



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

Promoting lifelong learning for all







Lifelong learning has never mattered more, whether to individuals, cities, nation states or the global policy community.

It is increasingly recognized that lifelong learning contributes to social justice, sustainable development and global citizenship.

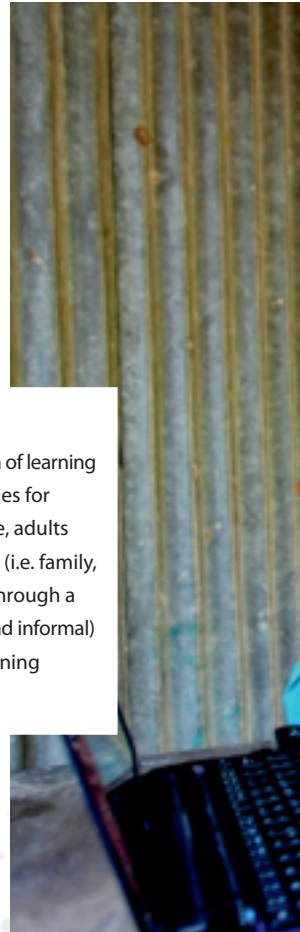
The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) is at the heart of this vision.

Who we are

Founded in 1952, UIL is the only United Nations organization with a specific mandate to promote lifelong learning and is one of the specialized institutes of UNESCO. Peace and sustainable development frame our vision and lifelong learning is the core of our work. We want to ensure that neither youth nor adults are left behind and help create policies and systems that foster effective lifelong and flexible learning pathways.

What is lifelong learning?

Lifelong learning is rooted in the integration of learning and living, encompassing learning activities for people of all ages (children, young people, adults and older people) in all life-wide contexts (i.e. family, school, community and workplace) and through a variety of modalities (formal, non-formal and informal) which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands.



Our holistic approach to education encompasses local, national, regional and global policies, includes multiple stakeholders and sectors, and stresses the links between them. We believe that lifelong learning is essential to the development of fairer, more sustainable and democratic societies.



What we do

We set standards, produce tools and instruments for policy-making, and monitor progress. We are also facilitators: we put people and places together to shape the global discourse on lifelong learning and support national and regional partners in making a case for lifelong learning.

We undertake research, analyse national practice and publish reports and guiding documents for policy-makers, planners and practitioners. UIL's work spans literacy, adult education, assessment and recognition of learning outcomes, learning cities and, of course, lifelong learning.

More specifically, our areas of action are policy support, capacity development, research and foresight, monitoring and advocacy and networking.

Policy support

UIL works in tandem with ministries and local and regional stakeholders. We offer advice on lifelong learning policy development and implementation strategies, working from the ground up to develop technical support that can make a difference in a given country context.

Capacity development

UIL develops collaborative policy and action research, workshops, courses and other resources. We help to build the capacities of those who make policies and design programmes in the field.

We conduct research and development projects with a national, regional and global focus.



Research and foresight

UIL publishes research, global and regional reports, policy papers and forward-looking studies in the areas of its mandate. We conduct research, and compile and disseminate new insights and recommendations.

Monitoring

UIL monitors progress against global goals and recommendations. We reveal the state of the art of adult learning and education and support Member States in monitoring learning outcomes and developing evaluation and assessment tools.

Advocacy and networking

UIL promotes lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies. We actively seek dialogue at national, regional and global level, and support civil society and non-governmental organizations in petitioning for positive change.



Lifelong learning is key to building creative, resilient societies capable of thriving in the context of rapid technological, environmental and demographic change.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Leaving no one behind

The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is our guide to action. Leaving no one behind is at the centre of this global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UIL has a special responsibility for supporting countries to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (SDG 4). But we are also charged with realizing the potential contribution of lifelong learning to the other 16 SDGs. In today's fast-changing world, where social, economic and political contexts are being constantly reshaped, learning must be continuous and lifelong, for everyone.

Women and vulnerable populations such as migrants or ethnic minority groups receive our special attention. Africa is another priority area for our work.

Work with us

Realizing the potential of lifelong learning takes political commitment and the development of cross-sectoral and multi-level policies. Collaboration is crucial and we are ambitious to work closely with partners at every level – local, national, regional and global. Only through collaboration can we identify practical and coherent solutions to the problems Member States face. When we work together, we are much more than the sum of our parts.



Did you know that UIL ...

... runs the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, which supports cities around the world in developing lifelong learning strategies for inclusive sustainable, urban development?

... maintains databases on effective literacy practices, learning cities, the recognition, validation and accreditation of prior learning, and lifelong learning policies and strategies?

... monitors, at global level, the implementation of the 2015 UNESCO *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*?

... publishes the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (GRALE), the main instrument for monitoring key international policy developments in adult education?

... organizes the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA), the event that sets the global direction of adult education policy every 12 years?

... coordinates the Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (GAL), a multi-stakeholder partnership of 29 countries?

... has a unique collection of books, periodicals and other material in its library?

Talk to us if you ...

are developing lifelong learning policy or seeking to improve existing ones.

require a partner for capacity development.

are looking for existing guidance, research or case studies.

have an interesting research project with a lifelong learning dimension.

want to collaborate on global activities.

are interested in monitoring and assessment.

Get in touch

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