



World Committee for Lifelong Learning (CMA)

3rd WORLD FORUM for LIFELONG LEARNING

***LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE
WHY AND HOW?***

Marrakech

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CMA conference synthesis

1 / One conference presenter reminded us yesterday of the quote that 'those who want to travel should be humble'. Given that I have been reliant on the able translators to follow much of the proceedings, and that I am far from home, I am acutely aware of my own limitations in synthesising the conference.

2 / The conference opening offered a metaphor for Jacques Delors' encouragement that we must learn how best to live together when xxx of the Marrakech city administration told us of the square where he lived as a child; taking breakfast on successive days with Christian, Jewish and Islamic families, as children ran in and out of each other's houses.

3 / What followed was a sequence of richly diverse discussions – relating to individuals, companies and to learning for social transformation.

4 / Sergio Haddad introduced one of the workshops with a summary of the macro context facing the world now, with its intersecting economic, environmental and social crises, with accelerating inequality; weakening states, and with the growing power of transnational corporations to generate profits in one country and realise them in a low or no tax administration. Much of the debate focused on how this broad context related to policy and practice in adult learning at the level of the state, cities and territories, and how too it affected the behaviour of responsible enterprises.

5 / Anxiety generated by intensified global competition can be seen in rich and developing countries alike, and in too many countries this has led to a narrowing of educational goals to

economic instrumentalism, to grow the economy, and to prepare citizens for their role as consumers.

6 / I mentioned the accelerating inequality, which Wilkinson and Oickett captured so well in their book, *The Spirit Level*. Despite the aspirations of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to halve global poverty in the fifteen years leading up to 2015, the findings of the latest Global Monitoring report for Education for All (EFA) make bleak reading, as Arne Carlsen reminded us. It is now clear that whilst the Education for All goals were inter-related, and represented a holistic approach to the developing world's educational needs, the inclusion of just two of those goals in the MDGs had a distorting effect, concentrating development resources on universal primary education in particular, to the detriment of other educational priorities.

7 / We saw the consequences of this in the first seminar on literacy. The risk is that people who drop out of schooling lose skills unless they live in a literate environment. I was struck here, too, by the need to see literacy as a continuum not a one off event. Teaching the alphabet is not enough in a complex modern society.

8 / We have recognised in our discussions the increasing role of new technologies. I picked up some comments on Twitter about the women, literacy and development seminar which took place this morning. They argued that women who are literate are less likely to be trafficked, less likely to contract HIV/AIDS, and less likely to lose children through death in childbirth. As the seminar reminded us literacy improves health, financial capability, parenting skills, and social inclusion. I don't usually quote Lenin, but as he put it 'literacy is not a political problem, but the fundament without which you don't have a polity.' The seminar recognised the importance of contexts – legal, economic, social and cultural – in determining access to, and the nature of literacy in different places, and emphasised, too, the power of inter-generational and family learning.

9 / The point was made in several of the conference seminars that no government can meet all the learning needs of adults throughout their lives. As a result we need a combination of formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities provided by a wide range of social actors. The third seminar explored the contemporary Canadian experience. It demonstrated that we can usefully blur elements of these categories given access to web-based technologies to enable individuation of studies. This creates challenges of course for tutors or supporters of learning to acquire a mastery of what was called techno-pedagogy. It also provides spaces to foster peer group learning.

10 / The same seminar also discussed the key importance of learning at significant moments of transition in the life cycle. They reviewed the work in the UK of the NIACE sponsored Inquiry into the Future of Lifelong Learning, which reviewed learning needs for the increasingly complex initial transitions into labour market activity (roughly school leaving to 25); the needs of the rather overloaded 25-50s when work, families and social obligations often leave little time for structured learning; 50-75s – moving out of the labour market and often under-utilised, and 75 plus where learning often relates to a decline in decline in physical skills, and a less active life. Each presents different learning challenges which reach beyond the narrow utilitarianism of much public policy.

11 / These first three seminars also provoked discussion on the need for good data, and for headline numbers to be disaggregated. We have already noted the under-representation of

women, but unless subgroups can be identified from population and participation data the risk is that the need of people with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, herders, elders, working class adults, people with different sexual preferences or religious affiliation will be missed. Without knowing the answer to the question 'who isn't there?' it is hard to know what can most usefully be done about it. We were reminded in the report back session of the particular responsibility of states to protect minorities, and agreed that building skills in analysing data was an important priority in strengthening lifelong learning strategies.

12 / Whilst we are on the subject of equity, we argue in the International Council for the Education of Adults that numerical targets are not enough when considering global challenges. We believe that the targets should be relational – securing a reduction in the gap between the opportunities and achievements of the most affluent quintile of the population with that of the least affluent 40 percent. But to achieve that goal we do indeed need better capacity to collect and analyse data.

13 / On the first evening of the conference I quoted Raymond Williams, who argued that at times of change people turn to learning to understand what is happening, to make adjustments in the light of change, but most importantly so that they can help to shape change. Inevitably, our focus in the seminars which looked at the impact of change on individuals has been on literacy as a key to democratic participation, and on its impact on skills to improve options to work and to shape lives. However, one very interesting contribution suggested a different form of globalisation of individual learning – where disciplines developed in specific cultures had found a global audience – from tai chi, to yoga; from Moroccan cuisine to belly dancing.

14 / A further impact on the lives of individuals, arising from globalisation came up in the seminar which explored the work of the Hasan 2nd Foundation and other agencies which support Moroccan migrants working and living abroad, to hold on to their cultural roots; and supporting the struggles inherent in the transition to living in a different context with coaching and mentoring. Migration is, of course, a key feature of the fierce new global world we are living in, and presents challenges for the people left behind; for the migrants settling in a new place; and for people in the receiving societies. Each challenge is a reminder of the Delors' pillar – that learning to live together is a key component of lifelong learning.

15 / Berlin has now a migrant community totalling 40% of its total population, and one of the seminars heard about its creative response, where the city adopted a target of 25% of public service jobs for migrants. We were told that the private sector has responded positively in actively seeking to reflect the diversity of the local population in its workforce.

16 / The seminars examining developments in lifelong learning in the private sector looked at businesses' social responsibility policies and practices, and at the challenges of skills development at a time when changes arising from new technologies, improved communications, and changing geo-dynamics all impact on firms' prospects. There was wide recognition that there is a major challenge facing responsible organisations in addressing the impact of intensified competition, globalisation and of climate change, whilst securing the success and sustainability of the enterprise. What, participants asked, did the challenges discussed at the Rio Plus 20 conference with its insistence that development needed to balance the economic, the human and the ecological mean for the practices of firms? And they answered that at best addressing the Rio agenda leads to change inside and outside

the company. However, to my mind there can be no doubt that the corporate world needs to develop a more dynamic responsibility for the development of staff. In too many places the bulk of training and development is offered to those who are most senior, and to those who have already had most learning opportunity.

17 / We were told, once again, that companies rely most on soft skills rather than those acquired through formal study. Yet at the same time were reminded of the old saying 'If we don't know where we are going, any road will take us there'. So how far is training a key to success? We all agree that it is better to train for the skills of tomorrow's economy than for yesterday's world. But once again. Context affects the answer. In Europe supported mobility is a key part of work preparation for the privileged – through the Erasmus programme. Migration for Filipinos, however, where the economy relies on more than 50% going abroad to work, and to repatriate money, is concentrated on less skilled domestic labour. In that context skills preparation for work seems less of a public priority.

18 / I missed discussion at the conference of the role of trade unions in lifelong learning. In the UK, UnionLearn has recruited and trained 30,000 volunteer union learning representatives, who offer peer group mentoring and support to fellow workers, in the belief that learning is a key industrial skill. They recognise that motivation is a key element of the curriculum for adults, and that you are more likely to be motivated by the experience of someone like oneself than by a representative of formal learning institutions.

19 / In a world of work where people move across boundaries, the recognition of prior experience and of qualifications gained overseas is of vital importance. But it is not just individuals who move. The conference noted the increasing commercialisation and marketization of training and competence recognition, and of the growth of transnational education and training providers – most notable to date in higher education, but growing in the skills sector too.

20 / The third sequence of seminars looked at social transformation and lifelong learning, questioning the narrow view that improvement in Gross Domestic Product will mean life improvements for all. In the light of the Sarkozy commission's analysis of the limitations of GDP to capture well-being alongside economic activity, and the Andean countries' commitment to 'buen vivir' – where transformation is seen to include human experience and a care for nature – we asked what response to globalisation will best make for a world worth living in.

21 / This question was examined first in a fresh look at how best to combine the formal and the informal to secure new cognitive perspectives, taking the workplace as context, and focusing on silence, patience and modesty in observation. The second seminar looked at health and education, highlighting the tension between expert knowledge and democratic engagement. What is the role of the physician in a world where expert patients have primed themselves through peer group learning on condition specific websites with ever better information and sharper questions. There are clear risks for a generalist medical practitioner. But will this lead to the individualisation of health care where the better informed get better treatment? And is all peers learning good, and reliable? These questions lead us back to the basic education and the importance of critical enquiry.

22 / In the final seminar we were given two different but complementary approaches to acting at the regional level. In the light of global change the city of Marrakech responded ahead of

Rio plus 20 to adopt policies in line with Agenda 21. But I was particularly struck by the work of the Council for the Development of Transeft – where we were told of the transformation of a village where old tyres had been habitually burned to generate the heat to fire pots – leaving acrid fumes lingering over the village. A modern gas-fired kiln has not only transformed the pottery, but also restored the possibility of tourism, and improved the health and life-expectancy of citizens. I liked their practical response, too, to the decision that a minimum of 12% of elected officials should be women, where CDT provided workshops, combining training and reflection. This, surely is grounded learning, solidarity in practice.

23 / So, in conclusion, where should we look to meet future challenges. As Carol Anonuevo from UNESCO suggested, we need to work on policy, governance, programme development, quality and access – the key themes identified at CONFINTEA VI, the world conference in Belem. But that, in my view will not be enough. As Sergio Haddad said, we have, too, to build a new way of seeing the world, working in solidarity – valuing the things we know together, as much as those we know individually. We need to invent new forms of association and of learning, taking delight in our shared humanity, and taking care of the limited resources of our planet. That, for me, is an agenda for lifelong learning in a world worth living in.

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Témoignage de l'atelier A
« La personne au centre de son parcours »

Individualisation, learning time and transitions

My presentation draws on experience in three different contexts:

- As Head of OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
- As director of a national inquiry into the future of lifelong learning, sponsored by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education in the UK, see <http://shop.niace.org.uk/ifll-learningthroughlife.html>
- As co-director of a research centre on the Wider Benefits of Learning (WBL), funded by the UK Department for Education and Skills.

This background leads me to:

- Value a focus on the outcomes of learning as well as the process
- Argue for a broad approach to measuring the outcomes, as a way of developing both policy and practice.

I structure my presentation around three questions.

Question 1 - What are the possibilities for a new relationship between the individual and the public authorities in relation to lifelong learning?

Proponents of lifelong learning put much stress on how much learning can empower individuals. This is quite correct, philosophically and empirically. However we now see a definite tension emerging, as individualisation leads to what is sometimes called 'responsibilisation'. This means that individuals are given increasing responsibility for looking after their own affairs, and better learning opportunities enable the state to withdraw. The classic example is in health: as adults learn more about how to look after themselves, so the state can leave it to them to secure their own health. This is of course a gross simplification, but it points to a real issue.

The issue is all the more significant in the face of mounting inequalities in many countries. The unequal distribution of learning opportunities becomes all the more significant in this context.

Question 2 - What are the options for a new 'time balance' between working time and learning time, in a lifelong context?

We are experiencing a considerable fragmentation of employment. Not just increasing unemployment, but a growth in part-time working, in 'zero hours' contracts and flexible working across a 24/7 schedule. Allied to this has been the continuous increase in female employment over the last two decades. And increasingly we will see a prolongation of working lives; as people live longer, they both wish to and are obliged to work longer.

This means looking again at how we mix worktime and learning time (including learning at work). People – both men and women – will have far more variety in their time patterns: not just changing careers but moving from full-time to part-time and back again (and varying greatly in what 'part-time' signifies). Older people are increasingly present in training.

This presents major challenges for policies and practice, to ensure that learning opportunities are available appropriately. Obviously new technologies will help greatly here. But we need to pay particular attention to the coherence of schemes for recognising competences, whether these have been formally or informally acquired.

Question 3 - What contribution can and should lifelong learning make to important life transitions?

It is a reasonable hypothesis that lifelong learning makes a particularly significant contributions when it enables people to manage major transitions in life. An obvious example specific example is the transition made by a prisoner when he or she leaves prison, often vulnerable to returning to their previous habits and milieu, and without skills.

Identifying key transitions in a changing demographic and economic context, and designing learning opportunities appropriate to these, is a major challenge. is the transition from paid employment to retirement, which affects almost everyone; a more

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Representing the Director-General of UNESCO,

Ms Irina Bokova

Closing remarks of the 3rd World Forum for Lifelong Learning.

The Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova, has asked me to

represent her and deliver a closing statement to the 3rd World Forum for Lifelong Learning. Ms Bokova sends her greetings to the Forum with the assurance that UNESCO – and she personally – are strongly committed to lifelong learning as a key element in developing sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations launched the Global Education First Initiative in September 2012. The aim is to raise the profile of education on the global agenda and to strengthen national and international commitment. After several years in which focus shifted to other priorities, education is now making a strong comeback. Its positive impact on multiple aspects of development is being recognized. This initiative will support Member States in their efforts to achieve the Education for All goals, which were adopted by 164 countries in the year 2000 in Dakar, with a 2015 target date set for most. The Global Education First Initiative is a five-year-long engagement. It is hoped that it will play an important role in defining the post-2015 development agenda. The three priorities of the initiative are: ensuring that all children attend school, improving the quality of education, and fostering global citizenship. The Director-General of UNESCO has been designated as the Executive Secretary of the Steering Committee of the initiative.

When talking about education, it is clear from the perspective of UNESCO that literacy provides the foundation for lifelong learning. Without literacy, a person cannot pursue secondary and higher education, or continuing education at any level – whether formal, non-formal or informal. Their path to continuous education is blocked. 200 million young people worldwide need a second chance to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. How can we deal with this challenge? One way is to create stronger ties between schools and the world of work. Another is to strengthen the development of soft skills in relation to teamwork, creativity, problem-solving, entrepreneurship. A third way is to build new partnerships between the public and the private sectors. We need to offer more avenues for people to improve their skills, helping them to escape poverty and unemployment. This will require a greater focus on non-formal and informal learning. It will require better ties between formal and non-formal learning systems. It will require that we develop systems to recognize, validate and accredit the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning. And it will require that we understand and appreciate where learning occurs; not just in classrooms, but also in the world of work, in homes and in social interactions.

We also need to remember that education, training and learning systems are not only about developing skills. They are also about transmitting human values, so we can create better places of work, and more sustainable, equitable and inclusive societies. Specifically, our education, training and learning systems should transmit the values of peace, democracy, respect for others, intercultural understanding, equity, gender equality, and sustainability in order to actively shape the future we want.

UNESCO is currently working on a preliminary study of the desirability of revising the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education, adopted by the General

Conference in Nairobi in 1976. This recommendation is a legal instrument but is not binding for Member States. Some organisations now even discuss the possibility of a UN Convention on Lifelong Learning. A convention is a stronger legal instrument than a recommendation. The Executive Board of UNESCO will discuss the preliminary study in its meeting in April 2013, and at the General Conference in October 2013.

UNESCO has also started work on an update of the 1996 Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty First Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, in light of changing contexts and new challenges. The aim is to revisit the four pillars of learning defined in this report: learning to know, learning to be, learning to do and learning to live together. This will be an important contribution to the post-2015 education and development agenda.

In this conference we have discussed learning in relation to the world of work, we have discussed the learning person and learning for transforming societies. We have also discussed learning to learn, which may be an element in the updated Delors Report. No country today can afford to build a formal education system that will respond to all the learning needs of its people. Therefore, we need to recognise and build on all forms of learning – formal, non-formal and informal. This must include a greater focus on workplace learning, as most of the learning that occurs in the workplace is non-formal.

I would like to thank The World Committee for Lifelong Learning for organizing the 3rd World Forum for Lifelong Learning. I would also like to thank the city of Marrakesh and the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting the conference. In my report to the Director-General Ms Irina Bokova, I will convey my positive impressions of this 3rd World Forum.

Thank you.

[The full text \(in French\)](#)