



## Lifelong Learning: Just a goal, not a reality?

The very early conceptualisation of ‘lifelong learning’ can be traced in Paul Lengrand’s work – Introduction to Lifelong Education (UNESCO) in 1970, placing education in its finest context when it envisions “*human societies as being made up of continually learning and growing individuals*”. It found resonance in the Faure Commission Report (Learning To Be) of 1972, which proposed that education is “*not a concomitant of a particular age but it is reaching out to embrace the whole of society and the entire lifespan of the individual*”. After two decades, this concept gained further impetus in the Delors Report (Learning: The Treasure Within) of 1996, which, through articulation of the four pillars of learning, emphasised on the renewal of knowledge, skills, and learning abilities of individuals to collectively adapt to the changing environment.

While UNESCO played a significant role in laying the foundations of lifelong learning through the aforementioned reports, the more recent international and regional mandate on lifelong learning for national (socio-economic) development has been provided for by the Hamburg Declaration (1997), expressing that the “*ultimate goal of education should be the creation of learning society committed to social justice and general well-being*”. The Belem Framework of Action (2009) further affirmed the role of lifelong learning as “*an organising principle of all forms of education*” in addressing global educational issues and development challenges. The World Education Forum in 2015, which drafted the Incheon Declaration, included “*opportunities for lifelong learning for all*” and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, enunciated by the Incheon



*The Belem Framework of Action (2009) further affirmed the role of lifelong learning as “an organising principle of all forms of education” in addressing global educational issues and development challenges.*

Declaration, enjoined the education sector worldwide to “*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*”.

Lifelong learning has thus gained ground and is now popularly understood as meeting the diverse and context-specific learning needs of all age groups, including the acquisition of basic literacy, technical skills through both formal education, and effective alternative pathways to learning. Literacy, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), adult learning, and education all represent significant components of the lifelong learning process.

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) proposes a definition of lifelong learning: “*Lifelong learning is rooted in the integration of learning and living. It covers learning activities for people of all ages (children, young people, adults and older adults) in all life-wide contexts (families,*

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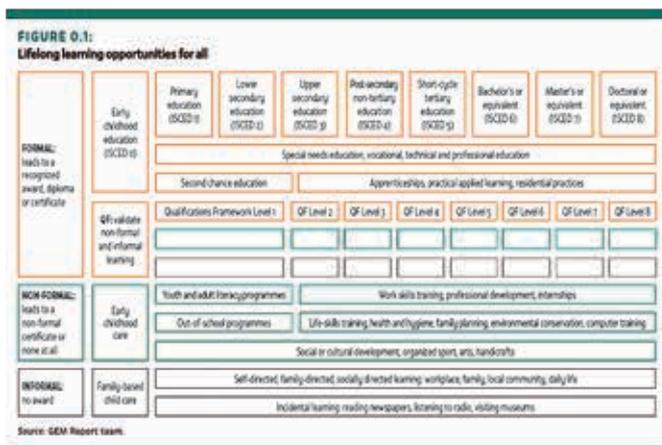
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*Lifelong learning is popularly understood as meeting the diverse and context-specific learning needs of all age groups, including the acquisition of basic literacy, and technical skills through both formal education and effective alternative pathways to learning.*

*(schools, communities, workplaces, etc.) and through a variety of modalities (formal, non-formal and informal) which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands. Education systems that promote lifelong learning adopt a holistic and sector-wide approach involving all sub-sectors and levels of education in order to ensure the provision of learning opportunities for all individuals” (UIL, 2013).*

This certainly represents a shift from earlier conventional perceptions of lifelong learning as pertaining solely to adult education or poor quality alternatives to formal education (GEMR, 2016). The Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) 2016 observes that, “the post-2015 development agenda conceives of lifelong learning as a process, one that begins at birth and carries through all stages of life”, helpfully illustrated by this figure:



The scope of lifelong learning presents considerable difficulties for monitoring, measuring the wide range of ‘providers’, ‘modes of delivery’, quality, and meaningful learning outcomes. Without robust indicators for process and outcomes, lifelong learning poses a challenge for being translated effectively into policy and financing frameworks.

While education systems in the Asia Pacific are well developed in the legislation, programmes, and financing frameworks for the ‘formal’ education streams, adult, non-formal, and informal education are far less appreciated or developed.

This lack of recognition is equally exhibited in the poor public financing accorded adult, non-formal education.

Adult education and learning provisioning in the Asia Pacific region has evolved over the decades – from literacy campaigns for acquisition of basic literacy skills, to building of literate environments for reinforcing these newly learnt skills, and creation of lifelong learning communities to foster participation of individuals in the various social dimensions of their lives. Of late, youth and adult education and learning has found greater recognition for its value in facilitating employability through in-service skills training and upgradation in the face of the increased pace of change in knowledge, technology, product, and labour markets.

The vision of adult and lifelong learning, however, has to incorporate economic as well as wider social objectives. While the economic objective of lifelong learning finds emphasis in employability, enhanced livelihoods and improved productivity at the work place - for example, the social objectives of lifelong learning as vehicles of social inclusion and justice, human dignity, human rights, sustainable development, global citizenship, and respect for cultural diversity - need equal, if not greater, recognition.

Though still not expressed in legislation in most cases, lifelong learning is making inroads in the national education policy discourses in the Asia Pacific region, as some of the country examples in this issue of *Ed-lines* will indicate. NGOs strongly promoting community-based practice for basic literacy, TVET, and education of youth and adults also contributes significantly to this.

A majority of ASPBAE members based in the countries of the Asia Pacific region sustain efforts at espousing a lifelong learning approach in their education interventions in the arenas of education practice as well as advocacy at the local level. ASPBAE has been fostering study exchanges amongst its members to build an appreciation and adapt an approach to lifelong learning. Compilation of a toolkit on lifelong learning, based on the experiences of its members, has been a continuing effort of ASPBAE. An initiative on a multi-country action research with marginalised youth on exploring and articulating their education and training needs for livelihood and life skills, as well as a proposed research



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on policy and financing initiatives for gender-just skills training for marginalised women, are concrete steps that ASPBAE has undertaken to build capacities, especially among CSOs to advance SDG 4 and promote lifelong learning opportunities in the region.

ASPBAE's participation in the global and regional consultative processes to define the new education agenda yielded much success in meeting its set targets for the post-2015 campaign – in terms of addressing the unfinished business of Education for All (EFA), upholding the right to education, and adopting a framework of lifelong learning. ASPBAE's strategic intent is to sustain its policy engagements in adult education and lifelong learning through the SDG-SDG 4 follow up processes, in the forthcoming CONFINTEA 6 Mid-Term Review, and the regional launch of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) and related policy forum on youth and adult education, amongst others.

Lifelong learning is still a goal and not a reality for all in the Asia Pacific context. Hopefully, the global agreement on a goal for education (SDG 4) promoting lifelong learning for all will provide an impetus for the articulation of national policies and programmes for lifelong learning in the region, with the extensive in-country work of NGOs supporting adult literacy, early childhood care and education, and community-based non-formal education, which offer strong building blocks for lifelong learning.

## EDITORIAL

# The challenges of pushing for commitments to lifelong learning in the SDGs and SDG4

*By Sandra Morrison, President, International Council of Adult Education (ICAE)*

**T**he 2015 World Education Forum adopted the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030, which sets out a new vision for education for the next fifteen years. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises the central role of education by establishing a specific stand-alone goal (SDG 4) for education which states “*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*” Global agreements are one thing, but the translation and concretisation of lifelong learning into national policies and local activities is another!



*Sandra Morrison*

As a fundamental first step to progressing the Agenda, it is important for civil society to harness the gains from the past and to clarify future goals. The Education for All (EFA) goals were initiated in Jomtien in 1990, they were affirmed in Dakar in 2000, and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000 certainly progressed the education agenda. While there is unfinished business, there will also be lessons and experiences to draw upon as a guide. It is also important to remember that the world is under constant change - environmentally, technologically, through globalisation, and in a quest for world peace. Migrations of people escaping war and terror is dominant and education for moving communities is an emerging phenomena. How does lifelong learning respond and resolve such catastrophic issues?

The renewed education agenda is holistic, is committed to making a difference and to transforming lives. The renewed education agenda must take stock of all the good and all the not-so-good and be flexible and responsive. Learning must be seen as a continuum, without prioritising one type of education over the other – an argument often misused, polarising formal and non-formal education, education of children, and education of youth adults. Lifelong learning has the potential to bridge these gaps and encompass diverse and challenging learning environments and forms. Civil society is an essential partner to governments to move the agenda forward with understanding of their communities, their strengths, and their needs. They can often be more flexible in finding innovative and creative solutions to issues.

More fundamentally, civil society is the consciousness raising voice which reminds governments that -



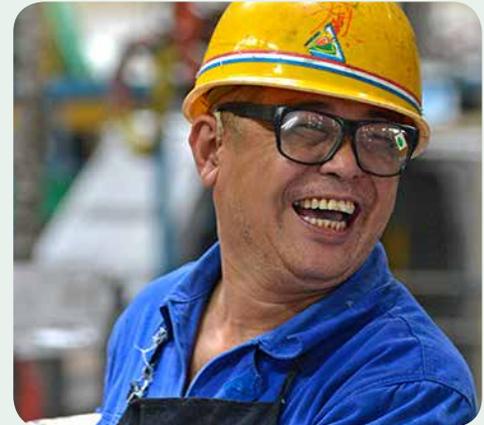
*Learning must be seen as a continuum, without prioritising one type of education over another.*

a) Learning is lifelong and life-wide with universal primary education as a fundamental stepping stone. Learning cannot be confined to the classroom. Many adult learners – more than 700 million - still lack even basic functional literacy. Resourcing adults to learn is equally as important as resourcing children to learn. A stronger political commitment for universal adult literacy is essential for all SDG's to be met.

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- b) Lifelong learning has the potential to be co-opted into having a utilitarian perspective only, primarily serving economic and market. For example, in the youth and adult education perspective, there is a strong emphasis on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) more than a holistic perspective to education. We must keep a more humanistic perspective and promote skills for human development.
- c) Lifelong opportunities must be accessible and reduce disparities, especially with vulnerable groups - women, indigenous communities, differently abled. Targeted and considered strategies will promote inclusion and embrace diverse learning needs.
- d) Lifelong learning must value all those involved and build appropriate infrastructure for quality education to occur. This means teachers, resources, and fundamentals such as water and electricity and shelter are imperative. Learning must take place in conditions which engender good learning outcomes.



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If no one is to be left behind, governments and partners must act with urgency and integrity and we must all step up our efforts. We must exemplify leadership and hope in the complex world of now.

## Multiple pathways to learning: key to lifelong learning advocacy

The global education agenda signals the huge task of setting into motion educational reforms needed for countries to transform their largely formal education systems into a lifelong learning system. Getting down to the brass tacks and deciding where to start could be overwhelming, even intimidating. For one, many countries have focused on education interventions in schools and formal training institutions and paid very little attention to non-formal and informal education.

The neglect of the non-formal education and informal education in the Education for All era will have to change if countries are serious in achieving the ambitious goals of Education 2030 agenda to “ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all.” The agenda will have implications not only in expanding the scope and variety of education/learning programmes, but necessarily on the development of systems by which lifelong learning will be made accessible to all learners. The Framework for Action Education 2030 emphasised

the necessity for “strengthened links between formal and non-formal structures, and recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education.”<sup>1</sup> Such is also stated as an indicative strategy for realising Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 4.4 related to youth and adults’ access to relevant skills for employment, decent work, and entrepreneurship.

To support countries in implementing the necessary reforms towards transforming the education and training system to a lifelong learning system, UNESCO-Bangkok is developing two documents based on a series of consultations on the ‘Regional Guidelines on the Role of Community Learning Centres and Adult Competencies for Lifelong Learning’. In the consultations, expert practitioners from different countries deliberated on the (1) guidelines on the role of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in a lifelong learning system, and (2) Asia Pacific competency framework.

Needless to say, there are many non-formal and informal education programmes run by both government and non-government organisations. Drawing lessons from the CLCs and demonstrating their success (as well as scrutinizing their challenges) could be a starting point for building the linkages between formal, non-formal, and informal education. CLCs have been

launched by UNESCO with governments in 1998 with the purpose to promote human development by providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all people in the local community. CLCs support empowerment, social transformation, and improvement of the quality of life of the people. The main functions of CLCs are to provide: (a) education and training (b) community information and resource services (c) community development activities, and (d) coordination and networking (UNESCO 2012).

The guidelines generated lessons from the experiences of the CLCs, their success and challenges in delivering non-formal education (e.g. as centers for trainings and seminars) as well as being a vehicle for informal education (e.g. as information hub and as a library). They also envision the pivotal role of CLCs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where information has become increasingly accessible to people



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<sup>1</sup> Education 2030 Framework for Action Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All, 2015.

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through communication technologies. The guidelines also proposed areas where CLCs can make a difference, such as in responding to the education needs of migrant workers and for helping build resilient communities.

How can CLCs become part of the seamless pathways to learning from community/work to school/training institutions? The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) argues that the transformative shifts in policy and practice that integrates formal, non-formal, and informal education would necessarily include reforms towards building the system of Recognition, Validation and Accreditation (RVA) of prior learning. *“Without recognition and validation of non-formal and informal modes of learning, there will be no lifelong learning. As lifelong learning values all kinds of learning experiences, learning outcomes should be recognised and validated independently of how, where and by whom they are acquired”*, (Ouane, 2011)<sup>2</sup>.

According to the Synthesis Report on Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-formal and Informal Learning in UNESCO Member States (UIL 2015), *“recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) refers to the establishment of arrangements to make visible and value all learning outcomes (including knowledge, skills, and competences) against clearly defined and quality-assured standards. RVA covers the whole process, including identification, documentation, assessment, and accreditation of learning outcomes from different settings.”*

How can an RVA benefit the poor and marginalised learners? In the Asia Pacific, the informal economy is the main arena for earning income for poor families. The International Labor Organization (ILO) reports that *“the largest share of informal economy workers in total employment is expected to be in South Asia (more than 70%), followed by South East Asia and the Pacific (about 55%) and East Asia (approximately 50%).”*<sup>3</sup> Most workers in the informal economy have limited formal education and therefore

are vulnerable to exploitation and they remain employed in hazardous work, sadly for many, for their entire lives. But through years of hard work, informal workers have acquired and mastered competencies -- knowledge, skills, and values which, however, are not made visible.

When an RVA system is put in place, these competencies can then be recognised and certified, therefore, providing an opportunity for informal workers to have access to continuing skills development or decent work in the formal labor market. In the Philippines, for example, a welder who has been working in a small machine shop can have his/her competencies certified by demonstrating one’s skill in welding through the RVA system of the Technical Education Skills Development Authority, and s/he can be given a certificate which can be used for further study and employment in or outside the country. In Bangladesh, the government also set up an RVA that allows informal workers to access learning opportunities that can upgrade their competencies, therefore, enabling them to find decent work.

The consultations on the *Guidelines on the role of CLCs in a lifelong learning system*, being drafted by UNESCO-Bangkok, put forward recommendations on RVA and how CLCs can be part of seamless pathways to learning from community/work to school/training institutions:

- Have a certificate of participation for every participant and for every programme.
- For some programmes, link them to formal education, such as with the Ministry of Education, or a registered training organisation to provide equivalency for learners.
- Working collaboratively with different education settings to ensure a seamless path, aware of what programmes are being delivered in these settings.
- Tapping expertise needed in setting up equivalency/qualifications framework.

- Setting up quality assurance recommendations depending on the kind of programmes.
- Partnership between central and local government in setting up RVA.
- Role of the private sector in setting up equivalency paths, particularly in identifying skills for specific work and trainings needed.

The road towards setting up multiple pathways to learning is both challenging and exciting. Apart from the CLCs, the rich and intensive experiences of NGOs in community education have yet to be systematically documented to inform education reforms. NGOs view harmonising their education programmes with the formal education system with appreciation and reluctance at the same time. Recognition of their work will provide opportunities for mainstreaming their education/learning frameworks and curricula. However, accrediting their education programmes based on government standards may not give full credit to their work/mission. What competencies would have currency in work, political participation, and in life? The exciting challenge is how NGOs and other youth and adult education providers can link up in the process of defining the framework and operations of an RVA. How can the often market-driven RVA be broadened so as to encompass empowering knowledge and skills related to citizenship and sustainable development – the realm of civil society? Broadly, how can NGO-implemented community education be genuinely part of the multiple pathways to learning?



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<sup>2</sup> Evolution of and perspectives on lifelong learning, Adama Ouane, Conceptual evolution and policy development in lifelong learning, UNESCO 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Visions for Asia’s Decent Work Decade: Sustainable Growth and Jobs to 2015, International Labour Organisation, 2007.

## Leadership development expands learning opportunities for indigenous youth in India

By Dominic M. D'Souza, Associate Director, Laya, and ASPBAE Executive Council Member

When Laya began its work with adivasis (indigenous communities) in 1985, we did not have a strategic perspective on learning in the adivasi context. Rather, we were responding to the needs that were expressed at the ground situation. We soon realised that we had to unlearn some of our own set views and begin again by listening to community voices on their various livelihood issues. As we engaged with different age groups, apart from facilitating enrollment of children in primary schools, we became aware of the variety of unstructured learning that was taking place at all levels, and where we felt we needed to add value. This strengthened our resolve to develop a holistic perspective of learning, mostly adult learning. However, at that point in time, we had not come across 'lifelong learning' as a concept.

In the early 90s, determined to make a difference, we began a year-long course on leadership development for school dropouts who were too old to go back to school. The course provides adivasi youth with skills to tackle injustices in their communities and enable them to gain a deeper understanding of the macro and micro level context they are living in. Innovative training curriculum and methods are used in a variety of programmes, such as mock courts, where trainees can practice their paralegal skills and herbal-based community health care trainings where traditional medicine is promoted.

After facilitating seven such annual courses, we decentralised our training activity into modules of short-term programmes to train paralegals, and community



*Laya has attempted to situate the 'climate change education' process in the context of 'education for sustainable development'. In this image, communities are seen learning sustainable agriculture.*



*Laya worked towards developing a holistic perspective of learning, mostly adult learning. Here, men and women learn how to repair lanterns at Laya.*

herbal-based health care practitioners. More importantly, Laya developed a crash literacy programme.

In all training programmes, Laya promoted the role of learners as motivators for literacy learning in their villages and is now experiencing the strategic value of following up neo-literates. They are exposed to literature and functioning of government social security schemes, basic personal hygiene and sanitation, herbal-based health care, kitchen gardens, efficient functioning of fuel wood cook stoves, potable water from bio-sand water filters, and use of solar lanterns, amongst others.

In the last couple of years, Laya has attempted to situate the 'climate change education' process in the context of 'education for sustainable development (ESD)', where the issue of climate change is viewed as a result of unsustainable development. The focus of climate change education is on grassroots communities, including local governance and media personnel at one level, and educational institutions on the other. At the community level, the awareness, reflection, and action processes are minimally structured and flexible, but at the school and junior college level, a relevant curriculum has been attempted.

Laya is setting up a 'community college' to create learning and employment opportunities for young adivasis and, in the process, deter migration of youth for lack of viable and respectful livelihood options. Furthermore, the purpose is also to demonstrate and provide good quality services to the community at the local level. The idea is to create a qualitative human resource among adivasi youth who will cater to the rights and livelihood needs of the local areas. Based on experience, long-term courses that promote a combination of life-coping skills, as well as vocational abilities, are envisaged for community ayurvedic herbal health care practitioners, community lawyers, and sustainable farming practitioners.

In this long and arduous journey, we have realised that the concept of 'lifelong learning' is best understood when the focus is on the learning of all involved in the process and is embedded in a specific context.

# Adult and Community Education: Providing economic and social benefits to New Zealand

By Colin McGregor, Director, Adult and Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the notion of lifelong learning is referenced often in curriculum documents within the compulsory education (school) sector. It is widely accepted that high quality education will instil in children and youth a love of learning that will remain throughout their lives. Despite this common acceptance of the importance and value of lifelong learning, there is no policy or legislation dedicated to adult and community education, which means there is no obligation for government support.

Adult and Community Education (ACE) in Aotearoa New Zealand is located within the tertiary sector (post-compulsory school level), and includes programmes of foundation skills such as literacy, numeracy and language, and personal interest courses for adults.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING

ACE Aotearoa, the lead agency for the adult and community education sector, has used its policy role to initiate strategic conversations with the government about the importance of legislation dedicated to adult and community education.

In 2010, ACE Aotearoa began developing policy to enhance advocacy around informing the government and communities about the value of adult and inter-generational learning. Policy papers were developed after in-depth consultation with the Strategic Alliance, a forum where high level issues are discussed by representatives of the main ACE providers, and smaller and non-government funded groups not represented by the Alliance. Feedback was also sought from the sector via a range of online media.

The policy papers outline the relevance and demonstrated value of ACE to the economic and social health of Aotearoa New Zealand. They also provide perspective on the relationship between adult learning and outcomes within health, social development, and justice.

The conversations stimulated by the

policy papers to date have resulted in some honest questions about national priorities, the benefits of learning, and its contribution to productivity and well-being. One of the challenges has been redefining adult and community education within what is a diverse sector. There is a continuum of formal and non-formal provision which is funded if it fits the government priority areas. Non-funded provision is also provided by community-based groups (often voluntary) which are not immediately visible if their core business is not adult and community education or they have limited capacity and capability. They include churches, libraries, and youth development programmes.

Our ability to articulate a clear purpose for adult education is critical to support us to steer a path through changes in government priority and focus. Our strategy isn't just for the government - it is through clear messaging that we ensure that the communities we work in can see the role of adult education for themselves, and as potential partners in our work.

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO HAPPEN?

The key messages we are seeking to promote include:

- ACE provides tangible economic and social benefits to Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Government decision making (through policy and legislation) influences the way the general public think. The government needs to foster the attitude that lifelong learning is important for the future of Aotearoa and its citizens.
- Raising awareness of the importance of lifelong learning is critical if we want an adult population that is confident, capable, engaged and empowered, enterprising and innovative, active in their communities, and contributing positively to society and the economy - adults who will have a lasting



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positive influence on their children and youth around them.

- People who struggle to recover from an experience of “failure” early in their learning journey risk missing out on the opportunities available to others around them. Lifelong learning opportunities must be made available to all, whether they are taken or not.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING TO SHAPE THE FUTURE?

At present, ACE Aotearoa is supported by the government to provide professional development to the ACE sector and promote networking opportunities. In addition, the government supports provision of grants to ACE organisations for innovative ideas. An exciting development is the creation of ACE Place, an on-line tool to link learners to providers. ACE will need to position itself as a viable sector for the future and not be seen as totally dependent on government funding. The sector has survived regardless of funding and will need to position itself in new ways to make the most of new technologies and the growth of adult learners in New Zealand.

# Community Learning Centres - providing lifelong learning opportunities to people in Thailand

By Parichart Yenjai, Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE), Thailand

Today, everyone seems to cope with a rapidly changing modern society. What a person learns, or ought to learn in a lifetime, cannot be acquired through the formal education system alone. Society must provide a range of appropriate learning opportunities for all people throughout their lives. These learning interventions can be in the form of bridging programmes of formal, non-formal, and informal education, which have been identified as lifelong education in the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1999) – the National Education Reform Act in Thailand - to enable people to learn and develop throughout their lives and improve their quality of life. This lifelong learning concept has been identified in Goal 2 of Thailand’s 12<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development Plan - *building and developing human’s capacity in continuing lifelong learning through their whole lives under strong collaboration and cooperation from all sectors of society*. This is well supported by the Non-Formal and Informal Education Act, of B.E. 2551 (2008) with the aim to promote continuing education/learning through the lifetime of people.

The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE) is the main organisation under the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Thailand, that is responsible for providing, promoting, and supporting non-formal and informal education, in terms of lifelong learning, for 50 million out-of-school people. The work force (15-50 year olds) is a major target group for ONIE.

ONIE is organised in 16 divisions, or centres, under the central administration to promote and support the implementation of non-formal and informal education and activities. It works in 77 provinces and runs 1021 district non-formal and informal education centres across the country. ONIE also works in sub-districts where each has at least one community learning centre (CLC) that serves as a lifelong learning hub. In all, it operates over 7000 such centres in the sub districts.

The community learning centres are multi-dimensional. The following are a few examples of the different roles the CLCs play in communities -

1. Centre for Sufficiency Economy and New Theory Farming Promotion (a theory of the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, focused on a method of development based on moderation, prudence, and social immunity) - to promote learning processes and disseminate knowledge.
2. Centre for Democracy Promotion and Development - to create correct learning and understanding of rights and duties in a constitutional democracy and promote people’s

participation in politics.

3. Community Digital Centre - to enable people to access various kinds of information through the internet.
4. Community Lifelong Learning Centre - to promote and support the provision of quality non-formal and informal education in line with education policies based on community contexts; to mobilise community resources to help in the learning process and conduct learning activities.

ONIE provides a number of services and activities in the form of non-formal and informal education, such as literacy, basic education, and continuing education comprising of education for life skills, skill development, and education for social and community development. These services are provided in public libraries, community book houses, science centres for education, educational radio and television programmes, etc. In this regard, community learning centres act as a key mechanism for providing people with lifelong learning opportunities to enhance their capabilities and improve their quality of life.

Having said this, the real growth and development of ONIE’s major target group - the work force (15-50 year olds) - has not yet been successful. To respond to the development of the work force in Thailand and to enable lifelong opportunities for all, ONIE advocates for the development and implementation of a Lifelong Education Act as a key legal mechanism for ensuring lifelong learning for all. The Act is currently being debated and deliberated in the parliament. If it is approved by the cabinet, it will positively influence the provisioning of lifelong learning in the country and contribute to the government’s goals of vision, stability, and sustainability.



*ONIE works in sub-districts where each has at least one community learning centre that serves as a lifelong learning hub.*



*ONIE advocates for the development and implementation of a Lifelong Education Act as a key legal mechanism for ensuring lifelong learning for all. The Act is currently being debated and deliberated in the parliament.*

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