

Adult Education and Development Conference addresses the power of adult learning and education

7-8 May 2019, Weimar, Germany



DVV International organised its 6th Adult Education and Development Conference focusing on the specific role of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within Agenda 2030 and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The 6th Adult Education and Development Conference (AEDC), organised by DVV International, dealt with the specific role of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within the Agenda 2030 and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). More than 150 experts, practitioners, and cooperation partners from the global network of DVV International presented good practice examples and discussed the positive effects of ALE on sustainable development.

Expert panels and working groups elaborated on strengths and challenges of ALE, in particular with regards its contributions to the overall agenda, its role for the education goal (SDG4) and interlinkages with other goals under review during the next HLPF. A key

note presentation by the former Director of UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report, Aaron Benavot, informed participants about monitoring progress on ALE-based international indicators and discussed reasons for the still insufficient visibility of the sub-sector.

ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, were part of different panels organised at the Conference. Nani was part of the panel on '*Creating inclusive societies through adult learning and education (SDG 10)*'. Maria was part of the final panel on '*Making Use of Potential - Increasing Visibility and Lobbying for Adult Education*'.

The Conference deliberated on a draft [Outcomes document](#) to be released in time for the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2019. Several DVVI publications were also released during the event including a coffee table book on 50 years of DVVI which featured all its partners through the years, including ASPBAE.

The conference participants agreed that the lifelong learning approach of SDG4 provides a potentially broader playing field for ALE. However, they also came to the conclusion that complexity and diverse learning formats (formal, non-formal, and informal) of ALE are both an asset and a challenge. It was noted and discussed that concept and scope of adult learning and education, possible interlinkages, and promising programme approaches for development are not always well known outside the ALE community. A particular challenge is often the lack of quantifiable data to show effects and impacts on individual learners, communities, and society as a whole.



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Participants stressed that the "power" of ALE must be better communicated to governments, donors, citizens, and other stakeholders. This should especially consider the potential to be effective across sectors and to fulfil key promises of the Agenda 2030, namely to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first. Furthermore, participants acknowledged that the role civil society and non-formal

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ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (centre with microphone) participating in a panel discussion on 'Making Use of Potential - Increasing Visibility and Lobbying for Adult Education'.

settings can play to promote the SDGs have to be even better elaborated. Eventually, it was stated that ALE is not a one-size-fits-all solution for development but rather a cross-cutting enabler and a precondition for participation and inclusive processes that allow for broad-based development and pro-poor growth.

Participants and stakeholders agreed on a set of key messages that were developed on basis of the aforementioned outputs and with the involvement of the global network of DVV International. The key messages presented in the course of the Conference were divided into six thematic blocks, starting with the overall role of ALE for Agenda 2030, followed by its contributions to the educational goal. Interactions and interlinkages

with four other SDGs were laid down to highlight the relevance of ALE for reducing inequalities and conflict prevention, promoting climate action, and assuring decent work and better employment opportunities for all.

The key messages focussed on the added value of ALE and addressed challenges, requirements, and recommendations.

The event also intersected with another commemorative event of the German Adult Education Association (DVV) which was also celebrating a century of 'folk high schools' in Germany. This allowed for international participants to interact with dynamic adult education associations in Germany.

DVV International celebrates 50th anniversary

7 May 2019, Weimar, Germany

DVV International celebrated its 50th anniversary in Weimar on 7 May with a ceremony featuring Federal Development Minister Gerd Müller as the keynote speaker. The celebrations formed part of an international conference on the role of adult education in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. ASPBAE President Nani Zulminarni and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, were present on the occasion and congratulated DVVI on ASPBAE's behalf on this important milestone in DVVI's life.



"The world needs nothing more than education", said Federal Development Minister, Dr. Gerd Müller, in his keynote speech during DVVI's 50th anniversary celebrations in Weimar.

The ceremony in Weimar was attended by approximately 250 guests from Germany and abroad. In his keynote speech, Gerd Müller, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, paid tribute to the Institute's decades of successful commitment, and emphasised the considerable significance attaching to adult education for development: "*Lifelong education forms the basis for*

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ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni (R), and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (L), at the DVV Adult Education Centre in Apolda, Germany.

reason, tolerance, equality, conflict prevention, peace at home and between peoples. The world needs nothing more than education.”

David Atchoarena, Director of UNESCO’s Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), congratulated the Institute: “DVV International is an influential player in the international adult education community. UNESCO is looking forward to continuing its cooperation with DVV International, especially in this crucial phase of Agenda 2030. We wish DVV International all the best for the next 50 years too.”

“Only if adults too receive adequate education will it be possible to implement the Agenda 2030”, said Christoph Jost, Director of DVV International. “We need adult education for all people worldwide in order to be able to successfully walk the path to a globally just and peaceful society.”

The ‘Rita-Süssmuth-Award for the international Volkshochschule’ was also awarded for the first time during the ceremony, under the auspices of the German Association of Cities and Towns. Honorary DVV International President, Rita Süssmuth, acknowledged the adult education centres (*Volkshochschulen*) in Bonn, Hanover, and Ulm with the award that is named after her for an international orientation of educational work at the local level.

The anniversary celebrations took place as part of the international adult education conference.

During their stay in Weimar, delegates from Southeast Asia visited the Adult Education Centre in Weimar and Adult Education Centre of Weimarer Land in Apolda where they were warmly received. The study visits offered a very useful exposure to the work on adult education in Germany – especially with respect to the integration of migrants and refugees. It was equally interesting to learn more about the history of adult education centres in this area which was part of the former East Germany: how they evolved and the roles they played in the processes of German reunification.



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The delegation also had an opportunity to meet with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the state of Thuringia, Gabi Ohler, at the Ministry office in Erfurt. She and other officials of the Ministry described the legal, policy, and financing framework for adult learning and education in the state and in Germany. The delegation included the Deputy Minister of Education from



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Cambodia, Nos Sles, ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and other education representatives from Southeast Asia.

This write-up draws from a DVV International [report](#) on the Adult Education and Development Conference and on a write-up on its 50th anniversary on the [DVV International website](#).

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