

# ANNUAL REPORT

2018

UNESCO  
INSTITUTE  
FOR LIFELONG  
LEARNING







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**2018** UNESCO  
Institute  
for Lifelong  
Learning

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The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) undertakes research, capacity-building, networking and publication on lifelong learning with a focus on adult and continuing education, literacy and non-formal basic education.

Its publications are a valuable resource for education researchers, planners, policy-makers and practitioners. While the programmes of UIL are established along the lines laid down by the General Conference of UNESCO, the publications of the Institute are issued under its sole responsibility. UNESCO is not responsible for their contents.

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# FOREWORD



Malak Zaalouk  
Chair of the UIL Governing Board

It gives me enormous pleasure to present this summary report of the main activities of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) during 2018. It was, in some ways, a year of consolidation during which the Institute adapted to changing financial circumstances and sharpened its focus on forging new and different partnerships in the wider context of its work. However, it was also a year of innovation and resourcefulness, with UIL reaffirming the core planks of its remit in new ways that demonstrate its relevance to key international trends and contexts, including, importantly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Institute welcomed a new Director, David Atchoarena, in April. David succeeded Kabir Shaikh, who served as interim director for five months, ensuring stability while UNESCO sought a new permanent director. I would like to thank Kabir for his excellent work. Since his appointment, David has clarified and strengthened

UIL's focus on the core areas of its work, while also emphasizing the importance of partnership and collaboration, including with UIL's host country, Germany. This approach has been rewarded with a substantial increase in the German Government's financial support for the Institute, announced at the Governing Board meeting in November 2018. This new funding will give UIL the stability it needs to advance its important agenda in the years to come, making a case for lifelong learning to become the key organizing principle of education policy and planning.

It is clear to me that UIL's agenda has never been more important and it is gratifying to see this more and more widely recognized. Technological change, mass population movement, demographic shifts and climate change, among numerous other issues, all point to a need for more lifelong learning, delivered in a more cogent, far-sighted way. It is crucial, therefore, that UIL continues to bring its unique perspective to wider policy debate about education and sustainable development. Lifelong learning is critical to the longer-term, sustainable development of societies, but, too often, this case can get lost among competing priorities, which can lead to the prioritization of short-term results above long-term success and stability. That is why UIL's distinctive advocacy and capacity-building role is so important. It has kept lifelong learning on the international agenda, even when policy interest was limited, and it remains the key global repository of knowledge

and expertise in the field, as well as the lead defender of UNESCO's broad, expansive understanding of the term.

It is the role of the UIL Governing Board to support this, through advice and guidance that help ensure UIL's targets are met. I am pleased to see how well the Institute has risen to the challenges of the past year, and how much progress it has made against the objectives for the work set out in the 2017 meeting of the Governing Board. This has included the development of an ambitious handbook on lifelong learning, preparation of the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* and new work on recognizing the competences of Syrian refugees. The development of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities has continued apace and the Institute has focused much of its capacity-development activity in Africa, where a key area of attention has been family learning and the empowerment of women and girls. I am confident that this outstanding work will continue throughout 2019 and beyond.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the work of UIL's committed, highly competent staff, whose passion and expertise are in evidence on every page of this report. I particularly appreciate their support for the new direction taken by the Institute in strengthening and renewing existing partnerships while seeking out and consolidating new ones. It matters to the Governing Board that the Institute does not merely talk about the importance of collaboration and partnership but is an exemplar of how this can work in practice. If the potential contribution of lifelong learning to the 2030 Agenda is to be fully realized, collaboration across sectors will be critical and it is gratifying to see the Institute forging stronger, more focused ties with its partners. In an increasingly polarized world, it is essential that we be prepared to talk with and listen to others, open ourselves up to challenge and work in an inclusive, collaborative and co-creative way.

“In an increasingly polarized world, it is essential that we be prepared to talk with and listen to others, open ourselves up to challenge and work in an inclusive, collaborative and co-creative way”

# INTRODUCTION



David Atchoarena  
Director, UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's vision is for all children, youth and adults to benefit from quality lifelong learning opportunities, within the framework of sustainable development and peace. Our mission at UIL is to strengthen the capabilities of UNESCO Member States in the field of lifelong learning, with a focus on youth and adults and a special emphasis on UNESCO's priority areas of Africa and gender equality. While the Institute continues to pay particular attention to literacy and non-formal education, it also promotes lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies.

This report shows how, in 2018, UIL's work has contributed to fulfilling this mission and translating our vision into reality in the context of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides an ambitious set of goals and targets to which Member States are

committed and that together form a coherent, universal framework of reference for our activities.

A major focus of our work has been on the contribution of lifelong learning to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which enjoins Member States to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. However, we also recognize that lifelong learning has an important transversal role to play across all 17 SDGs. The 2030 Agenda represents an opportunity not only to position lifelong learning as the overarching concept for education policies and systems, but also to leverage its potential in the achievement of the other SDGs.

In 2018, UIL's activities in the areas of policy advice, capacity development, research, monitoring, networking and advocacy have been combined, enhanced and, in some cases, redirected to achieve these goals. Engaging with Member States in the context of their policy work represents a strategic channel to translate the SDG 4 vision into reality. Cambodia, Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia and Viet Nam were among the countries to benefit from UIL's support in mainstreaming lifelong learning into education policies and plans in 2018. Sustaining policy initiatives and enhancing implementation strategies and programmes requires strong institutional capacities, particularly in a transition phase from education to lifelong learning. To help countries in addressing this challenge, UIL undertook two new



initiatives towards the development of SDG 4 policy-relevant capacity development resources: a handbook on lifelong learning and a groundbreaking online course.

Drawing lessons from various parts of the world and consolidating international expertise, the handbook on lifelong learning will give policy workers the critical tools they need to develop lifelong learning policies and implement them successfully. We completed a first draft of the handbook during the summer and discussed it in detail at an international consultative meeting in Shanghai, China, in October 2018. We are now moving forward with the final stage of development, with a view to publication in summer 2019.

An integrated approach to lifelong learning policy and planning was also promoted through the online course UIL developed with the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). The course, which offers a lifelong learning perspective on mainstreaming adult learning and education and non-formal education into education sector plans, was launched in October 2018. It is the first time UIL and IIEP have developed a joint initiative on this scale and the project provides a useful template for future collaborations, with IIEP and others. The eight-week course targets teams of professionals from ministries of education and aims to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to strengthen and mainstream adult and non-formal education into education planning. It presents a comprehensive and holistic model of planning, demanding a sector-wide and cross-sectoral approach, involving stakeholders from all relevant fields and ministries, at national and local levels.

Documenting policy responses and innovations in the field of lifelong learning in response to emerging issues constitutes a major driver of UIL's research activities. Recognizing the severity of the refugee crisis, UIL deepened its engagement in the socio-economic integration and further learning of migrants and refugees, notably through our publication, *Pathways to Empowerment*, the result of a joint project with UNESCO Beirut Office, on the recognition, validation and accreditation of the competences of Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. The book laid the essential groundwork for the development of comprehensive national strategies for the recognition of the competences of Syrian refugees and for their successful integration into work and education. It paves the way for further work in this area, in the Arab region and elsewhere in the world.

Another substantial undertaking directly addressing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)*. The report, which is published every three years, monitors the progress of Member States against the targets on adult learning and education set in the Belém Framework for Action, the main outcome document of the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), held in Brazil in 2009. The fourth report, *GRALE 4*, is devoted to participation in adult learning and education, from the perspective of equity and inclusion and in the context of the 2030 Agenda. It will be published in autumn 2019.

In addition to our important global monitoring function through *GRALE*, the Institute continued to engage in the area of assessment and evaluation. At country

## 10 INTRODUCTION

and regional level, our work on the assessment of learning outcomes in 12 African countries (RAMAA) resulted in the development of a common curriculum framework for literacy programmes, followed by a common assessment framework. This constitutes a major step forward in the enhancement of youth and adult literacy programmes in French-speaking West and Central African countries. Building on this experience, UIL undertook a number of major initiatives within the context of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), led by the

UIL continued to focus on key themes relevant to the concerns of Member States and, collectively, of the international community. We continued to grow the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, which now includes more than 200 members from 51 countries, while developing new programmes and resources to build the capacities of member cities. Preparations are underway for the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities, which will be held in Medellín, Colombia's second-largest city, in 2019.

"I wish to see UIL embody the change it demands in wider society by taking a collaborative, cross-sectoral, multi-level approach to its activities, working in a collegiate, synergetic way, while thinking widely and recognizing the connections with other sectors and fields of policy"

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. In particular, UIL acted as co-chair, with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, of the Assessment Task Force on SDG target 4.6 to establish and coordinate two international expert groups, on numeracy and literacy, to advise on the assessment strategy and instruments. UIL's work on learning assessment, in the Africa region through RAMAA, at global level, within GAML, and in response to individual country requests, will remain high on the agenda in 2019 and beyond.

UIL's work at a global level passed a number of important milestones as we continued to coordinate the Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (known as GAL). We defined a new focus and direction for the Alliance, and initiated two studies (on mapping and costing youth and adult literacy initiatives) to better guide international efforts and reinforce GAL's role in steering SDG 4. The GAL general meetings and the GAL Policy Forum in Mexico City in November anchored this new approach and provided ample evidence

of the relevance of the Alliance and of the commitment of participating countries to further promoting the youth and adult literacy agenda in national policies and on the international stage.

UIL can be proud of what it has achieved in 2018. Governing Board members, our key partners and stakeholders, our funders and our dedicated staff all deserve credit for guiding the Institute through a challenging 12 months. I would particularly like to acknowledge the support of the German Foreign Office, which demonstrated the value it attaches to the work of UIL and UNESCO with a substantial increase in its voluntary contribution for 2019. This additional support puts the Institute on a solid foundation following the challenges of 2018 and allows us to build positively on the progress we have made to date.

It is clear that there is much work still to do in driving lifelong learning higher up the global policy agenda and realizing its cross-cutting potential. As we look to the future, I want to see UIL consolidate the gains we have made, forge new, wider networks and different partnerships, and open up new, creative areas for development and exchange. Above all, I wish to see UIL embody the change it demands in wider society by taking a collaborative, cross-sectoral, multi-level approach to its activities, working together in a collegiate, synergetic way, while thinking widely and recognizing the connections with other sectors and fields of policy. Lifelong learning has never had a more critical contribution to make, both to the international agenda and to the challenges we face in our societies, whether demographic, technological, economic or environmental. UIL will do all it can, with new and existing partners, to support Member States in rising to these challenges.

# OUR MANDATE

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning is the only organization in the UNESCO family with a specific mandate to promote lifelong learning. It aims to strengthen the capacities of UNESCO Member States in the field of lifelong learning, with a focus on youth and adults, and paying particular attention to the policies and systems conducive to lifelong learning pathways. UIL does this through policy support, research, monitoring, capacity-building, networking and advocacy. Its publications constitute an important instrument to disseminate knowledge and inform policies. Contributing to the intellectual debate on lifelong learning, UIL also publishes the *International Review of Education: Journal of Lifelong Learning*, an international forum on policies and trends that provides perspectives on contemporary issues in lifelong learning.

## UNESCO MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY

2014 – 2021

### OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES



Peace – Contributing to lasting peace



Equitable and sustainable development – Contributing to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty

### UNESCO EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Developing education systems to foster quality lifelong learning opportunities for all



Empowering learners to be creative and responsible citizens



Shaping the future education agenda

### UIL'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strengthening Member States' capacities so that educational stakeholders and practitioner communities benefit, and empowering Member States to improve the quality of their lifelong learning policies

Supporting Member States with high-quality capacity-building ... in UNESCO key priority areas, in inclusive and gender-sensitive literacy and work-related non-formal learning and competence development

Promoting lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for achieving inclusive and sustainable learning societies



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UIL's mandate places its work at the core of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its related targets. Serving the Education 2030 Framework for Action, UIL's work is organized into five themes: policy support, capacity development, research and foresight, monitoring, and advocacy and networking. These are briefly explained below, and explored in greater depth in the chapters that follow.



## POLICY SUPPORT

UIL works closely with Member States and other partners, cultivating long-term partnerships with countries and working in tandem with ministries and local and regional stakeholders. We offer advice on lifelong learning policy development and education sector planning from a lifelong learning perspective, working from the ground up to develop bespoke support that can make a difference in a given country context. In 2018, we supported the development of lifelong learning policies in Viet Nam, Thailand,

the Philippines, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Mali, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. We also helped Member States to integrate literacy into policies, with a focus on women, in the Philippines, Cambodia and Bhutan.



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## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

UIL develops policy and action research, workshops and courses, case studies and other resources in order to build capacity in the fields of lifelong learning, adult learning and education, youth and adult literacy, and non-formal education. In 2018, we developed an online course with the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) on mainstreaming adult learning and education in education sector plans. Fifty-eight participants from the ministries of education of nine countries took part in the first course offer. UIL also began development work

on a new handbook to support Member States in moving from policy to practice in lifelong learning, and carried out capacity-building work with ministries and other stakeholders in numerous countries, including work on family literacy in Ethiopia and the Gambia.



## RESEARCH AND FORESIGHT

UIL publishes a wide array of research, global and regional reports, policy papers and forward-looking studies in the areas of its mandate. We conduct research and development projects with a national, regional and global focus, and produce and disseminate new insights and recommendations. The UIL Library and our expanding database of resources supports researchers and policy-makers in developing an informed, grounded perspective. UIL also produces an academic journal, the *International Review of Education: Journal of Lifelong Learning (IRE)*, six times a year. *IRE* is the longest-running journal of comparative education in the world and remains one of the most influential, offering a perspective that is at once exceptionally international and strongly focused on the aims and priorities of UNESCO and UIL.



## MONITORING

Monitoring is crucial in ensuring global goals are met, advances supported and challenges addressed. UIL is responsible for monitoring progress against a number of important global goals, targets and recommendations. These include the Belém Framework for Action, adopted at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009, and the 2015 *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*, both of which UIL monitors through the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*. UIL also co-chairs the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning's Taskforce 4.6, and supports Member States in monitoring learning outcomes for youth and adults and in developing appropriate evaluation and assessment tools.



## ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

Advocacy is at the heart of UIL's work. In all our activities, we seek to promote lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies. This takes the form of policy advice and support on the implementation of lifelong learning at national and regional level, the active promotion of lifelong learning at a global level, both within the United Nations and in other international forums, and support to civil society and non-governmental organizations in petitioning for positive change. Through conferences and workshops, we offer partners the opportunity to shape the lifelong learning agenda, share good practice, and develop a lifelong learning approach to policy and planning, both nationally and at global level through multi-stakeholder activities such as the Global Alliance for Literacy. We also support networking and the sharing of best practice through ambitious initiatives such as the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities.



## A MESSAGE TO OUR PARTNERS

UIL will continue to work with Member States, advocacy groups, researchers, non-governmental organizations and regional and global bodies to promote lifelong learning, support better policy, planning and practice in the field, and build capacities for better and more effective implementation. Lifelong learning has a huge contribution to make to inclusive, sustainable development and to addressing some of the wicked challenges of our time, including climate change, inequality, technological development and mass population displacement.

We believe these changes to our societies, our environment and our economies make the work of UIL more important than ever. However, realizing the potential of lifelong learning will take serious political and civil society commitment and the development of cross-sectoral, multi-level policies and plans based on an informed understanding of what works and what does not. That is why it is so crucial that UIL works closely with partners at every level – community, country, regional and global – to develop projects and programmes, to advise, support and monitor progress, and to disseminate the results of our work as widely and in as inclusive a way as possible.

“It is important that organizations that advocate positive social change also exemplify it. When we work together, we are much more than the sum of our parts”

In 2018, UIL strengthened its existing partnerships and forged new ones, improving our reach and building our capacities while reinforcing our core values and mission. We want to continue to foster this way of working, making our own programmes and projects as collaborative as possible and working across sectors to identify practical, coherent solutions to the problems Member States face. It is important that organizations that advocate positive social change also exemplify it. When we work together, we are much more than the sum of our parts. For this reason, we hope this report will be taken as an invitation to collaboration by our current and prospective partners, as well as an overview of how we have pursued our mission during 2018.





# UIL IN 2018

## A snapshot of our activities



### **POLICY SUPPORT** UIL promotes lifelong learning as an organizing principle of education policy and planning

- ▶ Government officials from four Member States were supported in lifelong learning policy development through a two-week technical workshop UIL co-organized in Shanghai, China.
- ▶ Technical support was given to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and in Central Asia, in particular Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- ▶ City officials were supported through learning city policy workshops in Mexico and Egypt.
- ▶ Country representatives were supported in developing a regional policy framework for recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) in the Arab States.



### **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT** UIL supports capacity development in Member States through publication, knowledge management, workshops and training

- ▶ Work began on a handbook on lifelong learning to provide policy-makers with the tools needed to implement lifelong learning policies successfully.
- ▶ The capacities of country teams from Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia and Viet Nam were built through a workshop in Shanghai, China, on developing lifelong learning systems.
- ▶ Participants from education ministries and universities in nine countries developed their understanding of lifelong learning through a UIL-IIEP online course on mainstreaming adult learning and non-formal education into education sector plans.
- ▶ Learning city leaders were supported in getting their initiatives off the ground and making lifelong learning a reality for all through a set of video tutorials.

“The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's vision is for all children, youth and adults to benefit from quality lifelong learning opportunities, within the framework of sustainable development and peace”



## RESEARCH AND FORESIGHT

**Research and foresight support effective policy and practice at national, regional and global levels**

- ▶ In partnership with INRULED, UIL initiated a joint research project on basic education for indigenous people in the Mekong Sub-region.
- ▶ *Pathways to Empowerment*, a new study documenting research into the importance of recognizing the competences of refugees, was published in June 2018.
- ▶ A study of RVA practices in Asia was undertaken together with the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Hong Kong).
- ▶ Volume 64 of *IRE* included special issues on sustainable learning cities and MOOCs.



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**MONITORING** Monitoring and evaluation play an essential role in improving the conditions and quality of adult and non-formal learning

- ▶ A record number of Member States submitted survey data that will be used to formulate the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*.
- ▶ UIL projects such as RAMAA, Advancing Mobile Literacy Learning, and Family and Intergenerational Literacy and Learning trained more than 300 literacy providers – half of them female – in the direct measurement of literacy skills, curriculum and learning development materials.
- ▶ UIL, ISESCO and the UNESCO Offices in Beirut and Cairo organized a capacity-building workshop for education experts in the Arab States on monitoring ALE-related policies in the region.
- ▶ Members of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning developed proposals for advancing measurement of SDG 4 indicators globally.



## ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

**UIL is committed to advocating for the right to education for all**

- ▶ UIL shaped thinking on literacy through the preparation of the UN Secretary-General's report, *Literacy for Life: Shaping Future Agendas and Education for Democracy*, to the 73rd session of the UNGA.
- ▶ Improvements in literacy rates in 29 countries were advanced through the restructured Global Alliance for Literacy.
- ▶ UIL's Hamburg Education Talks gave the Hamburg public an opportunity to discuss topical issues, such as the integration of refugees, with experts in the field.
- ▶ The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities shared good practice, policy support and networking opportunities with member cities.

# POLICY SUPPORT

UIL supports Member States in every world region in lifelong learning policy development and education sector planning from a lifelong learning perspective, working closely with ministries and local and regional stakeholders to develop tailored and targeted policy solutions that widen opportunity and improve the lives and life chances of learners. This can take the form of technical support and advice in strengthening policies and plans for adult learning, literacy and non-formal education, as well as the design, implementation and monitoring of literacy and adult learning and education programmes.

In 2018, our focus was on helping Member States develop cross-sectoral and gender-responsive lifelong learning policies, plans and strategies, according to countries' specific contexts and needs. To this end, UIL contributed to the promotion of lifelong learning, notably through the reinforcement of national capacities, the operationalization of the recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of non-formal and informal learning, and the implementation of the learning cities initiative.

A key activity was the capacity development of 30 government officials from Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia and Viet Nam during a two-week technical workshop on mainstreaming lifelong learning into education policies and plans in the

framework of SDG 4, held in Shanghai, China. Using a draft version of UIL's planned handbook on lifelong learning, each country team produced an outline proposal for a national policy and strategy to implement lifelong learning. UIL also convened a consultative meeting of 40 experts and high-level officials from universities, ministries of education and other government departments to debate cross-sectoral collaboration and governance models in the field of lifelong learning.

"In 2018, our focus was on helping Member States develop cross-sectoral and gender-responsive lifelong learning policies, plans and strategies, according to countries' specific contexts and needs"

Efforts to raise awareness of the benefits of lifelong learning and to enhance knowledge of the development and implementation of national lifelong learning policies and strategies in the light of the 2030 Agenda focused on Viet Nam, Thailand and the Philippines, where UIL organized dedicated policy forums. Technical support was also offered to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and in Central Asia, in particular Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In the context of increasing decentralization, building the capacities of cities to implement lifelong learning in local

communities constitutes an important challenge. UIL organized training workshops, based on six video tutorials on building learning cities, in Mexico and Egypt. The workshop in Mexico engaged around 100 mayors and education officers, while the Egypt event was attended by more than 150 city partners who debated means of promoting and implementing education for sustainable development in learning cities. The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) team also supported thematic workshops in more than 10 cities in the network. At the end of 2018, there were 223 cities from all five UNESCO regions in the network, 25 of which joined during the year. Preparations have begun for the fourth

Medellín, Colombia's second-largest city, has been selected to host the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities in 2019.



# In focus

## Gender matters

Gender equality is a global priority at UNESCO and is a key component of all of UIL's activities. UIL believes that policy-makers should take a more holistic approach to empowering women through literacy and lifelong learning and that educated women and girls have a crucial role to play in 'transforming our world'. This approach is underscored by the Education 2030 Framework for Action for the achievement of SDG 4, which highlights the importance of gender equality as a guiding principle linked to the realization of the right to education. Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is also the overall aim of SDG 5.

Despite progress at the global level, the challenges to gender parity remain significant. The Gender Review of the *Global Education Monitoring Report 2018* found that while the adult literacy rate increased from 81.5 per cent to 86 per cent worldwide between 2000 and 2015, the proportion of women in the total population of adult illiterates was unchanged, at 63 per cent. Furthermore, women make up 57 per cent of all youth illiterates, with gender disparity particularly acute in North Africa and Western and Southern Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa.

To address these challenges, UIL has sought to promote gender-responsive policy-making and to mainstream gender equality in education policies and practices. UIL's Microsoft-funded Advancing Mobile Literacy Learning project, for example, used mobile and digital technologies for the enhancement of literacy and digital skills among youth and adults, with particular focus on women, in Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia and Mexico. Female participants, many of whom were using laptops and mobile phones for the first time, reported both enhanced literacy and digital skills and greater independence. UIL's support to the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan in developing skills-based curriculum material focused on adults and youth in rural areas. The work, conducted in partnership with the UNESCO Office in Kabul, aimed to improve the literacy, numeracy and vocational skills of adults, especially women, across the country's 34 provinces.

In partnership with the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), UIL continued to support the piloting of youth-led action research as a learning tool to transform young women's lives. Since 2016, more than 100 young women in India, Indonesia and the Philippines have taken part in this project.

Participants have received training on the design of research questions relevant to their educational needs and on the collection and analysis of data with a view to producing evidence supportive of educational change. One female researcher who participated in the project in India had dropped out of school but now planned to go back and 'complete my education'. 'It is only when girls are educated, and our families and communities, that the nation will make progress,' she said. The outcomes of the project have been widely disseminated, at community level and nationally and internationally. The pilot initiative in India received an Education for International Understanding/Global Citizenship Education Best Practices award in 2018.

The empowerment of women and girls was also integral to UIL's work on family and intergenerational literacy in Ethiopia and the Gambia. Following the publication of a resource pack on family learning, with a special focus on the needs of women in sub-Saharan Africa countries, in 2017, UIL provided direct, customized and systematic technical support to design and implement family and intergenerational literacy and learning programmes in the region during 2018. In the Arab States, activities included conceptual support for Saudi Arabia's efforts to strengthen its provision in lifelong learning, focusing particularly on the participation of women. The work could be replicated in other Arab countries.



A South Sudanese women's rights activist speaks up for women's and girls' education at Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya.

UIL-organized International Conference on Learning Cities, which will take place in Medellín, Colombia, in 2019.

UIL supported the translation of lifelong learning into strategies and flexible learning pathways through a key research publication on the RVA of the competences of Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, entitled *Pathways to Empowerment*. We also organized a Regional Policy Forum on Creating Pathways to Empowerment in the Arab States, at which more than 30 country representatives discussed ways to

implement a regional policy framework for the development of alternative learning pathways in the region. UIL is furthermore supporting the development and implementation of RVA mechanisms in six countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as part of a research project carried out in collaboration with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the Regional Cooperation Center for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (CREFAL).

# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

UIL develops policy and action research, workshops and courses, case studies and other resources in order to build capacities in the field of lifelong learning, including in adult learning and education, youth and adult literacy, and non-formal education. Our work in this area involves the development of resources, including publications, courses and visual media, the provision of workshops and other training opportunities, and bespoke support for Member States in developing policy, planning or practice in a particular area.

In 2018, UIL, with the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), developed and organized an online course on 'Mainstreaming Adult Learning and Non-formal Education into Education Sector Plans: A Lifelong Learning Perspective'. The eight-week course, which was launched in October, targets teams of professionals from ministries of education and aims to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to develop and implement sound strategies to ensure that adult learning and non-formal education is strengthened and becomes integral to education sector plans. Fifty-eight participants from the ministries of education and national universities of nine countries (Afghanistan, Kenya, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia) took part in the first course offer. The practice-oriented course enabled

participants to improve their understanding and skills in defining youth and adult literacy, adult learning, non-formal education and lifelong learning, analyse the status of non-formal education within education sector plans, identify key challenges and their causes and develop strategies to address them. Further editions of the course will be offered in the future to enlarge its impact to a growing number of countries.

UIL also began development work on a new handbook to support Member States in moving from policy to practice in lifelong learning. The handbook will provide guidance to countries on how to review policies and plans in light of lifelong learning, develop policies with a lifelong learning perspective and support their implementation using a cross-sectoral and gender-responsive approach. The handbook chapters were developed in close collaboration with experts in the field and reviewed at an international consultative meeting on lifelong learning, organized in collaboration with the Chinese National Commission to UNESCO, Shanghai Open University and East China Normal University, in Shanghai in October 2018. The meeting convened around 40 representatives of UN agencies and high-level officials from ministries of education and other government departments, to assess the handbook and debate the integrated governance of lifelong learning in the light of the



2030 Agenda. Publication is expected in summer 2019.

Following the consultative meeting, UIL, again in collaboration with our Chinese partners, organized a two-week capacity-building workshop on developing lifelong learning-oriented education systems in Shanghai, using the handbook as a basis. The partners supported the workshop, financially and in terms of expertise. Country teams of eight representatives from Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia and Viet Nam developed a draft policy and/or an implementation strategy for lifelong learning, ensuring a gender-responsive approach. Particular attention was paid to the participation of women

in the workshop. Evaluation of progress in the participating countries is expected in May 2019.

UIL continued work with the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning (SEAMEO CELLL) to develop strategic actions for the inclusion of lifelong learning perspectives in national and regional educational policies in Southeast Asian countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam). Together with UNESCO field offices, SEAMEO CELLL and DVV International, UIL focused on the organization of



policy forums for the development and/or implementation of inclusive and gender-responsive lifelong learning policies/plans in Thailand, Viet Nam and the Philippines and the development of a lifelong learning policy in Cambodia. UIL will continue its engagement with these 11 countries by offering further possibilities for policy dialogue and capacity-building.

Another policy forum in April 2018 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, resulted in a set of recommendations on the formulation of policies and plans for the development of learning cities, in line with the guiding documents of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC). A second policy forum took place in May 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand; here, the focus was on the implementation of policies and strategies for building learning cities. In the Philippines, a policy forum on lifelong learning was organized in Quezon City in June. The forum resulted in a set of critical factors to support inclusive and gender-responsive teaching and learning practices. UIL also carried out capacity-building work with ministries and other stakeholders in numerous countries, including work on family literacy in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Gambia.

UIL organized a training workshop for 30 cities in the State of Puebla, in Mexico, from 30 January to 2 February 2018. Around 100 mayors and education officers attended the event to gain fresh insight and discover best practice on various core areas of action for building learning cities. As a follow-up to the training workshop, the city of Atlixco applied to become a member of the UNESCO GNLC and governmental authorities are executing an action plan for implementing

lifelong learning. In addition, the city of Puebla organized the Smart City Conference for Latin America in September 2018 (10,000 attended) and invited UIL to present the learning city initiative as a framework for smart cities.



UIL's Family Literacy and Learning Project being put into practice in the Gambia.

# In focus Building capacity in Africa

Africa is one of UNESCO's priority areas for action and is a key focus for UIL's capacity development and policy support activities. Most of this work is conducted at country level; however, we are also engaged in regional activities. UIL's work on the assessment of learning outcomes in French-speaking West and Central African countries (RAMAA), for example, has built capacity in 12 countries through the development of a common curriculum framework and a common assessment framework for literacy programmes. UIL was also an active participant in the 2018 Pan-African High-Level Conference on Education, contributing to the important Nairobi Declaration, which was adopted at the conference, and launching *Promoting Lifelong Learning for All*, a report on the promotion and implementation of lifelong learning policies and strategies in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

In the past year, we have also worked closely with UNESCO Abuja Office in the area of policy improvement for youth and adult literacy in Nigeria. Six officials from the Federal Ministry of Education participated in the UIL-IIEP online course, and UIL continues to offer support through the capacity-development of senior government officials. The online course also

engaged officials from Kenya, Uganda and Zambia.

Africa was also a major focus of our second main capacity-building activity of 2018: government officials from Kenya and Namibia took part in a two-week technical workshop on mainstreaming lifelong learning into education policies and plans and were involved in a consultative meeting of 40 experts and high-level officials from universities, ministries of education and other government departments to debate cross-sectoral collaboration and governance models in the field of lifelong learning.

Family literacy has been a major strand of UIL's capacity development work in Africa. Funded by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, UIL's Family Literacy and Learning Project has provided two sub-Saharan countries – Ethiopia and the Gambia – with direct, customized and systematic technical support to design and implement family and intergenerational literacy and learning programmes in their countries. A resource pack, *Learning Together across Generations: Guidelines for Family Literacy and Learning Programmes*, and a policy brief, *Engaging Families in Literacy and Learning*, developed within the framework of the project in 2017, were used as key reference resources for UIL's

technical assistance. In Ethiopia, UIL, working with UNESCO Addis Ababa, provided technical advice to the Ministry of Education on developing family literacy programmes in three communities. Training was provided on didactic methods and material development and the approach is currently being piloted with the support and supervision of education bureaus and researchers of regional teacher-training colleges and universities. In the Gambia, UIL selected two NGOs to implement family literacy programmes in selected regions of the country. UIL is collaborating with the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Dakar and the Gambian National Commission for UNESCO in this work.

Finally, in Mali, a comprehensive review of relevant policies and related implementation strategies for the effective training of educational staff has been initiated in the framework of the CapED/Teachers programme in cooperation with the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), IIEP Pôle de Dakar and UNESCO Bamako. UIL provided a contribution on good practice in training non-formal education (NFE) personnel in different regions, as well as support in the revision and implementation of national strategies in the context of the country's revised 10-year plan, PRODEC II. A primary focus of the new plan is the training of personnel for NFE activities targeting out-of-school girls and women with insufficient competences in literacy and numeracy.





# RESEARCH AND FORESIGHT

UIL produces and disseminates knowledge in the three areas of its mandate through research projects, the development and publication of new insights and recommendations in the form of books, policy papers and forward-looking studies, and the expansion of its knowledge base. Our work supports researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, partners and stakeholders around the world in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and SDG 4 in particular. We offer thought leadership in the field of lifelong learning, generating research and foresight that support advocacy at national, regional and global levels, and acting as a laboratory of ideas and innovation in adult and continuing education, literacy and non-formal education.

In 2018, UIL initiated a joint research project on basic education for indigenous people in the Mekong Sub-region, covering formal and non-formal education, in partnership with the UNESCO International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED). The project will result in country reports, a synthesis report and a policy brief, to be launched and disseminated during various events to celebrate the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019. UIL is also contributing to the work of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok in implementing two projects funded by Japan. The first concerns the development of online tools to support the professional

development of community educators. The second concerns the development and piloting of modules concerning education for sustainable development for trainers of community educators. India, Japan, Lao PDR, Mongolia and the Philippines were selected to pilot the modules, which UIL plans to pilot also in selected African countries.

As well as developing original research, UIL strengthened its databases and enhanced its library collection in order to improve the global knowledge base on lifelong learning. The Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database (LitBase) moved to a new website in order to increase visibility and use of the database. The new website is more user-friendly and includes new functions such as filtering tables for easy identification of cases by country, target groups, educational systems, levels and facilities, as well as subjects. New case studies, in multiple languages, were added to LitBase, as well as to UIL's databases on lifelong learning policies and strategies, recognition, validation and accreditation, and learning cities.

The UIL Library continued to provide an array of important knowledge-based tools and professional reference services to UIL staff and external users and organized access to relevant documents and information in its unique collection, much of which is now digitized (including all UIL

publications). Four CONFINTEA scholars were hosted by the Library during 2018, developing work on open and distance learning in India, the potential of lifelong learning practices in Lao PDR, the Belize literacy strategy and women's empowerment through adult literacy in Ethiopia. The Library also actively advocated for the role of libraries in lifelong learning, particularly their role in learning cities and in strengthening national literacy efforts, developing a memorandum of understanding with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions for that purpose.

The Library coordinated the global Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN), which supports information sharing and capacity building between libraries, documentation centres and information services in the area of adult and lifelong learning. The network comprises more than 100 information services in around 50 countries in all regions of the world, linked via a revamped website. One of the network's core activities is to produce six issues per year of the ALADIN Online Alert, profiling the latest open-access publications in the

areas of adult education, adult literacy, lifelong learning, and technical and vocational education and training.

UIL continued to produce and enhance access to information on lifelong learning, adult and continuing education, youth and adult literacy, and non-formal education in 2018. Publications included *Pathways to Empowerment: Recognizing the Non-formal Competencies of Syrian Refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey*, a study examining how the non-formal learning of refugees can be recognized, and *Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Youth and Adult Basic Education as a Foundation of Lifelong Learning*, a report summarizing policy and practice on RVA from around the world. We also produced a report on lifelong learning policy development in selected African countries, the outcome of a project to increase the capacity of policy-makers and researchers to develop national policies and strategies that will establish lifelong learning systems in Africa. UIL publications were translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese during 2018.

“Our work supports researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, partners and stakeholders around the world in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and SDG 4 in particular”

UIL also helps shape global discussion about lifelong learning through the publication of six issues per year of its journal, the *International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning* (IRE). IRE is the longest-running journal of comparative education in the world and remains one of the most influential. The latest volume included special issues on sustainable learning cities and massive open online courses (MOOCs). A special issue on repositioning adult learning and education in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals was also developed, for publication in 2019. UIL also launched a blog, *Only Connect*, at the end of 2018, in order to offer more policy-oriented thought leadership to the field

and to support the effective dissemination of UIL's work.



Syrian refugee students taking part in a course in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan.





# In focus Pathways to Empowerment



For Syrian refugees living in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is not a luxury. It can be a transformative, life-changing mechanism that can help them enter or re-enter education, integrate into the world of work and participate fully in their host communities. However, while policy-makers in the region have prioritized the recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of non-formal and informal learning, it remains a challenge to develop systems that do this effectively. This was the key issue addressed by *Pathways to Empowerment: Recognizing the Competences of Syrian Refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey*.

Based on an extensive mapping exercise conducted in collabora-

tion with UNESCO Beirut Office by our late colleague Madhu Singh, *Pathways to Empowerment* lays the essential groundwork for a system of RVA for refugees. It urges governments to develop comprehensive national strategies rather than ad hoc projects to recognize the competences of Syrian refugees. It highlights the essential contribution recognition makes to social inclusion and to building more sustainable, coherent societies, and shows that it cannot be the sole responsibility of education and training authorities. It must involve a broad group of stakeholders, including employers, trade unions, industry, and education and training providers, as well as civil society organizations. Member States should not view their recognition strategies as stand-alone interventions, the book argues, but as part of ongoing reforms to education and training, and qualification framework developments, that have potentially very wide benefits.

The publication's recommendations are already contributing to dialogue between national authorities and social partners, and guiding policy actions and RVA practices both in the region and in other parts of the world where recognition of refugees' learning is a critical issue. The publication's key recommendations have been translated into

Arabic and disseminated, in cooperation with UNESCO Beirut Office. These efforts included a 'Regional Policy Forum on Creating Pathways to Empowerment in the Arab States', at which more than 30 country representatives developed a draft regional policy framework for the development of alternative learning pathways in the region. Recognizing the wide importance of this issue, UIL is looking at ways to build on the recommendations of *Pathways to Empowerment* and transfer them to other regional contexts.

"For Syrian refugees, the recognition of non-formal and informal learning is not a luxury. It can be a transformative, life-changing mechanism that can help them enter or re-enter education, integrate into the world of work and participate in their host communities"

# MONITORING

Monitoring and evaluation are critical in building a strong, global evidence base for lifelong learning and for assessing progress against global goals and targets, as well as regional and national policy interventions. They guide Member States as to the most efficient and effective use of resources and indicate the degree to which existing programmes can be considered successful. The key global goals and targets for UIL's work include those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which urges Member States to '[e]nsure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. Through its *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*, UIL is also responsible for monitoring the Belém Framework for Action, adopted at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009, and the 2015 *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*.

In 2018, UIL continued its important role as co-chair of Taskforce 4.6 of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). GAML is led by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) with an aim to support national strategies for measuring learning. It provides stakeholders, researchers, UN agencies and NGOs with a platform for discussion to facilitate data collection on a global scale. Taskforce 4.6 was established to address SDG Target 4.6, which calls on UN Member States to

'ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy' by 2030. Its specific mandate is to consider ways to monitor data related to SDG indicator 4.6.1, which measures 'the percentage of the population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex'.

UIL's work at national and regional level focused on strengthening the capacities of 12 African countries participating in the RAMAA (Measuring Literacy Programme Participants' Learning Outcomes) project. UIL guided the development and validation of a harmonized competency and assessment framework at sub-regional level in close collaboration with the 12 RAMAA countries, and with the support and collaboration of IFEF<sup>1</sup>, OECD, PASEC<sup>2</sup> and the concerned UNESCO field offices. Moreover, capacity-building of national experts on developing and using direct literacy assessment was undertaken by involving them in the training as well as engaging them in the process (data collection, reports, etc.) of developing these normative frameworks. At the country level, other stakeholders were engaged in contextualizing and operationalizing these normative frameworks through a cascading model of capacity-building and strengthening in the area of literacy assessment. RAMAA further strengthened its South-South cooperation model by encouraging country stakeholders to contribute national expertise



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to normative documents and to share good practice.

UIL supported Member States in implementing the 2015 *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*, through a regional conference in Astana, Kazakhstan, for Central Asian countries (in June) and a regional workshop for Arab countries in Beirut (in July). At the same time, preparations began for the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*, which monitors both the *Recommendation* and the 2009 Belém Framework for Action. A survey questionnaire for the preparation of national reports was produced in six languages and disseminated through Member States' National Commissions, with the support of UNESCO's field offices. Member States nominated a focal point to integrate

national data into the survey. Surveys from 160 Member States were received and then analysed by a team of international experts in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The authors and editors produced a first draft of *GRALE 4* in December 2018. The final publication will be launched in autumn 2019 and will include both a monitoring section and a thematic section with a focus on participation, inclusion and equity in adult learning and education.

- 1 Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation
- 2 CONFEMEN's Programme for Analyzing Education Systems

# In focus

## Monitoring literacy

SDG 4.6 describes literacy as 'part of the right to education and a public good'. It is 'at the core of basic education and an indispensable foundation for independent learning'. The principles, strategies and actions for this target are 'underpinned by a contemporary understanding of literacy not as a simple dichotomy of "literacy" versus "illiteracy"; but as a continuum of proficiency levels'. The aim is that 'by 2030, all young people and adults across the world should have achieved relevant and recognized proficiency levels in functional literacy and numeracy skills that are equivalent to levels achieved at successful completion of basic education.'

However, what counts as 'proficiency' can vary from country to country, which makes comparability of data a challenge. As co-chair of one of the GAML thematic taskforces, UIL is, with the OECD, responsible for developing proposals on measurement frameworks to monitor progress towards SDG Target 4.6 on youth and adult literacy, in particular SDG Indicator 4.6.1: 'the percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex'.



Learners taking part in the Advancing Mobile Literacy Learning (AMLL) project, organized by UIL in partnership with Microsoft and UNESCO field offices.

As part of this work, UIL advanced the development of a measurement strategy for indicator 4.6.1. The Institute organized two expert meetings, in November 2017 and May 2018, to analyse global conceptual, assessment and reporting frameworks. Following the second of these meetings, two expert working groups were established (on literacy and numeracy) to develop proposals on a global content framework for reference, reporting scales and fixed proficiency levels for literacy and numeracy. These proposals were then put forward at the fifth GAML plenary meeting in Hamburg in October 2018 and a subsequent online consultation process was initiated by the GAML Secretariat.

UIL will continue to coordinate the work of the two expert groups to elaborate on the proposals for a global content framework, as well as developing concrete guidelines and a costing template for expanding data coverage and comparability for indicator 4.6.1. The mapping of existing national literacy assessment surveys will be finalized during 2019. UIL will also, in collaboration with UIS, develop short literacy and numeracy assessment surveys, including an item bank with a particular focus on the lower literacy skills spectrum.

# ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

UIL seeks to promote lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies. We do this through a combination of policy advice and support on the implementation of lifelong learning at national and regional levels, the active

develop a lifelong learning approach to policy and planning through the conferences, expert meetings and workshops we organize. And we contribute actively to debate and advocacy at a global level through multi-stakeholder activities such as the Global Alliance for Literacy.

“We promote lifelong learning through policy advice and support at national and regional levels, the active promotion of lifelong learning at a global level, and support to civil society and non-governmental organizations in petitioning for positive change”

promotion of lifelong learning at a global level, both within the United Nations and in other international forums, and support to civil society and non-governmental organizations in petitioning for positive change in their countries and regions. We give our partners and other stakeholders an opportunity to contribute to this process, share their own practices and

One key dimension of UIL's networking and advocacy activity has been the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, an international, policy-oriented network through which we promote collaboration and peer learning among members, share expertise and best practice, and stimulate and develop new thinking. The UNESCO GNLC opened for membership in 2015 and now boasts 223 member cities from more than 50 countries in all five UNESCO regions. In 2018, the network revised its regulations (including membership status) in order to reinforce quality assurance and excellence among members and is now developing new content for the network, setting new principles for member cities and facilitating cooperation among them. Content developed to date includes a set of seven animated video tutorials to provide guidance on building learning cities. Each tutorial is accompanied by best-practice videos submitted by UNESCO GNLC member cities. The video tutorials are available in all six UN languages and partners have already translated the videos into Italian, Korean and Thai.

## In focus

# The Global Alliance for Literacy

Literacy is a fundamental part of the right to education for all and indispensable for independent learning throughout life. Literacy is also a prerequisite for achieving all SDGs. Given the large number of people with no or low levels of functional literacy skills in the world, especially women and girls, urgent action is required, starting with ensuring that literacy is part and parcel of education policies and plans and improving the generation of reliable data on literacy and numeracy skill levels of youth and adults. The Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (known as GAL) was established to support Member States in improving literacy, fostering and facilitating collaboration between stakeholders, and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development literacy target: 'to ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy' by 2030 (SDG 4.6).

UIL, as GAL Secretariat, is responsible for coordinating its work and bringing together the group of experts, representatives of UN and government agencies, donors, national and international non-governmental organizations and the private sector that comprise the Alliance. In the first phase of its operations, GAL

emphasized the need for policy coherence, improved assessment and monitoring and the mobilization of resources. In 2018, UIL defined a new focus and direction for the Alliance, and initiated two

“Literacy is a fundamental part of the right to education for all and indispensable for independent learning throughout life. It is a prerequisite for achieving all Sustainable Development Goals”

studies (on mapping and costing youth and adult literacy initiatives) to better guide international efforts and reinforce GAL's role in steering SDG 4. The initiative refocused on the

20 countries around the world with youth and adult literacy rates below 50 per cent, plus the E-9 countries, in which two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults live. The E-9 countries constitute a powerful platform through which to develop South-South cooperation to tackle literacy challenges and share good practice among the countries of the Alliance.

The GAL general meetings and the GAL Policy Forum that took place in Mexico City in November 2018 anchored this new approach and provided ample evidence of the relevance of the Alliance and of the commitment of participating countries to further promoting the youth and adult literacy agenda in national policies and on the international stage. Participants also discussed the possibility of forging links between GAL and the UNESCO GNLC, to focus on the promotion of youth and adult literacy within learning communities that connect urban and rural contexts. They also agreed on the formation of a GAL ministerial steering group to streamline and expedite GAL's agenda and set out the next strategic steps. Lessons learned and recommendations from the policy forum were consolidated into a report and shared at the Global Education Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, in December 2018.



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UIL has continuously strengthened the network by contributing to meetings on the promotion of lifelong learning organized by member cities. With the support of UIL, thematic meetings took place in Santiago (Mexico), Villa María (Argentina), Gelsenkirchen (Germany), Limerick and Cork (Ireland), Pécs (Hungary), Contagem (Brazil), Larissa (Greece), Lucca (Italy) and Medellín (Colombia). As a result of these meetings, strategies and plans for the achievement of the SDGs in the cities are being actively developed. Medellín, the second largest city in Colombia, will host the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities – one of UIL’s flagship events – in October 2019.

To further support advocacy on literacy, UIL prepared and presented the UN Secretary-General’s report to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly on global literacy

initiatives and agendas for the period 2016–2018. It also prepared the UNESCO Director-General’s report to the 205th Session of the Executive Board on literacy vision and strategy.

Following up on previous work, UIL published *Promoting Lifelong Learning for All: The Experiences of Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania*, a report on the promotion and implementation of lifelong learning policies and strategies in five African countries. UIL will continue working with these countries, particularly with Kenya and Namibia, through policy dialogues and technical support for developing a draft policy and/or an implementation strategy for lifelong learning.

In addressing UNESCO’s priority focus on Africa, UIL made important contributions to the 2018 Pan-African High-Level



The Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (GAL) set out its next steps during a forum in Mexico City in November 2018.

Conference on Education, and specifically to the Nairobi Declaration, which was adopted at the conference. *Promoting Lifelong Learning for All* was presented at the conference. UIL also supported conferences on SDG 4 in the Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok) and Latin American and the Caribbean (Cochabamba) regions.

UIL worked closely with UNESCO Abuja Office in the area of policy improvement for youth and adult literacy in Nigeria.

As part of this commitment, UIL participated in consultations in Abuja to prepare for the Nigeria-UNESCO Special Plan of Cooperation – Phase II (2018–2021). When this plan is approved by the Nigerian Government, UIL and UNESCO Abuja will offer support through the capacity-development of senior government officials at national and state levels. Six senior officials from the Federal Ministry of Education also participated in the UIL-IIEP online course.



# In focus

## Hamburg Education Talks

UIL strove to strengthen relationships with its host country, Germany, and city, Hamburg, in 2018. This has included participation in public events, particularly in Hamburg, and the strengthening of political links at local and national level, particularly with the German Foreign Office, which has been steadfast in its support of the Institute.

UIL also opened its doors to the Hamburg public through its programme of Hamburg Education Talks, which began in 2018. The aim of these events is to bring experts in the field of lifelong learning together with local stakeholders and the general public to share insights and debate key issues. UIL recognizes that it has an obliga-

tion to its host community and the talks are a way of informing the public of our work while contributing to the rich and diverse cultural life of the city.

The first event took place in September 2018 to mark International Literacy Day on the theme of 'Illiteracy in Hamburg – Does it really exist?' It was very well attended, with participants exploring the challenges posed by low levels of literacy, both globally and locally. It was followed by a second event on the integration of refugees, in November. This event shed light on the competences, skills and values refugees must acquire for successful social and labour market integration in Hamburg, in Germany and

elsewhere in Europe, and considered the role education plays in integrating refugees in their host societies. It also reflected on how to better prepare people through lifelong learning to live in an increasingly multicultural society.

Both talks attracted wide participation and the quality of discussion was high. Further talks are planned for 2019, as are a number of other activities with our host city and country.



Participants discuss the integration of refugees at the second UIL Hamburg Education Talk.



More than **20** countries supported in **developing lifelong learning policies and plans**

More than **30** organizations and agencies working in **formal partnership** with UIL

**250** local officials engaged through **learning city policy workshops** in Mexico and Egypt



**10** **languages** other than English and French into which our work was translated

More than **10,000** **IRE articles downloaded** each month

**300,000** **UIL publications** downloaded



The year  
**20**



223 cities from 51 countries now members of the **UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities**

230

**literacy good practices** showcased on the LitBase website in English, French and Spanish

50

More than education ministry staff trained through the **UIL-IIEP online course on mainstreaming adult learning**

18

in numbers

9,000

education stakeholders reached through **our newsletters and the ALADIN Online Alert**



160

Member States contributed to the **fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education**

300

More than **literacy providers** trained in the measurement of literacy skills through RAMAA and other projects



# 2019 AND AFTER

## Our priorities

UIL will continue to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all in 2019 and beyond through its policy, research, capacity-building, monitoring and advocacy functions. The activities described in this report reflect the scale of our ambition and our determination to deliver against UIL's mission to strengthen the capabilities of UNESCO Member States, particularly in Africa, in the field of lifelong learning and to establish lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies.

In the year ahead, UIL will continue to work closely with its key partners to support the wider availability of high-quality lifelong learning, with a particular focus on those individuals and communities with the least opportunity to learn. We will reinforce our efforts to maximize the contribution of lifelong learning to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. Our 2019 programme stresses the wider relevance of lifelong learning to all 17 SDGs and the implications of this integrated perspective for educational governance.

A major focus of our work in 2019 will be monitoring and assessment. In autumn, we will launch the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*, evaluating countries' progress in meeting the commitments agreed to in the Belém Framework for Action, adopted at the Sixth International Conference on Adult

Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009. It is also the main monitoring instrument for implementation of the 2015 *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE)*. The 2019 report will include a special focus on participation and the contribution of adult learning and education to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Preparations will also continue for CONFINTEA VII, which is scheduled to take place in 2022, including the planning of regional preparatory conferences for 2020 and 2021.

In addition to *GRALE* and CONFINTEA, UIL's contribution to global monitoring increasingly takes place within the framework of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), through which the Institute coordinates the development of assessment tools for measuring progress against SDG 4.6. This work capitalizes on UIL's experience in the assessment of youth and adult learning outcomes in the context of the RAMAA initiative, which resulted in the elaboration of common competency and assessment frameworks for 12 French-speaking countries in West and Central Africa.

Building on the initiatives launched in 2018 to develop new capacity-building materials – notably the handbook on lifelong learning, the online course on mainstreaming adult learning and education/non-formal education and lifelong learning into education sector plans and the video tutorials on learning cities – UIL will further expand its support to



Member States to formulate and implement inclusive and equitable policies for promoting quality lifelong learning.

To inform policy support and document policy trends and responses, research will focus on emerging areas of policy concern, such as strategies to facilitate the socio-economic and cultural integration of migrants, and continue to serve the implementation of UNESCO priorities, including gender equality, and programmes on themes such as education for sustainable development and global citizenship education.

Networking is a key function to foster policy exchange and policy learning and promote international cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation. Recognizing the importance of networking for building effective policies and promoting international understanding, UIL will work closely with partners, including other UN agencies, national governments, city authorities,

civil society, universities and the private sector, as well as with other UNESCO entities. The Institute will also further reinforce its networking function through the Global Alliance for Literacy and the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. With regard to the latter, the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities, in Medellín, Colombia, will be a highlight in 2019.

Lifelong learning has a critical role to play in enabling countries to rise to the challenges they face, from technological development to climate change. While policy interest has grown, very many countries still fall short of the commitments set out in the 2030 Agenda. It is important that the potential contribution of lifelong learning to SDG 4 and to the wider agenda is realized. The distinctive perspective and mandate of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning has never mattered more.

# The UIL Governing Board

## Full Member

**UIL GB Chair, Ms Malak Zaalouk \* \*\*** Professor of Practice and Director of the Middle East Institute for Higher Education, The American University in Cairo **Arab Republic of Egypt**

**UIL GB Vice-Chair, Ms Eeva-Inkeri Sirelius \*** Former Secretary-General of the Finnish Adult Education Association **Finland**

**Mr Hamidou Boukary \*** Independent Consultant **Republic of Niger**

**Ms Angela Brown-Burke** Senator Councillor and Chairperson of Kingston and St. Andrews Corporation **Jamaica**

**Ms Un Shil Choi \*\*** Professor, The Graduate School of Education, Ajou University **Republic of Korea**

**Ms Paula Engwall** Senior Education Policy Specialist, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) **Kingdom of Sweden**

**Mr Hartwig Lüdtke** Vice-President of the German Commission for UNESCO **Germany**

**Mr Kilemi Mwiria** Senior Advisor to the President of Kenya on Education and Politics **Republic of Kenya**

**Ms Sylvia Ortega Salazar \*\*** Under-Secretary for Upper Secondary Education, Ministry of Public Education **United Mexican States**

**Mr Thomas Boni Yayi** Former President of Benin **Benin**

## Alternate

**Ms Laila Iskander Kamel** Former Minister of State for Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements **Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Mr Reijo Olavi Aholainen** Counsellor of Education, Higher Education and Science Policy Department, Ministry of Education and Culture **Finland**

**Mr Kadir Abdelkader Galy** Director of the Training Institute on Literacy and Non-Formal Education (IFAENF) **Republic of Niger**

**Mr Kornel Brown** Division of Adult and Continuing Education, Delaware State University **United States of America**

**Mr Insub Park** Executive Director of the Department of Lifelong Vocational, Educational Facilitation, National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE) **Republic of Korea**

**Mr Per Magnusson** Deputy Secretary General, Swedish National Commission for UNESCO **Kingdom of Sweden**

**Mr Christoph Wulf** Vice-President of the German Commission for UNESCO **Germany**

**Mr Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi** Research Programme Officer, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa **Republic of Kenya**

**Ms Sylvia Schmelkes Del Valle** President Councillor and President of the Governing Board of the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education in Mexico (INEE) **United Mexican States**

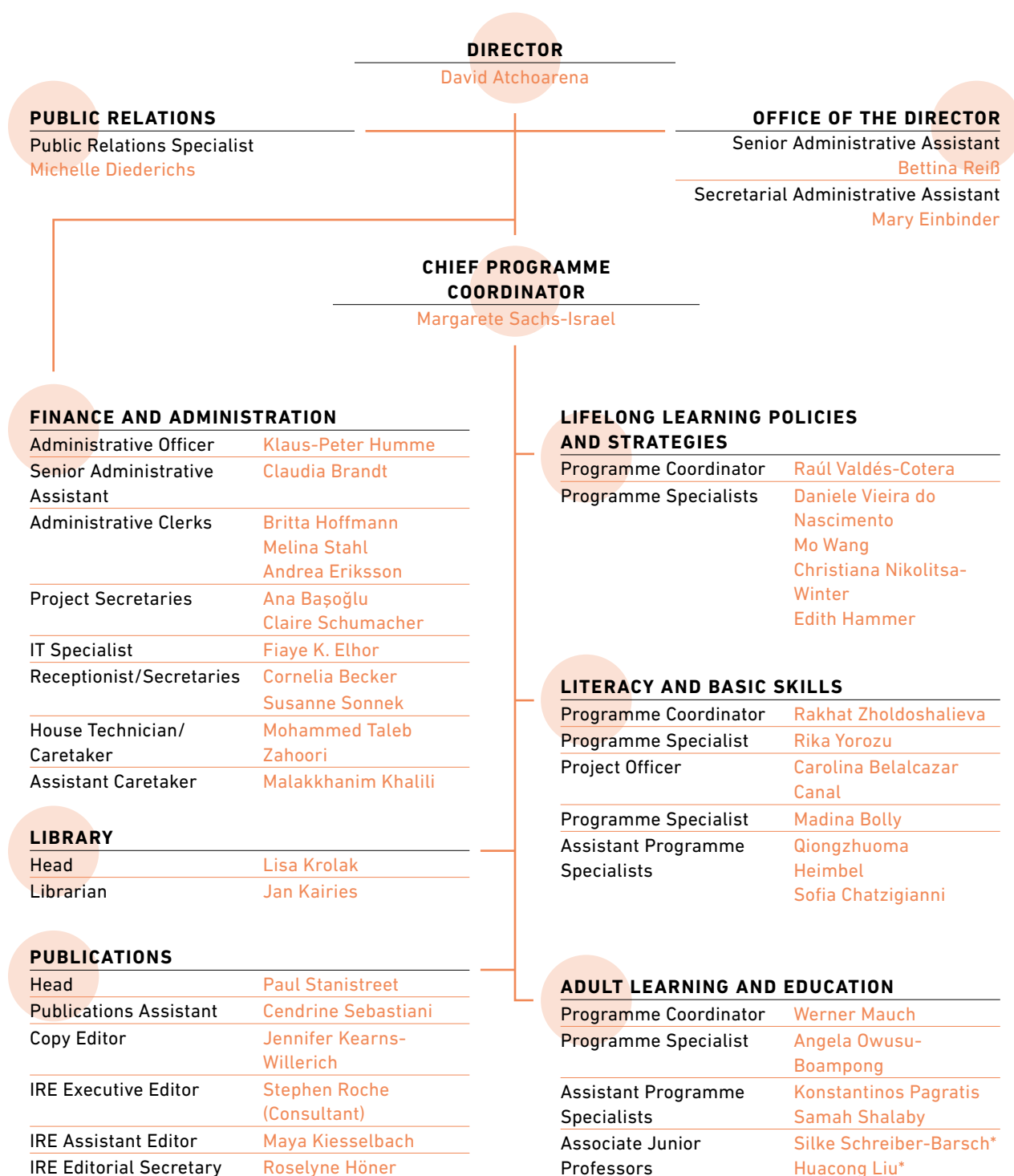
**Mr Alassani Tigri** Councillor to the Former President of Benin **Benin**

\* Member of the Standing Committee of the UIL Governing Board

\*\* Member of the IRE Editorial Board

# UIL organizational chart

(as of December 2018)



\* Secondment from University of Hamburg

# UIL in 2018: Our people

UIL would like to express its sincere thanks to all staff, trainees, fellows, scholars and interns who contributed to its work in 2018

## STAFF

David Atchoarena Saint Lucia  
Ana Başıoğlu Turkey  
Cornelia Becker Germany  
Imke Behr Germany  
Carolina Belalcazar Canal Colombia  
Madina Bolly Burkina Faso  
Claudia Brandt Germany  
Muriel Castiglia France  
Sofia Chatziagianni Greece  
Michelle Diederichs Germany  
Tomasz Dzieniszewski Poland  
Mary Einbinder France  
Fiaye K. Elhor Togo  
Andrea Eriksson Kingdom of Sweden  
Alexandru Gaina Romania  
Edith Hammer Austria  
Qiong Zhuoma Heimbel People's Republic of China  
Britta Hoffmann Germany  
Roselyne Höner France  
Klaus-Peter Humme Germany  
Jan Kairies Germany  
Jennifer Kearns-Willerich United States of America  
Huacong Liu People's Republic of China  
Malakkhanim Khalili Republic of Azerbaijan  
Maya Kiesselback Ireland  
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Sung Lee Republic of Korea  
Werner Mauch Germany  
Christiana Nikolitsa-Winter Greece  
Angela Owusu-Boampong Ghana  
Konstantinos Pagratis Greece  
Bettina Reiß Germany  
Stephen Roche Ireland  
Margarete Sachs-Israel Germany  
Silke Schreiben-Barsch Germany  
Claire Schumacher Canada  
Faith Schwieker-Miyandazi Republic of Kenya  
Cendrine Sebastiani France  
Kabir Shaikh United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
Samah Shalaby Arab Republic of Egypt  
Madhu Singh India  
Susanne Sonnek Germany  
Melina Stahl Germany  
Paul Stanistreet United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
Mohammed Taleb Zahoori Islamic Republic of Iran  
Raúl Valdés-Cotera Mexico

Daniele Vieira do Nascimento Brazil  
Mo Wang People's Republic of China  
Rika Yorozu Japan  
Rakhat Zholdoshalieva Kyrgyz Republic

## INTERNS

Ayibanu Abudurexiti People's Republic of China  
Debbie Alfred United States of America  
Latifa AlWazzan Kuwait  
Bartholomeow Ayinbila A-Obe Ghana  
Nejeebullah Azad Afghanistan  
Alexandrine Bouopda France  
Ivonne Julieth Castillo Beltrán Colombia  
Alexandra Chronopoulos Canada  
Callee Anne Davis South Africa  
Jennifer Duncan Germany  
Anna-Lena Handke Germany  
Alexander Howells United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
Yuk Tin Yvette Leung People's Republic of China  
Isabelle Mischke Germany  
Lucille Pannetier France  
Melitza Pizarro Colombia  
Vanessa Pogacnik Murillo Germany/Mexico  
Giovanna Leticia Romero Sarubbi Paraguay  
Meng Zhou People's Republic of China

## TRAINEES

Evalyne Nyambura Mungai Republic of Kenya  
Meng Xu People's Republic of China

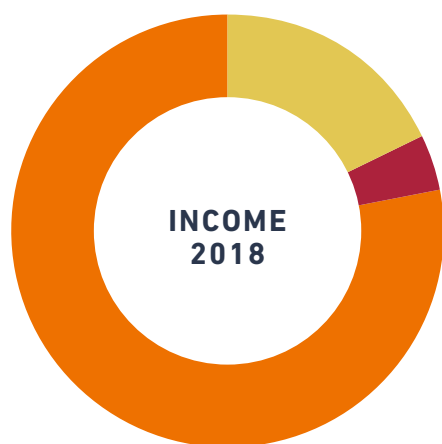
## VOLUNTEERS

Anton Bech Jørgensen Denmark  
Nina Toledano France



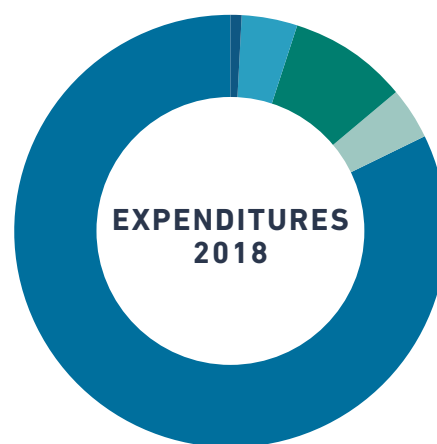
# Financial report

## UIL budget 2018 (US \$)



- Voluntary contributions
- UNESCO
- Other income

<b>UNESCO</b>	
Financial allocation	783,000
<b>VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	
Programmes	2,407,000
Host country (Germany)	854,000
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>	299,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,343,000</b>
Reserves programme funds	3,986,000
UNESCO extra-budgetary programmes*	120,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>8,449,000</b>



- Direct programme costs
- Governing Board and Standing Committee
- Host country premises
- General administration incl. ICT
- Institutional development

Governing Board and Standing Committee	42,000
Direct programme costs	4,826,000
Institutional development	263,000
Host country (Germany) premises	232,000
General administration, including ICT	568,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,931,000</b>
Reserves programme funds	2,398,000
UNESCO extra-budgetary programmes*	120,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>8,449,000</b>

\* UNESCO funds administered by UIL

We would like to thank partners and Member States that have made a financial and/or in-kind contribution to UIL's work in 2018. Special thanks are due to the three Member States that provided voluntary contributions: our host country Germany, and the governments of Norway and the Kingdom of Sweden.



## An institute and a city open to the world

UIL was founded – as the UNESCO Institute for Education – in 1952 in Hamburg; an expression both of UNESCO's commitment to post-war Germany and of the country's commitment to the fundamental values of UNESCO, starting with building peace. Its aim was to promote human rights and international understanding through education. Its first director was Professor Walther Merck, Chair of Comparative Education at the University of Hamburg, and its founding Governing Board included luminaries such as Maria Montessori and Jean Piaget.

Although the work of the Institute focused initially on Europe, from the 1960s on, it directed increasing efforts to supporting developing countries. It was apt, therefore, that in 1978 UIL moved to the former home of Albert Ballin, Hamburg native and visionary inventor of modern cruise

shipping. Ballin was a convinced internationalist, who believed in promoting dialogue and understanding as a means of securing peace between nations. Last year, UIL and Hamburg marked 100 years since Ballin's death.

Ballin's former residence, owned by the City of Hamburg, is now the workplace of UIL staff from every world region, all striving to realize lifelong learning's contribution to social justice, sustainable development and global citizenship. Our activities place particular emphasis on promoting inclusion and equity in and through education, two dimensions at the heart of the transformative agenda for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4. We are proud to pursue our mandate in a city which, like UIL, has always been open to the world, and to be part of its culture and history.



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 is at the heart of this vision.

As the only UNESCO organization with a specific mandate to promote lifelong learning and in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we work with Member States and other partners, in every region of the world, to strengthen capacities in lifelong learning, with a focus on youth and adults and the creation of policies and systems that foster effective lifelong learning pathways.

We believe that lifelong learning is essential to the development of coherent, holistic solutions to the wicked challenges of our time, from climate change to gender inequality, and to the creation of sustainable, fairer and more democratic societies.

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