, let us focus on the general notions to which that area broadly applies: The adult educator is someone who works with adults, persons beyond the compulsory school age, for the purpose of learning. We are talking about a relationship in which one aims to facilitate change in the capacity of an adult person or groups of persons. But more than that, an adult educator is someone who, while facilitating learning and change for the learner, is also conscious of his or her own inner learning and growth, and of how that impacts his or her work.

Adult educators therefore go by various names as diverse as the contexts in which they operate. As an adult educator, you may be known as a teacher, trainer, tutor, coach, instructor or development worker, to name but a few.

Why does someone become an adult educator?

To understand why someone becomes an adult educator, we need to look at the personal motivation and the context. For some this is a profession like any other. The reason is to have a job, to make a living. There might be other reasons as well, but they are secondary. In places where there are established adult education institutions, this may be more commonplace than elsewhere.

For others, adult education is a calling, something that reaches deep and far. These individuals will care less about



Qualities of a good adult educator: Humour

salary, career or status. Some are adult educators without perhaps even realising it. In this day and age, many bloggers, YouTubers and social media influencers may very well act as adult educators without being aware of it. There are surely many more reasons, but let us use these as a sample.

Adult educators are rooted in their respective socio-cultural contexts and adult education systems. If we do not understand this, we may run the risk of looking at the issue of professionalisation through our own lenses only. For example, some of us may think that academic training is the best (and possibly only) way to professionalise the field. This point of view may prefer subject knowledge over other (soft) skills. And even if we all agree that subject knowledge is important, it does not carry very far if the teacher lacks personal engagement. There are many adult educators out there who work with particular dedication. You cannot teach this in a classroom; it needs to come from somewhere else.

We try to provide some examples of different adult educators in diverse contexts in this issue of AED through a series of teacher portraits. Many of us will have a vivid recollection of the best teachers we had. This section is also an homage to adult educators all over the world.

What the figures tell us

The Belém Framework for Action, the outcome document of the Sixth International Conference of Adult Learning and Education (CONFINTEA VI), identifies the professionalisation of adult education as one of the key challenges for the field, and notes: “The lack of professionalisation and training opportunities for educators has had a detrimental impact on the quality of adult learning and education provision (...)” (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2010: 13).

Before delving into how to become a good adult educator, some facts can show a global picture of the professionalisation of adult educators. According to the Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE III), 81% of the 134 respondent countries reported in 2016 that initial, pre-service education and training programmes were in place for adult educators and facilitators (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2016: 123). GRALE III also shows that fewer than half (46%) of the 134 respondent countries reported that pre-service qualifications were a requirement to teach in ALE programmes. A further 39% reported that pre-service qualifications were required to teach in ALE programmes in some cases, whereas 15% reported that qualifications were not required to teach in ALE programmes.

The CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review, however, indicated in 2017 that even if there was growth in in-service and continuing education and training for practitioners, 61% of countries had inadequate capacity (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2017: 7). For example, 56% of countries from the European and North America regions mentioned that a continuing, in-service education and training programme for ALE teachers and educators was available, but that it had inadequate capacity. Only 28% of the respondents describe the

training as sufficient. Additionally, studies continue to show that ALE staff suffer from precarious working conditions, with part-time contracts and unpaid hours being relatively common in the sector. Finally, two consultations held in the region in 2016 reported that ALE teachers and educators frequently feel that their voice is not taken into account at the policy level (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2017: 25).

“It is not unusual in countries with low literacy rates for community members with low educational levels to take over the task of teaching their peers.”

While many countries still rely on non-professional adult educators, others work with volunteers who are trained as adult educators. In general, government entities exert the greatest influence on the training of educators, at both the initial and subsequent in-service stages. The reasons for inadequate training often stem from the way in which the sector is structured and made functional. ALE continues to be viewed as a limited-time project in many countries. In some countries, field functionaries in ALE constitute a relatively stable staff of trainers; in other countries, they work largely on a voluntary basis with nominal financial support; again in others, they are essentially employed by NGOs implementing ALE programmes. It is not unusual in countries with low literacy rates for community members with low educational levels to take over the task of teaching their peers. Considering that a number of NGOs are involved in delivering ALE programmes, prescribing one set of entry qualifications for all programmes and all contexts may not be realistic. This calls for innovative approaches that meet the requirements of quality and equity. As a consequence, the status, conditions of employment and remuneration of adult education staff are invariably below those of personnel in other education sectors (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2017: 18).

How to become a “good” adult educator

As has already been mentioned, adult educators are not always required to have qualifications in order to teach, in part because so few training opportunities are offered.

Let us look at some examples of good practice. The Government of the Republic of Korea established the Lifelong Learning Educator system, a national certification system for professional educators working in the lifelong education sector that aims to guarantee high-quality teaching and learning. Article 24 of the Lifelong Education Act defines a lifelong learning educator as “a field specialist responsible for the management of the entire lifelong learning process, from programme planning to implementation, analysis, evaluation and teaching.” To be certified as a lifelong learning educator, individuals must obtain a number of academic credits in a related field from a university or graduate school, or they must complete training courses provided by designated institutions.

In addition, the Lifelong Education Act prescribes “the placement and employment of lifelong learning educators”, making it mandatory for municipal and provincial institutes for lifelong education, as well as lifelong learning centres in cities, counties and villages, to employ lifelong learning educators. Schools and pre-school facilities that run lifelong learning programmes are also advised to hire lifelong learning educators (Republic of Korea Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2016: 58).

“The quality of ALE courses automatically improves if high-quality training is offered to adult educators.”

South Africa reported that the government has provided unemployed graduates and young people who have senior secondary school certificates with short-term contracts to teach adults literacy and basic skills. This highlights a shortage of qualified teachers in the field of ALE. The point to stress is that qualifications alone do not guarantee the professionalism of adult educators; however, ensuring professionalism does entail providing initial and continuing training, job security, fair pay, opportunities to grow and recognition for good work in reducing the educational gap in the adult population (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2016: 58).

The quality of ALE courses automatically improves if high-quality training is offered to adult educators, by providing pre-service education and training programmes for educators, by requiring educators to have initial qualifications, and by providing in-service education and training programmes for educators.

The provision of initial training should not only be associated with formal provision of ALE. Adult educators and facilitators should be provided with initial and continuing training, even when the delivery of ALE is non-formal (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2016: 57).

Overall, high quality curricula are needed in order to train adult educators. A curriculum represents a conscious and systematic selection of knowledge, skills and values which shapes the way in which teaching, learning and assessment are organised by addressing questions such as what, when and how people should learn in order to become good adult educators. However, guidelines for curriculum for adult educators are scarce compared to those for educators in primary and secondary schools.

The CONFITEA VI Mid-Term Review shows that, in order to ensure the quality of literacy teacher programmes, some countries (e.g. Indonesia and Nepal) have developed a standard curriculum for adult educators that can be adapted to local needs. In other countries, such as New Zealand and Australia, universities and other educational research institutions are engaged in the professional training and development of adult educators.

As an example of recommendable good practice, DVV International and the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) have developed a basic curriculum framework for adult educators in the shape of their Curriculum globALE, driving towards the professionalisation of adult educators worldwide (DVV International, DIE 2015). It follows the human rights-based approach, taking account of the fact that ALE is one of the prerequisites for the right of self-fulfilment and realisation of one’s full potential. While it outlines the skills required for successful course guidance, it also allows for different framework conditions, contexts and learning expectations. In this issue, we present one example of how the curriculum has been adapted in Laos.

That’s pretty much what we wanted to say in order to introduce this issue. Please read on to learn more and go into depth. We compiled these contributions to support you – as adult educators – in your own learning.

Notes

1 / United Nations (2015), for a full overview see <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

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“New professionalism” and my journey to becoming an adult educator



Jose Roberto Guevara
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Abstract – *The many dimensions of professionalisation that we currently see in adult education are illustrated through a lens of personal experiences and reflections in this article. It is this ability for reflection and reflexivity that defines a good adult educator, perhaps even more than a formal qualification. The importance of context is also thoroughly examined. And just when you think you've got it, another challenge pops up.*

My assumption of the professionalisation of adult educators was about coming up with a specific list of knowledge, skills and values that one is expected to have in order to be recognised by one's peers. This for me stems from my pre-conception about professional qualifications, like occupations of being a teacher, nurse, doctor, social worker or pilot, where there are pre-determined capacities that are agreed upon by a central professional association. Don't get me wrong, I myself would want to consult a professional medical practitioner and be flown by a professional pilot. Indeed, there is value in professionalisation.

Egetenmeyer et al. (2019: 7), who have also contributed to this issue of *Adult Education and Development*, describe professionalisation within the context of Europe as the “control of knowledge and workplace conditions through professionals” or “a central ethical value of the profession and an academic knowledge basis or the role of professions in society.” However, they have recognised that recently there has also been a shift to the notion of the “new professionalism”, whereby these qualities are no longer solely determined by the organisational or work contexts, but are equally shaped by the social context, recognising that this context is multi-layered and multi-dimensional (Egetenmeyer et al. 2019).

My “new professionalism” journey

So where does my pre-conception come from? I reflect and recognise that I am shaped by my own experience and de-



Environmental educators and advocates review the contents of the “Treaty of Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility” during the International NGO Forum at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) also called Rio+20

velopment as an adult educator in the context of environmental and popular education, within the social movement in the Philippines in the 1980s and 1990s. During this period, we advocated for and practiced education that challenged the dominant and repressive education that was prevalent during the Martial Law period (Garcia 1999, Yoo 2008). Therefore, the idea of professionalisation or standardisation that was recognised by the government of the day was virtually tantamount to acceptance of, and conforming to, the very status quo that we were challenging.

While I did teach within the formal education system, as a secondary school Biology teacher and a university Ecology instructor for a total of five years, all the while I continued to be involved in alternative educational activities, particularly in youth and community theatre with the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA). On reflection, the social movement in the Philippines, my formal studies in Biology/Ecology, and my engagement with community theatre, were the seeds that planted the idea of an alternative approach to learning that eventually took root and grew in my work as a community environmental educator in the Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines, which was supported by DVV International for many years (Guevara 2002).

It was much later, during a study visit to Germany hosted by DVV International for adult educators from the Asia-Pacific region, that I was exposed to an established system of adult

education with professionally-qualified educators. The closest manifestation of an established system with educators that I could relate to in the Philippines was a national network of community and popular educators, who were all involved in some way with the social movement for change, even after the People Power “revolution” that toppled the Marcos Regime in 1986. This was further acknowledged by colleagues from our network of educators being involved in regional and international adult education networks such as the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE).

It was within these regional and international networks that I began to recognise the diversity of adult education contexts. I saw that some countries had a more formalised and established system known as adult education, while in other countries, like the Philippines, the closest semblance of the system is a spectrum. At one end it is a system that complements the formal education system, usually for adults who have missed out on the opportunity to attend school. At the other end it is a counter-educational system that challenges the dominant system of education.

Recognising the “new professionalism”

So while I have attended and conducted numerous training workshops and study visits on adult and community educa-



Robbie Guevara, the author, and Monica Simons, from the Environmental Education Center of Guarulhos, Brazil, at the International NGO Forum during the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)

tion, I do not have a formal qualification in adult and community education. I begin by sharing my own “professionalisation” story to help set the scene as to how I came across the field of adult education, how I have come to recognise the existence of such a profession, and how I have come to call myself an adult and community educator, working within the field of education for sustainable development. My journey has led me back to the formal education system, teaching within a postgraduate programme in international development at RMIT University, where I continue to challenge the boundaries of educating future professionals in the field of international development.

“Life is our curriculum, and the world is our classroom.”

I would like to invite you to reflect and share with colleagues your own “professionalisation” journey. For many of us who have not had the opportunity of obtaining a formal qualification, it is this ability for reflexivity or self-critical reflection that I have come to recognise as the bedrock of what Egetenmeyer et al. (2019) called the “new professionalism”, which aligns with Chambers’ (2017: 150) own description of the “new and revolutionary professionalism” within the field of international development.

But more importantly, I share my story to also identify and examine the tensions that I have recognised with regard to the early notions of “professionalisation” as a set of pre-determined capacities for adult educators. Three tensions will be discussed that revolve around my argument that the influence of context is central to my “professionalisation” story. The first tension is that adult education has always been contextual; the second is that contexts are complex and inter-related; and the third, that context is not just diverse but also dynamic. Finally, I attempt to weave these tensions into the current context of adult education within the era of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and identify implications for this notion of the “new professionalism”.

For a long time, we as adult educators have always recognised how context has shaped our educational practice – life is our curriculum, and the world is our classroom. Egetenmeyer et al. (2019: 20) support this in a way when they argue for a multi-level model of professionalisation of adult and continuing education that “highlights the integration, interaction and interrelation of adult and continuing education providers” across societal, institutional and personal levels. While some value continues to attach to identifying specific individual competences of adult and continuing educators, this multi-level model helps further highlight the reciprocal nature of these interactions.

Context shapes practice

I have always argued that the most effective and relevant adult education practice is one that results from a deep engagement in and understanding of the local context – knowing the participants, their life experiences and having identified a need that can be addressed by a learning intervention. While we as adult educators are often asked to design, conduct and evaluate a training workshop with a pre-determined learning objective, it is not unusual for us to realise that the background information provided to us does not capture the complete situation. Hence, from my experience, most workshops would begin with an activity that would provide an opportunity to clarify expectations and agree on learning objectives, based on the jointly-identified needs. We have often called this the expectations check activity.

While it is expected that one will still be prepared, the most effective training design draws from and builds on context – recognising that adult participants have a richness of life experiences, knowledge and skills that they contribute. Therefore, if there is one key capacity of a professional adult educator, it is this ability to re-design and facilitate learning that responds to one’s understanding of the local context.

However, what I myself have often failed to recognise is an awareness of my own context and how it influences how I understand and therefore respond to the local context. In my own writings, I have shared key experiences where my own assumptions about what valid knowledge is (Guevara 2002) and what is an appropriate way of teaching and learning (Guevara 2012) have come into question.

Context is relational

While we may attempt to gain a better understanding of context, we can often see context from a perspective, either influenced by the specific objective of the workshop and/or the profile of the participants. It is important to remind ourselves of how context is very much complex and interconnected. So, one cannot simply identify a specific concept or skill that needs to be learned without situating this within the larger purpose for learning.

For example, many of us have been engaged in some form of economic livelihood training as a poverty alleviation intervention. One of the most common ones that I have come across has been with regard to handicraft production, like basket weaving, often in the context of creating locally-made souvenirs for tourists. However, one soon realises that introducing local handicrafts that rely on the use of local resources needs to be accompanied with an appreciation of how these local resources are limited. Therefore, a rush to collect raw materials, like leaves, for basket weaving, may in fact result in short-term livelihood gains, but can, if not well-managed, cause long-term damage to the environment. While as an adult educator we can include a discussion of the need to sustain the source of raw materials, it is eventually necessary to develop a more holistic approach to local livelihoods that will require the involvement of different key players in the local community, recognising the need for the different skills involved, from the planting and harvesting of the raw materials, the design and production of the product, to the marketing of the baskets. One might argue, is that still the responsibility of the adult educator? If the overall objective was to ensure a sustainable livelihood, then we need not only to provide the knowledge and the skills, but also to recognise that we need to work with others if our adult education work is to become effective and sustainable. I would argue that this is central to the “new professionalism”.

“And just when you thought you had got it – the perfect training design – ready to write it up into a manual and scale it up, you discover that the only constant is that context changes.”

It is therefore not sufficient for us as adult educators to understand and engage with context in designing learning programmes, but it is as important, if not more important, to also facilitate an appreciation of the interconnected reality of context for learners in order to enable them to effectively optimise this new knowledge or skill. Therefore, another key capacity of a professional adult educator, as Paulo Freire (1985) said, is that it isn't enough to “read the word”, we want our learners to be able to “read the world”.

Furthermore, I would argue that it is not only about understanding the interconnected nature of context, but it is

just as much about how, as adult educators, we have a responsibility to facilitate the interconnections between the different key players. I was involved as one of the facilitators in the design and implementation of the Curriculum globALE in Laos (see Gartenschlaeger et al., in this issue). As the article will illustrate, it was only through our attempts to ensure that our participants were going to continue to be supported after the 18-month-long training was completed that we were able to identify and nurture partnerships between different key players at local and regional levels and across different sectors of government, academia and civil society.

Therefore, we don't just “read the word”, or “read the world”, we help to shape the world.

Context is dynamic

And just when you thought you had got it – the perfect training design – ready to write it up into a manual and scale it up, you discover that the only constant is that context changes. In fact, it must change if we are to be truly effective in our adult education practice – because while we argued that context shapes practice, I will also argue that effective practice changes context. It is this dynamic reality that we need to not just recognise, but in fact embrace. As Freire (1985: 18) himself argued, “We can go further, however, and say that reading the word is not only preceded by reading the world, but also by a certain form of writing it or rewriting it. In other words, of transforming it by means of conscious practical action.”

Therefore, it isn't enough for the professional adult educator to read and respond to the interrelated and dynamic nature of context; it is also important for us to be aware of how we ourselves can be or are changed by context. Robert Chambers (2017: 163) has identified reflexivity, or “critical reflection on how we form and frame our knowledges” as a key capacity of the “new professional”. He argued that “Rapid change demands rapid learning and adaptation and, as noted earlier, being alert, nimble, in touch, and up to date. There is more to this than just learning. Rapid change also implies rapid unlearning and learning.” (Chambers 2017: 163)

Similarly, Egetenmeyer et al. (2019: 20) have affirmed that adult and community education “providers do not only respond to societal developments, they are also active members and shapers of societies”. Therefore, our curriculum is not just based on life, but it can potentially transform lives, and our classrooms can potentially be found in all places where people gather, whether it be to work, play, worship or socialise. What this “new professionalism” model further emphasises is how our very institutions are not just delivering adult and community education, but that we have a role to play in the transformation of our own institutions to ensure that they are, like us as individual adult and community educators, committed to professional practice.

Advocacy and the global development context

Finally, as adult educators, we find ourselves responding to the current global challenges and aspirations of the UN Sus-

tainable Development Goals (SDGs) to respond to these challenges. While they appear as 17 distinct goals, with one specific education goal, it is important that we establish how our work as adult educators contributes to this transformative agenda.

We have learned from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that we cannot have a truly global agenda if we only focus on the “developing” world, and so the SDGs are a universal global agenda. We also now realise that we cannot effectively achieve global development if we are not able to establish the interconnections between the 17 different SDGs, and therefore we need to facilitate learning that illustrates the interrelated nature of these goals.

Furthermore, as adult educators, we are not only responding to SDG 4, so that we “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UNESCO 2016), but we need to recognise that none of the SDGs can be achieved without some form of adult education, training or capacity building. If there is one more capacity of the “new professionalism” for adult educators during these times, it is our capacity to advocate for on-going learning, across contexts and across all stages of life. SDG 4 has provided us with a gift by introducing into the goal the concept of lifelong learning.

Let me invite you to read the experiences of our colleagues from around the world in this issue. Each of them demonstrates how, as adult educators, they have recognised and addressed the diverse, interrelated, dynamic and challenging contexts in which we find ourselves. These experiences have ranged from working with youth educators and volunteer literacy educators, designing and delivering programmes to build specific “professional” adult education capabilities, and engaging with different experiences, knowledge and value systems. Behind these more visible manifestations of our adult education work, there also is the need to continue to critically reflect and challenge dominant neoliberal policies that impinge on the rights of young people and adults to learn across their lives.

While we and our institutions will continue to create curriculum and training programmes to help introduce the concept and practice of adult education within both formal and non-formal education systems, I would conclude that the “new professionalism” expects that our on-going professional development and capacity building is our responsibility, as a demonstration of our commitment to becoming professional adult educators.

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Section 1

In the classroom

This is it. This is where it happens. The teacher has prepared, has an idea. But there are no guarantees. Each time learning takes place is a leap into the unknown. While every teaching situation is unique, there are ways to learn how to cope with many of its aspects. To be a good teacher, you must often first sit in the chair of the learner.

Zahir Azar

“We need to ‘free’ our minds”

Interview

Interview by Rabab Tamish,
Bethlehem University, Palestine
Photos by DVV International



After obtaining his doctoral degree in Philosophy in France in 1964, Dr. Zahir Azar returned to Lebanon where he worked as an adult educator in the Ecumenical Popular Education Program (EPEP)¹. In 1991, he became the Director of EPEP. In 1997, he

established the Arab Network for Popular Education, engaging hundreds of Arab activists and organisations in promoting the quality of adult education. Currently he is the coordinator of the Arab Adult Education Academy (AAEA)².

Based on more than 30 years of experience and activism in the field of adult education, what have you learned about the professionalisation of adult education in the Arab world?

In the Arab world, the concept of “professionalisation of adult education” has never been perceived as a dynamic and contextualised term. This means that most of the programmes are pre-structured as ready-to-use recipes, and do not emanate from learners’ active participation and engagement. My concern here is that there is a lack of a clear vision for adult education. Adult education in the Arab world unfortunately tends to adhere to traditional methods based on school-orientated practices. There is a common assumption that the preparation process for adult educators does not require the same level of effort as it does for school teachers. They are not trained in how to engage learners in the generation of knowledge. Training programmes focus on equipping adult educators with knowledge of content, with technical tools on how to teach, and with general principles of adult learning. These programmes however fail to engage adult educators as adult learners and to provide them with the opportunity to engage in the learning process as active learners themselves. We need to “free” our minds of the view that adult education should adhere to the same principles as traditional school systems. The training process needs to be based on the adult learners’ experiences, and to challenge assumptions about adult learning. It would be better to refer to adult educators as “facilitators” of the teaching and learning process. The term “teacher” or “educator” reflects a linear relationship where one expert tells a number of passive learners what to do and how to do it. A facilitator, on the other hand, is a person who perceives learners as active partners in the learning process and ensures that they engage in every decision related to their learning, such as selecting learning topics, planning learning activities, and developing assessment tools. We cannot ex-

pect educators to provide the space for adult learners to be active participants if they themselves have not practiced this role too. As trainers of adult educators, we should implement the same approach in preparing adult educators so that they can live this experience. This means enabling adult educators to contribute their own experiences and to engage in critical dialogue to develop their capacity to be facilitators of the learning process with the adults with whom they engage.

How are human rights integrated into the professionalisation process?

A training programme that is detached from learners’ experiences or the foundations of human rights cannot be called professionalisation. Working with adult learners means considering the factors that cause learners to feel marginalised and disconnected from their reality. When talking about human rights, I am not referring to politics and political freedoms. Rather, I see human rights as forming the basis for maintaining the dignity of the learner as a human being. This means facilitators actively work to ensure that they are upholding the rights of learners, including gender rights, equity and social justice. The practice of human rights is reflected when learners have the power to share their knowledge without fear and to critically assess their own realities. When they are equal partners and active participants in the process of their learning, adult educators and learners are able to break the barriers causing them to feel marginalised, and in turn they are able to regain their self-esteem and agency.

What is your vision for the professionalisation of adult education in the Arab world?

I cannot call it a vision. I see it more as a set of principles and values that confront the traditional approach to learning. I call this the emancipatory approach. It is about critically reflecting on what is taken for granted with regard to learning,



Zahir Azar and participants of the first Arab Academy for Adult Education are practicing the participatory approaches

and fully believing in the participation of the learners in the process of developing a vision about teaching and learning. If learners or educators are isolated from these processes, then the results are poor. This is the first element of the emancipatory approach. Secondly, when the teacher is a learner and is engaged in critical dialogue, as Paulo Freire described, then he or she will know that while they teach, they also learn. In this regard, the image of the facilitator is challenged where he or she is no longer the owner of the knowledge, and so cannot deliver it through a prepared text. This is a revolutionary argument about the process of adult education professionalisation, and requires the engagement of adult learners in every step of their learning, including the type of examination they take. Rather than a closed world, their world of learning is an open one where learners participate in their assessment. This is what I mean by emancipation.

To what extent is your work influenced by the work of Paulo Freire?

When I joined the EPEP, by chance I admit, I became very motivated to learn about adult education. The team started to plan for a programme that challenges the traditional approach, and we went through different stages until we reached the current principles and what we called the pedagogy of the text. We learnt a lot from the work of Freire, especially “Learning to Question” and his experience across different continents. We argue that we did not distance ourselves from him totally, but we adapted the spirit of his work to the Arab context. We believe that Paulo Freire has provided educators with the “path to” awareness raising. Walking the path does not necessarily mean adopting it as “the path”, but rather to question and to find the appropriate means within one’s

community to make it work, based on one’s own cultural transformation, and as seen fit by the community itself. This experience taught us about the professionalisation of adult educators that is developed gradually and dynamically. So we experienced failure when we prepared ready-made texts and curricula for training. We felt how this leads to the passiveness of learners compared to the cases when they were engaged in the planning of their learning and the writing of their texts. When we witnessed remarkable changes with these new approaches, we become more confident about the power of offering to be partners in learning with principles for action, rather than ready-made recipe programmes for professionalisation. You might be surprised to know that, despite the difficulty in reaching these views on adult education, we have nevertheless managed, with our regional partners, to gain trust at official levels, and some countries have agreed to integrate the work within their strategic plans and activism.

Who is responsible for adult education in the Arab world?

The answer is clear: the State. In some Arab countries, there are exceptions when there is a space for what we call civil society organisations to provide these services. The concern here is that neither body is able to lead the process without genuine cooperation. This partnership should be based on the experiences of both bodies. The current statistics in the Arab world about the status of adult education indicate that real progress is still far from emerging, and that the status will continue to be ineffective as long as we do not think of changing these countries’ approaches for adult education. I believe that there is a need to improve the quality of networking within each Arab country, and across these countries. These networks need to continuously assess the

effectiveness of the work in the field and act accordingly. Again, as was mentioned earlier, this requires a strong belief in participatory approaches where all partners are active in the planning and assessment of programmes. Development requires the engagement of all partners in critical conscientisation processes, where they share their experience and build the process of professionalisation of adult education.

What are the biggest challenges for providing effective teacher training?

The most critical challenge refers to what is in the learner's mind, especially when he or she has experienced different forms of alienation, marginalisation and exploitation. The skill required in breaking down the barriers that surround the ability to engage in learning within these minds cannot be underestimated, and should be carefully considered when preparing a programme. This stage needs time, but when all partners in the learning process feel the power of sharing, being respected and that their dignity is protected, they break down these walls. We need to be aware that this human relationship is not limited to the training programme, or to learner-facilitator interaction alone, but rather it is about a culture of active participation and agency. This culture should characterise the professional practices of the institution itself, its staff and structure. Any call for progressive adult education should be implemented within the organisation itself, such as challenging the hierarchical relationships within the institute, appreciating experiences, practicing flexibility and where participatory approaches to decision-making and joint planning are effectively utilised. Another challenge is related to donors' interventions in the process. The weaknesses of governments and civil society when it comes to leading adult education has increased the intervention of the international agencies in the area. As we know, most of these agencies offer recipes that are ready to be implemented. Their lack of flexibility sometimes leads to a programme either blindly following the donor's agenda, irrespective of its effectiveness, or simply to the rejection of the conditional funding. There are a few cases where funding agencies have shared similar progressive approaches to those I advocate, and accordingly they have responded positively to local needs, experiences and approaches for action. I hope that the intervention of international agencies in the Arab world becomes more flexible and supports local approaches that lead to impressive impact. One more challenge refers to the fact that most civil society organisations do not prioritise adult education within their agenda. Some of them believe that adult education is the responsibility of the State, or that the process is long and beyond their mandates. This view reflects a priority among some civil society organisations to limit their work to their objectives alone, such as health, youth or gender equity, without considering the value of the learning process itself. In addition, the lack of clear approaches in adult education, and the weaknesses of the State and of civil society forums, create a situation where they merely copy programmes, mostly developed by international agencies, without considering all the matters I described earlier, just because they

are easier to implement and follow. In many cases, participation in such international programmes becomes an "advertisement" to obtain credibility at local and international levels. This spoils the potential for effective development.

To what extent are local and international networks involved in professionalisation in the Arab world?

In general, efforts for genuine networking and partnership between the formal and informal bodies are still in their infancy in the Arab world. Recently, we have seen organisations emerge which share strong beliefs that strengthening networks has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the State and of civil society organisations, and as a result the quality of adult education. I believe that the intervention of international agencies should focus on listening to local experiences and working for their dissemination internationally in order to support the possibilities of exchanging international experiences. I think that we have an ethical duty to face the current form of globalisation that aims at increasing marginalisation. We need to be engaged in the rebuilding of a global approach that serves both humanity and development. This can be achieved when we enter the educational gates that we walk through. Despite the weaknesses at the network level, there are other factors that might facilitate the achievement of quality adult education in the Arab world. Firstly, the current networks and partnerships, despite their weaknesses, should be supported – especially when they continuously reassess their realities in the light of local, regional and international experiences. Furthermore, social media have helped break down the taboos on many people's accessibility to wider experiences. This will help us learn about networks that lead to influential impact. Finally, I argue that the "Arab Spring" has led to different forms of conscientisation and awareness-raising, despite the violence, poverty, pain and political instability that accompanied it. If we build on these factors, the quality of the professionalisation process will become more effective.

Dr. Zahir Azar, thank you very much for the interview.

Notes

1 / EPEP aims to promote adult education in the Arab world as a participatory, democratic and critical process. It promotes education as a process by which the acquisition of knowledge comes in response to the needs of local communities, and values above all else the experience of marginalised individuals and communities in informing the strategies used to improve their status.

2 / AAEA is run by four networks from the Arab world, and works in partnership with DVV international. It aims to enrich the quality of adult education throughout the Arab world.

Glocalisation – How the Curriculum globALE was localised in Laos to train adult educators



From left to right:

Uwe Gartenschlaeger
DVV International, Laos

Souphap Khounvixay
Non-Formal Education
Development Centre, Laos

Beykham Saleumsouk
DVV International, Laos

Abstract – *Using the Curriculum globALE to train adult educators in Laos, one of the remotest countries in Asia, turned out to be a project that was both challenging and rewarding at the same time. As an output-orientated framework, the Curriculum globALE is highly amenable to being adapted to suit local needs whilst providing an orientation with regard to the learning content of a training cycle. The implementation process clearly demonstrated the need not to focus exclusively on transferring knowledge and skills, but to simultaneously develop participants' personal abilities when it comes to critical thinking, decision-making, communication and leadership.*

“My new teaching techniques have boosted my confidence”, is how Ms. Naphayvong from the Vocational Education Development Institute describes the impact of the Training of Master Trainers that was implemented in Laos between 2015 and 2017 (DVV International newsletter 2017: 13). Her feedback specifically addresses two dimensions that are crucial for understanding the project: professional and personal growth. This article describes the journey taken by this capacity building project to empower adult educators in one of the most remote countries of Asia.

“The quality of non-formal education is poor, and the non-formal education services are scattered around at local level (...)” (Ministry of Education and Sports 2015). This observation from the key policy document of Laos, the Education Sector Development Plan, was clear to all as the process started. In fact, Laos does not have any structured pre- or in-service training for adult educators. In line with the UN 2030 Agenda, which sets out the need for high-quality training of teachers and trainers, DVV International and the Department for Non-Formal Education of the Laotian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports decided to initiate an experimental training cycle for more than 30 trainers and facilitators. The programme design was based on several core decisions:

- To use the Curriculum globALE as a reference point for the training cycle. The Curriculum globALE is an output-orientated curriculum, developed jointly by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) and DVV International

to equip training providers with a basic standard model for capacity building. It is unequivocally amenable to local adaptation.

- To invite a mixed team of trainers combining Lao and international expertise to plan and deliver the modules. From the Lao side, the team consisted of Souphap Khounvixay from the Non-Formal Education Development Centre, a government agency, and Beykham Saleumsouk from DVV International. The international team included Roberto Guevara from RMIT University in Melbourne, Anita Borkar from ASPBAE and Ushio Miura from the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok.
- To deliver the training almost exclusively via the Lao trainer and in the Lao language. This decision was taken in order to minimise language and culture barriers, as knowledge of English is very thin on the ground in Laos. Even greater importance attaches to the fact that using English means that training is automatically based on a cultural and intellectual concept that is linked to Western(ised) thinking. This places the entire challenge of transferring these contents into the Lao context onto the shoulders of the participants, which was perceived as constituting too much of a burden for most of them.
- To combine training with coaching and mentoring. By combining the two elements, the project sought to narrow the gap between capacity and implementation. Many capacity-building activities run the risk of participants being unable to put their newly-acquired skills into practice. The reasons are manifold, and include hierarchy issues in their home constituencies, as well as time constraints and unexpected challenges that they face in their work environment. They need support at their workplaces.

Setting the scene

As the team of trainers was scattered all over Asia and Australia, the preparation of each module demanded on the one hand the use of digital communication tools and cloud solutions. On the other hand, a standard preparation schedule was agreed: The international trainers arrived in Vientiane at the latest two days before each training course in order to fine-tune the agenda for the upcoming module. These preparation sessions turned out to be both exciting and challenging, especially for the Lao team, as they had to translate and transfer much of the agreed content into the Lao language and context.

The team realised during the preparation process that some of the material was already available in Laos. Government and development partners have developed various handbooks, manuals and curricula in recent decades. It was possible to use and adapt many of these, so that there was no need to “re-invent the wheel”, and previous work could be built on.

Another decision was taken regarding the sequence of the training modules. The Curriculum globALE recommends the following:

- Module 0: Introduction;
- Module 1: Approach towards adult education;
- Module 2: Adult learning and adult teaching;
- Module 3: Communication and group dynamics in adult education;
- Module 4: Methods of adult education;
- Module 5: Planning, organisation and evaluation in adult education.

While discussing this scheme in the team of trainers, it was agreed that it would be appropriate in the Lao case to start with the more practice-orientated modules. The reason was simple: In Lao culture, learning relies more on experiences and exchange than on intellectual learning pure and simple. This shift anchored the learning on the experiences of the learners themselves.

After restructuring the modules, the training cycle for Lao trainers was ordered as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Sequence of training cycle for Lao trainers (based on the Curriculum globALE)

Module	Dates/Deadlines
(M0) Introductory Module	16–17 December 2015
Homework: Local Needs Analysis	21 March 2016
(M2) Adult Learning	4–8 April 2016
Homework: Improvement of LNA	10 May 2016
(M4) Methods	24–28 May 2016
Individual training Implemented with coaching	1 August 2016 September–November
Elective Module 1: Gender Training	October 2016
Continuing individual training Implemented with coaching	December 2016
(M3) Group Dynamics and (M1) Approaches to Adult Learning	February 2017
(M1) Approaches to Adult Learning and (M5) Planning, Organising & Evaluating plus elective Module Soft Skills	June 2017

Source: the authors

The needs assessment was carried out during Module 0. Participants were asked to reflect on and introduce their working environments, experiences and expectations. The results were used to design the subsequent modules.

Learning to implement

Implementation posed several challenges for the team of trainers. Most of the participants were accustomed to tradi-



Networking exercise during Curriculum globALE training in Laos

tional teaching and learning approaches based on a teacher-centred concept. This includes a limited set of methods, mainly lecturing. When interviewed at the end of each training course, many participants expressed surprise at the process via which the training had been delivered. Most of the activities in this project incorporated principles of adult learning in the learning process itself, inspiring the participants to reflect and engage in further study. They were initially frustrated and full of questions: What is the main objective of this topic? We are experienced experts, why do we need to play this game? They faced challenges when it came to linking the learning experience with the objective of the training. At the same time, the attempt to replace the traditional lecturing and instruction-based teaching with interactive methods was appreciated and well received by the overwhelming majority of the participants during the process. This echoes experiences from similar cases in other countries where traditional teaching/learning settings are predominant. In order to keep the participants motivated and on track, it turned out to be crucial to synthesise the learning outcomes at the end of each unit.

This observation goes hand in hand with another experience: Participants who are accustomed to a traditional teaching environment, dominated by knowledge transfer pure and simple, become confused and – in some cases – draw the conclusion that the facilitators lack knowledge. It was helpful here to rely on a mixed team in which international experts (traditionally highly valued in Laos) could support the learning process by explaining the conceptual

background behind the non-traditional facilitation approaches that were used.

“Participants found communication across barriers of hierarchy, institutions and regional affiliations to be inspiring.”

The participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds. Their formal educational background varied from PhD to higher secondary diploma. They came from different parts of the country and held a wide range of positions in the official hierarchy. This had the potential to create misunderstandings and tension in a society where hierarchy is extremely important and the learning culture differs from one part of the country to another. The team of trainers devoted sufficient time to developing social and emotional skills aiming to bridge these gaps. This ensured that the acquired learning outcomes could be translated into different contexts as cross-cutting issues of adult learning principles. It furthermore emerged that the participants found communication across barriers of hierarchy, institutions and regional affiliations to be inspiring.

Most of the participants were unable to communicate in English. The first two modules were mainly implemented by the international team, using translation via interpreters. This was time-consuming, and led to several misunderstandings. As time passed, it became apparent that constantly working

in the international team gave the Lao facilitators increasing confidence and skills. This enabled them to implement the subsequent units as key trainers, with the international team supporting, mentoring and focusing on the design of the agenda.

All in all, the Training of Master Trainers turned out to be a learning journey not only for the participants, but for the facilitators as well. By engaging in an open process, involving the new paradigm of teaching/learning, and understanding local people's learning methods, as well as their perceptions of learning activities, it was possible to balance theory and practice and deliver the content in a manner that ensured professional and personal growth.

Three ways of looking at impact

There are three possible ways of describing the impact of the training of Master Trainers. The first way is to analyse the project using the OECD's DAC criteria¹, a standard tool used in development cooperation. In his research based on interviews with the participants and trainers, Professor Bruce Wilson from RMIT University in Melbourne described the relevance of the programme as follows: "The programme has contributed to the heart of non-formal education work through a core focus on adult learning principles." The effectiveness of the training was based on the design of the training cycle: "As each workshop was activity based, participants were challenged to act in ways which were new for them, offering each participant the opportunity to recognise their capacity to support learning in others in ways which they had not tried previously. There were no dropouts, and almost all participants were able to conduct at least one outreach workshop." The design was also instrumental for the high level of efficiency, as it allowed participants to learn without "disruption to ongoing non-formal education activities." The partnership of higher education, international and non-profit organisation minimised the costs. "Participation of learners was a key ingredient in both the workshop learning processes themselves, and in the approaches which the Master Trainers were encouraged to use with their own learners." By stressing this approach in several modules, participants were "not only (able) to increase the impact of their own non-formal education work, but also to recognise how they might contribute to the professional development of other educators" (all quotations are taken from Wilson's report). As a result, it was possible to recognise outreach activities as a main impact of the training beyond the participants' individual professional development. Lastly, the sustainability of the action relies on both the commitment of the Lao partners, and on the broader recognition that the Master Trainers' expertise in adult learning can make a more general contribution to professional development within the education and labour sectors in Lao PDR.

This leads us to the second possible way to explore the impact of the project: the numerous follow-up activities, including outreach training within the non-formal education system, and the recognition and demand that the Master Trainers experienced outside their sector. Based on their ex-

periences in training, a module on adult and lifelong learning was introduced into the teacher education programme at the National University of Laos, and is currently in the process of being adopted at other universities and teacher training colleges. Laos' biggest education project, the Australian- and EU-funded BEQUAL programme for reforming primary

Testimonials from participants:

"I wasn't very aware of the non-formal education sector before attending this programme. I didn't know exactly what it was because I was limited to my knowledge within my department, which conducts courses on vocational education lasting from six months to one year. A lot of our students want to continue learning even after the course, but are deprived of that opportunity as they do not have formal degrees or even an equivalency certificate. This training has not only been a learning experience, but also a good meeting ground for people from different organisations working in the same sector to come together and share their experiences."

Chanthanom Theangthong,
Lao Youth Union

"What impressed me most was experiencing that education does not always mean sitting still, but that you can teach and learn through being active. We learned how to integrate ice-breakers, energisers and activators into teaching practice. These methods made learning much more fun than I had imagined it would be. I also learned how important the learning environment and mutual respect between learners and trainers are. Despite the fact that the participants had different starting points in terms of knowledge, as well as diverging positions, ages and sexes, we all had the same rights and were treated in the same way. I felt highly appreciated, and this made me more confident when it came to sharing ideas, interacting with other people, helping others, listening, learning new things, and so on."

Amphone Lorkham,
Non-Formal Education Development Centre

"I am a teacher by profession, and imparting knowledge is what I do, so I feel that the training was highly relevant and enriching for me. I am very glad that I attended this training as I feel that I have learned a variety of techniques that I can use with my students. I like how participatory methods were used to introduce new concepts of adult education, and how we learned through involving activities. I look forward to using this approach in teaching with my students. I have attended a few training courses in the past, but I feel that I have been able to gain most from this Master Training of Trainers."

Latdavanh Bounyaveth,
Vocational Education Development Institute

education, used the Master Trainers for various components, including the training of pre- and in-service teachers and pedagogical advisors. The Swiss Red Cross and the Don Bosco Training Centre were among other organisations that took advantage of the Master Trainers' expertise.

Perhaps the most valuable impact of the project is in the personal development of the participants. One of the main lessons learned was in fact that, in a Laotian context, a successful training concept should always include personal development, not only in terms of teaching skills, but including a broad range of soft skills such as teamwork, decision-making, critical thinking and presentation skills. Evaluating these developments is somewhat complicated. They were however appreciated by the team of trainers and – more importantly – by the participants themselves. The testimonials presented in the box on page 25 try to cover this aspect.

The “Curriculum globALE experience”

This article has constituted an attempt to describe the design and implementation of a training cycle for adult educators in one specific country in Asia. The Curriculum globALE played a key role in this endeavour. This experience has taught us that:

- The Curriculum globALE constitutes a flexible instrument when it comes to planning in-service training courses for adult educators. Its outcome orientation provides the key for this flexibility, leaving sufficient scope for adaptation and creativity.
- Implementers should take advantage of the facility to modify the curriculum according to their needs, adding new elements and changing their sequence.
- Components that address soft skills and basic key concepts of education are essential in contexts such as Laos, and should be added in order to ensure decent learning outcomes

Notes

1 / More information on the OECD DAC criteria at <https://bit.ly/2ZuCn5V> and <https://bit.ly/31Kn0bc>

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(see page 110)

Six steps to improve training of farmers in Brazil



From left to right:

Luís Fernando Soares Zuin
University of São Paulo, Brazil

Polina Bruno Zuin
Federal University of
São Carlos, Brazil

Fernando de Lima Caneppele
University of São Paulo, Brazil

Abstract – *This article explores pedagogical paths when developing new approaches within the continuing education of farmers. The aim is to bring about a joint internalisation process between rural extensionists and farmers related to new technologies in rural territories. These teaching and learning processes entail a very wide variety of encounters between the scientific and technical learning contents that originated from experimentation in research centres and the historically-constituted experiences of farmers. The constructs of Freire (2001), Larrosa (2017) and Voloshinov (2017) are used as a theoretical contribution in order to analyse this pedagogical encounter.*

Throughout my years as a researcher in continuing education training courses with content related to animal welfare practices on Brazilian and other Latin American cattle farms, I have observed a number of difficulties concerning the pedagogical paths used in short-term training courses (up to three days) with regard to the internalisation of new technology. This has had a negative impact when implementing new management practices and in interactions with the animals in these rural areas (Zuin et al. 2014). I frequently heard the same complaints from trainers (often referred to as rural extension agents or rural extensionists¹), as well as from farmers, employees and family members. They all talked about difficulties that they encountered when trying to modify their attitudes towards the productive processes, based on these pedagogical meetings. The problems originate in part from the training that agricultural sciences students (like for example agronomists, zootechnicians and veterinarians) receive in Brazil (Zuin et al. 2019).

The teaching methodology used in Brazilian colleges of agricultural sciences is still predominantly along monological, pedagogical lines, i.e. the contents of the courses are offered to the students in a hierarchical and unidirectional manner. This form of interaction was described by Paulo Freire (2001) as “banking education”. It is quite common that this pedagogical method, constantly offered by professors, is reproduced by their students, once they have graduated and are actively working in rural areas. That in turn leads to difficulties when for example trying to implement new management

practices in productive processes. In other words, when rural extensionists act as educators, they assume the posture of those who know and teach. The farmers, employees and family members in these relationships assume the role of students who are expected to adopt the transmitted knowledge without questioning it, using it as a foundation for the proposed changes in their productive routines. This was one of the main precepts of the technical diffusionism proposed by Everett Rogers (1962).

The many paths

Educators in Brazil have historically established several pedagogical paths to internalise new technologies in rural areas. Countless teaching strategies have been presented along these paths, with the aim to reach as many different types of learners as possible. However, rural extensionists who offer technical content in their training often disregard learners (farmers, employees and family members) who come with rich and practical life experiences.

From the 1970s to the present day, several rural extension agencies in Brazil have been using the pedagogical path known as diffusionism to introduce new technologies into the field, sparked by the works of the North American Everett Rogers (1962). These have been applied on a massive scale by private and public agricultural research organisations. As a pedagogical method, it includes some specific interaction elements that are experienced among the subjects during the training activities pursued in continuing education courses. Here, only the teaching processes exist, and they are characterised by the farmer's passive experience. The knowledge that is being taught usually originates from experimenting with positivist-mechanistic science. Information about a particular technique is often developed in productive contexts different from those that farmers have already experienced in their productive routines, within their contexts of the world. Moreover, these techniques have frequently not even been tested in their territory.

“Here experimentation meets experience, and it is one of the greatest challenges facing course trainers during teaching-learning processes for adults and young people in rural areas.”

The power of dialogue

On the other hand, we encounter a different pedagogical context in rural areas where the interactional paths are constituted through Freire's dialogic pedagogy (Freire 2001), creating a relationship between learners and teachers where a non-hierarchical position of the educator is suggested in relation to the student. The idea is that, at times, the educator is a rural producer and the educatee is the extensionist, and

sometimes it is the other way round. This is a process in which it is difficult to identify who learns and who teaches. There is no passivity, but constant acts of reflection from the interlocutors of the new technology offered by extensionists in rural territories. Communication is bidirectional in this case, and all the subjects involved have the same power of speech and opportunity to report their experiences. This method for internalising new technologies in the field originates from the historically-established experience of farmers, farm workers and family members. Here experimentation meets experience, and it is one of the greatest challenges facing course trainers during teaching-learning processes for adults and young people in rural areas.

Larrosa (2017) has observed that the experience that is historically established among learners is totally different from experimentation originating from laboratory benches. For this author, experience is something that happens to us, that transforms us, and we cannot opt not to experience it. It is therefore characterised by the interaction between the three dimensions of human life: suffering, responsibility and passion. By suffering through experience, the subject facing the action of the real world that affects him or her is not allowed to become indifferent and passive. Responsibility towards others during the experience forces the person to seek to adopt a coping strategy; passivity is not an option for the subject, given the situation. The final element is the one that links the first two, namely passion, which provides in the subject a dependence on the other, or on a desired object. Together these three elements define an experience that produces new, unique and temporal senses in the subjects, and this has a major impact on their world view, fundamentally altering their axis of analysis of the things that surround them in the real world.

To make an experience

Unlike experience, experimentation seeks to universalise meaning through the constitution of information, transforming it into a new meaning. This will in turn be quickly replaced as new information is collected. The rapid replacement of content means that farmers are unable to convert experimentation into experience, as the reflection needed to adjust their daily production routines takes time. Information offered this way produces an increasingly fleeting meaning which is quickly replaced. There is no time in this teaching-learning process to allow for reflection or to gain an understanding of the complexity of the issue.

At the same time, we live in a modern society that has an ever-growing interest in information. We are incessantly seeking out this information, since we are expected to have an opinion on every subject surrounding us. This hurrying to acquire more information leads us to express our opinion through a shallow, binary and closed (yes or no) answer which it is frequently possible to manipulate. Larrosa (2017) observes that, in a society constituted by the pathways of information signs, the act of experience becomes impracticable.



Qualities of a good adult educator: Passion

In rural areas, the information contained in a new technology (product or process) is usually delivered to the farmer through continuing education training courses that are offered by organisations, to be used in the farmers' production routines. As these courses follow a monological pedagogical approach, they run the risk of creating a sense of mistrust in the farmer when it comes to whether this new technology can be applied in the production processes.

Meaning and sense

This is why we need a pedagogical path that would assist in the interactions between the subjects involved in the internalisation of new technologies in the field. We need something that provides interaction between wisdom originating from experience, and knowledge stemming from experimentation in rural areas. To do this, a search is carried out in linguistics and education for contents related to the production of new senses and meanings with a dialogical approach between the subjects in which the works developed by Voloshinov (2017), Freire (2001), Larrosa (2017) and Zuin et al. (2019) are employed as references. These authors observed in their studies that the same and the different are found in the word (sign), meaning and sense, a broad and a particular concept, information and narratives, experimentation and experience, private and public. The authors note that the production of a new sense among the subjects that are engaging in a dialogue occurs by combining a set of elements which are presented through life interactions. The first component of the dialogue is the ability of the interlocutors to master the meaning of the words. This is needed in order to understand the content of the message. It is therefore important for the educator to perform dialogical diagnostics in order to detect whether these meanings and concepts are understood in the same way by both the educator and the learner. However, some of the words related to new technology will be unfamiliar to farmers. The trainer must adjust these words, used in positivist experimentation, to the context of life in rural areas. To do so, the trainer must try to understand in as profound a manner as possible the community to which the training is being offered, and look for ways to unfold and correlate this content to the experiences of the rural worker. The second component is related to the quality and depth of the historically-constituted relationships between the subjects. This determines the level of proximity between the meanings of the words generated during the dialogue. The construction and identification of this element is important when considering pedagogical contexts in which the farmer teaches a specific activity to a colleague or a friend, under the supervision of the trainer. When this component is well executed, it frequently leads to good results in continuing education training courses offered in rural areas. This is because the trainer holds knowledge regarding the senses and meanings carried by the new technology, as well as the experiences of the learners in similar contexts, making it possible to create connections allowing an understanding of what is being offered.

The need for a diagnostic

The third element concerns the presence of the speakers in the same situational horizon. In our case, this is possible through the joint experience between the extensionist and the rural producer in the unique productive processes belonging to a specific rural area, carrying socio-environmental and economic particularities. To reach such a joint experience, the trainer must start with a socioeconomic and environmental diagnostic in the rural area before the course even starts. New information and techniques must be adapted through dialogue between extensionists and rural workers, so that it can be internalised according to the needs of the local production context. Here it is important for the extensionists to have had contact with the narratives ensuing from prior experiences of farmers and rural workers (at the beginning, during the diagnostics stage), regarding the use of similar technologies already provided and/or internalised, successful as well as unsuccessful outcomes. This method of introducing content during the dialogue requires the construction of a polyphonic and equipotent dialogical environment, this being the next conditioning agent. Such an environment permits an encounter of words between experimentation and experience in the field, avoiding monological educational contexts with an interactional-diffusionist character.

The next element relates to the perception among speakers that the interactions are plastic and unfinished, being unique in time and place. This conditioning warns the extensionists about the unique and temporal characters of the information containing scientific knowledge, which has been constantly developed, evolved and adapted to the most varied rural productive scenarios. By adopting this posture, the trainer avoids the application and distribution of a universal prescription found in the diffusionist "technological packages".

Creating meaning

The penultimate conditioning in the production of new senses and meanings refers to the process of attributing a value to the content of the statement, which for the purposes of this study would be a farmer's decision as to whether or not to internalise new technology. Here the farmer uses the historically-constituted contents of his or her experience as a filter when looking at future potential results of the new agricultural technology that is offered by the extensionist. The result determines whether the new technology will be adopted in practice or not. However, each time personal experience is used by the farmer in his or her decision-making process, it is re-signified and can determine the attribution of a new value, a new path.

Lastly, we have the presence of the super-addressee. Here we are talking about a third voice which exerts a significant influence on the formation of the content of the statement of both the rural extension agent and the farmer. In the case of the extensionist, the super-addressee would be contained in voices such as the information originating in the

technologies that are being offered to farmers. They can also be observed in the didactics that they have experienced in their processes in undergraduate programmes and specialisation courses throughout their education. This is a set of historically-constituted voices that reflect both the culture of the organisation, and its education in agricultural sciences. The farmer brings along the content of a culture that has been historically constituted in his or her area, the experience of other farmers, rural extensionists, family members, and others, offered to them by narratives and advice.

If we are to achieve a teaching-learning process aiming at the dialogical joint internalisation of new technologies in rural areas, it is important to make use of the historically-constituted experiences of the subjects involved. The challenge facing extension agents is therefore to know how to share their ideas with farmers and their families with the aim in mind of constructing a sustainable, socioeconomically-equitable reality in rural areas together.

Notes

1 / A rural extensionist can be defined as a rural development agent from private or governmental organisations. His or her main mission would be to endeavour to introduce farmers and their families to new technologies in a participative, socially-equitable and environmentally-sustainable manner in the productive processes in rural territories (Christoplos 2010).

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The good adult educators



In this issue we focus all our attention on adult educators. Some are teachers, some are trainers, mentors, guides, volunteers, activists. Some are all of that. What makes them tick? We asked around the globe and got ten answers. Let us think of them as snapshots. Some examples of the many good adult educators that are the backbone of adult education worldwide. Perhaps you want to share your story as well? Maybe you are an adult educator, or you know a really good one. What makes a good adult educator in your opinion? We invite you to share your experiences and thoughts on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AdEdDevjournal.



Sayed Mohibullah Mohib, Afghanistan

“Young Afghans, especially women, like to learn and attend out of curiosity”

Sayed Mohibullah Mohib is a teacher and Capacity Building and Quality Team Leader for the network of education centres of the Afghan National Association for Adult Education (ANAFAE).

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Sayed Mohibullah Mohib: I started teaching during my own studies ten years ago. I taught English as a second language for young adults. At first it was just a job to get some extra income. But I really enjoyed it. Most of my learners were very exciting, had many ideas and dreams about what they wanted to do, and at the same time they really knew why they wanted to learn. In the courses they met others with similar ideas. The courses were always full of life and enthusiastic students. This all made me want to pursue a teaching career.

Please describe your current work.

At present, I also work as the Capacity Building and Quality Team Leader for more than 360 other teachers working in our Adult and Community Learning Centres. I train them in methodology, classroom management, monitoring learning progress and lesson planning. I also develop teaching material and monitor teacher performance. Our centres are located in urban or semi-urban areas. Young people from 15 to their mid-20s join different education courses. Young Afghans, especially women, like to learn, and attend out of curiosity. The environment of our centre is safe, and families support our education programmes. I am very proud that we have received an international licence to train and certify teachers in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). This has been a huge change in our teacher training. Previously I held a Cambridge CELTA and Train the Trainer Certificate, and now I have obtained TESOL/TEFL Trainer Certification from New York and started the first TESOL training course in Afghanistan.

Which is your favourite teaching method, and why?

My favourite methods are TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching, based on interesting student interactions in the classroom) and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching,

promoting student-to-student interactions in a communicative context). I really love to apply the Dogme methods; they give me autonomy to deal with my students based on their interests and demands. When teaching teachers, I always apply the Think-Pair-Share method, which inspires teachers toward critical thinking and creativity in their field of teaching.

What motivates you?

Teaching is not only my passion, but it also inspires me to be a good adult educator. Most importantly, I found myself quite competent and skilful. It is delightfully motivating to support people and figure out their problems, to be worthwhile to them. Teaching gave me a really good intellectual value and earned me respect in our society. For me teaching means learning; it almost always motivates me to advance and broaden my competences.

Sayed Mohibullah Mohib



Ibrahim Matovu, Uganda

“The group constructed a learning shelter where learning takes place”

Ibrahim Matovu is an adult educator/facilitator of the Kibisi “Obwavu Mpologoma” Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) Group.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Ibrahim Matovu: I was nominated alongside one other nominee through a village meeting convened by the Community Development Officer (CDO) of our Sub-County. The meeting introduced the ICOLEW programme in our village and was looking for a potential candidate to be recruited as an adult educator. To be nominated you needed to be a resident of the village, have good moral standards and possess a Uganda Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level). We went through interviews, and I was successful perhaps because of my prior voluntary engagements with adult learning. We were trained for three weeks by DVV International and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. We then mobilised learners and started facilitating learning.

Ibrahim Matovu



Please describe your current work.

The Kibisi ICOLEW Group is composed of 30 learners (24 women and six men). These learners are categorised into three levels (2, 3 and 4), based on the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP Scale). I conduct two-hourly learning sessions for two days a week. Learning in ICOLEW is based on the REFLECT methodology where the learning process revolves around finding solutions to problems affecting my community and taking collective actions. Ideas for facilitating literacy and numeracy skills acquisition are also generated based on the problem under scrutiny. The group constructed a learning shelter where learning takes place. However, I also organise field visits for on-site demonstrational learning on topics related to, for example agriculture, health, hygiene or nutrition. In these visits I work closely with government sector experts. I prepare teaching/learning materials based on a localised curriculum, prepare a day's lesson plan and deliver needs-based learning. My other responsibilities include searching for and linking the group to other development programmes, conducting learner assessment, being a custodian of the group's documents, preparing and submitting monthly reports to the CDO.

Which is your favourite teaching method, and why?

I use a variety of participatory facilitation methods, but my favourite is grouping. This is because in groups, even the less active members of the wider group are able to participate freely. Members share their experiences openly, and I also find it appropriate for facilitating multi-level learning where the more advanced members assist their weaker counterparts.

What motivates you?

My motivation comes from seeing learners' progress in literacy and numeracy competences, and then applying their newly-acquired skills to engage effectively in activities that improve their well-being and personal development. I see all these achievements, and feel that they are a result of my work.

Anita Borkar, India

“I was fascinated by the power of dialogue in the communities”

Anita Borkar has worked as the Regional Coordinator of the Training for Transformation programme of the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) for over a decade.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Anita Borkar: During my professional training in social work, I was fascinated by the power of dialogue in the communities. Various community groups came together to discuss and deliberate on a host of issues confronting them. They constantly sought information and knowledge on topics relevant to their lives, and as a young professional I was enthused to provide it to them. My role gradually evolved to jointly gathering information and sharing knowledge, employing participatory methods to engage community groups for critical reflections on their lived realities. I worked mostly with women and girls from the marginalised communities in India and was, and continue to be, inspired by how they have been able to negotiate and transform their lives through seeking relevant education, at different stages in their lives. This proved to be a mutual learning experience for me which enriched my professional as well as personal growth. Over the years, I became deeply involved with networks on adult and community education in India, and was able to witness adult education as an enabling agent of transformation, for individual and collective living.

Please describe your current work.

After more than twenty years of work in India, I accepted the opportunity to work with ASPBAE at the regional level in Asia and the South Pacific countries. My work here involves working with our member organisations – NGOs and CSOs active in youth and adult education, advancing education practice at the community level and education policy advocacy at the national and regional levels. We work in close partnership with our member organisations to strengthen their transformative education practice on various issues that confront communities of adults and young people. I am talking for example about low levels of literacy, climate change, disaster management, sustainable livelihoods, gender and education, life skills, inclusive education, among others. ASPBAE regularly organises capacity building events, including consultations,

conferences, training, study exchanges, festivals of learning, etc., at the regional level, for different levels of functionaries from among our membership.

Which is your favourite teaching method, and why?

Among the most meaningful adult education methods for me are the ones that are based on transformative and participatory approaches. As compared to others, these lend themselves to mutual learning, and contribute to building ownership in the learning process, for all concerned.

What motivates you?

I equate adult education with the “breath of life” – not only for an individual but for all the communities we belong to as well – in our collective journey striving towards coexistence in freedom and dignity for all on this planet.



Anita Borkar

Building understanding between learners and adult literacy volunteers



From left to right:

Phylicia Davis
KGO Adult Literacy Program
Canada

Annie Luk
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Abstract – *Although volunteers account for a considerable portion of instructors and tutors delivering adult literacy programmes, they are rarely the focus of research. In Toronto, Canada, a group of community-based adult literacy programmes collaborate to deliver their training to new volunteer tutors. This article looks at why and how they train these new volunteers by reviewing their training documents. Focusing on the critical elements in the training materials, we highlight the importance of recognising the social relations between learners and volunteer tutors in the pursuit of goodness in adult educators.*

There are many volunteer educators in adult literacy programmes. In the USA for example, over 40% of the educators are volunteers (Belzer 2006). These volunteer tutors sometimes find themselves insufficiently prepared to work with adult literacy learners (Luk 2016, Perry 2013). Before they start, the volunteers are usually trained by paid staff of adult literacy programmes. The quality and content of such training varies (Belzer 2006, Ilsley 1985). In the West End of Toronto, Canada, four adult literacy organisations work as a collective to provide tutor training to new volunteers. Established in 1986 by Dr. Rita Cox and located in a mixed-income community, Parkdale Project Read is a community-based adult literacy organisation where volunteer tutors and learners meet every week to work on literacy, numeracy and computer skills. The Alexandra Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre, also established in the mid-1980s, provides weekly adult literacy programming for individuals in the area. West Neighbourhood House and LAMP Community Health Centre both offer wraparound community services for all ages, including adult literacy programmes. We will now look closer at two challenges facing new volunteers and how the training materials address these challenges to help new volunteers become good adult educators.

Reflecting on power and privilege

Although the characteristics of volunteer tutors in adult literacy programmes are not readily available or up-to-date, we do

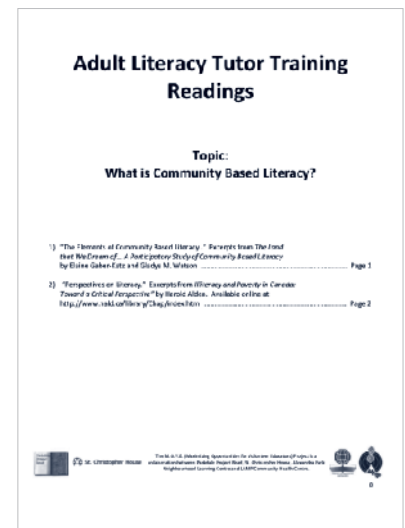
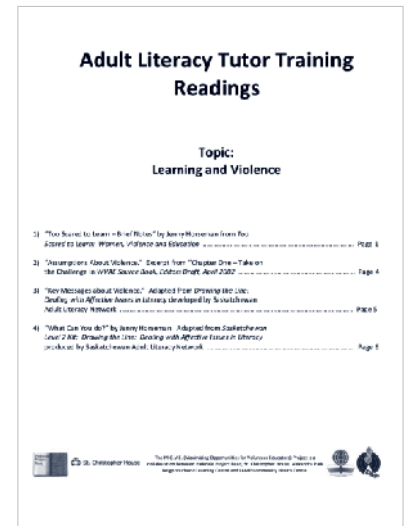
know that many of the volunteer tutors have more years of formal education than the learners with whom they work. According to a 2007 study on both paid and volunteer educators in adult literacy programmes in the USA (Ziegler, McCallum, Bell 2007), the majority of the educators were reported to have at least an undergraduate degree. Nearly 30% of the volunteers had Master's degrees, and 5% said they had Doctoral degrees. On the other hand, adult literacy learners usually have incomplete formal schooling. What is more critical than the differences in educational background between volunteers and learners is perhaps how new volunteers may not fully appreciate the stories leading learners to come to adult literacy programmes, and the systemic challenges facing learners (Luk 2016). The training materials from the collective of adult literacy programmes include a module on the power and privilege that are associated with our identities. The training highlights the importance for volunteers to understand how their identities connect to the “unconscious biases or preferences, which are hidden presumptions that can be related to race, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, language, country of origin, etc.”

“Good adult educators need to recognise their social positions and the role of education in addressing broad systemic challenges.”

At the same time, it is also important not to cast adult literacy learners into well-worn tropes such as heroic victims or pawns of destiny that would hinder the development of authentic relationships between learners and volunteers (Belzer, Pickard 2015). The training materials differentiate between social justice and charity. The former “requires investment, commitment and more importantly, relationships with others” while the latter intends to help “but ignores the source of one’s challenges (poverty, racism, etc.) and only perpetuates systemic issues”. The anti-oppressive approach used in the training illustrates that good adult educators in this context need to recognise their social positions and the role of education in addressing broad systemic challenges.

Relationships with learning

As mentioned in the previous section, many of the volunteer tutors experience their learning from formal school settings. Their long and fruitful experience with formal education suggests that few of them have extremely negative feelings about learning. As such, it could be difficult for them to imagine that others may associate schooling or learning with trauma (Horsman 2013). What is especially challenging in this context is that what is positive for the volunteers based on their prior learning experience may not be positive for the learners with whom they work. The differences in their learning histories and experiences could become jarring for the volunteers when they realise that they cannot simply replicate what they



Excerpt from training materials on “learning and violence” and “What is community based literacy?”

enjoy themselves in a learning environment. It is therefore important for volunteers to appreciate how learners may have different relationships with learning.

The training materials bring to light the impacts of trauma and violence on learning, such as creating a safe learning environment for learners “to write or talk about their life... [without worrying about] whether they will be shamed or have to look after the listener”. Through the learning and violence module in the training materials, new volunteers learn about the importance of “bearing witness” to challenges facing learners while not carrying the responsibility of solving all the problems for learners. This understanding is essential to fostering healthy relationships between learners and volunteers that are critical to the development and maintenance of a positive learning environment (Lynch 2013). The training includes different suggestions for volunteers such as giving learners “a clear message that they deserve the support they need” and “[helping] them find someone who they can work

with". At the same time, the training specifies to volunteers that they should not feel alone or over-extended in providing all the necessary support for learners because the staff is always there to help. Volunteers are encouraged to "talk to a staff person or a support worker to get help".

Making better volunteers

Since new volunteers are likely to find it difficult to envision what tutoring adult literacy learners would be like before they start (Luk 2016), what they learn from the training programmes is very important in preparing them. The volunteers' ability to create a positive learning environment with learners is also dependent on the expectations set by the training programmes. As shown in this article, the materials used by the adult literacy programmes attempt to address the pertinent social issues facing volunteers as they work with learners in tutoring sessions. Nonetheless, once volunteer tutors start working with learners, their understanding of adult literacy changes, and the strategies they need to develop their practice adjust (Luk 2016, Roderick 2013). To maintain the support needed by volunteers, adult literacy programmes should also include ongoing check-in and development opportunities for volunteers (Belzer 2006, Perry 2013). As volunteer tutors ourselves, we echo the training offered by these adult literacy programmes with respect to the importance of self-care. Self-care is critical for long-term sustainability and for preventing burnout. However, it is also challenging because as volunteer tutors, we often find ourselves wanting to help as much as possible while negotiating the limits of our own wellbeing. For volunteer tutors to continue being adult educators, they must include self-care as an ongoing element in their practice.

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Cultural diversity in the classroom: a challenge or an opportunity?

The way we see the world is greatly influenced by culture, be it the values we carry, the perceptions we have or the behaviours we exhibit. Culture also affects how we understand and interact with each other. Therefore, cultural values and norms affect not only our day-to-day interactions with other people, but also extend to the classroom and affect both learning and teaching styles. The past decade or so has witnessed a large influx of refugees into different countries, particularly to the Middle East and Europe. These refugees bring with them a wealth of cultural diversity. However, without a proper understanding of those differences, and if we fail to respect their diversity, the actions and behaviours of refugees are likely to be misinterpreted. This may further add to their social exclusion and aggravate their feelings of alienation. Embracing cultural diversity is not an easy task, but it is crucial for providing equal opportunities to learn, progress and integrate into society.

Obviously, adult educators have their own communication styles which are very much influenced by their cultural backgrounds. The aim is not to strip educators of their values, norms and perceptions. Rather, they too can bring a wealth of values and experiences to the classroom, thus making learning a reciprocal process as stipulated in adult learning

methodology. It is adult educators' openness towards diversity that helps students engage effectively in the learning process. Adult learning classes also provide a safe space where students can be themselves, express their views and different values without feeling judged, rejected or stereotyped. This atmosphere of acceptance and inclusion not only enhances the learning process, but also plays a vital role in minimising the effects of distress which many refugees exhibit, and which are often exacerbated by feelings of alienation.

Acknowledging the cultural differences that refugees bring with them into the host country in general, and into the classroom in particular, is essential for fostering a culture of inclusion as opposed to the creation of xenophobic societies that lack tolerance for people who are "different". Equally, refugee students need to learn about the values and fundamental principles that are prevalent in their host country in order to achieve peaceful coexistence. In adult learning classes, educators are aware of the influence that culture has on the learning process, and strive to gear cultural differences towards supporting the learning environment. In essence, adult education is a lifeboat that brings students with diverse cultures onto safe shores and enables them to hope again!



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Section 2

At the negotiating table

Sometimes it seems everyone wants a piece of the cake. And education usually responds to the various requests. Adult education plays a central role in much development work globally. If we want to be able to keep using this resource in the future, we must also cater to the needs of the sector itself, not just the funders, learners, politicians and society at large.

Haldis Holst

“It is not enough to fund
teacher training, or to make the
field more attractive”

Interview

Interview by Johanni Larjanko, Editor-in-Chief
of Adult Education and Development

Photos by Postomatic/Education International
(p.42), Fredk/Education International (p.45)



Haldis Holst is the Deputy General Secretary of Education International. Born in Oslo, Norway, in 1960, she graduated as a teacher in 1983, after majoring in English and Physical Education. She has worked as a teacher in primary and secondary schools, and has

been a union representative at local, regional and national level. She meets up with Adult Education and Development to reflect on how Education International works with teacher training, and what challenges teachers are currently facing in the world.

Why do we need teachers?

Good teachers are a necessary prerequisite for any quality education to take place, irrespective of the level of teaching. This is true regardless of the age of the learner. Good teachers are the key. The challenge is immense, as we see a lack of qualified teachers in so many places in the world, both North and South. It is a very complex question: How can we best recruit enough teachers, and how do we help them become really good at what they do?

So what can be done to address this situation?

Our main focus at Education International is to combat the trend of taking shortcuts, for example by lowering the requirements. We see a temptation in various places to lower them in order to increase the number of teachers, and thereby improve a country's statistics. This is a very dangerous road to take. Statistics can never be more important than quality! But what is the best way to address this? There is no simple answer, as the situation varies from country to country. Let me give you some examples: The median age of teachers is rather high in many places. Here the challenge is to attract new teachers. How do you recruit young people into the teaching profession; how do you make the profession attractive to them? In some countries, the challenge relates to regional imbalances, where parts of the country may have a rather highly educated teacher group, whereas other, often more rural areas, are worse off. Here the issue is about equal distribution. How do you make sure there are enough good teachers in the whole country? The challenges vary, and so do the solutions. I think the first thing that each country needs is a national strategy on how to train and support teachers.

When you look at the situation, do most countries have such strategies in place?

That's a tough question to give a general answer to. It is so different from place to place. If I look at it from a positive perspective, education has received a lot of attention as an individual right, including the right to lifelong learning. Education is also increasingly in focus as a tool to reach other goals, not least the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations. In many countries, education is considered the best way to combat poverty, fight for a more sustainable world, create more jobs, and so on. As a result, politicians are increasingly aware of the need to invest in education. And that is in my opinion a positive trend. At the same time, there is still a gap between rhetoric and action; there is still so much to do. It is not enough to fund teacher training, or to make the field more attractive. You have a lot of infrastructure to build up. Things like decent salaries, secure employment, functional working conditions. That is what Education International is fighting for. To sum it up: We feel there is broad support in theory, but not yet always in practice.

Given that the best way forward is to create national strategies for education, how far are you as an international organisation willing and able to get involved on the national level, for example by monitoring the results and quality of a strategy?

Our solution here is to very actively support our member organisations, who are all working on the national level. We want to help them engage in the policy debate in their respective countries. The best effects are reached when they succeed in both pushing for change and suggesting some solutions. Another tool is the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), that is set up to help countries reach Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals. This is aimed at the countries with the most urgent needs and which are trailing behind. The first thing this partnership does is to give financial support to

develop an education sector plan. The second thing is initiating a civil dialogue with various stakeholders. We think these steps could be useful in developing all levels of education. It is also a good way to inform politicians about our needs. Finally, this also helps to keep a watch on what is going on, making sure that the policy is not just a piece of paper.

Attempts to import a system of education or a policy from another country are usually doomed to fail, as there are so many unique factors involved. So how do we create a set of minimum standards, for example in teacher education globally?

It's difficult, but there are some things we can do. Together with UNESCO we have worked on international standards for teachers, the so-called EI/UNESCO Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards. That says something about where you must reach to be acknowledged as a professional in this field. These standards are being piloted by UNESCO in some parts of the global South as we speak. Fortunately, many countries have already developed a sort of professional ethics in teaching. That is a good start, but then these too must be checked for quality. This is where the international standards come in. To fit different needs and contexts, an international standard cannot go into depth, like stipulating the number of years you must study to become a qualified teacher or a universal curriculum. But what they can do is describe the competences you need if you want to be considered a professional. So more than anything they tend to be a framework and a reference point when developing national policies.

This sounds very interesting, and useful. Where does adult education enter the picture here?

Ah, good question. I admit we at Education International should be better at mentioning adult learning, talking about it, and including it in our work. Already today we also represent higher education and vocational training, but non-formal and informal adult education falls a bit below our radar at present. Nevertheless, all levels and types of education have a role to play, and we can certainly become better at including a wider scope in our rhetoric, and in our work. I can see challenges at both ends of education, at the very first stages, and then at the later stages. We are working to quality assure early childhood education, as well as learning taking place outside of the formal system. We would like to get more involved with actors in this sector. Some of our members are active in it today, but many of their teachers are not reached by teacher education. These are the ones we cannot currently reach, those active in adult education, but without a background as trained teachers. They are seldom members of teachers' unions. We have increased our efforts considerably in recent years to reach this group we call education support personnel, as they are of course important. This group includes all those who are involved in education, but are not trained to be qualified teachers.

I am thinking that this is a group that strongly supports the jigsaw puzzle that is lifelong learning, and because

of their unclear status they might really need the help and support of an organisation such as Education International.

Yes! I completely agree. It's the same as for those taking care of early childhood education. They are also doing a very important job, but their status is unclear in many cases. Both of these groups need support; they need help to get organised. For adult educators outside the formal system it's about building bridges towards working life. It is also about making sure they are given the opportunity to study, to get the qualifications they need to do an even better job. Many have extensive practical experience, but may lack the formal recognition of a degree. This is also true for a lot of teachers in vocational training.

We have heard a lot about the effects of globalisation and digitalisation. Given that this also affects where and how we learn, how should teachers respond?

Haha, yes you are right, this all makes the challenges even more complex. On the one hand we have big differences between countries that are preparing learners for a digital world and countries that have not even started on this journey. The latter may lack equipment, or the classroom may be without electricity. Access to technology is often the first hurdle. This is a debate on equality, where we see no direct conflict. Everyone seems to be in agreement about the need to improve. Then the IT skills of the teachers also vary greatly, and there is a need to include this in further training of teachers on all levels of education. We will all need digital competences to cope in the future, teachers and learners alike. I also think technology offers good tools for learning, where teachers can create new learning arenas, and support current ones. Take access for example. Technology promises to let us reach groups we currently cannot. We should try to see the possibilities without losing sight of the digital divide, and fight to overcome it. Finally, we need to act as watchdogs and remind decision-makers that machines cannot replace human teachers.

With all the changes going on in the world, it seems obvious to me that teachers need to update their knowledge and skills regularly in order to keep up with the world. What does Education International do to support the continuous professional development of teachers?

Well, in our education policy paper we state that the teaching of teachers includes three elements. We have the initial teacher training, the introduction to the work as a teacher, followed by further education. All three elements are equally important, and are necessary to ensure good quality. Of course some knowledge is constant, and learning it once is enough. But a lot of knowledge gets outdated, and we also have new knowledge appearing.

Education policy is national, the needs and context are different from one country to the next. What then is the added value of an international organisation such as Education International?



Haldis Holst during Education International's Strategic Planning Days, May 2018

Hmm. I think our members will give different answers to that. Some strong associations will say that EI can do things they cannot. For example by representing their interests in the dialogue with OECD, UNESCO, or the European Union, to name a few. We are often acting as the critical friend here, giving the teachers a voice at the table. Smaller members primarily need us to strengthen their competences. They also want our help to build strategic plans and the like. What all our members have in common is the insight that education is increasingly affected by global trends and aims. Much of the political agenda is run on a global scale, even if the implementation is national. We think a major challenge to education is the increasing interest in the field by global commercial actors, looking to conquer new markets. Now there are also many private actors who have a long-term commitment in education, and are serious about quality. They are generally not a problem. Companies looking to expand from education offered to a small elite to education for the masses, these are new in our sector, and they pose several threats. We see them targeting in particular poorer countries in the global South. These private actors generally do not like Education International very much. And yet we do not consider them “the enemy”. They are working on a market. It is the responsibility of governments to set standards, develop a good quality assurance system and to not lower requirements. And it is our job to help governments remember that.

Haldis Holst, thank you very much for the interview.

Education International was founded in 1993 as a merger between two organisations. The merger that led to the formation of EI not only created the world's largest, most representative global, sectoral organisation of unions, but also brought together the two powerful traditions of education trade unions and professional organisations. The new organisation made it possible for free quality education for all to become one of five global policy priorities. Other priorities include promoting the status of the teaching profession, improving professional standards, terms and working conditions, and countering trends towards de-professionalisation. More information at <https://ei-ie.org>

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The struggle of adult educators in South Africa continues



From left to right:

Ivor Baatjes
Nelson Mandela University
South Africa

Britt Baatjes
Nelson Mandela University
South Africa

Abstract – *Professionalisation of adult educators in South Africa has a relatively short history dating back to the mid-1990s. In the South African context, professionalisation is integral to the formalisation of adult education which has taken root in post-apartheid South Africa. Formal qualifications such as certificates, diplomas and degrees, based on national standards registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), are key elements of the professionalisation discourse. This article reflects on the professionalisation process in South Africa, and identifies the struggles and limitations which it has entailed. Adult education is a broad term, and here we focus on developments specifically related to the adult basic education programme in South Africa.*

South Africa has a long history of adult education dating back to the “night schools” movement which provided literacy and basic education for adults (Bird 1984; Aitchison 2002; Baatjes, Mathe 2004). Led by the South African Communist Party, this “movement” started with a few community initiatives in the early 1920s, and by the 1940s grew into a system of community-based adult education. When the National Party came into power in 1948 and instituted apartheid, teaching “black” people in any space outside a registered school was criminalised. By the 1960s, the apartheid government had closed down what remained of the night school movement. In the 1970s, in the face of extremely oppressive conditions, there was a revival of progressive adult literacy work and calls for “alternative” education (influenced by the work of Paulo Freire). In the eighties, “People’s education for people’s power” emerged, and an increasing amount of literacy and “alternative” education work was initiated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade unions (Motala, Vally 2002). These programmes and projects remained small, precarious and vulnerable to state interference, control and suppression. Business and industry also offered small-scale functional adult literacy programmes to workers using programmes designed by NGOs (Baatjes 2008). In 1994, when the Mandela regime came into power, 14 million adults had fewer than ten years of schooling, and more than 5 million of these people had received no formal schooling whatsoever. The National Education Policy Investigation conducted by the African National Congress (ANC) in 1990

suggested that there was a need to recruit and train 100,000 adult educators as part of building an adult education system in the country (McKay 2007).

Professionalising adult education

The first university-based qualification for adults was offered by the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town in 1980. This was followed by a gradual expansion of certified programmes. For instance, the then University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal) offered an Advanced Diploma in Adult Education in 1984. In 1985, the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) was established at the University of the Western Cape, where the first certified adult educator training courses for people at *pre-university* level were started. By 1986, a Department of Adult Education was established at the University of the Transkei, and in 1989 the University of the Witwatersrand set up an Adult Literacy Unit. Students in these programmes were largely activists from civil society – many from Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), trade unions and NGOs. In addition to these formal offerings, many NGOs continued to offer non-formal training to adult educators, and commercial providers (who served industry) also offered training. During this period, many adult educators were trained and then worked as adult educators (some in part-time and others in full-time positions). In post-apartheid South Africa, the ABET Institute, University of South Africa, enrolled its first students in January 1995. It undertook large-scale training of adult educators, using a blended approach of face-to-face and distance learning. The ABET Institute was responsible for training more than 17,000 adult educators (ETDP SETA 2013).

From 1994 onwards, there was much hope that the State would prioritise adult basic education and training (ABET) and create the conditions for, among other things, the professionalisation of adult educators. So, what happened? The 1990s saw the institutionalisation of a state system of ABET. ABET became increasingly formalised, influenced by the curriculum categories of formal schooling, skills-based training standards and qualifications. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was set up in 1995, and was introduced as an important mechanism to advance a more egalitarian education system. Its main objectives included to: facilitate access to education and training; facilitate mobility and progression within education, training and career paths; enhance the quality of education and training; accelerate redress against partly unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large (SAQA Act 1995). A key feature of the NQF was an attempt to make outcomes-based education (OBE) a central part of the entire education and training system. This has since been abandoned in the wake of large-scale criticism. During the period of transition to democracy, many adult educators argued that the NQF could potentially facilitate the goals of social justice, egalitarianism, redress and empowerment. However, today the NQF

as an instrument of professionalisation in adult education has produced virtually no transformative results. A number of scholars have provided critical analyses of both OBE and the NQF which are applicable to adult education (see Jansen 1998; Spreen 2001; Allais 2003; 2007 for detailed analyses). Christie described the NQF as having taken on the shape of “a rigid codified system of control” and being far from a mechanism “of enhancing mobility and flexibility” (Christie 2006: 380).

The introduction of the NQF also resulted in an increase in the number of private providers who could register and offer qualifications for adult educators through mechanisms of the National Skills Development legislation, plans and strategies (Department of Labour 2001). The skills development legislation brought into existence 23 Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). One of these SETAs is the Education and Training and Development Practitioners’ SETA (ETDP SETA) which, by 2012, had registered a total of 95 qualifications offered by 64 accredited providers (mainly private-for-profit). 2,395 adult educators graduated from these programmes between 2005 and 2012. Very few of the adult educators have enrolled across university programmes in the country. Annual enrolments across public universities ranged between 20-60 students. At present, Community Education and Training Centres employ about 14,000 adult educators of whom, in 2017, 50% had no post-school qualification. Many of the “qualified” adult educators are school teachers with a higher education qualification, but not necessarily in the field of adult education. In general, despite the growth in qualification registration on the NQF, there has been a decline in adult educator training. More recently, the Department of Higher Education and Training declared a new policy for adult education. The *Policy on minimum requirements for programmes leading to qualifications for educators and lecturers in adult and community education and training* (DHET 2015) signals another attempt to support the professionalisation of adult educators.

What are the barriers?

It is clear that much has happened in adult education in South Africa in the last 25 years. There have been a number of policy interventions to do with adult educators. Qualifications for adult educators have been registered on the NQF since 1998. There has been a proliferation of providers offering programmes to adult educators under the skills development legislation (Department of Labour 1998: 2000).

One could argue that all of the above is positive, and that by now there should be a thriving group of adult educators and an improvement in the life chances of the marginalised and vulnerable members of society who the adult educators are serving. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Although many people have obtained qualifications in adult education, the actual number of adult educators working in the field is in decline. Many adults (who should have benefitted from adult basic education) remain illiterate, and many others who have obtained some literacy skills remain unemployed (the promise of “growth and development” still has not materialised for many). Let’s take a closer look at the reasons why.

Firstly, the adult education system remains poorly resourced and has been described as the dysfunctional step-child of the education system. Although the need for adult education is enormous, the budget for adult education has always been inadequate. Little has changed since the mid-1990s when it comes to the percentage of the budget accounted for. Adult education received 0.5% of the overall education budget in 1996. This increased to 0.83% in 1999. 2018 data shows that the budget remains unchanged and that there is no likelihood that it will increase given the current funding model in post-school education and the fiscal constraints of government. The State has also adopted a human capital approach to education, and is focusing heavily on programmes and projects aimed at addressing the high levels of youth unemployment (56%).

“Despite the numerous policy interventions and programmes, adult educators remain precariously employed, under-employed, unemployed, marginalised and/or excluded.”

A precarious profession

Secondly, the data from various research projects clearly shows that the lack of job opportunities, coupled with undefined career paths, are two critical elements related to professionalisation. Adult educators have for years been locked in conflict with their employer (the State) about poor conditions of employment. During a demonstration in 2017 in the Eastern Cape, Lonwabo Hempe, an adult educator with two qualifications expressed his anger saying:

“We have educators who have been working in the sector since 1994, but they are still employed as contract workers. They don’t have benefits, and if they were to die today, retire, get expelled or even get injured, they would have no benefits at all. Their families will suffer. We even strive very hard to educate ourselves without any assistance from the Government. The 37% is therefore to cater for allowances like medical care, housing allowances, transport and other social allowances” (Chirume 2017).

Early this year (2019), during another demonstration, 64-year-old Tshidiso Phofu, from Sebokeng on the Vaal (Gauteng), who has worked for many years as a contract worker without an allowance and pension benefits, says: “I have nothing to show for my 30 years of service, no medical aid, housing allowance, not even a pension fund” (Marupeng 2019).

Despite the numerous policy interventions and programmes, adult educators remain precariously employed, under-employed, unemployed, marginalised and/or excluded.

Thirdly, we argue that it is important and necessary for adult educators to build organisations. There have been numerous attempts over the years to organise adult educators

into professional bodies – a testament to the sector’s resilience and refusal to give up. Amongst the earliest attempts was the establishment of the National Literacy Co-operation (NLC) in 1986. When the NLC closed in the mid-1990s, it was replaced by the Adult Educators and Trainers Association of South Africa (AETASA) and, less than a year after its closure, the Adult Learning Network (ALN) (2002) emerged as a new body focused on adult education and its educators. Following this was the formation of Khanyiseli’Abantu – An Association for Adult and Youth Education and Training (2012). All these organisations were important initiatives, but due to insufficient resources, or ineffective organisation and mobilisation, they have been unable to sustain themselves. More recently, the Community, Adult and Worker Education Network is being established as part of the National Research Foundation’s South African Research Chair Initiative. Part of the work of the Chair is the development of scholars and activists in community and worker education.

Let us build a union

Fourthly, the unionisation of adult educators has also been a difficult struggle. Although South Africa has a history of strong unions, the main educator unions representing educators have not played a prominent role in mobilising adult educators as part of their membership. This is partly due to the fact that many of the adult educators are members of teaching unions, as they are school teachers and work as part-time adult educators. In addition to this, despite the policy interventions, many jobs for adult educators remain largely precarious. They rarely find full-time work, and have to “make do” with being part-time or casual workers without any benefits or job protection. The South African ABET Educators Union (largely Eastern Cape-based) was established specifically to support adult educators in their struggle for decent working conditions and salaries. It remains small, and currently has approximately 3,000 members.

Fifthly, as indicated by the most recent research on community and vocational education, large numbers of adult and community educators working in non-formal spaces of learning are involved in a variety of socially-useful forms of work (Baatjes 2018). These educators work in a variety of sustainable livelihood projects, and may not regard themselves as adult educators in the formal sense of the term. Many of these educators do not meet the requirements to access university-based qualifications, yet they play important roles in the projects and programmes in which they work. These educators are often excluded from the State’s national skill development programmes. If the only meaning we assign to being *professional* is to have the “correct” piece of paper, then what are we saying to and about the many educators who teach adults meaningful and valuable things in meaningful and valuable ways, but lack this piece of paper? Professionalisation in its common sense “may create a narrowly-conceived field of practice that excludes and marginalises diverse voices and approaches to adult education” (Merriam, Brockett 2007 quoted after Bierema 2011: 31).



Qualities of a good adult educator: Curiosity

The good fight

Professionalisation remains an important issue for adult educators in the South African context. We suggest that the State has an important and ongoing role to play in creating the conditions for the professionalisation of adult educators. Given the enormous challenges in adult and community education, a range of strategic occupations in adult education needs to be established, including those related to policy making, research and development, pedagogical practices, community work and many more. With the dawn of new policy developments in adult education linked to the recent White Paper on Post-School Education and Training, it is imperative for adult educators to re-think more carefully the professionalisation of their vocation and to explore the best approaches that could produce better outcomes. Doing so will require building bridges between the current divides of the formal and non-formal, the qualified and the unqualified, rural and urban and other disciplinary boundaries that exist within adult education. What is desperately needed is a cadre of competent and committed adult education practitioners and organisations that can be sustained for future generations, working in solidarity to create a more equal and just society.

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The good adult educators



Irina Chistyakova, Kyrgyzstan

“It is impossible to conduct exactly the same training twice”

Irina Chistyakova was born into a family of educators: Both her parents dedicated their lives to educating children. Trying to break free, Irina pursued a career as a journalist for 20 years before realising that her true calling is as an adult educator.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Irina Chistyakova: To teach people – not children, but adults, apparently, was my vocation after all! At first I wanted to share my professional experience, and began teaching at the Department for International Journalism of the Kyrgyz-Russian (Slavonic) University in Bishkek. Once I got onto advanced training courses for university lecturers, I became acquainted with interactive learning techniques and training methodology. And then I said to myself: This is what interests me! My first training was in the field of media – for media professionals. And then I thought: What can I, as a journalist, do best and what can I teach other people to do? And then I began to develop and conduct training on the development of effective communication skills – both for corporate clients and in an open format.

Please describe your current work.

I develop and conduct media training on various topics for media professionals, bloggers and civic journalists. As a business coach, I conduct training on effective communication skills – oral, written, business communication and public speaking skills. Today, one of the main topics in my training for adults is the development of skills on emotional intelligence. I am the first trainer in Central Asia to develop emotional intelligence according to the concept of Yale University. And recently, I have increased my potential in the field of training methodology development.



Irina Chistyakova

Which is your favourite working method, and why?

I gradually began to add facilitation tools to classic training tools, using the facilitation method with PinPoint cards. I also actively use coaching approaches in training (as I am a professional coach). I introduce gamification. If we talk about classic skills development training, I draw on the Kolb cycle when developing programmes.

What motivates you?

Thank you for this question – it has triggered a reflection. I love working with a training group, and I am attracted to the group processes that develop during the training. It is impossible to conduct exactly the same training twice, even on the same topic and with the same group. It will be a completely different story! Each training course is a small life that will never happen again. For me, the two most exciting moments in the training are at the beginning when the participants talk about their expectations and at the end, during the final reflection, when participants explore what they have learned during training and what they will now introduce into their practice. This of course is only part of the training results – opinions and impressions of the participants – but to me they are a valuable reinforcement of the importance of my work.

Pierre Lemaire, Jamaica

“I want them to know that they are teaching me as much as I am teaching them”

Pierre Lemaire has dual French and Jamaican nationality, and has been teaching adults in Jamaica since 1976. He has just retired as Dean of the School of Drama at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts in Kingston after teaching at that institution for forty years.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Pierre Lemaire: My first experience in adult teaching was in France, when as a university student I volunteered to teach French to African migrants. This experience showed me that when working with adults, there is not a learner and a teacher, but two persons exchanging knowledge; both learn from one another. This was when my interest in adult education started.



Pierre Lemaire

Please describe your current work.

I started teaching young adults while pursuing a degree in Drama at EMCVPA. Outside of the School of Drama, I teach theatre through workshop programmes to persons with disabilities (psychological and physical), and to people in communities in Jamaica. I also use theatre as a tool for teaching different subjects or messages to specific target groups (Theatre in Education).

Which is your favourite teaching method, and why?

When teaching adults, I like to start working from my students' knowledge base, looking at who they are, where they come from, what they know, and utilise their strong points in my approach. I want them to know that they are teaching me as much as I am teaching them; teaching is really sharing, sharing your knowledge, sharing your passion, especially in the artistic field. When working with persons with a disability, I write it in two words: “Dis Ability” (“Dis” in Jamaican creole means “This”) because I know that for every disability, people develop another ability that they need to function in daily life. The point is to find this special ability developed by the person and use it in our process. Working with a specific group, I need to share their way of life, entering their culture, knowing their habits, their references. Being immersed allows me to work from within the group rather than imposing my views or methods on them.

What motivates you?

My passion for theatre is what motivates me to share with my students. Theatre is a group artform which deals with the intellectual, the physical and the psychological aspects of life, emotions and relationships. Therefore, it is a passion you need to share, which will help people to grow, and sharing a passion with other people to help them grow is what teaching should be about.

Maia Chanturia, Georgia

“Lifelong learning is necessary to make your life more colourful and joyful”

Maia Chanturia is the Director of the Jvari Community Education Centre in Georgia, where she also works as an adult educator.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Maia Chanturia: Shortly after I started working at the Jvari Community Education Centre, I communicated with people on a daily basis who needed opportunities to obtain information, find out about different issues, and enhance their knowledge and skills. Sharing my experiences and knowledge was part of my job, and fulfilling this responsibility successfully had always been an important task for me. This is the moment when you really realise that you are an adult educator and you have a responsibility to impart knowledge to other adults. The centre gave me the chance to complete a train-the-trainer course, become acquainted with the principles of andragogy and become a qualified adult educator.

Please describe your current work.

The Jvari Community Education Centre offers different individual and vocational training courses. I am responsible for conducting training courses and for leading public meetings and discussions. In addition to this, I teach financial education. Local people as well as internally-displaced persons attend these courses. We always make sure to offer programmes that are in high demand. Our beneficiaries can also improve their social skills by attending various types of training at the centre, in a comfortable, pleasant environment.

Which is your favourite working method, and why?

I use different methods in the learning process: teamwork, role-playing and situational games, demonstration and analysis methods. What makes our profession different is the fact that adult learners have already gained a certain amount of experience and knowledge. Most of them have already chosen a profession. So they are fully aware of what they are doing while they seek to develop their skills and capabilities. However, they have complexes too, and I reckon that to feel free and comfortable is crucial for them in order to



Maia Chanturia

overcome these obstacles. Taking this into consideration, we should first of all help them to relax and get rid of any kind of obstacles. Hence, information should be provided in a clear and interesting manner. It is really pleasant when you feel that they are ready to cooperate with you. And when you see that they are satisfied with the results, you realise that you have done your job properly.

What motivates you?

In my opinion, it's never too late to obtain an education. Moreover, lifelong learning is necessary to make your life more colourful and joyful. It can also help open new doors. The motivation for me is exactly this: to support people around me and help them to improve their knowledge. I really wish to share my knowledge with more and more people and convince them that anyone can start anything at any age, change their life for the better, protect their rights, become independent, and get a better job. All this is conditional on education which is lifelong!

Developing good adult educators – from idea to legal framework



From left to right:

Emir Avdagić
DVV International
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Svjetlana Tubić
Public school “Branko Radičević”
Banja Luka
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Abstract – *This article discusses processes that have contributed to strengthening both andragogic competences of adult educators, and quality assurance efforts in the educational process for adults in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the education system in the country was reformed, several problems were identified that related to andragogic education, adequate training programmes and concepts, as well as the issue of financing the andragogic-didactic empowerment of teachers in adult education. The solution here turned out to be new legal regulations for adult education teachers.*

Identifying the problem: processes without solutions

For a long time the teaching process in this region of South Eastern Europe was entirely based on principles of “traditional teaching”. The main feature was a teacher in front of the class, imparting knowledge through lecturing. Classes organised in this way naturally never really had a chance to deliver anything successfully. Although adult learners during that era also possessed a certain amount of accumulated knowledge, significant experiences as well as specific characteristics, they were being taught as though they were children. While the country was still called Yugoslavia, relatively little attention was paid to training adult education teachers. The region also lacked a systematic approach to remedy the situation, even though the signs and needs for a thorough approach were evident as early as in the 17th Century, notably in the works of Comenius. He noted the importance of the “universal” teacher who would be trained and qualified to also work with adults. He called for all channels of learning to be opened up during the educational process, and for students and adult learners to be placed in an active rather than a passive role during the educational process itself. Although the first organised forms of non-formal education in the former Yugoslavia appeared in the second half of the 20th Century (Summer and Winter Andragogic Schools), these mainly targeted management personnel, experts from the country and abroad, as well as adult education providers. The opportunity to participate was offered to a very small,



Group work during a workshop with adult educators on curricula development

“Comenius called for all channels of learning to be opened up during the educational process, and for students and adult learners to be placed in an active rather than a passive role during the educational process itself.”

almost insignificant, number of teachers. The initiation of these activities clearly indicated that problems had been identified, and that at the same time the need had been recognised to develop permanent, continuous training of adult education staff. In spite of this, the country still lacks a system enabling educators in adult education to have access to continuous andragogic training.

Key competences of adult educators

Today’s adult educators are no longer only mere imparters of knowledge. Thus the term “teacher” is increasingly being replaced with “moderator”, “educator”, “facilitator”, “trainer”, “instructor”, “group leader”, etc. These terms all include a comprehensive set of specific key competences that are crucial when teaching adults. Competence, as a term, plays a key role at different levels in modern approaches to education, including adult education. There are several definitions of

competence in circulation. Most of them include a set of related capabilities, obligations, knowledge and skills which enables a person to effectively perform certain activities. In addition to formal qualifications, a good teacher in adult education must possess a wide range of methodological and didactic competences, including preparation and planning, production of materials, selection of methods, and evaluation. A good adult educator also needs a number of social and personal competences. This leads some authors to emphasise the importance of generic competences in which they include personal, interpersonal, professional, didactic and motivational competence, as well as the competence to use theoretical and practical knowledge in their own field of activities (Žiljak 2011). All these competences contribute towards making a successful adult education teacher, where the emphasis switches from “teacher in pedagogy” to “participant in andragogy”. The role of the teacher in adult education is of exceptional, almost crucial, importance here for the quality and efficiency of the teaching process itself. A good teacher (adult educator) will try to help a student (participant in adult education) to achieve his/her own educational goals, while also helping her/him to take control of his/her own educational interests. A good teacher in adult education must be andragogically empowered in order to develop his/her personal andragogic-didactic competences. These enable him/her to focus exclusively on the participant (using assertive, constructive and motivational communication, being flexible, understanding the needs of the learner, being

aware of the role as: leader, trainer, facilitator, mentor and mediator). Additionally, the teacher must be able to adjust the content to the individual adult learner. The approach of the teacher and the attitude towards each individual participant in the educational process are also crucial, something which has been confirmed more than once by the claims made by large numbers of participants: "I may forget what you tried to teach me, but I will never forget how you made me feel during that process".

From "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" to "Once you stop learning, you start dying"

Like all countries with an economy that is in development, Bosnia and Herzegovina is struggling with many problems. The country has recently had to face a rising shortage of skilled labour. The formal educational system cannot currently respond to the needs and demands of a rapidly-changing labour market. As a result, adult education is becoming more and more important, and is playing a significant compensatory role in a society in transition. Bearing in mind the complexity and demands of the role and tasks of teachers in adult education, new teacher profiles are needed now more than ever. There is a demand for teachers with knowledge, skills and professional competences, as well as a different approach to participants in adult education (Medić et al. 2004).

The needs of a developing economy, but also processes that started but were not resolved in the 20th Century, were the reason why in the past period, through project activities of DVV International, an idea of professionalising adult education teaching staff emerged, including the idea of creating a legal framework for this very important field in order to ensure the quality of the teaching process, but also point to the rights and obligations of those who are the "most important link" in an adult education system. In 2006, the European Commission published "Adult learning – it is never too late to learn". In it the Commission points to the role and importance of improving the work of teachers in developing a system of quality assurance in adult education. One of the clearly stated recommendations is that adult educational authorities should invest in the improvement of educational methods and materials adapted to the adult learners (European Commission 2006). DVV International conducted research across Bosnia and Herzegovina which confirmed that teaching capacities which could fully meet the needs of adult learners do not exist in practice, and that andragogical training of teachers is more urgently needed than ever before. The research found very limited or almost no teaching experience among teachers working with adults, a very low level of awareness among teachers with regard to differences in educational work with children and adults, as well as several prejudices and stereotypes regarding adult learning and education. The Einstein quote: "Once you stop learning, you start dying" can often be heard in Western Europe, but the sentiment regarding the importance of adult education is unfortunately quite different in the Western Balkans. A popular saying sums it up pretty well: "You can't teach an old dog

Trainers' messages to other trainers

- » Every trainer is to some degree an actor playing on his own stage
- » Share positive energy to get it back
- » Work with passion! Create, play...
- » Love your job and believe in what you do
- » Show solidarity, and be supportive in the educational process
- » Be authentic, share your energy with the group, be there for your group
- » Everyone has the potential for creativity and an appreciation of beauty
- » Creativity brings out the best in us
- » Motivate others
- » Trust your group and help it on the way in its development
- » Let's work on ourselves and turn our weaknesses into our strengths
- » Be open, sociable and versatile
- » Reaching the goals is easier when working in a group
- » Adjust yourself to the group, never adjust the group to yourself
- » You don't have to be perfect
- » A good trainer is curious
- » Think positive, believe in people, but also believe in yourself
- » It is important to us how others around us feel
- » Being static has no place in educational work with adults
- » Help individuals to discover the best in themselves – their strengths
- » Be energetic and lead the group to the solution – don't serve them with prepared solutions
- » Be versatile, but learn to share the tasks and responsibility with others

new tricks". The research also found a high level of motivation among teachers, and a willingness and desire to work with adults. This, together with the identified awareness of necessary professional preparation, especially considering andragogic methodology, was reassuring. Based on the results of the research, and on the results of interviews conducted in two focus groups, a systematic approach was taken to solve this problem. Shortly afterwards DVV International developed a programme of teacher training content based on andragogical principle, with the goal of developing teacher competences to work with adults. The

programme was developed using good practice examples from the region, together with the results of the European analyses of the competences that teachers need to possess in order to work with adults. The training content was divided into five thematic areas. It enables participants, i.e. teaching staff, to strengthen existing competences and acquire additional generic competences and specific new ones related to adult learning. The training focuses on: characteristics of adults, principles of educational work with adults and ways of overcoming barriers, motivation of adults for learning, communication competences, managing an education group, applying visualisation in teaching, and proper presentation of teaching content. The programme also trains teachers in interactive methods, competences needed in order to manage self-learning, as well as knowledge and skills needed to adjust the existing curricula to the real needs of adult learners. The key messages presented in the box on page 56 are a result of the training programme. They clearly show that the goals of the training were achieved, and that the teachers who attended (120 teachers in six groups) gained new competences.

“The attitude of the individual is the key component of any competence, the carrier and driver of future work and development.”

The training programme was a success, and created an appetite for more. Twenty teachers who had attended the first cycle in this training were selected for a second cycle in which they were to be trained to become multipliers in adult education. Participants were selected based on marks and results, as well as on the desire and potential for further advancement in this field. The training course was organised in three modules focusing on managerial and leadership competences, roles and functions of a trainer in educational work with adults, counselling and coaching, as well as modern methods for training trainers. Recently conducted research (case study “Professional development of the teachers in basic adult education”) with the same group of teachers has indicated the achievement of an additional, perhaps the most valuable goal of the completed andragogical training. The results show that teachers gained a much clearer perspective of the importance and value of adult education for personal development, community development and development of society as a whole. After completing the training, all the teachers applied the competences that they acquired in training to their work with adults. Some of them even took over managerial positions in their educational institutions. All the teachers are also highly interested in working in and improving the field of adult education because they believe that this will enable them to contribute to the development of the community and of society. These results all indicate that these teachers have undergone a paradigm shift. The attitude of the individual is the key component of any compe-



Managing an education group of adults requires interactive approaches and techniques: workshop with trainers on management in adult education

tence, the carrier and driver of future work and development. This is of particular importance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Changing the paradigm of the teachers (who at the time worked in conditions of unregulated professional development) is about creating conscious, high-quality, competent teachers who will be the carriers of the further development of institutions, local communities and society as whole.

Developing training and building a legal framework

In order to further strengthen the capacities of all key players, DVV International has continued to lobby, implement and monitor all the andragogic training courses in the country. The aim is to make it an obligation of the system to “take care” of the continuous and innovative strengthening of key competences which are necessary for a successful educational process in work with adults.

Numerous strategies to develop adult education in the region treat teaching staff as one of the developmental elements, and classify it as a high priority element. An institutional-organisational and realisation network, which includes a very important social partnership, makes the objective foundation of the system, while the personnel (human resource) potential in terms of the competence of the staff, as the first condition for the quality of an educational work and educational process, represents the subjective base of the adult education system (Alibabić, Avdagić 2013). Thanks to the continuous support of DVV International – which has been working for many years to improve the legal framework for adult education through dialogue between civil society, the profession and the educational authorities – andragogic training is recognised by educational authorities at all levels of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is treated as a legal right and obligation in the laws on adult education. The educational authorities have also seen to it that programmes of andragogic training have become publicly recognised, and possibly financed, thus facilitating the enforcement of the legally-prescribed right and obligation of this type of training. The global curriculum for adult learning and education “Curriculum globALE” (660 teaching hours) was intro-

duced in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 as a publicly-recognised, non-formal programme, and another programme of professional development entitled “Basic Andragogic Training” was developed in 2018. This programme is based on the previous practice and the basic principles of the “Curriculum globALE”, and since it comprises “only” 120 teaching hours, it can respond to the needs and shortcomings in educational practice more quickly. This shorter training course is aimed at teachers who are not full-time employees of adult education providers, and who are occasionally engaged as teachers in adult education regardless of the educational form. The processes provided both the legal and programmatic frameworks for andragogic training of teaching staff in adult education. This development has certainly benefited from both the practice of the EU countries, as well as of countries in the region (primarily Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro and North Macedonia), where processes and previous research highlighted problems and challenges in the professionalisation of andragogic staff.

If the policy of education is mastery of the impossible, then educational policy is a plan on how to accomplish that which was seen as impossible (Popović 2014). The efforts made and results achieved within the complex and fragile constitutional framework in a country like Bosnia and Herzegovina certainly show that even what seems impossible, is actually possible. All you need is to work in a manner that is professional, persistent, continuous and dedicated.

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The role of continuing education in providing good adult educators



Carole Avande Houndjo
Pamoja West Africa
Benin

Abstract – *This is the story of how a number of civil society organisations across several countries in West Africa organised a network to support the professionalisation of adult educators. Financial support from international organisations helped where national governments were not ready to fund the network. The goals set out by the network are ambitious and the initial results encouraging. PRIQUE is a success story, and this article explains why.*

The Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education stresses the fact that adult learning and education is an essential component of lifelong learning, and will make a major contribution to the Sustainable Development Agenda between now and 2030. Having said that, more than half of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is illiterate. Adult education stakeholders are struggling to ensure that everyone has access to quality education. Whilst it is gratifying that access to basic education has improved over the past decade, its quality leaves much to be desired. The quality of adult education therefore remains a major challenge in West Africa. In an effort to contribute both to the right to education for all and to the quality of basic education, civil society organisations in West Africa have developed educational services for groups who do not have access to formal education. Solutions focus on teaching in national languages, and adapt teaching contents to life contexts through vocational training. These initiatives are supported by partners such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), DVV International, and others. Although they are recognised by the states, they do not receive state funding. The Regional Interinstitutional Programme for the Quality of Education (PRIQUE) has been established in order to lend greater visibility and legitimacy to these educational alternatives. The programme enables states and NGOs to train national actors (programme managers, supervisors and facilitators) with the aim in mind of improving the quality and equitableness of education systems.



Meeting of the PRIQUE steering committee in Cotonou, March 2019

“The goal pursued by PRIQUE is to improve the quality of basic education and to help boost educational opportunities.”

PRIQUE was launched through a participatory process which mobilised education experts (Universities, Ministries of Education, civil society) from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger during 2016. Subregional workshops made it possible to design a model for the Master’s degree course in Design Engineering and Management of Educational Alternatives (ICGAE), as well as the continuing education programme in adult education. The pilot phase of PRIQUE covers the period from 2017 to 2019.

This article tells the story of a unique experience of collaboration between adult education stakeholders.

What PRIQUE wants

The goal pursued by PRIQUE is to improve the quality of basic education and to help boost educational opportunities through a professional Master’s degree course and a pathway of continuing education at subregional level in West Africa. Specifically, this involves:

- boosting the capacities of education managers in the various French-speaking countries south of the Sahara by developing diversified continuing education opportunities that are closely linked to one another and which complement the programmes within the countries and the training opportunities currently linked to the professional Master’s degree course at the ENS in Niamey;
- continuing to upgrade and diversify the continuing education that is on offer, including in emergency situations, by modernising modules and integrating new adapted training services to meet the demands of government services and civil society organisations;
- developing training engineering, the design of training programmes, and the establishment of pools of trainers at the level of each country, in the field of education, in the holistic sense of the term;
- promoting continuing education opportunities for education managers in French-speaking countries south of the Sahara through an effective communication and networking plan;
- improving the conditions for the implementation of training using modern communication and distance-learning tools through an educational resource centre;
- strengthening operational capacities with more than 2,300 managers who have come through state structures, CSOs/NGOs from PRIQUE countries and elsewhere;
- setting up a digital documentation centre.

First results

PRIQUE has achieved significant results during the two years of its implementation, including:

- training 23 managers from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger and Togo for the Master's degree in design engineering and management of educational alternatives;
- designing 14 training modules developed after a needs assessment was carried out among education stakeholders in West Africa;
- training more than 200 literacy and adult education actors by means of continuing education;
- lobbying for the Ministries of Education to assume ownership of PRIQUE.

Roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders

As its name suggests, PRIQUE is a multi-stakeholder programme with the aim of improving the quality of education in French-speaking countries south of the Sahara. To promote ownership of the programme by all stakeholders, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation has succeeded in encouraging collaboration between university professors, representatives of the Ministries of Education of the PRIQUE countries, and civil society organisations, facilitated by a consultant who ensures that the process moves on smoothly in qualitative and programmatic terms.

PRIQUE is run by a steering committee which meets every six months on a rotational basis in one of the five PRIQUE countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger). The members of the steering committee are:

- the responsible officials of the *École normale supérieure* and of the Institute for Training in Literacy and Non-Formal Education (operational and strategic coordination);
- the representatives of the Ministers of Literacy and of Non-Formal Education of the five PRIQUE countries;
- the focal points for the five PRIQUE countries designated by the Ministers of Literacy and of Non-Formal Education;
- the civil society focal point provided by the Pamoja West Africa network;
- the regional education/training adviser from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation;
- the backstopper (consultant recruited by SDC).

The responsible officials of the *École normale supérieure du Niger* (ENS) and of the Institute for Training in Literacy and Non-Formal Education (IFLNFE) have been tasked with the implementation of the programme. They present the results, challenges and prospects to the steering committee, and then implement the recommendations made by the committee.

The role of the representatives of the Ministers who are responsible for literacy and for non-formal education is to lobby the Ministries for the inclusion of PRIQUE training in training plans, to report to the Ministers on all the decisions taken by the steering committee, and to present to the com-

mittee their countries' experiences and initiatives in literacy and non-formal education.

The individuals who act as PRIQUE focal points are tasked with lobbying for regular registration for the ICGAE's continuing education and Master's degree courses. Their action plan in this context has been approved by the steering committee and implemented in their countries. In addition, they help update the list of LNFE players, and provide input with regard to the acquisition of indicators in their countries. Finally, they are tasked with organising the steering committee in their countries. Six focal points are included in PRIQUE: Five correspond to countries, and one to civil society. The Pamoja West Africa network is responsible for mobilising the latter.

The regional education/training adviser represents the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation on the steering committee, and ensures that the programme is implemented in accordance with the project document that has been approved by its West African Directorate.

The backstopper acts as the programme's support worker from the design phase through to the implementation level. He facilitates the meetings of the steering committee and supports the team from the ENS and the IFLNFE in technical terms when it comes to drawing up the programme's strategic documents.

Intervention strategies

Intervention strategy for the implementation of continuing education

IFLNFE's intervention strategy consists of providing continuing education in Niamey and throughout the subregion. It is complemented by the provision of a digital documentation centre for education stakeholders.

The continuing education courses that are taught at IFLNFE take place over a period of ten days. Education stakeholders are informed about the programmed (thematic) module, about the profiles that are envisaged, as well as about the deadlines and the conditions for taking care of participants, thanks to a vast communication operation conducted by IFLNFE, and to the PRIQUE focal points. The application forms are received and sent to IFLNFE by the focal points. A commission meets to review the files and select participants on the basis of predefined criteria. The minutes are sent back to the SDC Regional Adviser for approval, before being shared with the focal points. This process takes two weeks.

Continuing education can be relocated to the PRIQUE countries. There are two types of off-site continuing education: that requested and organised by Ministries or NGOs, and that provided by the IFLNFE trainers' pool. In principle, this also lasts ten days and covers the topics of continuing education. In fact, the training courses taking place at the IFLNFE are not sufficient to reach the entire target audience. This is why IFLNFE offers the opportunity for structures in the subregion to request off-site training for their staff at

Table 1: List of topics related to continuous education

Modules	Training period ¹
Capitalisation, modelling and scaling up of efficient models	January
Design of teaching materials	February
Participatory management, shared leadership and partnership development	
Lobbying and social mobilisation	March
Knowledge about the education system, training and LNFE	
Mobilisation of resources	April
Evaluation of prior learning and certification of learners' learning outcomes	
Development of the literate environment	May
Monitoring, supervision and evaluation of LNFE programmes	
ICT in LNFE	June
LNFE's offers and approaches	
Instruction of large groups and remediation/combating failures and dropping out	July
Planning: drafting of public policies, specific strategies and LNFE projects	
Languages in the LNFE's service	August
Knowledge of the education and training system and of LNFE	

very much reduced costs. This enables the programme to have greater impact and to be more beneficial to stakeholders.

Off-site training is organised following a request to IFLNFE from a structure (e.g. a non-governmental organisation, a network or a ministry department) for the benefit of its members. The structure submits the list of candidates and their profiles to IFLNFE for its approval. IFLNFE in turn provides the trainer and the teaching materials. The costs related to providing support to the trainer (speakers' fees, travel and accommodation costs, etc.), and the participants' registration fees are paid to IFLNFE whilst logistics are managed by the requesting structure.

IFLNFE plans to train pools of off-site trainers to reduce the costs of continuing education, bring it closer to the beneficiaries, and have proven skills available in all the PRIQUE countries.

Continuous education targets managers and staff working in Ministries of Literacy and of Non-Formal Education

(LNFE), as well as NGOs and projects with an LNFE component.

Intervention strategy for the Master's degree in Design Engineering and Management of Educational Alternatives (ICGAE)

The Master's course lasts two years, and is organised over four semesters. The training model includes teaching units such as: educational planning and management, educational engineering, andragogy/adult education, didactics, management, lobbying, language sciences, ICT, bilingual and plurilingual teaching in formal and non-formal education, measurement and evaluation of learning, the quality of education, and development and analysis of educational policies. The first cohort of the Master's course attended the in-classroom courses at the ENS in Niamey. This option of in-classroom courses did not encourage many players from NGOs to enrol, as it was impossible for them to obtain two years' leave of absence to attend. The implementation of a semi-classroom training system is therefore envisaged in order to encourage a larger number of actors to attend from among the next cohort of the Master's programme, due to start in October 2019. Semi-classroom courses will allow the participants to attend the courses on a distance-learning basis whilst remaining in their respective countries, but also to continue their professional activities.

The staff teaching the Master's degree course is made up of men and women from the professional world (Ministries of Education and NGOs/civil society organisations offering educational solutions) and Universities from PRIQUE and Northern countries (Universities and international organisations). These actors are tasked with implementing the various training modules in accordance with the training model and timetable developed.

The enrolment procedures for the Master's degree course are as follows:

- holder of a Bachelor's degree (*baccalauréat* + 3 years' study) or of an equivalent diploma;
- have at least three years' experience in education and/or training;
- pay the registration and training fees.

Challenges and prospects

PRIQUE is a good example of multi-stakeholder cooperation to boost the quality of education in general, and that of adult education in particular. One of PRIQUE's major challenges is to mobilise other financial partners in order to achieve a greater impact. SDC is currently PRIQUE's only technical and financial partner. It is important that the Ministries of Education and NGOs take ownership of PRIQUE through an annual budget to train their staff.

Another urgent matter is the need to design modules on educational topics such as education in crisis situations, education for global citizenship, education for peace, etc.



Members of the PRIQUE steering committee at the Ministry of Vocational Training and Literacy of Benin. After each meeting, the committee shares the report of the meeting with the Ministry in charge of education of the country that hosts the meeting

The rise of terrorism in northern Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger has led to the closure of hundreds of schools and displaced thousands of people, and there is an urgent need to put forward solutions to meet the educational needs of these out-of-school young people.

PRIQUE makes a significant contribution to the achievement of SDG 4 on access to quality education, notably in target 4.5: gender equality and inclusion; target 4.6: achieve universal literacy among young people and adults; target 4.B: expand the number of scholarships available to developing countries; target 4.C: increase the supply of qualified teachers. Indeed, in terms of their wording and objectives, the two components of PRIQUE, the ICGAE Master's degree course, and the FC-LNFE, are capable of helping attain all these targets. When selecting participants PRIQUE takes the issue of gender equality into account. PRIQUE promotes universal literacy among young people and adults at the level of target 4.6, thanks to the high-quality training that it offers to managers who are responsible for educational solutions. In the same vein, the high-quality training received through PRIQUE is able to influence the attainment of target 4.C by contributing towards a substantial increase in the number of qualified teachers/trainers in the countries covered by the programme. Finally, by awarding scholarships to managers from PRIQUE countries, the programme contributes to the attainment of target 4.B on expanding the number of scholarships available to developing countries.

The programme is currently being evaluated; the recommendations resulting from this evaluation will make it possible to improve the PRIQUE mechanism for the next phase, which will be launched in 2020.

Notes

1 / These periods are illustrative, as they may vary from year to year.

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About the author

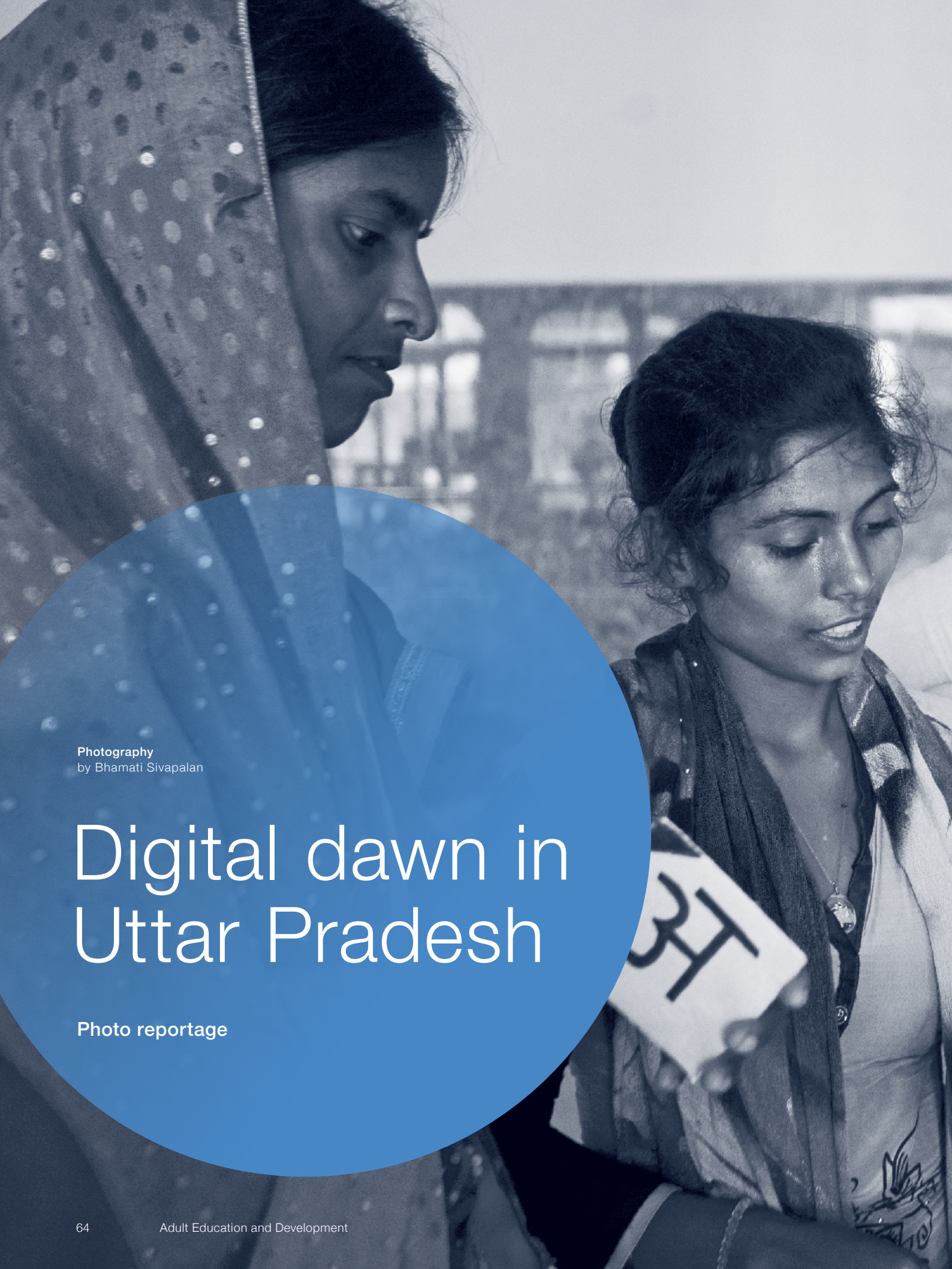
Carole Avande Houndjo is a trained linguist specialising in adult education. She is currently working as the coordinator of the Pamoja West Africa network, which lobbies for the quality of education through the use of the REFLECT method, which is an effective tool for community empowerment.

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Photography
by Bhamati Sivapalan

Digital dawn in Uttar Pradesh

Photo reportage



A new digital literacy programme for women started in Pratapgarh district in Uttar Pradesh, India, in 2018. The education organisation Nirantar has conducted three training courses for literacy teachers so far. Here, the trainer Anita calls Kiren, one of the teachers, to perform a mock demonstration of teaching letters in Hindi, using the word pedagogy

Digital dawn in Uttar Pradesh

Photography

by Bhamati Sivapalan

Nirantar is a Centre for Gender and Education. For the last 25 years, Nirantar has worked across 14 states of India with over 200 organisations to enable girls and women from marginalised communities to better understand and address their realities. This includes the Dalit and Tribal communities that have been historically denied access to formal sources of knowledge and education.

In response to the shift in ways of reading and writing because of digital media, they are now integrating digital knowledge into their literacy work, and have initiated the Applied Digital Literacy (AppDiL) programme. The programme is creating empowering experiences for women by equipping them with digital and literacy skills. Applied Digital Literacy helps girls and women to critically engage with structures of power, and to raise voices in order to access their rights and entitlements.

The current programme is running with 900 illiterate rural women in the Northern part of India, in collaboration with Gram Vikas Sewa Sansthan (GVSS) and Tata Trusts. The women are members of a dairy cooperative where all the information and tools of the trade have been digitised, but women had no way of accessing that information, or of monitoring their sales and collections. With the AppDiL intervention, they are not only able to crosscheck and keep track of their collection and earnings, but also to challenge the notions of what women can do and achieve.

AppDiL is being implemented by 30 teachers on the ground. They work with the women for four to five hours every day, mobilising and running the literacy centres in their villages. These teachers come from the same socio-economic and cultural background as the learners, with some history of formal education. Thus, the teachers themselves go through rigorous training and capacity-building programmes, including digital skills training, in order to become adult educators for rural women.

In her photo reportage, Indian filmmaker and photographer Bhamati Sivapalan invites us to closely follow one of these teacher training courses that was conducted in May 2019.



1 / “Cheel japata khel” is an interactive game for learning the alphabet. The learners run around in a circle where several letters are placed on the floor. The learner has to pick out the correct letter being taught at the moment. In this photo, Rita, one of the teachers (who is posing as a learner) happily shows the correct letter

2 / Cards of individual Hindi letters are neatly stacked in the training hall to be used for sessions. Teachers are encouraged to prepare such cost effective, easy-to-use cards for introducing letters and numbers to the learners

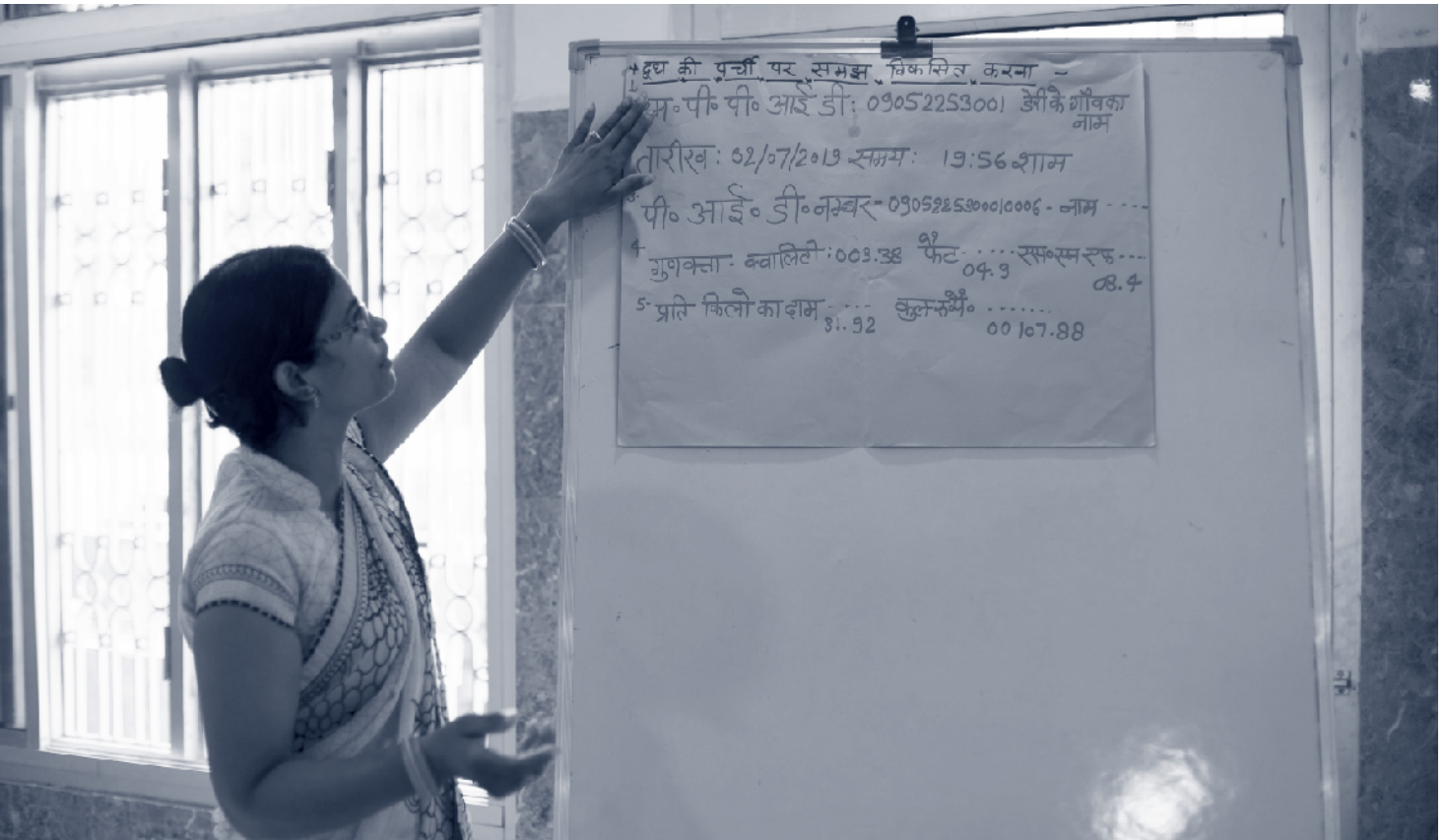




3 / The trainer Anita has now moved to the numeracy session. Here she asks Anu to conduct a mock session of teaching the numbers 1-9 to the learners in an interactive way, by using matchsticks. Teachers are motivated to use creative activities at the centres to enhance learner participation

4 / Peer learning is an important part of the training. Here, one of the teachers is taking down notes of the matchstick exercise, while the other chooses to make a video of the same

5 / All the learners in this project are part of a dairy cooperative. Neelam, one of the teachers, shows the kind of posters that teachers can make in their literacy centre to explain the receipt which the participants receive after they have deposited milk at the pooling point



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6 / The next sessions are on digital literacy. During the previous training activities, many teachers found it difficult to teach the session on the digital thermometer. Here, Chamla, a teacher, has prepared a chart comparing a basic and a digital thermometer, and is conducting a mock session on the same theme

7 / During an exposure visit, the teachers gather around Kalyani, the other trainer from Nirantar, to learn how an ATM card works. After this, they will step into an ATM kiosk for the first time in their lives

8 / A composed yet nervous Shalini uses an ATM machine for the first time, while the others look on and wait for their turn





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9 / During the session on the use of mobile phones, Neelam practices her newly-acquired skills by taking videos with her smartphone. She is documenting sessions during the teachers' training

10 / Vijaylakshmi is taking down notes from Shalini's notebook. She says it's easier to remember what happened during the training this way and it saves her a lot of time

11 / One of the teachers is opening a calendar on her phone during a session on opening calendars on basic phones. It is important for the teachers to practice these tasks before going ahead and teaching them in the literacy centres



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Section 3

In the lab

It's time to put on a white lab coat and enter the laboratory. This is where the new paradigms of teacher training are tested and developed. To be relevant, adult education must develop in sync with the world, and somehow this must be continuously conveyed to teachers. New ideas are not worth much if they don't make it out of the lab.

GRETA – a competence model for teachers and trainers



From left to right:

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Abstract – *Course leaders, lecturers, teachers and trainers are the cornerstone on which successful adult education is built. But precisely what it means to be “able to teach” is not yet covered by any generally-applicable standards. The GRETA project has developed a uniform competence model for teachers and trainers stretching across different adult education providers in adult education and further training reflecting the competences that are necessary in order to teach. This marks a major step towards achieving professionalisation of adult education. When developing the model, emphasis was placed on constant feedback between practitioners and researchers.*

It is not hard to compile a list of things that make a good teacher. But how to make it comprehensible? And how to make it widely accepted? This is what the GRETA¹ project is all about.

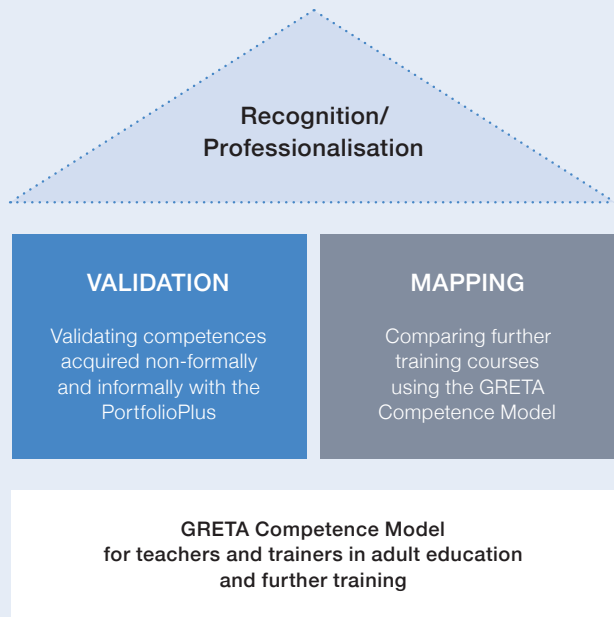
The project is coordinated by the German Institute for Adult Education – Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE) and funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The project is currently in the second funding phase (running from December 2018 to November 2021), and will pilot and evaluate the tools that have been developed in different application variants in practice.

The special added value of the GRETA tools lies in co-operation across different adult education providers – unprecedented in adult and continuing education – in which individual interests take a back seat to professional development across the entire sector.

The science behind the model

Structures for validating the adult education competences of teachers and trainers were prepared on a scientific basis, and possibilities for promoting professional development were developed along two paths. On the one hand, teachers and trainers are to be enabled to document – and have validated – the competences that they have already acquired through non-formal and informal means. On the other hand, further training in relation to the competence model (mapping) is to be provided, and further opportunities for professionalisation are

Figure 1: Professionalisation paths within the GRETA project



Source: Lencer, Strauch (2016).

“The model provides an overview of the knowledge and skills that a teacher needs, as well as of the attitudes, beliefs and (self-reflection) skills that constitute professional teaching.”

thus to be shown to teachers and trainers in a targeted manner. Both approaches are based on a uniform competence model stretching across different adult education providers for teachers and trainers in adult and continuing education.

What is in the model?

The GRETA competence model maps the adult education competences that are relevant for teaching. The model was developed with considerable support from eight nationwide funding institutions and professional associations for adult education and further training in Germany. It is subdivided into competence aspects, competence domains and competence facets (see Figure 3).

The model provides an overview of the knowledge and skills that a teacher needs, as well as of the attitudes, beliefs and (self-reflection) skills that constitute professional teaching. It can help take stock of one’s own competences and provide orientation for individual competence development.

The model focuses equally on all groups of teachers and trainers in continuing education, regardless of employment status (full-time, part-time, as salaried employees, freelancers, self-employed or volunteers), or of the institutional context in which teachers and trainers work (from publicly-recognised, non-profit and commercial, to in-company continuing education), which subject they specialise in or in which field they operate.

What all teachers and trainers in adult and continuing education have in common is that they support adult learning by planning, implementing and evaluating educational programmes. And this is exactly where the GRETA competence model systematises the relevant knowledge and skills in the competence domains and facets referred to.

Potential applications

The model addresses the adult education competences of teachers and trainers, and not, for instance, the technical skills of a teacher (e.g. computer, language or sports teachers). This in no way disregards subject-related and didactic competences; these are reflected in the model as areas to be “subject-specifically defined”. The model can be used as a reference for a variety of purposes: It offers the opportunity to obtain an overview of the competences that are relevant for one’s own teaching, and where there may still be gaps. From the perspective of further training institutions, the model can be helpful for taking stock of and refining the skills of teaching staff. Where competences are found missing, this can be systematically addressed through appropriate training. In addition, the model can serve as a reference in terms of competence requirements for teaching staff for a specific further training institution, or for a given field (e.g. family education, vocational training, etc.). The competence model can also be used to support the recruitment of personnel and as a basis for personnel selection and development interviews.

Developing GRETA

The challenge which arose while developing the model was to show which competences of teachers and trainers should be considered, and which should be both practical as well as scientifically connectable. This, however, had to be done against the heterogeneous background of adult education and further training. Theoretical principles were analysed for the development of the model; existing competence models were integrated, the opinions of practitioners and experts were collected and evaluated, and a continuous feedback process was established between research and practice, and then put to use for analytical purposes. A methodical approach was chosen for this purpose, with a variety of sequential and circular survey steps. The perspectives of leading and planning personnel, of teachers and trainers from all fields of adult and continuing education, as well as the project partners from GRETA I, were systematically included and taken into account for the analysis.

Figure 2: Circular feedback of research results with practitioners



Source: Lencer, Strauch (2016).

“In order to do justice to the holistic understanding of competences, the GRETA model included and described not only knowledge and cognitive abilities and skills, but also aspects of motivational and social willingness.”

The competence model is based on a holistic understanding of competence where competences are the “cognitive abilities and skills that individuals either have or can learn in order to solve certain problems, as well as the associated motivational, volitional and social readiness and abilities in order to be able to use the problem solutions successfully and responsibly in variable situations” (Weinert 2001: 27). In order to do justice to the holistic understanding of competences, the GRETA model included and described not only knowledge and cognitive abilities and skills, but also aspects of motivational and social willingness (Figure 3).

The competence model is subdivided into different levels. At the top level are the “competence aspects” (outer ring). Following a uniform understanding of competences, professional knowledge and skills, subject and field-specific knowledge, professional self-management and professional values and beliefs belong among the aspects of competence.

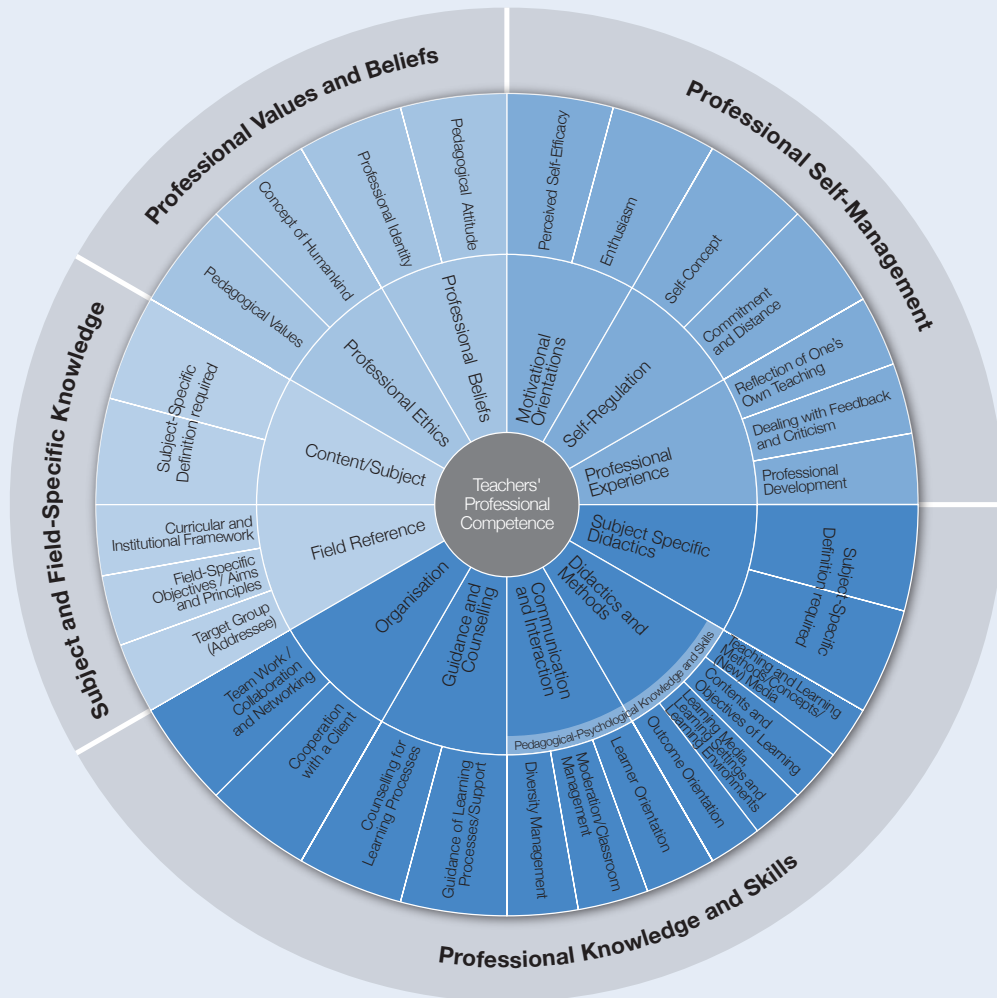
One level below this we find the “competence domains” (inner ring), which are further subdivided into competence facets (middle ring). Knowledge – such as technical knowledge – is listed in the model as theoretical-formal knowledge, whilst application-orientated and practically-applied

knowledge is referred to as knowledge and skills (Schrader & Goeze, to be published).

Subject and field-specific knowledge is subdivided in the model into the competence domains of content and field reference. The thematically different subject content as subject-specific formal knowledge is not further operationalised or defined in adult education and further training due to the broad thematic breadth of the field. This area should be defined on a technical basis. The competence domain field reference includes all knowledge relating to curricular and institutional framework conditions, field-specific goals and principles, and (field-specific) target groups.

An essential component of professional competence is the professional knowledge and skills that are cited in the model. One level lower, professional knowledge and skills include the competence domains “didactics and methods”, “communication and interaction”, “guidance and counselling”, and “organisation”. Didactics and methodology, as well as communication and interaction, together constitute pedagogical-psychological knowledge and skills. Didactics and methodology encompass all knowledge and skills related to the planning and implementation of the teaching-learning process. The competence domain “communication and interaction” includes the knowledge and skills related to the leadership of groups and control in teaching-learning situations. Another competence domain in the aspect of professional knowledge and skills is “guidance and counselling”. It is divided into knowledge and skills related to guidance and support during the learning process, as well as concrete knowledge and skills related to counselling for learning processes in the sense of guidance that is related to the learning situation. The fourth competence domain in this aspect is that of

Figure 3: Competence model for teachers and trainers in adult education and further training



Source: Lencer, Strauch (2016).

organisation. This includes teamwork and networks, as well as cooperation with the client.

The competence aspect “professional values and beliefs” is subdivided into the competence domains “professional ethics” and “professional beliefs”. The competence facet of “professional ethics” includes moral concepts of pedagogically-relevant concepts of humankind and values. Concurring with a holistic understanding of competence, these facets constitute important components of competence that exert a major influence on morally-acceptable professional teaching. The beliefs of the teachers and trainers, such as their own pedagogical attitudes and identification with the profession, are bundled as professional beliefs.

The fourth competence aspect is “professional self-management”. This includes the competence domains “motivational orientation”, “self-regulation” and “professional experience”. Motivational orientation includes elements of

job-specific motivation and professional enthusiasm for the subject and teaching, as well as perceived self-efficacy.

“Self-regulation” as an important further competence domain refers to an awareness of one’s own role as a teacher and trainer, as well as commitment to learners, taking into account one’s own resources and professional limits. The competence domain “professional experience” comprises a reflection of one’s own teaching and appropriate handling of feedback and criticism, as well as the resulting continuous professional development.

Using the GRETA tools

The GRETA tools can be used in many ways. Some of the products and instruments can be used freely, whereas others are conditional on authorisation by the central GRETA coordination office.

The GRETA competence model forms the basis for the other GRETA tools used in the validation of teachers' and trainers' competences in adult and continuing education.

These include:

- a reflection sheet for reflecting on one's own pedagogical competences,
- the GRETA PortfolioPlus for documenting one's own pedagogical competences,
- an expert manual for evaluating the competences documented in PortfolioPlus by authorised experts,
- the GRETA competence balance as proof of documented and validated competences,
- a mapping manual for the classification of further training offers in line with the Competence Model,
- the GRETA mapping profile for identifying the competence domains and facets identified in the mapping process.

What can GRETA do?

The GRETA tools can be used for a variety of application contexts and in different manifestations. Examples include the consideration of individual aspects of the competence model, like in personnel selection interviews, or the use of tools for the validation of non-formally and informally-acquired competences.

Possible purposes are:

- individual career planning and competence development of teachers and trainers,
- external presentation, self-marketing and order acquisition,
- staff recruitment in institutions,
- assessment and refinement of teachers' and trainers' competences in facilities; strategic personnel development and organisational development,
- illustration of personnel quality in existing QM duties,
- description of competence requirements in specific fields (possibly as a voluntary commitment on the part of individual subfields of further training or specialist areas),
- personnel development interviews; coaching,
- competence-oriented refinement of continuing education opportunities,
- external presentation of train-the-trainer further training courses,
- a targeted search for suitable further training opportunities for teachers and trainers.

The instruments developed in GRETA are to be tested and piloted until November 2021. Interested institutions will be advised within the project period and will receive information and support on how to use the GRETA tools. Further information is available at www.die-bonn.de/greta.

Notes

1 / The following were involved in the development: Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten e.V. (AdB), Bundesarbeitskreis Arbeit und Leben DGB/VHS e.V. (AuL), Bundesverband der Träger beruflicher Bildung (Bildungsverband) e.V. (BBB), Deutsche Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Erwachsenenbildung e.V. (DEAE), Deutsche Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung und Fernstudium e.V. (DGWF), Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), Dachverband der Weiterbildungsorganisationen e.V. (DVWO), Verband deutscher Privatschulverbände e.V. (VDP)

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Column

To teach is to learn

“To teach is not to transfer knowledge but rather to create the conditions for its production or construction.”
(Paulo Freire – Pedagogy of Autonomy)

This sentence sums up Paulo Freire’s democratic, critical, creative and challenging vision of the relationship between teaching and learning, totally contrary to the vertical and authoritarian “banking” concept of unidirectional transmission of information by the teacher, to be repeated or memorised by the students.

The educational process is primarily one of building up learning and the capacity to learn. The production of knowledge is an active process in which we access new information, connect it with the information we already have, and develop processes of identification, association, symbolisation, generalisation, reaffirmation or negation between existing knowledge and new information. Thus we produce new knowledge – always actively, and never passively.

That is why, since popular education was introduced, we have conceived of learning as a creative task. Knowledge is constructed and reconstructed, but that is not all. We are made and re-made as people, as subjects capable of thinking, of feeling, of imagining, of projecting, of doing, of transforming. And that is why teaching cannot be reduced to simply dealing with content, but rather entails the carrying out of a whole rich and complex process in which the conditions (and also the provisions) are produced so that we can learn in a critical way. Freire says: “These conditions imply or demand the presence of *educators and students* who are

creators, instigators, restless, rigorously curious, humble and persistent ... the students are transforming themselves into genuine subjects of construction and reconstruction alongside the educator, who is equally subject to the process.”¹

This implies that, in order to attempt to teach, as educators we must always have the attitude and willingness to learn. To learn from the situations, the doubts, the concerns that each moment of the process raises for us. Learn from the behaviours, expectations, questions, words and silences of each student with whom we work. To learn from the results – positive or negative – that arise from our pedagogical or didactic initiatives. To learn from the new materials and methodologies that we are exploring, which is demanded by the educative fact that we have the responsibility to give productive guidance.

The greatest challenge for our training as educators is the daily challenge of systematising and learning from our educational practice in order to generate better learning. This challenge never ends, it renews itself daily. And as long as we are so inclined – humble and firm – we will have the possibility of generating the conditions and tendencies that make the construction of critical and creative knowledge and abilities possible, in order to generate learning throughout life.

Notes

1 / Freire, P. (1997): *Pedagogía de la Autonomía, saberes necesarios para la práctica educativa*. México: Siglo XXI. P. 47. [emphasis added]



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How reflective practice could make better teachers in Morocco



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Abstract – *Teacher education programmes in Morocco are often accused of recycling old teaching practices and attempting to implement them. Instead of overwhelming theory and loads of unstructured practice, what trainee teachers perhaps really need is feedback as to how to improve their teaching methods and grow as professionals. This kind of feedback usually stems from personal experience (and context), this being the best way to reflect on personal methodology and develop a personal philosophy of teaching. This article discusses the role of reflective practice as a way to obtain such feedback, along with possible ways to encourage professional development and promote lifelong learning.*

Education is a vital ingredient in the growth and progress of nations around the world. Throughout history, civilizations have suffered famine, disastrous wars and deadly plagues; they have flourished, fallen and then risen from the ashes. Humanity would not have managed to survive all these disasters had it not been for education, ways to instil and transfer knowledge about military strategies, geography, languages, medicine and more. Such knowledge has helped many nations re-establish themselves as stable, steadily-developing countries in the modern world, and carry on teaching history, however difficult it has been. Quality education is arguably at the heart of any country's plan for progress, and Morocco is no exception. For an educational system to be successful, teachers need to perform at their very best. How can they do that? What makes a good teacher? How can reflective practice and lifelong learning improve teachers' performance? And how can "teacher effectiveness" be achieved in a developing country such as Morocco?

Through a theoretical lens: What makes a good educator?

Recent attempts to provide an answer to this question have managed to generate a very rich set of characteristics and skills that teachers need to possess in order to be "efficient" (see Walker 2008; Christenbury 2010; Miller 2012). For critical purposes, however, it is safe to argue that most of these fruitful efforts may have fallen foul of the temptation to state the blindingly obvious. True, academic knowledge, classroom



Teachers demonstrating for better training and working conditions, Rabat, January 2016

“Perhaps a point that very few can disagree with, teaching is first and foremost about passion.”

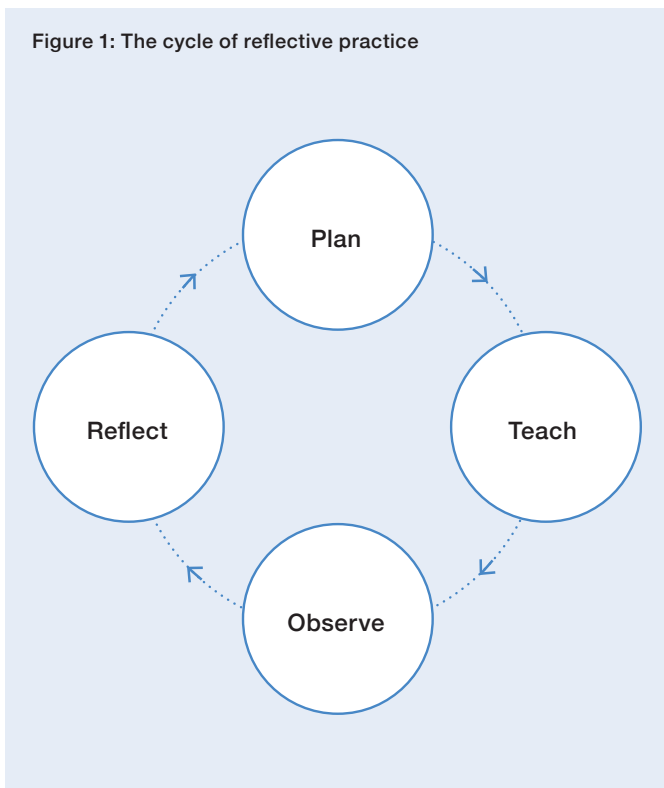
management, concept verification and communication skills are all vital to the discussion, but at the same time one could plausibly claim that no one who lacks these skills should be permitted to teach in the first place. What is more, a teacher's mastery of pedagogical skills can be observed, and even measured, by the naked eye. On the other hand, it is somewhat of a challenge to consider root qualities that can make one a promising, exemplary teacher, qualities like passion. Perhaps a point that very few can disagree with, teaching is first and foremost about passion. Just like wanting to make a difference, passion fuels us with an enormous energy, and greatly increases our motivation to do well in a classroom situation. Teaching has always been conceived of as more of a noble mission and a way to extend one's legacy than a mere job. Passion is a delicate quality, un-fakeable, and somewhat contagious. Passionate teachers tend to be highly inspiring vis-à-vis their students and colleagues with their relentless efforts in class and their strong work ethic. This is not to dismiss pedagogical skills; their importance is indisputable. However, without passion, a teacher may be no more than a “knowledge-imparting agent”, more of a mercenary with a task, than a “true” teacher.

Now, assuming a person has a passion for teaching and for the subject to be taught, and has sufficient knowledge about it, does this make them a “good” teacher? The answer is: No. A teacher in the modern sense is a lot more complicated. Teaching roles have become more varied than ever, and hence teachers' responsibilities in class have grown accordingly. Expertise in the subject is no longer the sole criterion for effective teaching as much as the ability to deliver a comprehensive lesson and reflect on it. Perhaps it is common sense that the more teaching experience one has, the better one performs. However, that might just not be the case all the time, and outcomes can turn out to be highly idiosyncratic. The best and most efficient teachers are those who act as reflective practitioners and life-long learners. Let us take a closer look at these two qualities, the relationship between them, and their place in Morocco's teacher training programmes.

Reflective practice and lifelong learning: a pathway to better teaching?

Teacher education programmes in Morocco often seek to provide prospective teachers with a balanced proportion of theory and practice. This has been seen for decades as an ideal way to prepare trainees for teaching and enable them to pioneer their classes effectively. However, there are a few aspects of teaching that can be of paramount importance, but which are often overlooked in the country's approach to teacher education. For one thing, it is quite important for

Figure 1: The cycle of reflective practice



teachers to carry on learning, even after obtaining their official certification. Lifelong learning is critical to teachers' effectiveness, and reflective practice is one way to keep learning.

Lifelong learning, in general terms, is all about the pursuit of knowledge throughout one's life (see Merriam, Caffarella 2007; Aspin, Chapman 2007; Tovkanets 2018). It is a kind of learning that is not bound by age or type of knowledge. Lifelong learning implies an eagerness to acquire knowledge beyond traditional schooling, and throughout one's life. In the field of education, lifelong learning is perceived as the lifestyle of effective teachers. It is a mindset that considerably expands one's thinking, instils creativity, and renders one proactive in every aspect of life. Its benefits are immeasurable, and often transcend the notion of abstract knowledge to more applicable forms of knowing. I am talking about what the French call "*savoir*", "*savoir-faire*" and "*savoir-être*". In a lifelong learning context, they may mean:

- *savoir*: learning for the sake of knowing, or constantly refining one's knowledge of the world,
- *savoir-faire*: learning for the sake of "doing", acquiring practical skills and enriching one's ability to perform a variety of tasks,
- *savoir-être*: learning for the sake of being and becoming, the foundation of personal growth, and awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses and how to improve them.

In teaching, it is almost inevitable that most classes include students with different abilities, learning styles, learning

preferences and aptitudes. Each student has a different kind of motivation, and their success or failure may depend on the extent to which their needs and interests are embodied in their teachers' practice. Attempting to cater for the needs of all students is more a farfetched aim than an achievable outcome, yet it can be approachable by teachers who recognise themselves as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners.

It is arguably possible that the conceptualisation of reflective practice as we know it today was derived from Schön's (1983) reflection-in-action. The approach was later broadly adopted in education, albeit it can be applied to most, if not all, professional practices. According to Schön (1983), reflective practice often instigates the idea that improvisation can be the optimum approach to challenging situations in one's work sphere. As an answer to "What makes a good educator?", researchers and practitioners alike emphasise that a person's ability to reflect on the content taught, teaching objectives and methodology is characteristic to effective teaching (see Habib 2017). In other words, reflective practice involves thinking critically about any decision made by the teacher, including what lessons to teach, how to teach them best, to what category of students, and desired outcomes in line with learners' contextual and ethical backgrounds. As simple as it might sound, it is the idea of "questioning" that makes any teacher a better practitioner.

Figure 1 illustrates the cycle of reflective practice – as inspired by Schön (1983) – in four steps applicable before, during and after teaching. The first step towards mastering reflective practice is planning. This is presumably a step where the teacher identifies the layout of the lesson and the items to be taught in context. Most of the time, the organisation of the session, or lack of it, is a determining factor as to how effective the teaching process can be. Here, teachers rely on their lesson planning skills and students' learning profiles, and use their sense of anticipation to identify potential challenges. Having planned the session, it is time for the second stage of reflective practice, i.e. teaching, the stage at which the teacher delivers the lesson according to the plan set out beforehand. It is crucial that teachers follow the plan as it is, in a manner that allows them to check their preconceived hypotheses and anticipated challenges.

As they apply what was planned in the first stage, teachers are required to keep a close eye on the progress of their lesson. That leads us straight to the third stage of the cycle, i.e. observation. This is a step that can be taken both during and after the lesson. While delivering the lesson, it is important that teachers notice what works, in what context along with students' reactions. Other strategies to observe one's teaching activities after class include – but are not limited to – video/audio recordings, students' feedback or writing a report-like essay on how the class went. This allows teachers to identify their strengths, and to realise what could have been done better. Observation is an essential stage; if synchronised well with the teaching procedure, it can provide rich feedback on the efficacy of content and methodology. Having planned, taught and observed the lesson, the time

comes to reflect on it. This stage is mainly evaluative, and requires teachers to look back at the lesson objectively, based on what has been observed, and to question their methodology. This step allows teachers to work on their weaknesses and account for the gaps in their pedagogical repertoire. After that, the fourth step consists of reflecting on the feedback generated and using it to plan the next lesson, thus earning the teacher valuable experience.

To conclude, there is a broad consensus on the importance of reflective practice in teaching (Lane et al. 2014; Skinner 2010; Schön 1983). It is an optimal approach to merge one's knowledge and experience, the implementation of which can improve the practice beyond existing theories. Teacher education programmes in Morocco therefore need to not only give teachers sufficient opportunities to reflect on their activities, but also to teach them what to reflect on, when and why, as well as appropriate tools/strategies to do so. The implication of all this is that teacher educators must also be highly skilled in reflective practice.

Teaching teachers or helping them teach?

The mission of teacher training centres in Morocco may have focused in recent years on preparing pre-service teachers to perform teacher roles in line with modern theoretical frameworks. However, for such an ambitious mission to succeed, practice lessons need to be flawlessly consistent with the trainees' *savoir-faire*, as well as with their theoretical knowledge. Teacher educators typically instruct prospective teachers on the various intricacies of effective pedagogy. So why is it that Morocco's ranking in global education sinks further into crisis year in, year out? We must ask the question: Is training teachers enough to improve the quality of a national school system?

Over the course of their training, novice teachers end up with a conception of what makes a "good" teacher. The notion is – more often than not – overwhelming, exhaustive and quite idealistic in nature to say the least. Instilling reflective practice might be more important, though that cannot be done without knowledgeable tutors who themselves are reflective practitioners. Regardless of the decent skills bundle that they ultimately receive, many of which are inapplicable due to contextual complications, pre-service teachers often encounter numerous challenges in fieldwork after they have qualified. Such complications can be as trifling as oversized classes, or as crucial as teachers' deteriorating authority in public schools. The latter is sadly reflected in the increasing number of cases of violence against teachers lately.

The need for action

Merely training teachers may not be enough to improve the quality of the country's educational system. It is true that training centres have relatively up-to-date programmes when it comes to theory, and that sterling efforts have been made to teach modern methodologies. It is however highly unfortunate that the teaching materials allocated for the use of such

modern philosophies are, to some extent, primitive. Teaching science without adequate labs or IT without computers is somewhat unrealistic. Most classrooms are not equipped with data projectors or any sort of technology, whilst others still have chalkboards. Above all, classes tend to be very overcrowded, with an average of more than 45 students, and do not get me started on the state of the libraries, even where they exist at all.

Morocco has witnessed teacher strikes on an unprecedented scale in recent months. Teachers all over the country have come out to protest against what they perceive as the Government's approach to educational reform. Practice lessons have been significantly reduced, pre-service allowance cut in half, along with a number of measures taken by the Ministry of Education, most of which do not serve the teaching community. Teachers' strikes have been met with police brutality and unnecessary violence. Regrettably, the public sector is suffering from long-term financial shortages. This is a problem that seems to affect only teachers, and their salaries in particular. Accordingly, teachers' salaries in Morocco are thus arguably some of the lowest in the world, with an annual starting salary of about 60,000 MAD, or approximately 5,500 EUR. However, considering the country's GDP, it is still possible to survive on such a small amount. Many teachers unfortunately also claim that they have been subjected to consistent unjustified deductions from their salaries. Not only that, but – reportedly – even the country's pension fund might not have the capacity to pay teachers when they retire. To make things worse, the protesting teachers have no adequate representation in Parliament. This effectively prevents them from voicing their concerns via legitimate channels.

“Teaching teachers may at times simply not be sufficient to evolve an entire educational system.”

There is one trait that has not yet been thoroughly addressed in this article, though it could be the most crucial characteristic of effective teachers. I am talking about motivation, an element the importance of which is actually beyond measure. No matter how skilful a teacher may be, very little can be done in the absence of motivation. It is a quality that is not necessarily inherent, but rather stems from one's work atmosphere and from the legal framework governing practice. As a teacher, it is easy to be affected by feelings of abandonment in a ruthless, utterly judgmental environment. Any teacher who does not perform well under such circumstances inevitably ends up losing out in a blame game played with the school system and civil society. Teachers in Morocco have very few facilities to help them teach, and are expected to cope miraculously with the many challenges that they face in their work environment. On the whole, teacher education in Morocco has been in a state of chaos recently. What the country needs is a proper reform. Teaching teachers may at times simply not be sufficient to evolve an entire educational system.

Where do we go from here?

By and large, we are only just starting to pay any attention to teacher education in Morocco. True, it is possible to encourage teachers to teach, but it would take some remarkable improvements in teaching conditions. Developed countries around the world recognise the indispensability of human capital as the driving force behind their progress. As such, and to improve Morocco's school system, teacher education centres need to provide teachers, the human capital of the field, with meaningful training and sufficient professional development opportunities, to make them lifelong learners and reflective practitioners, and most of all to motivate them to perform their best regardless of the circumstances.

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Qualities of a good adult educator: Patience

The “new professionalism” in adult and continuing education – a multi-level perspective



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Abstract – *Academic discourse regarding professionalisation in adult education currently focuses on the professionalism and professional development of adult educators and on the skills and competences needed for working in the field. Theoretical discussions of the sociology of professions and the “new professionalism” approach suggest that we need a broader perspective which also includes the perspectives of the respective organisation and of society. The article refers to the research project KOPROF (2019), which is based on the theoretical perspective of the “new professionalism”. This perspective also analyses the interplay between the levels of society, organisation and individual competences.*

A focus on the professionalism and professional development of professionals in adult and continuing education has been observable for several years (Jütte et al. 2011). Research in adult education has tried for a long time to identify a profession designated as “adult education” by working towards identifying specific attributes. Pfadenhauer and Sander (2005) summarise the attributes of professions in this traditional perspective that are the subject of central discussion in science as follows: Professions are understood as activities that perform central societal functions such as healthcare or justice. They are accompanied by certain privileges and social prestige. Academic and scientific knowledge taught at Universities is therefore a central attribute. Furthermore, the quality of professional work is typically monitored by professional associations.

The perspective of the “new professionalism”

Due to the changes taking place in modern society in general, and in the adult education sector in particular, focusing on the attributes of a profession is no longer useful. Modern society is characterised by the diffusion of knowledge and by interdisciplinary structures of working together across disciplinary boundaries. Adult education is a prime example of this interdisciplinarity because it has been characterised from the beginning by a high degree of heterogeneity in all areas, including staff, organisations, topics, target groups, and so on. A focus on professionalism has emerged since the late 1990s, along with a strong orientation towards the competences

required to work as an adult educator (e.g. Lencer, Strauch 2016; Nittel et al. 2014; Research voor Beleid 2008, 2010). These studies examine the educational and professional paths of adult educators, their entry paths towards and reasons for entering adult education, as well as the knowledge and competences that they need in order to work in the field.

However, this focus neglects the heterogeneity of the field of adult education and the requirements of the different systems with which adult educators are confronted. Evetts (2011: 407) points out that professionalism no longer seems to be a “distinctive logic”; instead, it is integrated into organisational structures and influenced by other logics. Adult education activities are not only pedagogical in nature; professionals also have to deal with questions of funding, quality management and standardisation. For example, an adult education teacher can never just focus on professional planning and lecturing without also considering questions of funding or the objectives of the organisational context. The professional adult educator always has to balance the demands of the bureaucratic, economic and professional perspectives (Egetenmeyer et al. 2019).

The (1) economy requires adult educators to deal with questions of supply and demand for their own educational offerings. Depending on the targets of the respective organisation, adult educators have to make their own arrangements in order to ensure cost coverage or profits. This is accompanied by competition from other adult education providers on the local or broader market. At the same time, there are requirements of the (2) bureaucracy, which we understand as standards. Public bodies can define these standards. Adult education organisations have to comply with such standards in order to obtain public funding for adult education courses such as labour market-oriented adult education, or integration courses for refugees and migrants. Standardisation is also related to questions of quality management, when adult education organisations have to meet predefined criteria in order to earn publicly-recognised certifications for their programme. The third perspective is (3) professionalism. From this perspective, adult educators working in the field are autonomous experts in adult education. They have sovereignty over adult education expertise, and with this perspective as a starting point, they organise, plan and implement processes of adult learning and teaching in a professional manner. In summary, when we talk about professionalism in adult education, we talk about adult educators who are continually dealing with different economic, bureaucratic and professional requirements as part of their daily work. Balancing the needs of the three different logics is characteristic of adult education. As Noordegraaf (2015) has argued, this balancing can be referred to as “hybrid professionalism” (Figure 1).

Researching the “new professionalism”

In the KOPROF project (Contours of professional development in continuing education: requirements for the professionalisation of personnel in continuing education), the authors focus

Figure 1: Perspectives of hybrid professionalism



on the “new professionalism” perspective in order to analyse professionalisation in professional continuing education in Germany. In order to obtain an overview of the interaction between the different logics, a three-level model was selected, comprising society, organisation and individual competences. The model involved collecting qualitative data (documents, interviews, focus groups) and quantitative data (a questionnaire) in eight continuing education organisations (Figure 2). The research process followed the research approach of the Critical Communicative Method (Gómez et al. 2011), which emphasises reflective research conducted in cooperation and dialogue with the target groups in order to initiate societal and political changes.

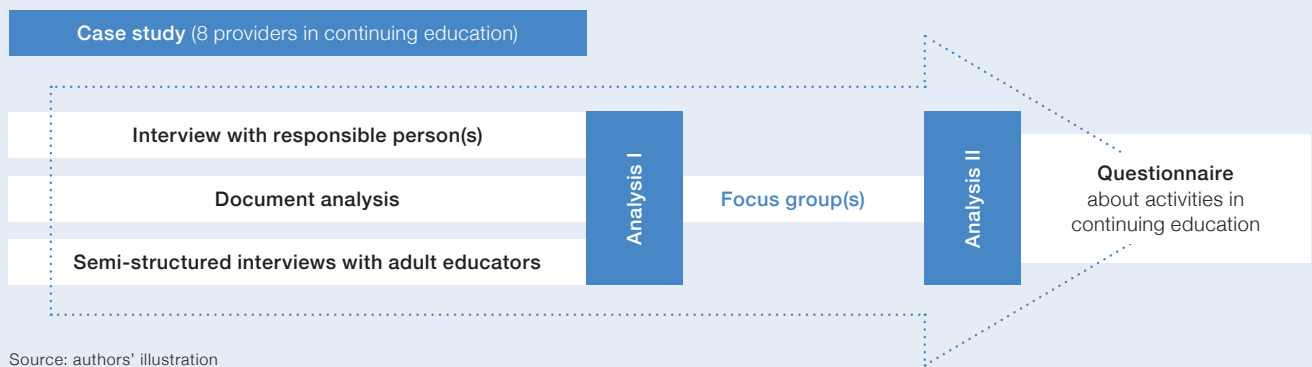
Adult education and continuing education are two terms that have been used synonymously in the German academic discourse for several decades. This does not ignore the different traditions of “adult education” as more general and civic education-orientated, and “continuing education” as more vocationally and professionally oriented. In fact, when looking at a provider or even a single course, it is often virtually impossible today to say whether it is undertaken for personal or professional development. This is why the interpretation of the data which were gathered from a continuing education provider is also relevant to adult and continuing education as one joint academic discipline.

Contours of professionalisation in adult and continuing education

The KOPROF project identified several overall contours of professionalisation in professional adult and continuing education. Firstly, the data supported the new professionalism perspective, meaning that the adult education organisation exerts a strong influence when it comes to the professionalisation of adult educators. Research currently focuses on identifying the qualifications, skills and competences needed

Figure 2: Methodical design of KOPROF

Critical Communicative Methodology



by adult educators. The necessary conditions for professional work and the existing possibilities and limitations of the work environment are not considered. Adult education organisations act as important interfaces between adult educators and society's demands. The data indicates that professionalisation is taking place when staff development and organisational development are closely interlinked. Adult educators identify with their organisational context and push the organisation forward through intensive networking in their individual field of activity. Organisational structures provide space for the individual development of adult educators. This important role of adult education organisations is supported by umbrella organisations. The latter bundle and provide general information, knowledge or training opportunities for their members. Because of the heterogeneity of adult education, the umbrella organisations help provide structure, identify needs in terms of societal developments, or define common quality standards.

A further overall contour of professionalisation could be identified as the mediating role of professional adult and continuing education. Adult and continuing educators mediate between the different requirements and expectations of various sides and players. They mediate between the pedagogical and subject-specific focus when preparing a course. During the course, they have to mediate between the wishes and motivations of participants and those of the principal who is funding it. They have to mediate between the targets of the adult education organisation for a specific course and the individual perception of the teacher teaching this course. Mediation between different sides and perspectives characterises adult educators' everyday working lives. In addition, the project found an institutionalisation of communication pathways for mediating between staff and society. Again, the umbrella organisation takes on an important role when it comes to communicating the experiences and expertise of adult educators in their daily practice to stakeholders in adult education policy.

The third contour refers to the systematic integration of these moments of mediation into organisational development.

It was possible to identify within this contour innovative ways of supporting the professional development of adult educators. Innovation was found where support for professional development was closely linked to organisational development. With this focus, the development of the organisation goes hand in hand with the individual development of adult education professionals. The professional development of the personnel is then central to achieving organisational development, for example when organisational strategies are developed towards digitalisation. If the organisation then offers professional development towards digitalisation, individual and organisational development strengthen one another.

Development needs for professionalisation in adult and continuing education

The KOPROF project used these findings in order to identify requirements for further development to help boost the professionalisation of adult education:

1. Adult education organisations are key when it comes to the individual professionalisation of adult educators. Adult education organisations can develop general conditions for professional development and offer space and support for professional actions and exchanges. Adult education organisations therefore have to be understood as key stakeholders within the individual professionalisation of adult educators.
2. Public funding has to cover the core budget of the adult education organisation (not only projects and activities) in order to value processes of organisational development. These are essential for individual professionalisation. Funding should therefore be designed in a way that supports contexts in which adult educators can act professionally.
3. Most people working in adult and continuing education have a specialised qualification, but what is needed are pedagogical competences for dealing with the require-

ments of the field. To address the different requirements within the field of work, and to mediate between the various demands, adult educators need opportunities to participate in continuing academic education. It is therefore essential to offer modularised academic courses in adult and continuing education. The number of courses that fit these demands is too small at present.

4. Finally, the KOPROF project identified the need for intensive practical research, which includes refining strategies that bring together research and practice in adult and continuing education, for example by providing joint workshops or by developing research projects.

The research results from KOPROF highlight the relevance of adopting a different perspective on professionalisation in adult and continuing education. We are talking about the perspective of the “new professionalism” approach, which emphasises the importance of adult and continuing organisations and the embeddedness of professionals in various requirements and demands from different sides. Research projects have to take account of these developments and of the specifics of the adult and continuing education field. They have to adopt a broader perspective which includes the organisational and societal levels in addition to the individual competences of the professional level, as well as the interplay between these levels.

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The good adult educators



Adama Sawadogo, Burkina Faso

“They were particularly keen on finding someone who was tough”

Adama Sawadogo is 48 years old, has six children and has been working as an adult educator in a village in Western Burkina since 2003.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Adama Sawadogo: My parents couldn't afford to let me continue my studies after I had been admitted to the BEPC examination, which is why I found myself back in my village. One day, I decided to enrol in the only literacy centre there was in the village. I remember that, at the time, there was no school in my village, and the nearest one was 12 kilometres away, so that was where I went to school. Only few parents agreed to send their children there because of how far away it was. After four months of intensive courses, and with the level I had, I was offered a place on a course to become a trainer in the centre (adult educator). They were particularly keen on finding someone who was tough, that is someone from the same background as the learners.

Please describe your current work.

I teach in Kouéré, which is 30 kilometres away from the rural municipality of Sidéradougou, of which the organisation, which is named Union dakélé des femmes de Sidéradougou (UDFS), is located in Western Burkina. Literacy teaching among adults in the villages of Burkina Faso takes place for the most part during off-season, which is from January to May, because the rainy season is from June to October, and harvest time is in November and December. Classes usually start at eight in the morning and finish at four in the afternoon, five days a week. My learners are aged sixteen and older.

Which is your favourite teaching method, and why?

At first, we used the classic method (instrumental knowledge), which means nothing other than learning how to read, write and do maths. We have now switched to the REFLECT

method, which meets the needs of the population by letting them have a say in which topics they are taught. The implementation of the ideas that have been collectively developed in the centre is particularly beneficial for the learners and the population. And because it has value for the learner, the REFLECT method is currently the most commonly used.

What motivates you?

Being with adults and sharing any knowledge that I have, and of course what they give me in return, especially when we discuss certain topics. Because I am the first endogenous trainer in my village, I am treated with a certain respect, and sometimes I am asked to weigh in on certain decisions that need to be taken. And this always motivates me. My village currently has seven trainers, all of whom were taught at my centre.

Adama Sawadogo



Svetlana Isaenko, Belarus

“I constantly learn new methods by taking part in training for educators”

Svetlana Isaenko works for several projects implemented by the NGO “Business Women’s Club” in Brest.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Svetlana Isaenko: I started my professional career as an adult educator. My first job after finishing postgraduate studies was at the Advanced training Institute for pedagogical staff, where I taught pedagogical and developmental psychology. After some time I simultaneously started teaching forensic psychology and psychology for business communication to specialists with higher education degrees who were enrolled in further education classes.

Please describe your current work.

As part of the project “Strengthening of national HIV and tuberculosis prevention, treatment, care and support systems in the Republic of Belarus”, I taught classes on safe sexual behaviour for long-distance drivers at the request of the Belarusian Association of International Road Carriers (BAMAP). My classes are held in the form of an interactive conversation based on training courses of BAMAP (in the classrooms of BAMAP Brest). Within the project “Education of women serving a sentence in open prison No. 1”, I taught a cycle of social and psychological training. The project was implemented with financial support from DVV International and aimed at the successful resocialisation of convicted women. Training courses were held in the summer of 2018, attended by a total of 40 women. The training subjects were conflict management, assertive behaviour, relations with the immediate social environment, and personal growth.

Which is your favourite working method, and why?

I prefer combined working methods: mini-lectures + group work + individual work + projective methods, etc. I had, and hopefully will have, different target groups, so combined



Svetlana Isaenko

working methods allow learners to come to terms with any educational situation. I constantly also learn new methods myself by attending train-the-trainer courses. For example, I recently learned about a forum theatre method.

What motivates you?

My work motivates me. I meet different people who have different social status, different jobs, things like that. I find all these things challenging, and I have to accept them.

Neelam Tiwari



Neelam Tiwari, India

“The literacy centres have become a women’s space”

Neelam Tiwari is a supervisor at the adult literacy centres run by Gram Vikas Sewa Sansthan (GVSS) in Mangraura block, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Neelam Tiwari: In 2011, I was pursuing my Master’s degree in Sanskrit. I learnt about an open position at a literacy centre. I applied, got the job, and realised that I was also the person best qualified for it.

Please describe your current work.

My work at the centre ranged from literacy and numeracy to hearty singing of songs. Most of the women enrolled in the centre were from OBC¹ and SC² communities; these are communities where women’s education is not given importance. The female literacy rate in the village was 26%³, and the women coming to the centre had never been to school, and nor had their husbands. The pedagogy we used emerges from, and was fundamentally linked to, rural women’s lives. I understood the importance of giving value to learners’ contexts and their experiences in the process to further knowledge construction. Developing women’s understanding on issues related to gender and violence, vis-à-vis their lived realities, was at the core of the teaching learning process. Our primers were written with a gender perspective, and they helped me not only in conducting discussions with women, but also to sharpen my own understanding of a feminist way of thinking. This understanding was challenged daily in my personal life. Initially, my husband supported my work, but he gradually started disliking it due to my increased mobility. He didn’t like the fact that I had to talk to the men of the vil-

lage as an equal. As I grew more financially independent, my husband used to find reasons to beat me. To address this, I started living with my in-laws. In 2018, when GVSS opened adult literacy centres for the women of a dairy cooperative in the same block, I was selected as a supervisor and was assigned the responsibility of overseeing fifteen adult literacy centres. I visit them all, support the teachers, and build their understanding on gender issues and feminist pedagogies.

Which is your favourite working method, and why?

I used to love making songs on the issues and concepts that were taught at the centre. We started our day singing songs that were also a call for women to join the centre. After that, I used to commence teaching. I also liked asking women to write on the blackboard. This gave them confidence about their learning abilities, and women used to appreciate each other, which helps in motivating them to learn further.

What motivates you?

I feel motivated and energised when I see women putting in that extra effort to learn, and especially when they share their positive experiences of attaining literacy. The literacy centres have become a women’s space where we all share similar journeys, but most importantly continue to learn together.

Notes

- ¹ / Other Backward Class (OBC) is a collective term used by the Government of India to classify castes which are educationally or socially disadvantaged.
- ² / The Scheduled Castes (SCs) are officially-designated groups of historically-disadvantaged people.
- ³ / Census 2011

Humberto da Silva Oliveira, Brazil

“Scientific and technical knowledge is essential for more active participation in contemporary society”

Humberto da Silva Oliveira has been teaching physics for the last 21 years, firstly in private schools and for the last 11 years in public schools in the state of Paraíba.

Adult Education and Development: How did you become an adult educator?

Humberto da Silva Oliveira: Various opportunities and challenges have arisen during my professional life. One was to work as an adult educator. This occurred due to the need to reschedule my working hours for the evening session. Until then my teaching experience was with young people and adolescents. My first contact with adult students was highly interesting because I realised that their motives and interests were very different. In addition, the classes were heterogeneous, with students of different ages and learning needs. This contact with adult education furthered my personal and professional growth. In adult education classes, mutual learning always takes place between teachers and students. This involvement renewed my dream and desire to contribute to the growth and intellectual strength of students and the local community.

Please describe your current work.

At present, I work in a public school in a district on the outskirts of the city of João Pessoa, teaching secondary-level physics in youth and adult education classes. Our learners are young people and adults who have not concluded basic education at what is considered the normal age. Most are workers, mainly in low-paid, unskilled jobs, for which no kind of professional qualification is required. Many of our students live in communities with little infrastructure where the lack of safety and the consequent violence affects them and frequently leads to them giving up their studies.

Which is your favourite working method, and why?

In order to attempt to overcome these difficulties and to contribute to the inclusion of the students in new environments, broadening their choices and opportunities, I believe that the teaching of physics can promote scientific and technological literacy for students who do not normally have access. I like to use the Science, Technology, Society and Environment approach with my students, together with the use of ICTs, as this allows us to acquire scientific and technical knowledge

which is essential for more active participation in contemporary society. As we live in an era of personal mobility and technology, we use diverse technologies, mainly smartphones, in order to offer opportunities for reflection and awareness with regard to the sciences and technologies present in our societies.

What motivates you?

It is apparent that through projects developed in the school, my students achieve the motivation to acquire new knowledge, skills and competences to handle and understand the new technologies and their influence in society. These changes can be seen in their behaviour, and in their commitment to seek new knowledge and to look for ways of solving their problems and improving their lives. All this is what motivates me and makes me believe that adult education can contribute to renewing students' lives.

**Humberto da
Silva Oliveira**



Are Egyptian adult educators ready for action research?



From left to right:

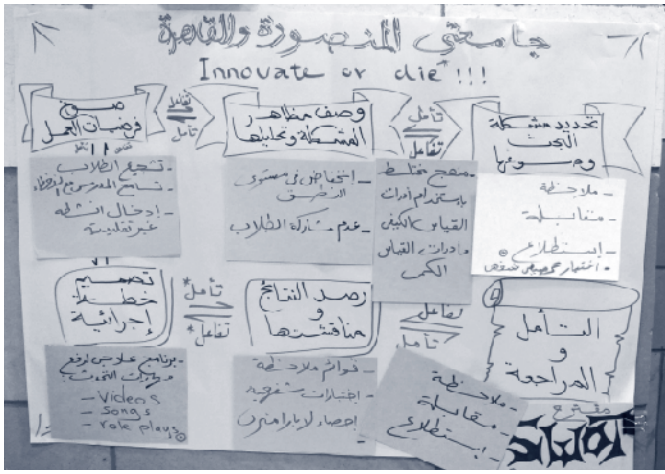
Khalaf M. Abdellatif
Hiroshima University
Japan

Eisuke Hisai
Hiroshima University
Japan

Abstract – *Adult educators contribute to the promotion of an “Egypt with no illiteracy”. There has been renewed interest recently in action research to promote educators’ professional development. While educators’ professional competences have been investigated in detail, more specific research competences have received little attention. Using the mixed-method approach, which includes quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, this article finds that educators attain neither the level of competence claimed in literature, nor attitudes to adopt action research for professional development. Policy-makers and training designers might consider it worthwhile to develop educators’ research competences before applying action research-based training programmes.*

Literacy is a universal human right. But illiteracy is blocking development efforts in many countries today, including Egypt. This affects the country on many levels, not least socioeconomically. One sector within education that addresses this issue is adult education. In order to promote literacy, adult educators must be professionally trained and have the right combination of competences. Many scholars have recently argued that competence-based professional development programmes are efficient, and hence the majority of adult educators in Egypt have an adequate level of professional competences. At the same time, globalisation, neoliberalism and other global trends have reshaped the concepts of learning and teaching in the 21st Century. This requires teachers and educators to upgrade their competences. Professional development programmes are now increasingly seeking to integrate knowledge, critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and research-based teaching.

Carrying out action research is a form of professional development for teachers because it empowers them to enhance their practices through reflective teaching, and it helps them to emphasise their skills and develop their professional competences. The concept of “teacher-as-researcher” encourages teachers and educators to be collaborators in improving their work environment, professionalising teaching, and developing policy (Johnson 1993). Teacher research has its roots in action research; it is advancing reform based on actual school experiences, through on-the-ground research.



Participants of the “Action Research for All Schools” training programme 2013 formulate their understanding of the steps of action research, American University in Cairo, Egypt



Participants of the “Action Research for All Schools” training programme 2013, American University in Cairo, Egypt

In this article we use the terms “adult educator” and “teacher” interchangeably to refer to the educator who works mainly in classrooms to contribute to the promotion of literacy in Egypt.

The competences of adult educators

Adult educators need to acquire certain skills or competences in order to do a good job, such as critical thinking, teamwork, decision-making and creativity. These skills, together with educational and teaching competences, are essential for educators to fulfil their roles.

“Teaching competences and professional competences of the adult educator are not the same.”

The idea and scope of educational competences are originally related to a major movement in the field of teacher education, namely the “competence-based education” movement, which first began to appear in the United Kingdom and the US in the 1940s. By 1968, this movement had become a trend through the emergence of teacher training programmes. Since then, training programmes based on competences have spread all over the world. It has made teachers and educators knowledgeable with regard to general, professional and specialised competences. In the competence-based programmes, a set of criteria for defining “the efficient educator” are developed on a scientific basis, relying on the principle of sufficiency rather than on knowledge as a frame of reference for training.

Teaching competences and professional competences of the adult educator are not the same. However, they share some characteristics. Teaching competences focus on the role of the adult educator within classrooms, as they are directly related to the teaching profession, professional knowl-

edge, and skills. They include knowledge, skills and directions for the adult educator to succeed in the teaching profession. But these competences are directly related to the teaching process, and do not go beyond the adult educator’s practices within the classroom. Teaching competences depend on the mastery of teaching materials, knowledge of learners’ psychological characteristics, knowledge of teaching and learning methods, the mastery of teaching skills, and the positive trend towards establishing good relations with learners in classrooms.

While professional competences refer to broader and structured scopes of the educator’s professionalism, competences also include the classroom, local community and professional development institutions. Thus, teaching competences are a particular aspect of professional competences. Both teaching and professional competences nonetheless aim to address rapid technological advancements and strengthen the teacher’s performance. Teaching skills are a component of teaching competences; they represent the ability to perform a particular work or activity related to the planning, execution, or evaluation of teaching, and this work is subject to analysis of a range of cognitive, psychomotor and social behaviours. Teaching skills can be evaluated by the following criteria: accuracy, achievement and the ability to adapt to changing teaching positions. The evaluation is done by using structured evaluation or observation methods. As a result, these skills can be improved through training programmes.

Action research

Action research is a continuous process of action and reflecting of actions in which practice is inseparable from pedagogical theory. The aim here is to improve educational practices or solve problems through four spiral steps: planning, action, observation and reflective evaluation. The steps are then repeated if the problem has not been solved. Although

Table 1: Sample responses

Modules	Number of competences	Overall score*	Neutral level**	Percentage of answers above the neutral level
General competences	7	2,226	1,134	80.2%
Professional competences	26	5,572	4,212	44.1%
Research competences	17	2,992	2,754	32.6%
Total	50	10,790	8,100	52.3%

* The overall score is the result of the self-assessment of all competences belonging to the respective category.

** The neutral level is the sum of all “neutral” answers in the respective category (neither agree or disagree; each neutral answer means a score of 2).

n=81

the literature does not indicate that there is a consensus on who first developed action research, most of the literature refers to Dewey, Collier, Lewin or Corey (McNiff 2014). Kurt Lewin however first coined the term action research in his 1946 paper entitled “Action Research and Minority Problems”.

Action research refers to the link between three elements: action, research and participation, whereby action and research are carried out interchangeably in order to achieve meaningful outcomes. Action research is also used to investigate the dimensions of a specific problem related to the learning environment, so that teachers and educators can reflect on how learners could learn. It is thus defined as a survey conducted by one or several teachers, with the purpose of concluding experiences that improve subsequent decisions, actions and practices (Sagor 2005).

Research competences

Research competences are important pillars for adult educators, as these competences enable them to undertake research into the degree of their professional development and to improve their practices. The pedagogical research is sought to support educational reform and improve practice. However, the teacher-as-researcher approach is a specific kind of empowerment; it helps bring about more specialised educational reform because it is implemented by teachers in order to improve their practice.

The literature states that educators-as-researchers need to have the following competences:

- proficiency in dealing with modern technology,
- the ability to search for information in global databases,
- awareness of qualitative and quantitative research methods,
- awareness of the framework of action research,
- awareness of scientific writing for search reports,
- mastery of English for searching and reading,
- acquiring sufficient ICT skills.

We therefore conclude that the research competences for adult educators include an awareness of the varied research concepts associated with adult education and research elements, educational research methods relevant to andragogy, and the role of action research in the professional development of adult educators. It is argued that adult educators are able to design research tools that are suited for use in participatory action research with their colleagues.

Competences of 81 adult educators

There are many programmes for developing professional competences of adult educators in Egypt. Some of them use action research as an approach to develop teachers’ competences, while some other higher education institutions provide action-research training and highlight the potential of action research. For instance, the first annual teachers’ conference dedicated to improving education in the Arab world discussed the potential of action research in formal and informal education. The conference took place in Cairo on 10-12 January 2016, and was organised by the Middle East Institute for Higher Education at the American University in Cairo, in cooperation with the Arab League, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO), and the UNESCO regional office in Egypt. The event was supported by the Ford Foundation. This is a concrete example where policy-makers in the region are aware of action research, and are considering its benefits. But that is only one level. Are Egyptian adult educators ready for action research? Do they have the research and professional competences needed to drive action research projects in their classrooms?

We chose the governorate of Suez in Egypt as a case study because of its varied environments: industrial, coastal and agricultural. There are also several oil companies, international shipping agencies and many factories in Al-Adabia and Ain Al-Sokhna which make it an attractive governorate for people from all over the country.

Table 2: List of all competences and the respective scores according to the self-assessment
in order of score (highest first)

1. General competences		Score
1	Understand the theories of adult education	324
2	Explain the function of adult education	322
3	Explain the link between adult education and achieving development	322
4	Participate in developing adult education programmes	321
5	Understand the philosophy and the concepts of adult education	316
6	Explain the social role of the adult educator	314
7	Identify the local and global challenges of the 21st Century and their impact on adult education	307
Overall score		2,226
2. Professional competences		Score
1	Plan for teaching adults effectively	319
2	Manage the teaching situation to achieve learning objectives effectively	317
3	Help adult learners to enhance their achievement levels	317
4	Use technological teaching aids in their classrooms	314
5	Identify learning theories and their educational implications for adult learners	311
6	Understand the role of adult educator in teaching for adults	301
7	Understand issues related to the topics of educational material provided to adult learners	298
8	Act as a facilitator in cooperative learning activities of adult learners	280
9	Be aware of the psychological and social aspects of adult learners and their motivation to learn	277
10	Structure teaching goals and aims addressing various levels of learners	269
11	Take into consideration the individual differences between adult learners	257
12	Be aware of the process of evaluating adult learners' achievement through different methods	198
13	Help lower achievers to develop their learning through individual teaching (one-to-one)	193
14	Use various teaching methods and strategies for teaching adult learners	188
15	Help adult learners to investigate the causes of their learning difficulties	187
16	Use various teaching models and aids for teaching adult learners	180
17	Use both oral and written assessment comprehensively	173
18	Have a sense of humour and develop learners' motivation	167
19	Use critical thinking skills and problem solving in teaching adults	161
20	Establish a meaningful dialogue with adult learners	154
21	Develop creative and innovative practices	150
22	Teach adult learners needed soft skills adequately	149
23	Work in a group with other staff members	139
24	Teach adult learners to develop their thinking skills	93
25	Teach adult learners how to learn	92
26	Address learners' diversity and multiculturalism	88
Overall score		5,572

3. Research competences		Score
1	Write research reports	315
2	Show sufficient ICT skills	265
3	Understand the concepts related to researching in adult education	223
4	Understand the basics of citation and the issues of plagiarism	212
5	Use scientific databases to search for useful information and data	206
6	Be fluent in English for the purposes of researching and reading	203
7	Design research tools (questionnaire, survey..., etc.) suitable for research	190
8	Use reflective teaching to enhance practices	188
9	Fully master the Arabic language	185
10	Cope with the difficulties of research	181
11	Peruse postgraduate studies (specialised diplomas, Masters..., etc.)	181
12	Use different types of methodology (inductive, deductive..., etc.)	178
13	Adopt the teacher-as-research approach for professionalism	117
14	Understand qualitative and quantitative research methods	99
15	Understand what action research is, as well as its educational framework in adult education	92
16	Understand the role of action research in the professional development of adult educators	86
17	Do participatory action research with colleagues	71
Overall score		2,992

The research followed a mixed-method approach. A random sample of 81 educators, 71 women and ten men, were given questionnaires with which to self-assess their competences. In addition, five interviews were held with the management staff of the general authority of adult education in Suez.

The questionnaire was designed to assess the professional competences of adult educators. It was made up of three parts: general competences (seven competences), teaching competences (26 competences) and research competences (17 competences). The educators were asked to self-assess their competences on a scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), with 2 being neutral (neither agree nor disagree). Construct validity was determined, and test-retest reliability was 0.996 (Cronbach's alpha), which represents excellent reliability and implies that the measure was consistent overall.

The analysis of the results revealed adult educators' overall level of competence to be 52.3%. In other words, 52.3% of the answers were above the neutral level. The general, teaching and research competences were not equally high, and the study showed that the teachers have significant shortcomings with regard to some of the competences. Table 1 gives an overview of the results.

The analysis of *general competences*, which are essential for any teacher or educator, shows that all the educators examined scored a high level of these competences (80.2%

of the answers being above the neutral level). This indicates that the preparation and in-service training of adult educators in Egypt promote their general competences effectively. The top three general competences were: "Understand the theories of adult education", "Explain the function of adult education" and "Explain the link between adult education and achieving development". Table 2 provides an overview of all the competences and the results.

Educators showed an adequate level of *professional competences*, but it is below the neutral level in 56% of the answers, revealing that training programmes are needed that develop these competences effectively. According to the self assessment, the educators scored high in professional competences such as "Plan for teaching adults effectively", "Manage the teaching situation to achieve learning objectives effectively" or "Help adult learners enhance their achievement levels". They scored lowest in the competences "Teach adult learners to develop their thinking skills", "Teach adult learners how to learn" and "Address learners' diversity and multiculturalism" (see Table 2).

The level of *research competences* was significantly below the adequate level. Only six out of 17 competences were above the neutral level according to the self-assessment (see Table 2), among them: "Write research reports", "Show sufficient ICT skills" and "Understand the concepts related to researching in adult education". The test subjects showed

inadequate levels in 11 research competences. Among the weakest were: “Understand qualitative and quantitative research methods”, “Understand the role of action research in the professional development of adult educators” and “Do participatory action research with colleagues”.

The interviews with the management staff of the general authority of adult education in Suez confirmed the results of the questionnaire. The director of the training unit said: “From my experience, I think that adult educators are not good in professional competences, they need more: more training, more action and more work”.

When she was asked about the research competences, she explained: “I am not surprised. They are doing their best, but we do not offer them the right track. I think that adult educators should be made familiar with action research first, maybe through booklets, or one-day training to introduce the concept and its importance”.

All the interviewees confirmed that the adult educators have no problem with general competences, but that they seem to have problems with *some* professional competences, and that they need to develop their research competences first before adopting action research to enhance their practices.

Further steps

The study revealed that adult educators in Suez, Egypt, satisfy neither the level of competence claimed in the literature (regarding research competences in particular), nor attitudes to adopt action research for professional development. We think that the time to introduce action research to educators is yet to come. Policy-makers and training designers might consider developing educators’ professional competences and research competences, respectively.

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Online extras

Our journal continues online! You can read some extra materials on “the good adult educator”, written exclusively for the digital version of *Adult Education and Development*. They are available at www.dvv-international.de/adult-education-and-development. Just choose edition 86 and look for the online-extra section in the content list.

Making good adult educators for the 21st Century

Moshood Ayinde Hassan
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Abstract – *Many professions today require specific skills and professional training. To engage in adult education, professional teachers and trainers must also obtain relevant skills and traits in order to cater for the requirements of adult learners. This article explains what type of training skills adult educators need, based on the situation in Nigeria.*

The role played by instructors in the performance of literacy programmes in Morocco

Laila Bouzarra
Cadi Ayyad University
Morocco

Monia Alazali
Cadi Ayyad University
Morocco

Mohammed Bougroum
Cadi Ayyad University
Morocco

Abstract – *An empirical analysis conducted in Morocco, based on original longitudinal data obtained from a survey conducted in the city of Marrakesh, showed that the performance of literacy programmes is substantially influenced by the instructor’s professional qualities and by his or her recruitment conditions (university degree, vocational training and amount of remuneration). This study helps improve the choice of criteria used to define the appropriate profile of a literacy teacher.*



Qualities of a good adult educator: Empathy

AED through the ages

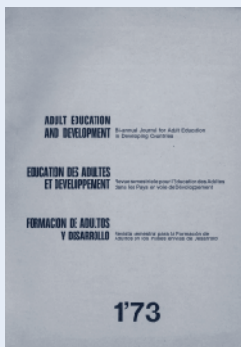
A short history compiled by Heribert Hinzen and Ruth Sarrazin

The early international activities and programmes of the German adult education centres (Volkshochschulen, vhs) and the German Adult Education Association (DVV) were part of the reconciliation and decolonisation processes, and were institutionalised with the founding of DVV International in 1969. Ever since then, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been financing and supporting cooperation with adult education partners on a project basis.

Most of the projects are related to work in countries and regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. In addition, there have been special cross-cutting projects related to information and communication, training of trainers, and global learning in vhs.

The longest-running project of DVV International is the journal Adult Education and Development (AED). It was launched in 1973 with the aim in mind to share information

1
1973



DVV International publishes the first issue of AED, intended as a follow-up for the participants in the further training courses organised by DVV International and for the staff of projects abroad. All three languages (English, French and Spanish) are collected in one volume comprised of 36 pages. AED will appear twice per year until 2013, and yearly after that until 2019.

10
1978



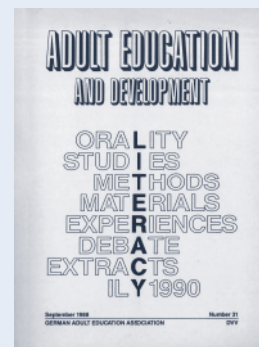
Circulation and readership are growing quickly, making AED a forum for adult educators from all over the world. The focus is – and will remain – on practice. Most of the readers and authors are from countries in the global South. Each language is now published in a separate volume, giving much more space for contributions. Issue 10 focuses on education and health.

19
1982



The journal also analyses different forms of development cooperation and its impact, often taking a (self-)critical look, as demonstrated in this cartoon from AED 19. Amongst other things, this issue includes one chapter on “cooperation for development”. Partner organisations of DVV International supported translations into more languages for wider dissemination and use.

31
1988



Literacy is one of the crucial topics that recurs in many issues of AED. The United Nations declared 1990 to be the International Literacy Year (ILY). DVV International decided to contribute to the preparation of this year by publishing a special issue of AED on the topic.

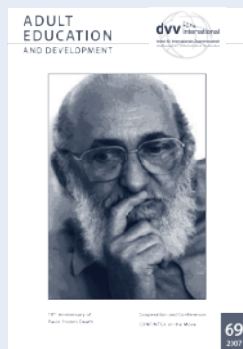
on activities in our field and to provide a platform to exchange ideas and experiences. While the early issues had a print run of only 500 copies, the peak distribution reached 20,000 copies that were sent out to colleagues and partners around the globe. To understand the growth and relevance a bit better, we have compiled some milestones in AED's history for you.

49
1997



UNESCO's Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, CONFITEA V, took place in Hamburg, Germany, in July 1997. It brought together almost 2,000 people from more than 150 countries. AED has closely followed these and other international debates and processes over the past decades, making the outcomes and discussions available to a worldwide readership with often limited access to such information.

69
2007



This issue places the focus on Paulo Freire, the great educationist who died ten years earlier in 1997, and whose thinking lives on in theory and in practice to the present day. In 2007, AED is no longer a print-only publication. Following the digital trend, AED also starts appearing online. All issues from the year 2000 onwards can be read online article by article, making it easy also for colleagues with low Internet bandwidth to access the contents.

80
2013



AED reinvents itself, with a new concept and a new layout. An editorial board is established consisting of ten adult education experts from around the globe. The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) becomes a cooperation partner, organising virtual seminars for each issue. The first "new" issue 80 deals with the post-2015 era, after Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

86
2019



AED writes its final chapter. The latest and final issue of AED is now in your hands. Project financing is coming to an end, and DVV International has to close down its journal. With all the positive feedback from our readers, contributors and partners, we feel that this is a loss for our efforts for the profession of adult education in development. However, we are also thankful for 46 years of support, of cooperation, learning and sharing!

Memories of a journal

By friends, contributors and readers

"Many years ago, when working on indigenous knowledge with regard to adult education, the AED journal was the one source of really interesting research work on IKS. Where else could one find alternative knowledge about the process of education and learning, community activism and adult education? AED will be badly missed."

**Astrid von Kotze, author and reader of AED,
Popular Education Programme, South Africa**

"Your magazine is great! I just finished AED 81 and feel like there's hope left for the world."

**Feedback from a reader
on issue 81**

"I first encountered this journal as a Master's student in Adult and Community Education at Manchester University in 1977. To become part of the editorial board many years later was a privilege greatly enhanced by the collective nature of the work in which board members were effectively involved in decisions concerning all aspects of each number of the journal. With its passing, we have lost a valuable contribution to the debate on adult education globally at a time when we most need it."

**Timothy D. Ireland,
Member of the AED Editorial Board (2013–2018) and
Consultancy Board, University
of Paraiba, Brazil**

"I am really struck by the cover of the journal 'Inclusion and Diversity'. Really seeing the cover one wants to read the whole journal."

**Feedback from a reader
on issue 84**

"The journal talks about urgent issues on adult education. It is a tool for advocacy made accessible to all."

Feedback from a reader

"Something that started off in 1973 with thin editions that were written up on a typewriter developed, thanks to digitalisation and to the technical progress that has taken place in printing and typesetting, to become a professionally-designed magazine meeting the highest expectations in terms of both its content and its appearance. I am glad that I was part of this process for more than two decades."

Gisela Waschek, former member of the editorial team of AED, Germany

"22 years ago I translated my first article for Adult Education and Development, without having much of an idea about the areas that adult education could cover. This collaboration, which has lasted for more than two decades, has been an enrichment for me, allowing me to discover innumerable facets of what learning and the imparting of knowledge, skills and wisdom can mean, encompassing all areas of life, all locations, all social milieus, and ultimately every one of us, whatever age group we belong to. It is with sadness that I see this collaboration coming to an end, but at the same time I am proud to have been a part of it. Thank you for all that!"

**Catherine da Silva-Pedersen, Translator
(English > French) for AED, Germany/France**

"The AED publication has been the foremost adult education journal of our time, strong in the promotion and dissemination of information on adult and non-formal education practices round the world that may have been hitherto unknown and unshared. It is sad that this worthwhile venture is coming to an end, as I have truly enjoyed the publication and am greatly honoured to have contributed to some of its editions."

**Diipo Fagunwa, author and reader
of AED, Elderly Care and Support
Services (ELCASUSE), Nigeria**

“This very professional journal will certainly help me in the implementation of my literacy and adult education programmes.”

Feedback from a reader

“I will always cherish the opportunity I was afforded to serve on the editorial board of the Adult Education and Development journal for three years. I found it a rewarding experience in a number of ways: experiencing diverse peoples and cultures; interacting with a group of individuals with varying and sometimes opposing views and sharing in a process leading to mutual agreement; and contributing to scholarship in the field of adult education.”

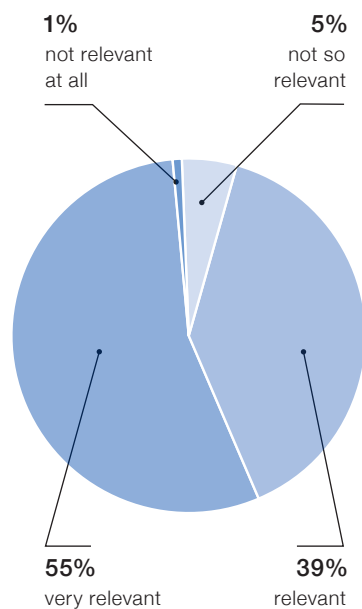
Shermaine Barrett, Member of the AED Editorial Board (2017–2019), University of Technology, Jamaica

“The renewal of Adult Education and Development (AED) to its present format, design and content was a real lift for improving the visibility of important trends and tasks of adult learning and education globally. The mix of articles based on research, interviews, adult learners’ and trainers’ voices, columns, illustrations and pictures is remarkable. Because of the thematic profiles and choices, the issues will last a long time. Cooperation between DVV International and ICAE has also been unique, with ICAE responsible for following up the issues by on-line seminars.”

Sturla Bjerkaker, Member of the AED Editorial Board (2013–2018) and Consultancy Board, Norway

Result from the 2018 readers survey (265 readers answered this question)

How relevant is the publication to you?



“I always appreciated your creative focus, covering a variety of perspectives and practices accessible to many. As you know, community practitioners in the field do not access and do not read the main academic publications on adult education and community development. And yours is an exception.”

Feedback from a reader

“In the 1990s, Adult Education and Development played an important role in helping us to share innovative experiences of the REFLECT approach to adult learning – creating a space for dialogue and exchange between practitioners and researchers in South and South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South America. This journal helped us to grapple with and overcome the power of geographies, languages, institutions and disciplines which so often limit the spread of innovation.”

David Archer, author and reader of AED, ActionAid International, United Kingdom

“The journal has indeed expanded the minds of people globally. People have learnt to discuss and how to transform their villages.”

Feedback from a reader

“AED has been an important component throughout my professional life. I read the early issues during my doctoral dissertation. My first contribution as an author was in 1975, and already in 1978 my time as editor of AED began. Since 2013, I served on the editorial board. To work on and for AED created the great challenge and opportunity to keep close to current policy and practice. This global voice on adult education and lifelong learning in their potential to support sustainable development will certainly be missed.”

Heribert Hinzen, former editor of AED, Member of the AED Editorial Board (2013–2017) and Consultancy Board, Germany

“I just found a little error, on page 58 there are three numbered pictures and labels, but numbers 6 and 7 are inverted.”

Feedback from a very careful reader

Get involved!

The roles and impacts of adult education: a global debate



Timothy D. Ireland is professor of Adult Education at the Federal University of Paraiba, in João Pessoa (Brazil).

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The ICAE 2019 Virtual Seminar discussed questions raised in the latest issue of the *Adult Education and Development* journal. This issue focused on the roles and impacts of adult education. What follows is a reflection on the exchanges which took place during the seminar.

In 1964, the Beatles sang, “I don’t care too much for money, money can’t buy me love”. Whilst that is probably still the case in 2019, it is definitely not the case for health care or for education. Health care and education have long been commodities to be sold and negotiated on the open market. Even adult education, which was never considered an easy “sell” to investors, is now attracting attention especially from those who are investing in distance or online education. Education is as subject to the power of economics as is foreign policy and other areas of government activity. Hence, whilst we as educators continue to consider quality of life and “good living” as the ultimate aims of education for all, this is perhaps not the goal of those neoliberal policies which prevail in most parts of the globe at present. From the neoliberal perspective, education is seen as a utilitarian means to the economic end of greater productivity, consumption and generation of wealth. It cares little for the natural environment and the well-being of the global community, despite all the efforts of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to establish goals to combat climate change and its impacts, to achieve food security, gender equality, water and sanitation for all, full and productive employment and decent work, and promote peaceful and inclusive societies. Growth in the productive process is, in general, premised on homogeneity, leaving little space for heterogeneity and diversity. We see this in education through an obsession with standardised tests.

The curse of the tests

Standardised tests seem to be for education what Gross National Product – GNP, is for economists: standardised tests measure results and not processes, whilst GNP measures the overall material wealth of a nation and not the way in which that wealth is distributed. In a speech in March 1968 at the University of Kansas, Robert Kennedy launched an unexpected criticism of the value of GNP, lamenting that “Too much and for too long, we seemed to have surrendered personal excellence and community values in the mere accumulation of material things” and questioned the capacity of

GNP to measure that which we most value in life: “It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country, it measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile” (Kennedy 1968). Chanell Butler-Morello’s article is an excellent example of the learning and personal growth which we can miss through over-dependence on standardised tests, which as Jorge Osório affirms, “distort the meaning of education in diversity”.

“We must all band together in solidarity to safeguard this planet whose existence is so crucial to our own well-being.”

Hessel, Morin 2011

In the document *Rethinking Education: towards a global common good* (2015), UNESCO affirms that “The development and use of knowledge are the ultimate purposes of education, guided by principles of the type of society to which we aspire” (p. 78) and should be considered as global common goods which belong to all humanity, that is “education and knowledge are collective goods – they belong to all of us. Consequently, we all have the right to education and to acquire knowledge, and the purpose of this process is not individual gain but the well-being of all”. We should perhaps use the noun “knowledge” in the plural – “knowledges” – since the belief that there is only one way of knowing the world is one of the motives for our current malaise. Whilst globalisation has brought some benefits to the global community, it has also tended to exacerbate inequalities between North and South, between nations and between different regions within the same nation. The obsession with growth as an indicator of development needs to be replaced with a “more complex and nuanced imperative that distinguishes between what we need to increase and what we need to diminish” (Hessel, Morin 2011). We need, in the words of Hessel and Morin, to “pursue and encourage the kinds of globalisation that foster a shared future for human beings from all walks of life and everywhere on Earth – a future that will protect us from a grim array of mortal dangers. We must all band together in solidarity to safeguard this planet whose existence is so crucial to our own well-being”. This “banding together in solidarity” requires processes of adult learning and education, which were at the heart of this edition of the virtual seminar as we sought to understand the role and impact of adult education or, to be more precise, the roles and impacts of adult education.

A word on dignity

Whilst the focus of each of the four articles chosen for this year’s discussion was different: health literacy, the learning needs of the disabled, functional literacy as the key to the development of Africa, and the challenges of data produc-

Virtual Seminar 2019

All the contributions of the virtual seminar can be read online at <http://virtualseminar.icae.global/>

Video recordings of the webinars are available on Youtube:

- Webinar with Henrique Lopes (Portuguese Catholic University) and Leona M. English (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada) on adult education and health: <https://youtu.be/-xazsNrkg4>
- Webinar with Samuel Asnake Wollie (UNESCO Liaison Office Addis Ababa) and Shirley Walters (University of the Western Cape, South Africa) on the role of adult education for the future of the African continent: <https://youtu.be/XsoyOSWhBuY>

Adult Education and Development

Issue 85 > “Role and Impact of Adult Education”

Free print copies of *Adult Education and Development*, issue 85 on “Role and Impact of Adult Education” are still available and can be ordered at info@dvv-international.de



tion – given the intersectoral nature of ALE, all point to the importance of education and learning as fundamental ingredients for the quality of human life, for sustainable development and for human dignity. Knowledge, education and health are basic human needs, which for that reason must be accessible to all and not left to the whims of the soulless market. Moreover, in order for the rights to knowledge, education and health to flourish, the health of democratic governments is essential: systems of government, which defend the *right to be equal whenever difference diminishes us* and the *right to be different whenever equality decharacterizes us* (Santos 2001).

References

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Get Involved! ICAE webinar series 2020

Following each issue of *Adult Education and Development*, our cooperation partner, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), offers you the chance to discuss the topics raised in the print issue in a virtual seminar.

For this last issue, ICAE will offer a series of webinars on “the good adult educator” in the course of February 2020. The following contributions of this issue will be the starting points of the webinars:

Glocalisation – How the Curriculum globALE was localised in Laos to train adult educators (see page 22)

Webinar with Uwe Gartenschlaeger, DVV International; commenter: Katharina Popovic, ICAE. The webinar will be offered in English.

> 13 February 2020, 15:00 CET

It is not enough to fund teacher training, or to make the field more attractive (see page 42)

Webinar with Haldis Holst, Deputy General Secretary of Education International. The webinar will be offered in English.

> 25 February 2020, 15:00 CET

The role of continuing education in providing good adult educators (see page 59)

Webinar with Carole Avande Houndjo, Pamoja West Africa, Benin; commenter: Vincent Houessou, Ministry in charge of literacy, Benin. The webinar will be offered in French.

> 20 February 2020, 16:00 CET

During the webinars, the authors will present their thoughts and arguments, further discuss with the commenter and exchange with the participants.

The webinars are free of charge and open to anyone! Do you want to participate? You can register at <https://bit.ly/2maqNi5> or send an e-mail to policy@icae.global. Registration is open now! Deadline for registration is the day before the webinar takes place.

The webinars will run in English or French on the platform zoom.us, which you can access through a normal web browser, or through the zoom.us app. Technical support is available if you need it.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Ricarda Motschilnig (policy@icae.global).



Artists in this issue

Thaakierah Abdul

Cover artist and illustrator



Thaakierah Abdul (South Africa) is a Cape Malay, colourful and bold female visual communication designer. Through her work, she aims to push not only design boundaries but societal boundaries as well. She would consider her work to be a “hot mess” (a constant work in progress). It’s a combination of experimental design and documentation.

Contact

E-mail: thaakieraha@hotmail.com

Instagram: whitespace_____ (5 underscores)

Adult Education and Development: Who has been the best teacher in your life?

Thaakierah Abdul: My mother has been the best teacher that I’ve ever crossed paths with. Cheesy I know, but she has taught me in ways that exceed verbal communication. Her way of life, mannerisms and her ethos as an individual have given me perspective on how to view the world and exist within it. I salute her confidence, independence, her tenderness and her perseverance to push through any obstacles that attempted to block her blessings. These attributes have become a ‘get out of jail card’ for me. It helps me escape many hard realities that I face on a daily basis. It’s allowed me to chase my dreams and grab amazing opportunities. I am a mould of her persona. She is a dream and continues to act as an amazing role model. It’s hard to explain, but I know how she has benefitted my well-being through her actions in the way I explore my journey through life.

Bhamati Sivapalan

Photographer



Bhamati Sivapalan is an independent filmmaker based in Delhi, India. Her work is around documenting social movements, art and music. She is interested in the medium of cinema as a political and poetic witness. Besides films, she dabbles in photography, design and animation.

Adult Education and Development: Who has been the best teacher in your life?

Bhamati Sivapalan: My peers have been my best teachers. The fundamentals of my world view owe a lot to shared learning and conversations.



The microphone icon was designed by Shira Bentley (<http://shirabentley.com>), illustrator of AED 85.

Famous last words

Thank you. What you are currently holding in your hand is the last ever issue of *Adult Education and Development*. We have packed this issue to the brim with engaging, challenging, fun and serious articles, photos, columns, reflections, editorials, notes, illustrations and stories. Because we felt we had to. That we owe it to you, dear faithful reader. Many of you will find yourselves in these pages, as we decided to dedicate this historical issue to the good adult educator. Please read, reflect and discuss whatever you find of interest, and then share your thoughts with your colleagues, friends, with us, with the world. More than anything, we have tried to promote and support the global dialogue. Even if this publication ends here, the discussion goes on.

By the way, you might also want to save this copy for the future. Who knows, it just might turn out to be a collector's item ...

www.dvv-international.de/adult-education-and-development

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