

**Bulletin No. 40**

Jan 2022

**Table of Contents**

<b>Editorial <i>Chris Duke</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The year in poetic (re)verse</b>	<b>4</b>
New Beginning <i>Anne Hope</i>	4
Becoming and Being <i>Serap Brown</i>	5
Hope and Despair: Sisters in the Struggle <i>Shauna Butterwick</i>	6
The Turning of the World <i>Budd L Hall</i>	7
Learn, learn, and learn again – lifelong <i>Norman Longworth</i>	8
<b>Other ways of seeing</b>	<b>9</b>
The undying relevance of African Traditional Education <i>Idowu Biao</i>	9
Indigenous peoples, climate justice, adult learning and education <i>Sandra L. Morrison and Timote M Vaiuto</i>	11
The Wuxing Learning Cycle for Elder Learners in the Asia-Pacific <i>Thomas Kuan</i>	14
The sparkle of lights on the edge of challenges in the turmoil of the Covid-19 pandemic <i>Yahui Fang</i>	20
The Story of Participatory Research: history and future <i>Sumitra Srinivasan</i>	22
<b>We Are ALE, and CONFINTEA VII</b>	<b>23</b>
CONFINTEA VII just around the corner – getting informed, taking action <i>Heribert Hinzen</i>	23
A new social contract for education <i>David Atchoarena and Paul Stanistreet</i> <i>p.stanistreet@unesco.org</i>	25
Moving Forward with Unity and Enthusiasm. Reflections Upon the New European Agenda for Adult Learning 2021-2030 <i>Balázs Németh</i>	27
<b>SIG Lifelong learning and older adults</b>	<b>31</b>
Learning in Later Life Special Interest Group (LLL SIG) update Report <i>Brian Findsen</i>	31
Learning Activities for Senior Citizens in Thailand <i>Archanya Ratana-Ubol</i>	33
Older adults and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand: Social issues affecting seniors' reality <i>Brian Findsen</i>	35
Technology and older people in the UK: the current picture <i>Alex Withnall</i>	37
<b>The Next Issue</b>	<b>39</b>
Growing relevance of community-based participatory research in higher education in India <i>Niharika Kaul</i>	39

<b>People</b>	<b>40</b>
New members	40
Great champions of ALE	42
Lalage Bown: a global inspiration and ‘mother of adult education in Africa’	42
Lalage Bown, An Extraordinary Life	45
Ken Thompson– a true champion of lifelong learning communities	46
Archbishop Emeritus Tutu’s heartfelt engagement with life (1931-2021)	48

## **Editorial** *Chris Duke*

*dukeozenay@gmail.com*

New Years: new ambitions and aspirations, resolutions as well as apprehensions; and rising awareness that not all ‘new years’ begin on January 1<sup>st</sup>, but at different times over some weeks, notably in different parts of Asia and leaving aside the alternating seasons of the two hemispheres. Some ‘new years’ are historically long-abiding, with old belief, ways and wisdoms stirring, rediscovered, noticed with new interest and serious respect – lifelong learning across the millennia. Thomas Kuan’s Waxing Learning Cycle is one such.

Mid-winter in the North passes with celebration of the passing of the year’s darkest day and longest night, echoing deep anxieties revealed in medieval European folk and nursery tales, so-called pagan rituals rolled into the still dominant Christian calendar matching the northern seasons. Australian First Nations (Aboriginal) communities in far North Arnhem land, however, have a six-season year matching the behaviour of the weather, and so of all life-forms, not the four neatly quartered calendar into which behaviours, hopes and fears are shoehorned.

We tend to tidy things into evenly matching rectangular boxes, with clear policy borders, duties, targets, and competitive rivalries. But nature does not behave that way. Nor, instinctually, come to that, does our species. The life-giving essence of diversity is for ever assailed by rectangular, tidy mass management which in standardising repeatedly proves short-sighted and self-destructive. Nature will not be ruled by men’s tidiness, for all that we aspire to reduce the mountains and to make the rough places plain.

As this recognition dawns, another burden falls women’s way. They already ‘hold up more than half the sky’: added to one-to-one and family nurturance and charity they are now charged with addressing the ethics, morals, and actions of competitive fight-ful mankind. Reflect on the themes and currents of the previous Bulletin on *Climate Justice and Adult Learning and Education*. What does it imply about gender roles and the tasks required of womankind?

Accordingly, we open this New Year issue with poetry that may stir muted awareness. Embrace the space between hope and despair, with Shauna Butterwick.

In the succeeding section ‘Other Ways of Seeing’, Idowu Biao looks back beyond ‘modernity’ and calls up the undying relevance of African traditional education; and Sandy Morrison and Timote Vaoleti call up indigenous approaches in the vast Pacific region from Aotearoa (New

Zealand) east and north, for the impact of acquisitive globalism on climate and the job required of ALE.

Yahui Fang in another, but more politically threatened, place, Taiwan, with its contested identity crisis, looks for light in the turmoil of pandemic. Also, in a totally different part of Asia we hear about the creation and practical growth of P(A)R, participatory (action) research, as it has bedded down and been driven at PRIA in India. (See also later in this issue the bio-note welcoming one of ALE's Elders, Ana Krajnc, midwife to PAR in Ljubljana forty years ago.)

We keep centre-screen the upcoming VII World Conference on ALE, CONFINTEA, this time in Marrakesh, Morocco, in a 12-yearly tradition starting in 1949. This has seen patient and significant growth of civil society influence within the intergovernmental (IGO) UN structure of UNESCO.

We continue to promote the new five-year campaign to connect and multiply the influence of bodies championing ALE and LLL, *We Are ALE*; and to seek active and evident collaboration with other bodies in this cause, as Niharika Kaul foreshadows in the next Bulletin.

High-level cooperation between Governmental and nongovernmental bodies is not restricted to the UN family of nations, as Balazs Nemeth shows in a meticulous analysis of new European Union (EU) policymaking and the response of a lead European INGO, EAEA. Maybe it is time to look also at the role in formulating and promoting ALE and LLL of the 'rich men's club', the OECD.

Brian Findsen continues animating the SIG (Special Interest Group) on older adults' learning, and their situation and treatment, with rising proportions of older adults now in most countries: are they socially, economically, and otherwise valued wise and productive Elders giving back some of what they gained from society in their 'productive years'; or just a costly drain on resources? We have reports from Thailand and the UK as well as New Zealand, and a plea for much more attention to this demographically, socially, and economically ever more crucial sector.

In an unusually absorbing final section on People, we welcome three new senior and influential members with a wealth of experience to contribute; and three of the galaxy of 20<sup>th</sup> century ALE leaders who have passed away in recent weeks and days of 2021.

Some may be surprised by who is there. They are as diverse as our world and its diverse inhabitant custodians.

First and most obvious within the world of LLL and ALE is the towering majesty of **Lalage Bown**, the mother of AE in Africa. Words like leadership and charisma cluster round her, but also warmth, humour, and wee drams of whisky. Above all she was politely fearless in speaking truth to power as Tom Schuller recalled in Maria Slowey' fine synthesis drawn from the huge volume of recognitions on the Glasgow CR&DALL website. The only comparable figure that I can call up is the diminutive yet personally forceful person of Dame Nita Barrow, who as President of ICAE had big, highly decorated generals who loomed over her quaking in their Iraqi boots.

If Lalage is an obvious choice, globally known and loved in the world of ALE and LLL, **Ken Thompson**'s stature is mostly local to Melbourne in Australia, and more widely through the learning regions and movement now shaped by the UNESCO-led Global Learning Cities movement GLCN. Ken stayed with the local community movement that he nurtured in the disadvantaged multicultural city region in socio-economic decay, of Hume, steering it into strong partnership with local government, and when that ended, out through it to continuing self-reliance. He was the archetypical quiet Australian achiever, matched perhaps only by another fine, modest, and persistent worker, the late Glen Postle, who built lasting and self-sustaining connections across generations and between university and community in Southern Queensland.

The third in this trilogy of honour some would not see as an adult educator at all, the highly influential active opponent of Apartheid and subsequent reconciliation-maker in South Africa, **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, friend, ally and co-campaigner to Nelson Mandela and, also to PIMA President Shirley Walters. Arch was also a great educator, as a teacher and as Chancellor in her University of the Western Cape: a national culture-maker for the new South Africa. If lifelong learning in its full sense has any meaning, Arch Tutu was its champion par excellence.

What did these three have in common?

courage

one or another kind of charisma and capacity to charm and to lead

absence of self

all-generous unquenchable good humour

and as Shirley well expresses it, heartfelt engagement with life.

## The year in poetic (re)verse

### New Beginning *Anne Hope*

*[Anne Hope was an iconic adult / popular educator exiled from SA in the early 70s – she had been using Freirean methodology with the black consciousness movement with Steve Biko as a leading figure. In exile, working with Sally Timmel, she developed Training for Transformation courses and training manuals still being used 50 -60 years on. She died at 85 a couple of years back. Shirley Walters]*

Stop all this procrastination  
Turn the mind to something more  
It is time for celebration

Burn the junk in conflagration  
Put the remnants in a drawer  
Stop all this procrastination

Explore new-found fascination  
Open wide your mind's closed door  
It is time for celebration

Find a novel destination  
Let the lion within you roar  
Stop all this procrastination

A new task will spur creation  
Risk those feelings, though they're raw  
It is time for celebration

Face another generation  
Archetypes lie at the core  
Stop all this procrastination  
Time, yes time for celebration.

## **Becoming and Being *Serap Brown***

[serapbrown@uvic.ca](mailto:serapbrown@uvic.ca)

*[As Serap Brown expresses in her poem, we need new paradigms which allow us to re-create, re-imagine, re-member our connections and collaborations towards peace and dignity.  
Shirley Walters]*

I did not become an ecofeminist  
I just am, because  
I did not become a  
feminist.  
I just am.

How could I not be?  
Witnessed women who  
were oppressed,  
silenced, erased from history,  
made invisible.  
Witnessed women

who could not  
practise their will  
and become fully human.  
did not have a choice to become a feminist.  
I just am.

And I did not become an environmentalist.  
I just am.  
How could I not be?  
Witnessed crystal clear, running Waters  
Turn grey, heavy, thick, dull.

Witnessed legendary ancient forests  
giant trees  
holding wisdom  
in forests, in relations eradicated, cleared.  
Forests home to many  
birds, wolves, fish, and Water  
I witnessed life slowly and painfully  
disappearing from the land.  
My loved ones have been fading away  
I did not have a choice to become an environmentalist.  
I just am.

And I now realize  
my experiences, insights  
simply merged  
cause I am tired, tired of  
divisions,  
extractions,  
dominations,  
exploitation and destruction!

So, I am in SEARCH  
in SEARCH of a NEW PARADIGM  
and I know it is on its way.  
This new paradigm holds space for  
listening, re-creating, re-imagining,  
re-memembering our relations, connections,  
bringing peace, dignity,  
collaboration, no division but unity.

I did not become an ecofeminist.  
I just am.  
So, I am in SEARCH,  
in SEARCH of a NEW PARADIGM  
and I know it is on its way.

## **Hope and Despair: Sisters in the Struggle** *Shauna Butterwick*

*shauna.butterwick@ubc.ca*

Hold hope and despair close  
they are reciprocal, mutual  
sisters in the struggle for climate justice.

Despair and hope  
not opposites, not binary  
embrace the space between.

Stay a while  
do not turn away

attend and observe.

In darkness, our despair  
bears witness to power  
without vision, humanity.

In hope, darkness lifts  
light enters  
energy restored.

Hope and despair  
spaces of wisdom  
guides in the struggle.

Stillness and movement  
silence and voice  
listen and learn.

Our tears and hope  
replenish the earth  
earth needs both, as do we.

### **The Turning of the World *Budd L Hall***

With thanks to Nelson Mandela, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Pete Seager and Raffi

We have seen the images, the flames

We have seen the anger and confusion in the faces of our friends

But, we are told as well that this is a special time

We sometimes even feel that a turning has begun

But we are unsure of the nature of the turning

And we are unsure of what it means for ourselves

For our families and our communities

And even for our work

And even more we ask how do we make the road together?

What are scholars and civil society leaders and public officials and funding agencies and artists  
and students for in this age?

What is the use of our power to read the world?

Do we have the skills to re-name the world?

How do we release the deep new stories of our lives?

How can we become turners of a new world?

If you would be a person for the turning, make your work capable of answering the challenge of apocalyptic times, even if this means sounding apocalyptic

If you would be a turner, write living works. Be a scholar from outer space, sending articles to the journal of the new world rising, to great new editor, an Indigenous woman, who cries out for contributions to this new reality and she does not tolerate academic bullshit.

If you would be a turner, experiment with all manner of words, and forms, of representations of the new day dawning, of theatre and painting, of poetry, erotic broken grammars, ecstatic religions, heathen outpourings speaking in tongues, bombastic public speech, automatic scribbling's, surrealist sensings, found sounds, rants and raves---to create your own limbic, your own ur voice.

If you would be a turner, don't just sit there. These are not the times of sedentary occupations; this is not a 'take your seat' time in history. Stand up and let them have it.

For everything turn, turn, turn

### **Learn, learn, and learn again – lifelong *Norman Longworth***

*norman.longworth@gmail.com*

The world is at a crossroad, pandemics take their toll  
Our earth is trying to tell us that its hurting to its soul  
We've exploited its abundance to the point of no return  
And it seems that human beings never learn

There are some who think perversely, get economies on track  
And an overcrowded planet will continue to pay back  
But my inner feeling tells me as the earth resolves to burn  
That human beings never seem to learn

Manipulation's everywhere, misinformation's rife  
The media's taking over every aspect of our life  
This twisting of the evidence provokes me to discern  
That humans have been brainwashed not to learn

While Integrity is silent and the charlatans in charge  
The spectre of extinction will roam forever large  
Our planet is so fragile that its health inspires concern  
Unless the human beings start to learn.

At this urgent time of danger, is it time to take control  
Of the hearts and minds of people to make our planet whole  
To find new ways of living that urge us all to yearn  
For strategies that teach us all to learn

All nations work together and the demagogues have gone  
In the fight to save the planet we must strive to get it done  
And unless we solve this problem as a critical concern  
We'll have proved that we have never learned to learn.



## Other ways of seeing

### The undying relevance of African Traditional Education *Idowu Biao*

*idowubiao2014@gmail.com*

#### Preamble

When, in its rapacious cupidity, Europe invaded, balkanised, and shared Africa as a piece of cake would have been shared, no thought was given to the pre-existent educational system of this gun-shaped continent. In fact, going by the early writings of the colonialist, Africa was devoid of all culture and therefore of any type of educational system. When the time came for colonisers to depart Africa in droves about one hundred years later in the aftermath of the wave of political independence that the Continent experienced, it was generally held that whatever may have existed as African traditional education has been effectively replaced by modern (Western) education. None of these views about Africa was a result of any scientific thinking or research. All the viewpoints were products of conjecture.

About two centuries after colonisation, scientific data on global education development lay bare the facts. Whereas UNESCO recommends a minimum of 6% of nations' Gross National Product (GNP) allocation to public education, Sub-Saharan Africa can hardly allocate 3% of its GNP to education (UNESCO, 2015). The situation is worse within the domain of adult learning and education where the best African performance as shown in UIL's Global Reports on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) 3 and 4 indicates that over half of African states allocate less than 1% of their education budget to adult education (UIL, 2016, 2019).

Consequently, eighty-five percent (85%) of industrialised countries' citizens are literate in a modern sense while only thirty percent (30%) of Africa's population is literate (UNESCO 1990; OECD, 2000). Whereas the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries tout a basic education rate of 94%, a rate of upper secondary education of 88% and an average tertiary education rate of 46% respectively, Sub-Saharan Africa can show only a 42% basic education rate, thirty percent (30%) level of upper secondary education and 7% enrolment into tertiary education (Tefera, 2014; OECD, 2021).

Since despite these identified weaknesses within African education, learning goes on all the time, the question is: through which structure are about sixty percent (60%), seventy percent (70%) and ninety percent (90%) of Africans that did not get a place in primary, secondary and tertiary education continue to learn? It is through the structure of African Traditional Education (ATE). What then is ATE and how does it function to sustain the learning needs of traditional Africans?

#### African Traditional Education

African traditional education (ATE) is an ageless education system that originated in Africa. It is a lifelong learning system of learning and education that offers solutions to all available life cycles, socio-economic and environmental challenges that may confront the traditional African.

ATE's prominent features include its central philosophy, teaching-learning methods, and curriculum content.

*ATE's central philosophy*

ATE's central philosophy is derived from the indigenous African's world view which is that the human being and indeed the world s/he lives in, is both material and non-material. In the view of the traditional African, both the human being and the world s/he lives in are living organisms that are more spiritual than material. The earth constituting the major hardware representing the world may be considered as a 'place'. Yet, it is more than a mere physical place. It is a place that serves as a double abode both for the living above its surface and the dead below its surface. It produces all that which sustains life in terms of food and medicaments and its aura, which is an invisible electro-magnetic substance oozing from it continually. This provides a perpetual balm for sustained human being's mental stability. The earth affords human beings the opportunity to create and establish a sense of community with its deep emotional bond, which in turn soaks the 'place' of the community and generates both tangible and intangible effects.

*ATE's teaching-learning methods*

The whole of the physical community serves as learning environments (school and classroom) for ATE. Those acknowledged by the community as wise persons make up the teaching personnel. Storytelling, proverbs, and folklores are the teaching techniques (styles of communication) and tutorial, small and medium-size groups are the varying class sizes employed by ATE to facilitate learning.

*ATE's curriculum content*

Central to ATE's curriculum content is the deliberate intention to make every community member into a productive entity. Consequently, ATE aims to equip every member of the community with a vocation through which the said member will serve the community from the beginning to the end of the member's adult life. Indeed, through a process of vocational specialism, whole families within the community come to be recognised as specialists in specific vocations (e.g., family of drummers-musicians, family of healers, etc.) (Omolewa, 2007; Avoseh, 2013). One other important aspect of the curriculum has to do with character formation. The importance attached to the character of every member of the community is so capital that ATE's curriculum painstakingly takes the learner (whether primary, secondary, or tertiary) through the steps involved in acquiring the attitude for selfless service and ability for the spontaneous demonstration of empathy towards human beings and all that lives.

One other important content of ATE's curriculum is the emphasis on the knowledge and techniques of conservation and sustainability. Deriving from ATE's philosophy is the view that matter and material resources do not enjoy a limitless life span. They can run out of existence if consumed irresponsibly and they can perish faster than they would normally have if used in an unsustainable manner. Consequently, within the context of all vocations and in all human relations and throughout human-nature relations, sustainable behaviour is deliberately taught and learnt through ATE's curriculum content (Magni, 2016).

## Conclusion

The final aim envisioned by ATE is a kind of training that makes every member of the community, a holistic person: a person who may have his/her head in the clouds but whose feet are firmly on the ground.

## References

Avoseh, M. B. M. (2013). Proverbs as theoretical frameworks for lifelong learning in indigenous African education. *Adult Education Quarterly* 63(3), 236-250.

Magni, G. (2016). *Indigenous knowledge and implications for the sustainable development agenda*. Paris: UNESCO.

OECD (2021). Population with tertiary education (indicator). doi: 10.1787/0b8f90e9-en. Accessed 13 December 2021 from [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance\\_19991487](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance_19991487).

OECD (2000). *Literacy in the information age*. Canada: OECD.

Omolewa, M. (2007). Traditional African modes of education: Their relevance in the modern world. *International Review of Education*, 53(5-6), 593-612.

Teferra, D. (2014). Charting African higher education— Perspectives at a glance. *International Journal of African Higher Education* 1(1), 9-21.

UIL (2019). *Fourth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*. Accessed 18 March 2021 from <https://uil.unesco.org/adult-education/global-report>.

UIL (2016). *Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*. Accessed 18 March 2021 from <https://uil.unesco.org/adult-education/global-report/third-global-report-adult-learning-and-education-grale-3>.

UNESCO (2015). *Education 2030: Incheon declaration and framework for action for the implementation of sustainable development goal 4*. Accessed 2 December 2021 from [http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en\\_2.pdf](http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf).

UNESCO (1990). *Researching literacy rates in industrialised countries: Trends and prospects*. Retrieved from <https://uil.unesco.org/literacy/researching-literacy-industrialised-countries-trends-and-prospects>

**Indigenous peoples, climate justice, adult learning and education** *Sandra L. Morrison and Timote M Vaioleti*

*Sandy is Indigenous Māori and Timote is Tongan*

This article discusses the connections between climate justice and adult learning and education (ALE) highlighting the critical perspectives of indigenous peoples. We turn to the South Pacific to position this article and to draw on the experience of Pacific peoples and Māori of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Indigenous peoples are place-based people with historical, spiritual, and ancestral connections to lands and waters. These places are fundamental to enhancing identity, underpinning a sense of belonging and conducting customary practises handed down over successive generations. Environmental relationships have promoted a strong ethic of guardianship amongst Indigenous peoples who perceive landscapes as being an extension of their human selves (Epeli Hau'ofa, *talanoa - exchanges of views and knowledge in a number of Pacific nations guided by cultural protocols* - May 2004 in Vaioleti, 2011), with genealogy that goes back and is accountable to Earth mother. A multitude of gods play key roles guiding the activity in the many spheres of the universe and maintaining order and balance.

In a knitted web comprising human and non-human entities, all living beings are in association with each other. Indigenous peoples work and live generally as kin but always as a collective with roles ascribed to serve, to protect and enhance everything and everyone's wellbeing. Knowledge systems have accrued over many generations of careful observation and interaction with the environment, and this knowledge continuum informs practises to care for and look after the environment.

There is no one way of being Indigenous, and Indigenous peoples vary in many ways, but there is one commonality they share, their oneness with their environments (*fonua*) (Mason Durie, *talanoa*, May 2006 in Vaioleti, 2011); *Fonua* in Tongan, *Fanua* in Samoan, *enua* in Cook Islands, *Whenua* in Māori, can mean environment, it can be the land including the oceans, waters the skies and all that are within (Vaioleti *ibid*).

At another level though, for a significant number of indigenous communities, we share the brutal experience of being colonised which included the relationships to place being severely broken. Colonisation in many cases brought the taking of land forcibly or by unethical means followed by political suppression of social and customary practises. While indigenous populations around the world still suffer continuously from 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> century wealthy nations' actions, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century wealthy nations are engaging in actions that are causing a global crisis. Again, it is the disadvantaged who carry a disproportionate share of that burden.

Over more recent decades and to add to the above layers of disturbance, climate change is yet another factor to face and deal with, calling again on Indigenous peoples to be resilient. Some authors argue that it is colonisation which brought climate change (Sproat, 2016; Whyte, 2017). The rapid degradation of the planet through resource extraction and exploitation, the belief that man dominates over the earth, the overriding principles of capitalism that disregard planet and people, increasing industrialisation that promoted the burning of fossil fuels, agriculture and afforestation have all contributed to rapid anthropogenic climate change.

As mentioned already, Indigenous peoples continue to feature in disproportionate numbers in the negative indices of social, economic, and cultural impacts. The impacts of climate change are no different. In addition, Indigenous peoples are generally not included in many decision-making bodies which guide policy and legislation despite the Declaration on the Rights for Indigenous Peoples (2017) affirming our involvement. Ongoing struggles for self-determination, for reparation of past wrongs by Governments, for seeking the return of their lands and waterways, has seen them clash with Governments whose political ideology sits in stark contrast to those held by Indigenous peoples. Overridingly, Indigenous peoples have always sought and will continue to seek justice and in the case of climate change seek climate justice. Caring for the natural environment is integral to who we are; caring for the environment means caring for people as well, given the inextricable relationship to the one interconnected holistic world (fonua).

In addressing these issues of climate justice, adult learning and education (ALE) can act as a powerful tool towards arriving at solutions. ALE considers the context in which learners are positioned. ALE addresses inequity. ALE considers the life experiences that participants bring to the table. ALE is problem-centred and new knowledge can be applied immediately. These characteristics synergise with the Indigenous people's values as it applies to education. ALE for Indigenous peoples promotes political and system change seeking transformation and emancipation. ALE for Indigenous peoples also re-centres Indigenous people's values and knowledge systems such as those referred to earlier.

For Indigenous Māori and Pacifica, the principle of “ako” acknowledges that we are all learners and teachers in a reciprocal relationship which will bring mutual benefits both for ourselves and to the environment. In ako, there were no artificial boundaries between, formal, non-formal, and informal education. All learning and knowledge are required for responding to living a balanced and harmonious life with others. It is inclusive to ensure that the delicate balances between the spiritual elements, people, fauna, the living and non-living, are respected. ALE and ako both have a socio-transformational spirit. Ako which is about knowing what to do and do it well for the collective, (Vaiotele, 2011) like ALE, gives people in the Pacific the voice to express their aspirations, to counter established systems that perpetuated social inequalities.

Ako and ALE are absolutely necessary in the Pacific to address climate justice. With climate change, a number of the Pacific communities (such as those in Tarawa in the Kiribati) have lost fishing grounds to acidification and land for food production to sea intrusion. Communities in Lifuka in Ha'apai, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands group have suffered similarly, but some of the differentiating factors compared to other parts of the world affected by climate change are that they do not have the land mass that would allow re-location inland so that they can move. They therefore maintain the connection to their own place that gives them the references for their knowledge, meaning and culture. The often attention-seizing headlines of sinking islands, king tides and other weather disasters often trump the destruction to indigenous knowledge and local ALE which was used to construct and preserve them (Vaiotele & Morrison, 2021).

Losing land or fonua to climate change for the Pacific nations means losing the means to sustain oneself and one's fatongia (service to community) as well as the ability to preserve languages

and cultures developed specifically to local occupations. Such destruction of their place/space will in time be a great loss to the local nations and eventually the world community.

In this age where the growth of predatorial behaviours, selfishness and fake news spread by technology and mass media seem acceptable, development of critical skills for most Pacific populations who have a natural disposition for respect and harmonious relationships must be an essential part of ALE. The ability of ako and ALE to empower the community to challenge power in institutions for social justice is essential in the Pacific developing democracies. After all, it is Indigenous peoples and the small island states such as the Pacific states that carry a disproportionate cost of the developed nations' wealth generation. We deserve to be treated better; it is matter of moral obligation as well as our human right.

## References

Sproat, K. (2016). An Indigenous people's right to environmental self-determination: native Hawaiians and the struggle against climate change devastation, in *Stanford Environmental Law Journal*. Vol.35:2 pp158-218.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights for Indigenous Peoples. 2017.

Vaioleti, T.M. & Morrison, S. L. (2021). "Overview on adult learning and education in the Pacific – progress and status" session 10 and 11 of the PHES conference 27-30 July 2021. Commissioned report for UNESCO, Samoa.

Vaioleti, T.M. (2011). *Talanoa, Manulua and founga ako: framework for using enduring Tongan educational ideas for education in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. (PhD thesis, University of Waikato).

Whyte, K. (2017). Indigenous climate change studies: Indigenizing futures, decolonizing the Anthropocene, in *English Language Notes* 55.1-2 Fall

## **The Wuxing Learning Cycle for Elder Learners in the Asia-Pacific** *Thomas Kuan*

*kuanthomas@gmail.com*

Learning developed differently between West and East because of different life philosophies. The Western concept is more linear and individualistic. while the Eastern is generally holistic and community- centric. In older person's learning, Europe has championed the well-known Kolb's cycle in their 'Lifelong Learning in Museum: A European Handbook' (edited by Kirsten Gibbs, Margherita Sani, Jane Thompson; 2007). It showcases that learning is experiential with a four-phase process of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualisation and Active Experimentation; see Figure 1.

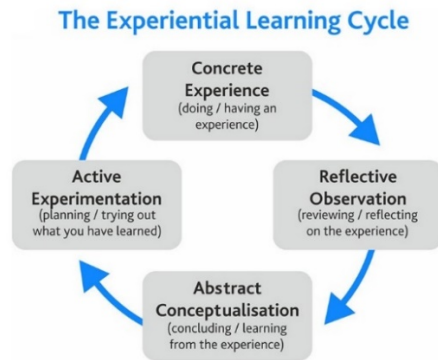


Figure 1 – Kolb’s Cycle

Another well-known model is ‘A contextual model of learning in museums and HOCGS (based on Falk and Dierking, 2000); see Figure 2.

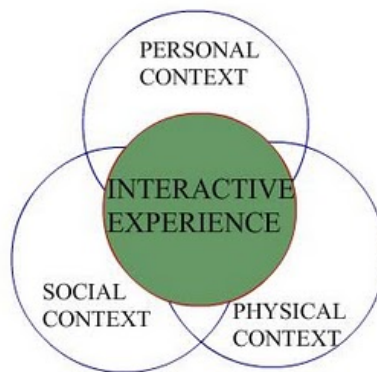


Figure 2 – Contextual Model

It suggests that seniors’ learning is a social experience seen from three contexts; namely: Personal, Sociocultural and Physical. The overlapping of these three contexts gives personal meanings and interactive learning.

Is there an Asian model of learning for older people? Do Asia-Pacific learners need to have some individualistic thinking to produce late peak creativity within its social constraints? This article attempts to share some Asian perspectives of later life learning.

Kuan (2021b) says that:

*Learning has been in parts of the Asia-Pacific region for the past millennia and ancient scholars may have thought of learning concepts and its processes. While gerontology and research findings on elder persons are available, studies on the learning mindsets of Asia-Pacific elders are not well documented. However, there is an ancient scientific belief that ‘knowledge of the natural world and the ability to change or harness it’ (Ho, Chinese mathematical astrology – Reaching out to the stars. New York, NY, Routledge Curzon, 2003, p. 7) may reveal some indigenous learning paradigm. The concept of Wuxing or ‘Five Elements’ in traditional Chinese knowledge has allowed this author to postulate the concept of the ‘Wuxing Learning Cycle’ as a useful elders’ learning model in today’s cross-cultural contexts. The constructive Wuxing Learning Cycle has similarities*

*with modern learning techniques and is useful in developing policy frameworks for active later life learners.*

In ‘Wuxing Learning Cycle of Learning for Elder Learners in the Asia-Pacific’, I show how elders in the Asia-Pacific region learn. This suggests that elders subconsciously adapt an ancient process of transformative elements called Wuxing (or ‘five-stars’) in their informal learning efforts; see Figure 3.

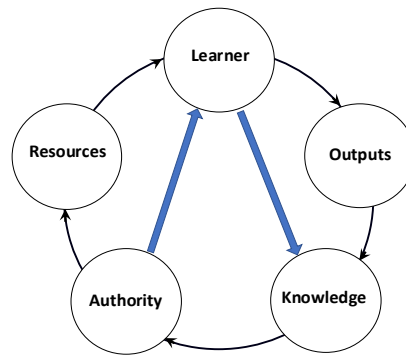


Figure 3 – Wuxing Learning Cycle

In this article, a theoretical framework for the ‘Wuxing Learning Model’ is based on the following elements:

resources to learners

outcome of learning

creation of wealth, knowledge

guided by ‘authority’ and social norms, to give

improvements in better resources for better outputs.

The elements are linked holistically to nudge a culture of lifelong learning, or later life learning for older persons.

The Wuxing Learning Model is adapted from the ancient Chinese BaZi theory that postulates – when Wood burns it will give rise to Fire, which when it dies down gives rise to ash or Earth. As earth accumulates over many centuries, it gives rise to Metal which when it cools down, will give rise to Water which is a resource for Wood (to grow).

The Wuxing Learning Model’s 5 Elements (of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water) and the Learner Autonomy Profile’s (LAP) 5 Inventories (of Resourcefulness, Initiative, Persistence and Desire; [www.hrdenenterprises.com](http://www.hrdenenterprises.com), Confessore & Kuan 2015) show a sort of synchronicity, although not in themselves connected. Both techniques were developed centuries apart, each



based on their Western and Eastern thoughts, and they have almost similar parameters seeking truths in learning (Kuan, 2021a).

Wuxing Learning Model's critical questions are closely related to the Critical Questioning in Method Study which is a forefront productivity technique (together with Work Measurement) of the industrial era. Often didactic thinking is involved in seeking solutions.

Peter Kearns' 8 pillars for his report to PASCAL and PIMA Bulletin Number 21 in 2018 argued that if problems of later life learning are not effectively managed, they will inevitably spill over into the eco-social environment. Effective investment in human capital through a policy framework will encourage cohesive learners and communities (Kearns, 2018).

Learning in later life should be considered in the context of a changing world which raises questions of meaning, purpose, and identity in the lives of older adults (Kearns, 2018). He suggested the following: The search for a new paradigm for learning and community building in good active ageing: A good starting point in this search for a new paradigm for good active ageing in the context I have outlined is to build on the work of WHO in developing the concept of active ageing. WHO, in their Policy Framework for Active Ageing in 2002, recognised the need for a new paradigm to guide policy:

In Kearns's paper 'The 8-Pillars Policy Framework', he expanded the active framework of three pillars of 'participation, health, and security' into eight pillars to include five issues: inclusion, citizenship, happiness, employability, and personal fulfilment.

The eight pillars are thus:

1. Participation - in lifelong learning, the learner, the community
2. Health - physical, emotions, spiritual
3. Happiness - happiness index, relaxed mindset, stress-free living
4. Employability - maintaining the capacity to be able to be employed throughout the lifespan
5. Citizenship - rights to living and learning in learning cities and communities
6. Fulfilment (personal) - achieved delayed gratifications, personal dreams, realising of potentials, personal actualisation
7. Security - social, financial, and physical; rules, regulations, guidelines, policy framework, governance and planning, technology, and social innovations
8. Inclusion - learners and non-learners, disadvantaged persons, physically impaired persons, older adults, professors and practitioners, governments and NGOs, learning spaces. Kearns' '8-Pillars Policy Framework' in later life learning can be viewed as five interacting structures in a holistic cycle. See Figure 4.

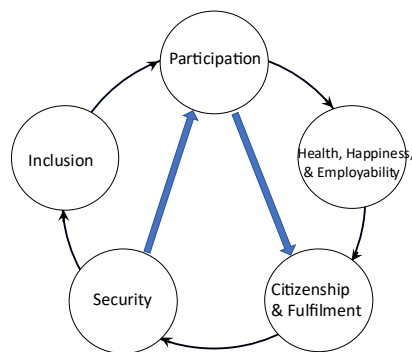


Figure 4 – Kearns' 8-Pillars Policy Framework

Displaying the Kearns' '8-Pillars Policy Framework' in the Wuxing Learning Cycle shows the relationship of an additional five pillars to the existing WHO's three pillars.

The Wuxing Learning Cycle for Elder Learners in the Asia-Pacific contributes to understanding international issues by seeing the interactive relationships with each other. 'Participation' is the learner or community, with outputs or objectives of learning. Outputs of health, happiness, and employability are the result of any participative effort in learning. Once health, happiness, and employability have been achieved, they will give rise to permanent benefits (wealth) from learning. Permanent wealth includes citizenship and (personal) fulfilment which the learner achieves. As wealth is accumulated, the security aspect is essential as it includes rules, regulation, mentoring, financial constraints, governance, and policies to control and guide the learner's efforts. Proper security will give access to inclusion which means resources like persons and institutions to aid the learner or community.

In short, a learner wanting to achieve outputs (of health, happiness, and employability) will generate wealth (which includes access to citizenship and life fulfilments). A happy and concerned citizen should be subjected to rules and regulations (on security issues, societal norms, and harmonious living). When these are achieved, other resources (inclusive people, marginalised and unlearned persons) are included in community learning. Kearns argued that if problems of later life learning are not effectively managed, they will inevitably spill over into the eco-social environment. Effective investment in human capital through a policy framework will encourage cohesive learners and communities (Kearns, 2018).

## Conclusions

Learning has been with humanity since our forefathers learn to hunt, to farm, to build shelters, to work, for survival, for communicating, etc. They learnt informally as it was an effective, low cost and reliable way of doing things. Today, informal learning covers 80% of daily living, and is effective where adult education and learning (ALE) are not readily available to adults, especially older adults living in rural and urban communities.

Global changes - Covid-19, wars, mass migration, climate change, etc. - have reduced education funding, and alternative methods of achieving learning need to be sought. One suggestion is

subconsciously to adopt a 5-step process of Wuxing Learning model to reach out to those with the intention to learn.

Wuxing Learning Model has some coincidence with western Learner Autonomy Profile. More research is required to understand the synchronicity between them. Critical questioning techniques are useful for 21<sup>st</sup> century workplaces. Displaying the Kearns' '8-Pillars Policy Framework' in a Wuxing Learning Cycle shows relationships of five additional new pillars to the existing WHO's three pillars, allows for easy understanding.

In the East, Wuxing Learning Cycle can be observed when, for example: a boatman wants to build a boat for sale or personal use, he would look for a piece of wooden log to carve and build his boat, which becomes his wealth to be used or sold. Similarly, when elder citizens weave baskets: they obtain the necessary materials to weave baskets which are sold to obtain wealth. Also, left-over red envelopes or 'any-pows' (use to contain monies for gifts during Lunar New Year) are often recycled by seniors or elder persons to make decorative lanterns which can be sold or donated. In Asian puppetry and cuisines, students learn from masters to pick up tips and experiences to achieve mastery through informal learning.

Challenges for older person learning are to harness the creative potential of the ageing population. Being aware of Wuxing Learning Cycle makes learning fun and life less boring especially during Covid-19 pandemic lock-downs or forced 'stay@home'.

[This article draws on a chapter by Thomas Kuan in the Springer volume P. Narot, N. Kiettikunwong (eds.), *Education for the Elderly in the Asia Pacific, Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects*].

## References

Confessore, G. J., & Kuan, T. 2015. *An initial effort to learn about the eastern concept of BaZi and the western concept of learning autonomy: Does east meet west?* The 3rd international conference on lifelong learning for all, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, September 2015; and 'Entrepreneurial Lifelong Education: Glocal Perspectivism on Social Innovation, Cultural Integration and Ethical Praxis' in National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan, November 2015.

Kearns, P. 2018 '*Towards Good Active Ageing for All in a context of deep demographic change and dislocation*'; First report of the PASCAL & PIMA SIG on Learning in Later Life; 2018 December.

Kuan, 2021a '*The Eight Characters – Designating Time in Personal Learning*' in *Time in Daoist Practice, Cultivation and Calculation*; Ed Livia Kohn; Three Pines Press, 2021; p 158.

Kuan, 2021b '*The Wuxing Learning Cycle for Elder Learners in the Asia-Pacific*'; Chapter 5 in *Education for the Elderly in the Asia Pacific, Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects*; P. Narot, N. Kiettikunwong (eds.), Springer 2021; p 83-100.

## **The sparkle of lights on the edge of challenges in the turmoil of the Covid-19 pandemic** *Yahui Fang*

*yahui.fang@gmail.com*

*[submitted on the darkest day of the year, Yahui had been required first to get clearance for this article from the main information sources, her daughters Vina and Tina. Ed.]*

In early May, Taiwan suffered a Level 3 pandemic Alert unexpectedly. When the government announced that students need to leave school and start 'distant learning' with no exact due date, I was leading grade 10 class students to assist artists to work at the Atayal (an aboriginal tribe in Taiwan) tribal art museum. When the social panic arose and people flooded into supermarkets to grab shopping for expected further lockdown my younger daughter Vina, at her G9, started her at-home schooling and my elder daughter Tina, at her G12, was forced to have an online graduation ceremony, leaving many unshared farewells to classmates, they entitled themselves ironically 'the first generation of no graduation ceremony'.

The global crisis like climate change and the pandemic struck us. No matter at what age, we felt all surrounded in the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) world. So, does this happen in the current young generation generally? Their inner world is facing more challenges from the world affecting their life attitudes. How do they perceive themselves? What are they observing in their posture of entering the world, and in the flow of their inner world?

Some might think: 'Youth' seems to divide between some bold and vital activists like Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg, other young people out for violent 'fun', and a large number who are withdrawn, disturbed, apathetic, or living in a rather escapist world of social media and games! Between these polarized youth images that had been identified, I was wondering what could be contributing to leveraging the energy from the younger generation.

***Are there some directions or wisdom of working with 'ordinary' teenagers and supporting them to develop their leadership and further serve the world?***

As an engaged educator, a mother of two teenagers, and a mentor of gap year students, I kept reflecting on these hands-on experiences of working with Youth: Most of them who didn't have purposeful motivations from the very beginning or aren't born as vital activists, are just friendly but ordinary teenagers. Their on-going becoming lay behind more secrets than I could imagine.

***A stepping stone: an online event and further family reflection activities support self-renewal***

During home learning, Vina and I had to live in different cities. Occasionally, we both had an opportunity to participate in research on 'developing teenagers' leadership through an online workshop. Later Vina also participated in follow-up pilot workshops.

According to Vina's learning log documented after participating in each session, she regarded participating in the workshop just like doing some **self-examination** and **self-talk**. *"It helped me organize some things. What impressed me was our discussion time. During this time, I kept thinking about the past. Although the past is far away from me, it seems to be very close."*

The course changed her original concept and image of “leader” and “leadership”. *“That transition of perceiving “leader” gave me special feelings. At first, I felt that I was so insignificant, but later I found that everyone who worked hard to live their own life is a great leader. Sometimes when you feel that others are glowing, you will find that you are too.”*

This shift of thinking kept brewing. She reflected on her dramatic changes this year, leaving hometown, and transferring to a new school at the end of February, and suspension of classes caused by the pandemic in early May. This mirrored her inner state:

*At the beginning of this online workshop, I was in the state of feeling displaced. I couldn't find my grounding, that is, I usually feel powerless when doing anything in life. Even the things I enjoyed in the past are gradually losing... But during this time, I seem to be able to set off again slowly.*

The emerged renewal energy drove her to act out.

*.... I will continue to finish the reading club I recruited at school, leading a study circle on reading (The moon and the six pence). My goal is to have a reading club every school season! Besides, I think I will urge myself to arrange my life better, although it is unlikely that I will rule out the majority of homework, if there is something meaningful to do, I will adjust the time planning to engage in this work and contribute myself. Keep traveling, keep reading, keep learning. -Vina's reflection at the last workshop*

Vina devoted time to host the study circle, but also participated in her sister's organized study circle “Touch the Jaguar” (an idea originated from the first book they read together: (*Touching the Jaguar: Transferring Fear into Action to Change Your Life and the World*))

Vina savoured what she experienced and the way of being cared for, and tried to integrate it into her daily activities and being. In her study circle at school, for example, she got more aware of participants' being and making preparation before each gathering on working out facilitation processes and procedures to create a good and safe aura (environment). She even extended and improved the guidelines of study circles by integrating members' suggestions and invited members to co-work to safeguard the social space.

As she experienced an inclusive social gathering, she felt more courageous to use her poor English to participate in group discussion, and more secure to express her feelings and thoughts in the group. She became more comfortable in expressing her vulnerabilities. When she became more self-accepting, she turned to use a more positive mindset to identify challenges from the environment, and gradually transformed towards a growth mindset.

### ***Youth work is a co-carry process to find ourselves***

In response to the questions proposed at the beginning, I found more was needed to identify what other ‘treasures lie underneath such profound youth work’. It is a great honour to witness this gradual but deepening inner work in Vina. Because of this witness, I find that many possibilities still lie that cross the age divide, cultural divide and ethnic divide: a garden of practising leadership through care emerged as we met each other there.

Thanks to all the happenings and gifts, this journey of finding out the way to accompany youth for youth development is still on the road. To my surprise, I found that I have been nurtured in this soul-searching: the way to support teenagers shed light on my inner quest as well. I could centre myself to stay conscious in everyday practice and focus on supporting and

partnering networks as a spiritual fortress. With reassurance, I see the possibility of dancing between self-transformation and social transformation.

## **The Story of Participatory Research: history and future** *Sumitra Srinivasan*

*sumitra.srinivasan@pria.org*

In 1976 a group of interested persons across North America first met to discuss Participatory Research (PR) as an alternative means of research and use of knowledge for social change. In 1980, the first international meeting on Participatory Research was held in Ljubljana in former Yugoslavia, now Slovenia, attended by early pioneers of this PR 'movement' - Budd Hall, John Gaventa, Ted Jackson, Helen Lewis, Orlando Fals Borda, Rajesh Tandon, to name a few.

The discussions from this meeting, and of the practice and theorising of Participatory Research over the next decade, began to be circulated internationally and regionally in cyclostyled newsletters, articles in now-defunded journals, and documentation of conference proceedings.

Knowledge produced by social movements, in civil society, political organisations and in academia was synthesized and presented in an array of forms – text, statistics, drama, poetry, video, learning games. Such locally created and owned knowledge, used as tools to build capacities of community and social organisations in the Global South, contributed to the steady spread and sustained development of the theory and practice of Participatory Research.

The origins and history of the development of the field of Participatory Research have remained largely undocumented, though it is a significant part of the oral tradition of its 'elders' who spearheaded the movement.

Celebrating 40 years of PRIA, in partnership with the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research, a seminal event on December 16, 2021, brought the knowledge and experience of some of the pioneers of Participatory Research to explore the historical evolution and contemporary manifestations of PR. Over 140 participants listened and learnt from the emotional and inspiring stories of the lives and achievements of the 'elders' of Participatory Research, spotlighting the relevance of community-based participatory research in a post-pandemic world. It was an enriching experience, and an inspiring lesson from history, to re-energise the teaching, learning and practice of Participatory Research.

Juan Mario Diaz Arevalo, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Sheffield, and Sumitra Srinivasan, PRIA, India, in conversation with the 'elders', explored the following questions:

- why is it important for researchers to make research relevant to and for the people? We learnt from the experience of the 'elders' and pioneers of Participatory Research.
- what strategies, with leadership from the Global South, is required to re-energise similar and different others to overcome a tired-ness/co-option of using Participatory Research, and to build capacities to use research for social transformation?

The panellists were

- Dr Budd Hall, Senior Associate, Centre for Global Studies; Professor Emeritus, Public Administration, University of Victoria, Canada
- Dr Rajesh Tandon, Founder-President, PRIA, India
- Dr Edward Jackson, Adjunct Research Professor, School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University, and Senior Research Fellow, Carleton Centre for Community Innovation, Canada
- Dr John Gaventa, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, UK
- Dr Patricia Maguire, Professor Emeritus of Education and Counseling, Western New Mexico University - Gallup Graduate Studies Center, USA
- Dr Yusuf Kassam, Independent Participatory Researcher, Canada
- Dr. Deborah Barndt, Professor Emerita, York University, Toronto, Canada
- Prof. Normando Suarez, Assoc Prof in Sociology Department, UNAL, Colombia,

Supported by the Strategic Research Support Fund, Department of Politics and IR, University of Sheffield, UK, the conversation was translated live from the English to the Spanish by Walter Vanegas and Delia Ballén from Transmisiones Live, Colombia.

*[And for an example of introducing and sustaining another way of seeing and doing, see also the article by Niharika Kaul below. Ed]*

## **We Are ALE, and CONFINTEA VII**

### **CONFINTEA VII just around the corner – getting informed, taking action** *Heribert Hinzen*

*hinzenh@hotmail.com*

The next CONFINTEA, the world conferences on adult learning and education (ALE) will be at the end of June or early July 2022 in Marrakesh, Morocco. It seems that it will be in a hybrid mode, where a smaller number of representatives from governments and civil society will be present locally, and more will join via online facilities. Last year all the regional pre-consultations were successfully concluded. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has documented the outcomes from last year's meetings as well as all the previous CONFINTEA I to VI on <https://uil.unesco.org/adult-education/confintea>

Shortly, in February or March 2022, an online consultation on the new Marrakesh Framework for Action (as a follow-up on the Bélem Framework for Action) will be open for everyone. Currently UIL is working on a draft being presented to the CONFINTEA VII Consultative Committee (CC) for discussion this January, to be followed by a revised draft for the online consultation.

The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is a member of the CC. Others include DVV International. Colleagues of ICAE and DVV are members of PIMA. We therefore have a good chance to engage in the discussion of the draft Marrakesh Framework. ICAE will also

use the potential of the *We are ALE* campaign where PIMA is represented. ICAE is planning for a global (civil society organization) CSO Forum alongside in Marrakesh, maybe with several regional and thematic workshops as well.

***Now is the right time for us in PIMA to be ready to be involved.*** There is abundant information that we can make use of:

1. It seems that the Report of the *UNESCO Commission on the Futures of Education* initiative will be an important document for ALE within lifelong learning - before, during and beyond CONFINTEA VII. This is the Zewde Report, in the lineage of the Faure and Delors Reports of earlier decades. PIMA members have been informed of this already via our news and website. It makes sense to look at *Reimagining our futures together. A new social contract for education*, the title of this new report of the initiative which started its work two years ago.

The International Commission was chaired by the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Her Excellency President Sahle-Work Zewde. Around a million of people joined the inquiry in the process, through events and meetings, position papers and statements. ICAE contributed a statement on *Adult Learning and Education – Because the Future Cannot Wait*. The new UNESCO report stands in the tradition of earlier UNESCO reports which shaped the thinking and practice of education in the perspective of lifelong learning. In 1972 it was Edgar Faure et al. with *Learning to be: The world of education today and tomorrow*; and in 1996 by Jacques Delors et al. called *Learning: the treasure within*. The discourse on the future of education will continue, and we are invited to get involved by sharing our ideas, hopes and fears, experiences and examples online.

2. The new *Global Education Monitoring Report 2021/22 (GEM)* has just been published with as its theme *Non-state Actors in Education. Who chooses? Who loses?* As usual it is a voluminous A4 book with a wealth of statistical data and thematic discussion - see [https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/non-state\\_actors](https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/non-state_actors).

It looks at the different sub-sectors of the education system and identifies areas where non-state actors are playing a significant role. It is interesting especially where it compares the reality and aims of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and SDG Goal 4 related to education.

Here are three quotations closely related to our field:

NGO and community organisations are the main providers in adult learning and education (p. 179)

Non-state actors are a driving force in adult learning and education (p. 191);

Community learning centers (CLC) are increasingly recognized as playing an important role in providing education opportunities meetings local communities' needs.” (p. 259)

There is also an interesting GEM Background Paper by Ulrike Hanemann on *Non-state actors in non-formal youth and adult education*.

3. In the pipeline is a joint publication of PIMA and the University of Glasgow Centre for Research and Development in Adult and Lifelong Learning (CR&DALL) with the provisional



title of *Global Collaboration and Advocacy: Contributions of a Civil Society Network*. It is an edited collection of selected articles from the *PIMA Bulletin* of the last two years which cover areas like ALE and CONFINTEA, Lifelong Learning, Country Perspectives, COVID Pandemic, Means and Methods. It is planned for the CR&DALL Work in Progress Series. It should serve in the short run for all of us who want to get prepared for CONFINTEA, and as a sort of reader for practitioners and students engaged in ALE.

4. PIMA colleagues are also involved in a Special Issue of the *International Review of Education. Journal of Lifelong Learning* which is published by UIL through the Springer system. The provisional title is *Strengthening the future of adult education and lifelong learning for all: Building bridges between the CONFINTEA and SDG processes*. If all goes well the articles will cover topics like literacy and lifelong learning, monitoring approaches and policy tools, community-based ALE and CLC, financing, and green skills. Publication is planned for spring 2022.

These and other materials will help in better understanding before and when the draft Marrakesh Frameworks is put online for comments and discussion.

PIMA is also considering a webinar with partners to further inform and discuss ways of engagement, like commenting online, or joining the activities of the *We Are ALE* campaign. In the PIMA management (EXCO) we also discussed supporting a PIMA Special Interest Group on ALE which could guide us further during the CONFINTEA VII preparatory process. See also <https://www.we-are-ale.org/home/> Members who are interested are invited to contact me on [hinzenh@hotmail.com](mailto:hinzenh@hotmail.com)

**A new social contract for education** *David Atchoarena and Paul Stanistreet*  
*p.stanistreet@unesco.org*

*[PIMA is grateful for the permission of the UIL Director to reproduce this blog. Ed]*

The [article](#) below was first published on the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) [blog](#) on 11 November 2021 and is shared here by PIMA member Paul Stanistreet. In it, UIL Director David Atchoarena shares his first thoughts on the final report of the UNESCO International Commission on the Futures of Education. The report is a successor to UNESCO's two previous major reports on the future of education: Faure (1972) and Delors (1996). It aims both to build global solidarity around the need for a new social contract for education and to start a conversation about the form this might take. The guiding questions for this conversation are 'How can education shape futures we want?' and 'How to rebalance our relationships w/each other, the planet and technology?' UIL will contribute actively to this conversation in the coming months. If you would be interested in contributing your thoughts and reflections, please contact Paul Stanistreet: [p.stanistreet@unesco.org](mailto:p.stanistreet@unesco.org)

**The Futures of Education report is a chance to depart from our current 'unsustainable path' in education, and build new relationships, with each other, with the planet, and with technology, writes David Atchoarena**

On 10 November 2021, the much-anticipated UNESCO report, [Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education](#), was launched in Paris at the organization's General Conference. It was prepared by the International Commission on the Futures of Education under the leadership of Her Excellency Madame Sahle-Work Zewde, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The report follows in the tradition of the Faure Commission's 1972 report, *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*, and the Delors Commission's report of 1996, *Learning: The Treasure Within*. Due to the rapid changes in our globalized world and the rising importance of education and lifelong learning therein, this year's report could not come at a better time. Global challenges such as the climate crisis, technological and demographic change, and inequalities further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic require urgent action. The world is at a turning point, the members of the International Commission on the Futures of Education argue: we can continue on the current 'unsustainable path' or radically change course. How we respond to these challenges will determine what future lies ahead.

The report proposes a new social contract for education – one that aims to rebuild our relationships with each other, with the planet, and with technology. It argues that this new social contract is our chance to repair past injustices and transform the future. Knowledge and learning are the basis for renewal and transformation, the report recognizes. To this end, the report proposes a new social contract for education, focusing on the public purposes of education in serving the common good.

While it acknowledges the challenges the world faces, the report comes from a place of hope and optimism, aiming to build on climate activism and the spirit of solidarity and civic action that emerged during the pandemic: 'In a new social contract for education, we should enjoy and expand enriching educational opportunities that take place throughout life and in different cultural and social spaces'.

The report calls for the recognition of a right to education for all throughout life, as a foundational principle of the social contract for education, just as the recently presented Common Agenda, from the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, does. In its Embracing a culture of lifelong learning report, published in 2020, UIL offers policy directions to make lifelong learning the governing principle of education systems. Among other measures, establishing lifelong learning as a human right would require countries across the globe to develop a legal framework opening the way to a universal entitlement to learning throughout life.

To make this idea a reality, the Futures of Education report foresees a global movement around the new social contract for education. It calls for broad participation of stakeholders – both state and non-state actors. In her foreword, Her Excellency Madame Sahle-Work Zewde writes 'Our hope is that the proposals contained here, and the public dialogue and collective action called for, will serve as a catalyst to shape futures for humanity and the planet that are peaceful, just, and sustainable.'

I invite our partners around the world and other stakeholders committed to lifelong learning to be part of that global movement. Join us in acting to make this social contract come alive. Share your ideas, challenges and solutions with us. Only collaboratively can we expand lifelong learning opportunities for all, women and men, including the most vulnerable, and ultimately extend the right to education to a right to lifelong learning.

*David Atchoarena is the Director and Paul Stanistreet the Head of Knowledge Management and Communications at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*

## **Moving Forward with Unity and Enthusiasm. Reflections Upon the New European Agenda for Adult Learning 2021-2030** *Balázs Németh*

*nemeth.balazs@pte.hu*

### Summary

This article reflects upon the goals and policy contexts of the New European Agenda for Adult Learning<sup>1</sup>, an outcome document of almost ten months of well-coordinated dialogue and preparatory work to culminate at the September 2021 European Council meeting and conference on adult learning in Europe, combined with a European pre-conference of CONFINTEA VII for 2022. Accordingly, I try here to reflect the main five priority areas of the New European Agenda for Adult Learning (NEAAL according to which the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) recently provided a short Statement.

While relating those developments to the September 2021 publication of the EURYDICE network on European adult learning and education<sup>2</sup> to reflect some recent trends and issues, I finally bridge this topic to the UNESCO discourse upon the Futures of Education<sup>3</sup>, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, more precisely to SDG4 on Quality Education.<sup>4</sup>

Moving out of the dark – a consolidated effort for united action for better adult learning and education

Right at the end of the 2010s decade, there were many doubts and questions about the potential continuation of a fairly constructed and balanced policy on adult learning to serve both economic interests and social claims for building a more inclusive, equitable and yet competitive environment in various dimensions of lifelong learning. This period was full of difficulties and challenges: hit by crisis, depression, migration, ageing, inequalities, rise of populism and intolerance, and the return of nationalisms and conflicts instead of collaboration amongst nations and peoples.

It must also be underlined that the 2008 global financial crisis refocused most governments of Europe to turn and make use of adult education, as a tool to support VET-focused training and

---

<sup>1</sup> New European Agenda on Adult Learning (EAAL) – Brussels: Council of the EU (2021) 14485/21 Source: [st14485-en21.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/st14485-en21.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> EURYDICE (2021) Adult education and training in Europe: Building inclusive pathways to skills and qualifications – Source: [Adult education and training in Europe: Building inclusive pathways to skills and qualifications | Eurydice \(europa.eu\)](https://eurydice.europa.eu/)

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO dialogue on 'Futures of Education' – Source: [UNESCO Futures of Education - A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT](https://unesco.org/en/education/futures-of-education)

<sup>4</sup> UN SDGs – Source: [Education | Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/)

re-training for people having to upgrade their skills and competences, according to changing labour-market demands and conditions; a consequence of rapidly changing economies and their technology-led environments. The past decade was, consequently, deformed by a rather VET-dominated discourse. As a result, even adult learning was taken out of the education portfolio of the European Commission's relevant Directorate General and put under the portfolio of Employment. It therefore became evident that a number of institutions and organisations, having struggled to achieve a balanced policy in the field, insisted on a more inclusive policy ground at the renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) right at the end of 2011, and accepted by the European Council of Ministers, could be considered as a kind of relative bargain.<sup>5</sup>

However, the same decade was mainly overruled by skills-focused discourses. The campaign for skills and competence developments led by the OECD and CEDEFOP claimed that the promotion of adult learning would serve smart and sustainable growth, and match the newly formulating 2016 Skills Agenda for Europe<sup>6</sup>, together with the new Upskilling Pathways for Adults.

In this context, it was rather difficult, and needed long years of heavy campaigning work, to explain and demonstrate that improvement of participation and performance levels in adult learning would depend very much on strengthening basic and digital skills amongst young adults. They should be able to cope with changing learning environments and transforming labour conditions and workplaces that demand that transversal skills be held by employees. In the meantime, it turned out that the goals of Education and Training 2020 would hardly be able to help reducing early school-leaves in the Members States of the EU, especially in the newly integrated Members of former socialist countries.

By the end of 2020, BREXIT and the COVID-19 pandemic made it rather difficult to formulate a new adult learning strategy for Europe. It took another year to reach closure on each and all necessary consultations on adult learning with all EU member governments, European stakeholder organisations, and representative bodies which had formerly provided reflections on preliminary plans, demanded a wider policy spectrum on the development of adult and lifelong learning to follow. On the one hand, there were the messages of the UN SDG4 meetings. They needed also to recognise the positive impact of a more holistic understanding of adult learning and education, in claiming a better position among the competing educational sectors in Europe.

The specific European perspectives of integrating the formerly identical European Grundtvig-programme of adult learning into the reconfigured Erasmus+ programmes reduced the dimensions of adult learning objectives and made it difficult to improve participation and quality in the field, with reduced attention from educational policy bodies. Meanwhile, falling figures in educational and VET outputs, and in adult learning numbers, resulting in shortages of highly skilled labour in most top vocations in Europe. This called for urgent interventions,

---

<sup>5</sup> Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (2011) Council of the European Union, 2011/C 372/01 – Source: [Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> EC (2016) New Skills Agenda for Europe COM(2016) 381 final – Source: [EUR-Lex - 52016DC0381 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

in the field of adult learning, for example: to improve conditions with strengthened access and opportunities; better guidance and counselling; improved methodologies and relevant quality instruments; better financing incentives, etc. through effective policies and governance models.

One may also critically reflect that the 2021 NEAAL (New European Agenda for Adult Learning) is considered a slight return to the 2000 goals framed by the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, by underlining the need for constructive development of learning with intergenerational and intercultural focuses, towards more inclusive education for adult and lifelong learners across Europe.

That policy change is apparently there in the 2021 EURYDICE study on adult learning and education, providing an overview of policy areas where changes and development are urgently needed. Those areas were marked as: governance and policy frameworks; learning provision; financial support; flexible learning; recognition and validation of learning outcomes; awareness-raising; and outreach activities and guidance services. This whole spectrum of interventions signalled an extended use of research, development, and innovation to generate convincing data through

relevant indicators and benchmarks neglected or subordinated to economically driven priorities.

#### *A closer look at the New European Agenda for Adult Learning*

We must admit that this New European Agenda (NEAAL) was developed through intensive and thorough consultation over a year, to generate interest, support, commitment, and wide engagement from governments to civil society groups. The aim was to formulate an integrated policy document for the development of high-quality adult learning and education based on a balanced set of goals that aim at economic development and social cohesion, within a frame of sustainable structures.

Formally speaking, this Agenda is a Council resolution accepted on 29 November 2021 in Brussels, based on a consultation concluded at the 8-9 September European Summit on Adult Learning and CONFINTEA VII preparation. That Summit produced a Draft Declaration on Adult Learning which summarised in 8 points major dimensions of adult learning and education (ALE). Most of those points became channelled into the priority areas of NEAAL to reach for consensus and the support of a wider community of practitioners, government representatives and moreover, of such international bodies as UNESCO, ILO and the OECD.

By recognising all formerly achieved goals in the relevant area, the Resolution underlines that NEAAL 2030's five *main priority areas* ensure continuity of work and further development of ALE as outlined below, and detailed in its Annex I:

governance

supply and take-up of lifelong learning opportunities

accessibility and flexibility

quality, equity, inclusion, and success in adult learning

the green and digital transitions. (NEEAL 2030, p.9)

Governments agreed, based on the subsidiarity and national circumstances of EU Member States, to further implement specific instruments such as:

the Open Method of Co-ordination

Mutual Learning by identifying and learning from good practices in different Member States based on peer learning activities, peer counselling and exchanges of policies and practises, conferences, seminars, high-level expert fora, studies, analysis and networking for better dissemination and visible outcomes

Effective governance

Monitoring of the process

Knowledge-building and evidence-based adult learning policy in association with relevant international organisations like the UN (through UNESCO and ILO), the OECD, and the Council of Europe.

As for the priority areas (NEAAL2030, pp. 17-22) we must recognise that *Priority Area 1 on Governance* highlights the importance of strengthening conditions for cooperation on adult learning needs, and for policy coherence and relevant adult learning and skills strategies at national level, based on research and evidence. It also underlines the importance of co-operation and partnership with stakeholders.

*Priority Area 2 on Supply and take-up of lifelong learning opportunities* demands better awareness-raising, by making adult learning more tailor-made and supported by effective guidance, outreach, and validation of learning outcomes. Also, relevant financing tools may help to increase employer commitment.

*Priority Area 3 on Accessibility and flexibility* indicates the need for more flexible enrolment to adult learning programmes to increase participation, inclusion, and motivation amongst adult learners. Programmes for adult learners should be organised and supported by local and regional providers offering real opportunities for personal and career development, community learning, intergenerational learning with special attention to vulnerable groups. This Area calls for learning opportunities combined with micro-credentials, to generate more attention and opportunities for adult learners with better social and economic recognition and benefits.

*Priority Area 4 on Quality, equity inclusion and success in adult learning* means developing the professionalisation and capacity-building of adult educators and trainers, where higher education may play a further role. Better networking and partnership amongst adult learning providers can also help here. It means improving the mobility of educators and adult learners in the context of European multilingualism, and quality concerns. Inclusion points to fostering gender equality and solidarity between cultures and between generations by lifting barriers to participation and engagement in adult learning.

*Priority Area 5 on Green and digital transitions* calls for twin transitions, recognising the important steps and further actions to be made in environmental protection and technological advancement through digital devices and settings.

Further integration of sustainability measures requires new attitudes and mindsets, awareness through action-based skills, and knowledge expansion.

Those priority areas are supported by two specific EU-level targets: to raise the participation of adult in learning: by 2025 so that at least 47% of adults aged 25-64 should have participated in learning during the last 12 months; and at least 60% of adults aged 25-64 should have participated in learning in the last 12 months by 2030.

### *The EAEA reflection*

EAEA has supported the goals and focuses of the New European Agenda for Adult Learning, recognising the importance of the Council Resolution to strengthen the policy position of the field. The EAEA December 2021 Statement *Adult Learning and Education is Key for the Future of Europe*<sup>7</sup> recalls that EAEA started campaigning for a stronger European policy in adult learning and education, and for getting adult education recognised as a separate sector of the education system. In this context EAEA welcomed the priority areas of the Agenda supported by the Council Resolution which will support inclusion and engagement of all adults in learning.

Likewise, EAEA shared the vision of developing adult learning provision through better consideration of social conditions and employability. Active citizenship and community learning are other key issues that EAEA is promoting and agrees on being recognised as issues to be contributed to by adult learning. EAEA supports the enhancement of green and digital transitions and is very concerned that non-formal adult learning and education has a crucial role in achieving such priorities.

Finally, let us stress that EAEA is convinced of the need to develop intergenerational adult learning, and to expand solidarity and subsidiarity towards adult learners. To reach those two major EU-level targets on participation rates for 2025 and for 2030, EAEA calls for further collaboration, and common actions at local, regional, national and EU-levels, to get these aims realised.

## **SIG Lifelong learning and older adults**

### **Learning in Later Life Special Interest Group (LLL SIG) update Report *Brian Findsen***

*brianfindsen@gmail.com*

---

<sup>7</sup> EAEA Statement *Adult Learning and Education is Key for the Future of Europe* – Source: [Statement\\_NEAAL\\_December-2021\\_final.pdf\(eaea.org\)](#)

There has been only moderate progress in terms of on-going analysis of later life learning SIG during this year. I am however more actively seeking contributions to the PIMA Bulletin at a personal level, writing directly to individuals for feedback about what is happening in respective countries. Covid and country responses, of course, have been the major new forces affecting the lives of older people, directly and indirectly.

The SIG objectives for the future remain as for 2021. Ageism does not fade away because of covid; in many instances it has been exacerbated by responses to covid, as many elders suffer from renewed social isolation because of government mandates.

For my own part, I have been working alongside Taiwanese colleagues Hui-Chuan (Peggy) Wei and Ai-tzu (Iris) Li as co-editors for a book entitled *Taiwan's Senior Learning Movement: Perspectives from outside in and from inside out*, a publication is directly relevant to the purposes of the LLL SIG. The next PIMA Bulletin may include a review. Authors are drawn from the UK and five Asian countries as well as from Taiwan. The sub-title, *Perspectives from outside in to inside out*, relates to seeking to understand the influence of global forces on later life learning (*outside in*) before concentrating on how Taiwanese educators/gerontologists perceive local developments (*inside out*). The book is to be published by Springer in February 2022.

Meanwhile, here is a contents summary to be going on with:

Findsen B., Wei H-C., Li. Ai-TZU (Eds.) February 2022 *Taiwan's Senior Learning Movement: Perspectives from Outside in and from Inside out*. Springer.

#### Part 1 Global Perspectives and Conceptual Framework

##### *Chapter 1 - Introduction*

Introduction to aging in Taiwan; principal concepts; rationale for the book; logic for structure of the book; brief chapter content.

##### *Chapter 2: A Global Perspective on Active Aging*

##### *Chapter 3: A Global Perspective on Later Life Learning*

#### **Part 2 Perspectives from East Asian Countries on Senior Learning/Education**

##### *Chapter 4: Never too Old to Learn: Development, Challenges and Strategies of Education for Older Adults in Mainland China*

##### *Chapter 5: Lifelong Learning Among Older Adults in Singapore: An Overview*

##### *Chapter 6: An Appraisal of South Korean Seniors' Education*

Chapter 7: Learning as the Key for the 100-year Life Society: The Experience of Policy and Practice in Japan as a Super-Aged Society

#### **Part 3 Past and Present Taiwanese Senior Learning Developments**



Chapter 8: An Outsider's Perspective on Taiwanese Senior Learning developments

Chapter 9: Developing Policy and Practices of Senior Education in Taiwan

Chapter 10: Bracing for the Super-Aged Society: A New Era for Active Aging Learning

Chapter 11: Flourishing Blooms: The Practices and Effectiveness of the Active Aging Learning Movement in Taiwan

#### **Part 4 Concluding Remarks**

Chapter 12: Concluding Remarks

Increasing the membership of this special interest group remains an on-going priority. PIMA has a broad membership and significant numbers of the organization deal with issues facing older people and their learning circumstances. More PIMA members are very welcome to join this SIG.

#### **Learning Activities for Senior Citizens in Thailand *Archanya Ratana-Ubol***

*archanya@gmail.com*

Thailand has gone through the demographic transition of an aging population, with the average number of children born per family dropping from 6 to 2 in less than 20 years between 1970 and 1990. Fertility rates in Thailand are now 30% below replacement level. Thailand entered the society for senior citizens in 2005. According to the National Statistical Office, in 2014, Thailand has an aging population of more than 10 million, accounting for 14.9 percent of the country's population.

**Policies, Strategies, and Plans.** Thailand proclaimed the use of the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) as its guide for promoting the country's educational development. The Department of Social Development and Welfare, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security promote community involvement in improving residences for elders, engaging resources from the community and local entities - such as the municipal government, sub-district Administrative Organizations, educational institutions (such as vocational colleges) - in order to improve public spaces used to support elders' activities in community centers, villages' multi-purpose halls, and temples courtyards. Activities include elderly clubs, social welfare groups, vocational networks, housewife clubs, savings clubs, village scouts, and annual village activities (Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute, 2010, 2012).

Within Southeast Asia Thailand has implemented non-formal education and informal education as a complement to formal education. The concept of lifelong education has been found to be fruitful for Thai citizens. In 1999, the Thai Government passed *The National Education Act*. Under this Act, Education entails a learning process for personal and social development through imparting knowledge; practices; training; transmission of culture; enhancement of academic progress; building of a body of knowledge to create a learning society. The Act also

states that “credits accumulated by learners shall be transferable within the same type or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated from the same, or from different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training, or from work experience.”

Research undertaken by Ratana-Ubol (2018) involved the analysis of policy documents, measures, and various mechanisms in operation to reveal three WHO-based dimensions of policies carried out by organizations. Although many organizations proclaimed that senior citizens were considered the most valued in society, their implementation guidelines didn't reflect this belief. Many reflected that senior citizens needed help and care to avoid older people becoming a burden to society. They provided services but failed to empower senior citizens and their families. Attention needed to be given to activities which would lead to a better quality of life, and the possibility of generating some income to complement pensions.

In addition, research studies have pointed to operational improvement for senior citizens' potential to enhance education, skills, policies, and social structures as follows:

1. *Schools for senior citizens.* The teaching has been based on the needs of senior citizens in basic subjects up to advanced levels. Policies are focused on involving senior citizens in participating in organized activities to improve their quality of life. Benefits can be gained for individuals in being involved in the administration of the schools, in taking responsibility for specific functions.
2. *Gatherings promoting self-esteem* via the development of support groups, getting benefits from social contact with peers, promoting partnerships for career advancement and skills development; in turn, such activities promote security and self-esteem.
3. *Programs promoting intergenerational communication* with the aim of promoting happiness, as well as a positive outlook connected to a sense of belonging. Such programs can encourage youth to spend more of their free time learning from the wisdom of their elders, learning from them, and conserving cultural practices.
4. *Centers for quality-of-life development and career promotion for elders* aim to promote their self-esteem. Measures focus on strategies and usage in learning activity management for senior citizens. The main mechanisms include health promotion, and participative activities for senior citizens, enhancing collaboration amongst networks for skills development, thus harnessing the talents of senior citizens (Ratana-Ubol, 2018).

Accordingly, the school for seniors is one tool for promoting lifelong learning via the provision of facilities or the use of life course approaches to improve their well-being and encourage them to lead lives of active ageing. This means having better physical and cognitive functioning, having less depression, as well as having higher levels of life satisfaction and happiness. The substance of schools for seniors includes activities provided by organizations or communities to develop seniors' learning processes, enhance appropriate living, and adjust to social changes towards self-reliance. Thailand has promoted the concept of the University for the Third Age (U3A) as “a school for senior citizens”. Schools for senior citizens promote lifelong learning. Life skills development, informal learning and non-formal education are conducted in these

schools according to their needs and interests. Course content is connected to their daily lives to increase their life skills. Volunteer guest speakers in schools for senior citizens come from varied networks, including intellectuals in the community (Ratana-Ubol, 2020).

In conclusion, Thailand promotes the concept of the *potential of the senior citizen*, referring to the power of senior citizens in three dimensions from the WHO: health, participation, and security. Therefore, Thailand's policies and plans for senior citizens emphasize a support system designed to ensure that the implementation of appropriate activities to enact policy objectives for the potential of the senior citizens can be achieved.

## References

Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute. (2012). *Situation of the Thai Elderly 2012*. Nonthaburi: SS Plus Media.

Ratana-Ubol, A. (2018). *Proposals for improving the elderly functional role in Thailand*. Bangkok: ThaiTGRI.Org.

Ratana-Ubol, A. (2020). Life Satisfaction and Happiness of Thai Senior Citizens. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 14(1), 46-63.

## **Older adults and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand: Social issues affecting seniors' reality *Brian Findsen***

*brianfindsen@gmail.com*

### Covid in New Zealand

New Zealand has been going through difficult times as Covid (more particularly, the delta strain) has been more heavily experienced in the community now that the Government has surrendered its elimination strategy. The Government has abandoned its levels system of public health control in favour of a 'traffic light system' where regions will have varying levels of freedom. Auckland, the capital and major economic power, has formerly borne the brunt of severe lockdowns. Fully vaccinated citizens (now defined as two Pfizer jabs and soon to incorporate a booster) have considerably more freedom providing they have a vaccine passport. Non-vaccinated people cannot enter most shops, public events and most local/national government-controlled venues (e.g., museums; hairdressers; restaurants; swimming pools) but can have access to essential services (e.g., supermarkets; petrol stations).

### Relevance to older people and their learning

How is this scenario relevant to older people and their learning? In general, conditions of living for all people include specific consideration of older adults. Given that older people have a disproportionate vulnerability, especially in terms of health and safety, and more limited access to structured learning opportunities, any Government mandates also affect them. Even the controversial "no jab, no job" mandate has an impact, although most older people are not in

full-time work. Significant numbers of seniors volunteer for work in social agencies and benefit from the associated learning.

At a personal level, I recently resigned after 10 years of service from the Board of Age Concern Hamilton because it has implemented the above mandate, one which is embedded in ethical/moral questions. The agency lost significant numbers of older volunteers who were providing much-needed services to other elders (e.g. visiting; shopping). It is indeed ironic that the government mandate supposedly to protect the health of the public has this unintended consequence of further marginalizing some older people, particularly those who live alone. Previously, for extended periods, older people in villages and rest homes were not visited by family and friends because of governmental covid restrictions.

To highlight further concerns of older people, I report on instances of social issues affecting learning prospects for elders. In the Waikato Times (December 2, 2021, p.5) the newly introduced vaccine certificate (used by 'fully vaxxed' to access services and agencies) is proving to be problematic for some elders. The scheme assumes technological literacy, ownership and expertise of computers/mobiles. It assumes an e-mail address (one per person though couples may share an e-mail!) and a New Zealand passport (problematic for newer immigrants): in short, no end of bureaucratic demands for people who may have very limited or no internet expertise. The article documents the exasperating experiences of a small sample of older people.

An issue for the field of lifelong learning has been how people in the fourth age (Laslett 2008), one of increasing dependence and frailty, actually access learning and education. It is fair to say that elder care (and learning) is in a state of crisis, exacerbated by Covid restrictions and staff shortages. A report issued by the Health Quality & Safety Commission is entitled Older Māori and aged residential care in Aotearoa, where the focus is upon Māori realities of ageing. Included amid key recommendations on the issue of quality care for Māori elders (kaumātua) are: a more person-centred approach where quality is the primary objective; the need to incorporate tikanga Māori and te reo Māori (language) aligned to cultural values in care models; and development of a workforce capable of enacting appropriate culturally-based care. This last recommendation will require marked recruitment and training to meet Māori expectations of suitable care.

### Mental health and well-being

Another issue which has become more apparent in recent times has been mental health and well-being. A report developed by the New Zealand Mental Health and Well-Being Commission (2021) analyzes the first two years of five years set for looking into mental health and addiction. Given the restrictions on movement because of covid, access to resources (including education) and personal choice have become major foci. This report on the Access and Choice Programme identifies how better and more equitable outcomes for people suffering from mild to moderate mental health and addiction in this country may be achieved. Government has invested \$664 million in 2019 wherein four new national services have been introduced: Integrated Primary Mental Health and Addiction (IPMHA); Kaupapa Māori; Pacific; Youth. Interestingly, older people are not specified as especially at risk; but they

certainly are vulnerable to social isolation. It remains to be seen whether the Commission and this report will make a real difference.

The new year?

It is indeed quite unclear whether 2022 will bring more positive change for Aotearoa New Zealand than in 2021, a year saturated by Covid and its consequences for individuals, institutions, and wider society. In the health arena, while full attention has been given to Covid and its impact, other physiological, psychological, and learning needs of seniors were relatively under-resourced and/or ignored. Technology can have a positive impact on learning for older adults, but there are limitations as social contact becomes sparser, and elders retreat into smaller bubbles of presumed safety. I welcome the opportunity in a subsequent newsletter to paint a rosier picture where disappointment is replaced by genuine optimism.

## References

Health Quality and Safety Commission New Zealand (2021). Report - Older Māori and aged residential care in Aotearoa: Ngā kaumatua me to mahi tauwhiro I Aotearoa. Wellington: New Zealand.

<https://hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes-aged-residential-care/publications-and-resources/publication/4388/>

Laslett, Peter. The Third Age, The Fourth Age and The Future. Published online by Cambridge University Press: 14 November 2008

The New Zealand Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (2021). Access and Choice Programme: Report on the first two years – Te Hōtaka mō Ngā Whai Wāhitanga me Ngā Kōwhiringa: He purongo mo ngā rue tau tuatahi. Wellington: New Zealand.

<https://Mentalhealth.inquiry.govt.nz/inquiry-report/he-ara-oranga/>

Waikato Times Thursday 2 December 2021. Elderly struggle to access vaccine certificate. Article by Jo [Lines-MacKenzie@stuff.co.nz](mailto:Lines-MacKenzie@stuff.co.nz)

## Technology and older people in the UK: the current picture *Alex Withnall*

*alexwithnall@btinternet.com*

Even before the pandemic struck early in 2020, it was increasingly apparent that many older people in the UK were becoming excluded from many aspects of daily life through lack of access to the internet and/or the absence of digital skills. It now appears that the pandemic has exacerbated the situation and, as the Omicron variant threatens a new chapter in the Covid-19 saga, many older people are fearful of the future despite the reassurance provided by the comprehensive UK vaccination programme.

Research by the Centre for Ageing Better, a non-profit organisation based in London, has explored the digital experiences of people aged 50-70 during Covid-19 (ageing-better.org.uk 2021). Results show the very wide range of activities which have necessitated the use of digital skills to participate actively in society. During the three lockdowns experienced in the UK between March 2020 and July 2021, such activities as being able to order food deliveries online, applying for financial support to compensate for loss of income if still working, and staying connected with family and friends, were especially important. Nevertheless, the research uncovered a noticeable digital divide within this age group, especially those living in households with lower incomes who were less likely than others to have been online prior to the pandemic.

This research excluded people over 70 years of age. But work by Age UK, a national charity working on behalf of older people, found that although 88% of 50–64-year-olds and 75% of 65–74-year-olds in England said that they use the internet almost every day, 42% of over-75s did not use the internet; there was little evidence that the pandemic had encouraged them to get online more (Age UK, 2020). Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that many over-70s feel ‘stranded’: that is, caught between the vanishing certainties of the past and what they perceive to be the ferocious pace of technological change. Even those possessing reasonable digital skills felt that change was happening so fast that they could not hope to keep abreast of it. It can be argued that the rate of overall change is no faster than in previous eras; but technology has speeded up the ways in which we communicate on a variety of levels, so that our daily lives have changed beyond recognition and will doubtless continue to do so.

Bearing in mind that some older people may experience physical problems getting online – poor eyesight, loss of manual dexterity - as well as cognitive impairments and lack of confidence, it is obviously important for those organisations which support older people to be able to respond to the challenges which the pandemic has thrown up. The Centre for Ageing Better, cited above, has suggested a range of good practices which different organisations may adopt. These include offering assisted digital support to those who cannot get online; using referral networks; direct mail or telephone to reach digitally excluded older people; and face-to-face support where feasible.

Finally, it is interesting to see older people themselves exploring ways in which their learning can be enhanced using technology. Members of U3A in the UK recently participated in an international symposium at the International Federation on Ageing hybrid 15<sup>th</sup> Global Conference held at Niagara Falls and online, at which presenters discussed how online learning, notably via Zoom and videoconferencing have enhanced the experiences of older learners in a variety of settings offering the possibility of a range of new learning initiatives in the post-pandemic world (ifa2021.ngo).

## References

Age UK. (2020). *Briefing Paper. Digital inclusion and older people – how have things changed in a Covid-19 world?* ageuk.org.uk

Centre for Ageing Better. (2021). *COVID-19 and the digital divide: Supporting digital inclusion and skills during the pandemic and beyond* ageing-better.org.uk

International Federation on Aging 15<sup>th</sup> Global Conference 2021. ifa2021.ngo

## The Next Issue

*[This contribution foreshadows the subject of Bulletin No. 41 on the social responsibility of higher education, to be co-edited by Niharika Kaul and Maeva Gauthier.]*

### **Growing relevance of community-based participatory research in higher education in India** *Niharika Kaul*

*niharika.kaul@pria.org*

Recently, Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) hosted a seminal [event](#) on the history and future of Participatory Research, bringing together the early propagators of Participatory Research from across the world. *[see Sumitra Srinivasan above]* It threw light on how, increasingly, knowledge shared through participatory processes is critical for sustainable impact of development programs. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) has proved to be a powerful instrument for transforming higher education ecosystems around the world. CBPR has been increasingly integrated into the three missions of higher education in India, mainstreamed in the Scheme on [Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in Higher Education Institutions in India](#) drafted by the Expert Committee of the University Grants Commission, India (UGC) in 2020.

For instance, Centre for indigenous knowledge in agriculture -(CIKA) at Gandhigram Rural University documents, analyse, validate, standardise, and further propagate the Indigenous Knowledge/ Practices in Agricultural and related fields under various farming systems of Tamil Nadu. Similarly, CHRIST University has introduced a 2-credit open elective course on CBPR, thus enabling the participants to acquire competencies in CBPR, skills in working with the community, and building personal and social awareness to work with myriad dimensions of inequalities in an ethical manner. With the rising popularity of SDG-driven education, and with the onset of Covid-19 and the climate crisis, several universities such as Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and Manipal University Jaipur are mainstreaming CBPR approaches in their teaching and research, to sensitise young professionals about their specific field-based challenges, facing them in their own realities.

The issue of capacity-building and training of CBPR methodologies to next generation of researchers is a pertinent one in the given context. The Knowledge for Change Global Consortium, an [initiative](#) of the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, is a ground-breaking decentralised model of training, where mentors from around the world are trained to carry out contextually relevant research using community-based participatory research methods in their local [hubs](#). The K4C

Consortium has proved the extent to which CBPR methodologies are being adopted by researchers and practitioners globally to address societal challenges facing humanity.

Given how important training of trainers is, in order to create a larger cohort of CBPR trainers who can teach CBPR to young researchers in universities in India, the UGC is initiating the [Master Trainers Training Program](#). Under the program, seven universities across India have been identified as regional centres, for capacity building of faculty as Master Trainers for CBPR. These Centres would host annually at least two batches of training of 30-40 Master Trainers so identified from colleges and universities of that region. Each batch of Master Trainers would undergo a combination of virtual and physical (face to-face and residential) training of a week's duration at the Regional Centres. The first batch of Master Training Programme is proposed to begin in the month of January 2022. This initiative has put into focus the ever-growing popularity and relevance of CBPR in making higher education socially responsible in India.

## People

### New members

**Karlyga Myssayeva** [Myssayeva.kn@gmail.com](mailto:Myssayeva.kn@gmail.com) is especially welcome to join PIMA, coming as she does from the largely unrepresented Central Asian region that has risen in prominence and strategic significance in recent years. She is an Associate Professor, and Vice-Dean for Innovation and International Relations in the Faculty of Journalism at al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, the Capital of Kazakhstan, where she teaches in the UNESCO, international journalism and PR department. Of late she has been active in national and regional preparation for the upcoming 2022 UNESCO CONFINTEA VII in Morocco.



**Professor Ana Krajnc** [Ana.krajnc@guest.arnes.si](mailto:Ana.krajnc@guest.arnes.si) is President of the Slovenian NGO Slovenian Third Age University.

Dr Krajnc is among the world's most long-standing adult educators with a lifetime of scholarly and applied service. She studied psychology and pedagogy at the University of Ljubljana, with a PhD in 1971 and postdoctoral studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto, Canada the original home of ICAE under Roby Kidd and Budd Hall.

From 1964 she was a researcher, senior researcher, then from 1973 professor at the Institute of Sociology University of Ljubljana, where she introduced new MA and PhD Adult Education (Andragogy) programmes. From 1970 to 2002 she organized the International Summer Seminar for principals and professionals in adult education institutions. In 1984, Ana initiated the Slovene Third Age University network which now has 56 affiliated local organizations nation-



wide all over the state. In 1996 she was Visiting Professor in Adult Education at the UBC Vancouver In the years 1989 – 1991,

Throughout her working years she has been a visiting professor at ICAE, and elsewhere; at the UN she prepared the resolution for the education of prisoners and initiating the Institute for Dyslexia and the Institute for Elderly Education. From 2004 to 2013 she was also Visiting Professor at the University of Maribor, Slovenia. From 1976 – 1983 she worked on UNESCO's *The Systems of Adult Education in European Countries* series of booklets on national systems of adult education. She published *Social Participation in Adult Education at OISE* in 1972 and 8 more books followed, along with over 500 articles. She established the Slovenian journal *Studies in Adult Education and Learning* and was its editor in chief for 20 years.

Ana Krajnc was a member of ICAE from its beginning, and a member of its delegation to China in 1984. She was midwife to an identifying philosophy and movement within ALE: participatory action research (PAR) (*see the contributions of Sumitra Srinivasan and Nihikara Kaul above*). She organized the ICAE's international conference on "Participatory Research" in Ljubljana in 1982, where PAR was effectively launched.



Recently Ana joined an initiative at the National Academy of Science promoting citizen science. The Slovenian Third Age Universities systematically promote education via research, and Ana is the national representative in the international virtual organization for elderly "Pass-it-on", based in Paris, France. However, a lot has changed in research, especially the citizen science movement, and Ana hopes to update in joining PIMA.

**Dr Leone Wheeler** [leonewheeler2@gmail.com](mailto:leonewheeler2@gmail.com) and [alcn@bigpond.com](mailto:alcn@bigpond.com) (for ALCN business), is the Honorary CEO of the Australian Learning Communities Network, a network of leading-edge practitioners building sustainable communities using learning as the key element. She is also a Board member of PASCAL International Observatory where she facilitates the *Connecting Urban and Rural Learning Initiatives Learning Cities Network (LCN)*. Leone is an Associate of RMIT University, School of Global, Social and Urban Studies where she was formerly played

various academic, research and networking roles to do with community and regional partnership. After leaving RMIT she worked as UNESCO-UNEVOC Qatar Centre Research Fellow with Dr Rupert Maclean on several projects for the College of North Atlantic-Qatar, including on TVET and sustainable development, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities developments.



Dr Wheeler's interest in joining PIMA is to bring the stories of PIMA members to the Australian network, and to share lifelong learning stories about ALCN members to PIMA members. She is also interested in finding people interested in promoting the value of learning communities in rural and regional communities.

## Great champions of ALE

### Lalage Bown: a global inspiration and ‘mother of adult education in Africa’

*Maria Slowey*

*maria.slowey@dcu.ie Professor and Director of Adult and Continuing Education, Glasgow University 1992-2004*

Emeritus Professor Lalage Bown, OBE died in Shrewsbury hospital on 17 December 2021, aged 94, following a fall at home.



It is only as the heartfelt tributes pour in from across the globe that the extraordinary range and diversity of Lalage’s activities and achievements really come to light. Her interests and accomplishments were so wide-ranging that even those of us fortunate to have known her over many decades were unlikely to have been aware of the sheer scale of her contribution, and the thousands of lives she had enriched.

As many PIMA members will be aware, Lalage was a widely known and respected figure in the adult education world. She published extensively, was an indefatigable advocate of liberal adult education, women’s rights, and an early exponent and practitioner of adult education in Africa. What is also evident is that, despite the myriad different ways we individually may have encountered Lalage, in *all* circumstances she was the same remarkable person, fearless in speaking out for the values to which she was deeply committed. As Alice Prochaska, a recent past Principal of Somerville College - the Oxford College which played such an important role in Lalage’s formation - put it in her tribute, although she was always in awe of Lalage ‘it was a benign feeling of awe’. For those PIMA friends who have not met Lalage in person it is not easy to capture her energy and what Rickard Taylor has termed “her essentially human charisma. Lalage had that rare and hard to define talent of demanding, by her presence alone, the rapt attention of the whole audience-whether in the Senate chamber, the lecture hall, or the seminar.”

Heribert Hinzen, writes how, in a recent letter to him “she reminded me that she first came to Germany in 1947 at the age of 20 as a member of a group of British university students to meet with other students from all over Europe to think about a peaceful living together with other nations on the continent. One could imagine her twinkle around her eyes mentioning that they worked day and night in a half-ruined hotel in Bonn-Bad Godesberg where a decade earlier Chamberlain and Hitler met.” And, shortly after that experience, as Michael Omolewa, puts it “The young woman of twenty years who graduated in History at Oxford University chose to serve overseas, leaving behind the comfort and serenity of her environment and people for the more challenging terrain of Africa. “

Her professional activities in Africa are summarized by a colleague from Glasgow University, Robert Hamilton. “Over a period of 30 years in Africa she became the first field resident tutor in the Extra-Mural Department at Makerere University College in Uganda and held various positions at the University of Ibadan and Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria, the University of Zambia and the University of Lagos. In Zambia, Lalage established a national extra-mural programme, emphasising the role of the university in promoting discussion of current issues, with special courses for trade unionists, politicians, and the police, and made use of radio, television, and theatre for public education. She also helped to set up the first systematic university training for adult educators in Africa. She was an activist who served as the founding Secretary of the African Adult Education Association and as an active participant at the building of the Nigerian National Council for Adult Education. For her role in these institutions, she received numerous awards and recognitions. A special issue of the journal, *Adult Education in Nigeria*, was dedicated to the celebration of her 70th birthday in 1997, when she was named the ‘Mother of Adult Education in Africa’. Of most significance, she saw first-hand the effects of illiteracy and dedicated much of her career in Africa to helping adult women learn to read and write. Interviewed by Mary de Sousa in 2009 for the *UNESCO Education Sector Newsletter*, she said: “I was left with the huge conviction that even the simplest acquisition of literacy can have a profoundly empowering effect personally, socially and politically. When it comes to women, there is a huge change in their self-worth and confidence.”

There is a phrase which, in other circumstances may seem something of a cliché, but which in Lalage’s case conveys the essence of her underpinning philosophy - put simply, she was not intimidated in ‘speaking truth to power’.

An example of this truth speaking is given by Tom Schuller who recalls an abiding memory from around 1993/4: at Lalage's urging he went to an AE conference in Nigeria. “The campus was sadly decaying, and things obviously in very poor shape. The conference dinner was in a bizarre setting of military opulence, with a row of men sitting on the dais; in her after-dinner speech Lalage managed to combine perfect politeness with a blistering attack on their failure to maintain the place and the lack of educational opportunity. I was torn between admiration and fearful anxiety as I scanned their faces....”

Lalage returned to the UK and in 1981 was appointed to the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Glasgow as Director and Professor. Not only did the Department thrive under her leadership, but, as Professor Anton Muscatelli, Principal of Glasgow University, said in his recent personal tribute. “I knew Lalage personally and I have vivid memories of her during my time as a junior academic in Social Sciences - she was an inspirational figure. Lalage made a significant contribution to the University of Glasgow throughout the past few decades... She was truly ahead of her time in the work she did to address the Africanisation of curriculums, and to make education more inclusive. Her influence can be traced in the University’s ongoing work today to decolonise the curriculum”.

In 1992, I had the privilege of being appointed as her successor in Glasgow University as Director and Professor of Adult and Continuing Education I was both delighted and apprehensive in equal measure. Delighted, as DACE (the Department of Adult and Continuing Education) had become, under Lalage’s leadership, not only one of the largest but also one of

the most far sighted and innovative departments of its kind in the UK. Learning from her, I used to remind anyone who would listen that DACE had more adult learner registrations than the University's entire full-time student population at the time. I was also rather apprehensive: she had set the bar so high, how might it be possible to 'follow in her footsteps'?

I need not have worried: Lalage's contribution was so distinctive that she would have been a hard if not impossible act for anyone to follow. From the moment she heard of my appointment Lalage was unstinting in her support for the new head of the Department in the University that she loved so much. She immediately whisked me off for a few wee drams to celebrate.

She, of course, was never heading for 'retirement' - a concept she eschewed to the end and was later whisked off by Chris Duke (Editor of this Bulletin) to become a hard-working Visiting Professor at the University of Warwick.

The stories of her time at Glasgow warrant a book in their own right: she looked outward from the University, connecting with the important regional authorities at the time, to the wider community, the media, the City of Glasgow, museums, and the like. An annual highlight for her involved a visit to all the outlying DACE centres throughout the west of Scotland. She also looked inward to the university, working tirelessly to engage with colleagues in all Faculties and Departments about the importance of widening access, promoting lifelong learning, part-time study opportunities and outreach activities. She played a significant role in the major committees of the University. Her interventions in Senate were legendary: in one account, when there was a disagreement over what she regarded as some minor matter, but which some members viewed as a 'crisis', she stood up to say, in her typical 'truth to power' way, that unless colleagues had shared her experience of being at an equivalent university meeting in Africa when the room they were in was surrounded by an aggressive group of men wielding spears, they had no right to use the term 'crisis'!

Her extraordinary charisma was evident in the memories of so many staff and students- plus Glasgow taxi drivers, who all seemed to know 'The Prof'. But perhaps one of the most memorable occasions was when she was awarded an honorary degree by Glasgow University - a rare honour, of which she was very proud - and her powerful charge to the graduands resulted in a tremendous standing ovation.

Like so many from all over the world, I miss her desperately. We've had so many fun times in Glasgow, in Shrewsbury and in Dublin. Just over two years ago Lalage took the lengthy train and ferry to Dublin to speak at a seminar that I hosted on the topic of ... learning in later life. Needless to say, she not only stole the show, but kept me up late into the night chatting and drinking Irish whiskey, rather than her favourite Scotch. As ever, she did not complain!

I encourage you to read details of this remarkable adult educator, feminist, and post-colonial activist in tributes on the following websites- the first of which contains an overview of her life by Robert Hamilton, a colleague from Glasgow University.

<http://cradall.org/content/adult-educator-advocate-right-access-education-women%E2%80%99s-literacy-and-decolonisation>

<https://guardian.ng/opinion/lalage-bown-1927-2021-matriarch-of-adult-education/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jan/10/lalage-bown-obituary>

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/obituary-lalage-bown-w9xnf3fzl>

## **Lalage Bown, An Extraordinary Life** *Budd L Hall*

*bhall@uvic.ca*

What I love about African culture is the knowledge that people do not disappear when they die. They enter into the larger kingdom of ancestors with whom we may continue to communicate, seeking advice and just sharing stories. Lalage as a daughter of Africa remains with us even now sitting in a conversational circle with Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Thomas Hodgkin, Nita Barrow, and others.

I first learned about Lalage in 1970 when I was a doctoral student of African educational systems looking for a place to do my PhD research. She was the Director of Extra-mural Studies at the University of Zambia at the time, and through the mail offered me a position there to do my work. In the end, I was offered a position at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania at the Institute of Adult Education. I met Lalage in person in 1971 in Dar es Salaam as we hosted the meeting of the African Association for Adult Education there.



Lalage was the Secretary of the AAEA while I was the local organizer on behalf of the Institute of Adult Education. This was the first international conference that I ever helped to organize. Lalage flew into Dar es Salaam 4-5 days before the conference. She set up with a typewriter at the University, took my disorganized and messy conference notes, and turned them into a very professional-looking programme. She had a remarkable talent for taking fragments of ideas, diverse activities, and seemingly divergent perspectives, and weaving them into an articulate, coherent, and professional paper or policy or report. She was an institution-builder.

Her greatest gift in my opinion lay in her ability to gain support at the highest levels of government or academia for the field of adult education. She was a consummate professional who took the task of academic leadership to the highest level. She was a passionate advocate for the power of adult education. She had remarkable confidence in bringing the need for adult education to Vice-Chancellors, to Ministers of Education, and to heads of state. She spoke often of the responsibility to ‘educate the politicians’, an activity that she undertook with enthusiasm.



At the 1971 meeting several of the younger generation of African adult educators just getting started in university life thought that by 1971, it might be time for an African to hold the position of Secretary of the AAAE. There was a feeling that there had not been very much reported over the year or two preceding the gathering in Dar es Salaam. Surely time for a transition? There was some anticipation by the younger folks that the conference, upon hearing the report from the Secretary, might feel it was time for a change. When the Chair called upon Lalage to deliver her report, the room was filled with an astounding record of activities, accomplishments, challenges, and plans. She had delivered a five-star report. When the vote came for Secretary, she was voted in unanimously! She may have had white skin, but she was an African and a brilliantly accomplished one at that.

After 1980, when she returned for good to the UK and took up her position at Glasgow, I had less contact with her. She was an active player in building the International Council for Adult Education where I was working after leaving Tanzania. She edited the journal *Convergence* for us, following in the footsteps of Edward Hutchinson.

During the past 15 years my partner Darlene Clover and I were fortunate to have been able to visit with Lalage on numerous occasions at her home in Shrewsbury. We stayed in a guest room with a collection of perhaps 500 books above the bed. We could have stayed there forever. Shrewsbury was the place where she had been raised after her father returned from his days with the Indian Army in Burma. He had been awarded an estate with a manor house and a farm just outside the town itself. Lalage shared her encyclopaedic knowledge of the area with us each time we visited. She was a woman of the land. She was as engaged in Shrewsbury and its organizations in her late 80s and early 90s as she had been in the many African communities where she had worked before.

The Ancestral Kingdom will be energized, stimulated, and entertained by this newer addition. And the rest of us will continue to call on Lalage for stories and advice.

Lalage Bown Oyay Oyay Oyay

### **Ken Thompson— a true champion of lifelong learning communities** *Leone Wheeler*



*leonewheeler2@gmail.com*

Dr. Ken Thompson, colleague, mentor, and friend to many, especially in the Hume Learning Community in northern Melbourne, passed away recently. He is remembered for his great generosity, his vast knowledge of lifelong learning, his leadership, and his empathy to people from all walks of life.

Ken was foundation Chair of the Hume Global Learning Village (HGLV) Committee (the operational committee) and member of the strategic HGLV Advisory Board (2003-2014). He was eminently qualified for this role considering his

background as a registered Psychologist, former Principal of Gladstone Park Secondary College (1993-2006), Visiting Fellow at Melbourne University (1996-2022) and Board Member at Meadow Heights Learning Shop (2012-2016) as well as several other appointments for the Department of Education of Victoria.

Hume is a heavily populated industrialised and highly multicultural civic region which suffered quite severe social and economic disadvantages through a period of reconstruction with industrial change notably in the auto industry. The HGLV (2003-2014), a collaboration of partner organisations and Hume City Council, achieved many successful, innovative initiatives that set down values and principles for developing learning cities/learning communities both within Australia, and internationally. The successes have been widely written about.

I served with Ken on the HGLV, was Chair of the Research Committee, and in 2013 had the honour of interviewing Ken as part of a *Learning as a Driver for Change* research project. I asked Ken to reflect on the most significant change that happened during the previous years of HGLV. Ken said it was *the process of learning and the institutions of learning*. Significant changes were made for individuals and groups to support their learning, whether in increasing the numbers of children attending kindergarten, or providing a community venue for VCE students to study, and community hubs at local primary schools. To have an iconic building such as the Hume Global Learning Centre is a statement to and by the community. Ken emphasized the importance of valuing learning in all its forms, building social justice groups, and intergenerational learning. To Ken, learning was as fundamental to life as water. It was also Hume's ability to turn a deficit into a challenge:

There's a whole language, the optimistic language, of the opportunity for improvement. The pride we have in Hume. It is a confidence. It has gone from the faith of a few 10 years ago to the confidence of many.

Ken made time to get to know what was happening in the Hume community and more importantly to value everyone's work. We were very lucky to have Ken as the Chair of the HGLV as Frank McGuire, MP, Member of the Victorian Parliament for Broadmeadows and foundation member of the HGLV, said:

Part of the success is having a fantastic Chairperson, [Ken] really is optimistic and really builds everyone up to really share things and having a person like that – people just want to come to these meetings. He is an empowering person. Do we realise how important that is?"

Members of the HGLV Committee thought that an important factor of success of the HGLV model was to select a champion like Ken. If someone is passionate and has the belief, others will follow them.

I know Ken was disappointed when the HGLV Committee and Advisory Board was disbanded in 2014. However, he never lost faith in the Hume community, and with the help of several strategic community partners established the Hume Learning Community Inc. He was Chair of the Hume Learning Community and made sure that the collaboration, the sharing of projects and ideas, and the valuing of lifelong learning continued until his passing. He was particularly keen to ensure the voice of the most disadvantaged in the community was heard. Many

initiatives developed during the years of the HGLV live on in the work of Hume City Council, for example, the Jobs and Skills Taskforce, and the Multiversity programme.

For me personally, Ken continued his mentorship and support of my work when I returned to Australia to take up the position of Hon CEO of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN) in 2020. He became a member of the ALCN Executive Committee and worked with me on a story template, so that our members would continue to tell their stories of learning innovation, exploration, and inspiration.

Late last year Professor Bruce Wilson, Director of the EU Centre, RMIT University, and George Osborne, Manager Economic Development, Hume City Council, held an informal gathering, fittingly at the Hume Global Learning Centre, to remember Ken's life and work. Friends of Ken spoke movingly about how much he had impacted their lives, and how he was always so positive in encouraging the lifelong learning work that they were engaged in. This year Bruce will call together friends of Ken to work on a legacy to remember his accomplishments, and I look forward to contributing to this group.

## **Archbishop Emeritus Tutu's heartfelt engagement with life (1931-2021)**

*Shirley Walters*

*ferris@iafrica.com*

On the 26 December 2021 I finished a mountain hike to hear the news that Archbishop Emeritus Tutu, a South African cleric and social activist, who was a giant of the struggle against apartheid, had died. Tears tumbled. He was the Chancellor at the University of the Western



Cape (UWC) where I have worked for many years. We lived through militant anti-apartheid campaigns, movements towards democratic transition and rebuilding the social order. Arch, as we called him, led with loving kindness, moral certainty, resoluteness, and his signature laughter, which was just a breath away, at the darkest and lightest of times. Millions of people, from all walks of life, are grieving his loss in South Africa and beyond.

The Nobel Peace Laureate, often described as South Africa's moral conscience, sought justice not revenge. At UWC's Division for Lifelong Learning, we celebrated his heartfelt engagement with life as the essence of lifelong learning. In 2011, he received an honorary doctorate from UWC and on that occasion we presented him with a commissioned recording by Tina Schouw as a tribute, "Open up your heart". This beautiful song honours the 'torch bearers, the way showers, the light carriers, by highlighting the ways they 'open up their hearts to let the light in'.



[https://soundcloud.com/tinaschouw/open-up-your-heart?si=88d6c98527b94789847865c31563ec3f&utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=post&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing&fbclid=IwAR2rRp40NNdkCIgUKdn-y8iZYTnm6laeIod-zqdzqNqQT105\\_xuueKyM8s4](https://soundcloud.com/tinaschouw/open-up-your-heart?si=88d6c98527b94789847865c31563ec3f&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=post&utm_campaign=social_sharing&fbclid=IwAR2rRp40NNdkCIgUKdn-y8iZYTnm6laeIod-zqdzqNqQT105_xuueKyM8s4)

Through his actions, Arch embodied ‘the change he wanted to see’. There are many significant moments of public education – I will point to just two. As Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on public television he broke down and sobbed, at the horror of what he was hearing. Crying in public is not the cultural norm, especially for men – his visible distress spoke volumes for the millions who were witnesses. After death he continued to teach – he insisted on an unpretentious funeral, reflecting his modest lifestyle.

He chose a simple coffin with rope handles and instead of cremation he chose the more environmentally friendly aquamation option! Arch is no doubt chuckling at the millions of people who are ‘Googling’ what this means! His laughter, used in self-effacing ways, was another hallmark of his leadership.

In his honour let’s all ‘open up our hearts to let the light in’!

*PIMA Website [pimanetwork.com](http://pimanetwork.com)*

