Achieving Lifelong Learning for All: Where are we now? And what next?

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To help Commonwealth governments and institutions use technologies to improve and expand access to education and training
Learning for Sustainable Development
GOAL 4

ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
More at sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal
Plan

Context
Understanding Lifelong Learning
Where are we?
Role of technology: the COL experience
What next?
Context
Median age, by country (2017)


750 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, still lack basic reading and writing skills.

1 in 5 children/youth are not in school

While primary to secondary transition rates have increased in the last 10 years, approximately 10% of those who complete primary do not go on to secondary schooling.
GER Tertiary Education - Global

58% of worldwide employers do not believe new graduates are adequately prepared for work.

Half of youth are not sure that post secondary education has improved their chances of finding a job.

McKinsey ("Education to Employment")
In the 21st century Lifelong Learning is not an option

• Achieve universal primary, secondary and tertiary education for all
• Skill people for the future of work
• Cater to the needs of the ‘third age’
Understanding Lifelong Learning
From Lifelong ‘Education’ to Lifelong ‘Learning’

- holistic approach to education not limited to age or socio-economic groups
  - Edgar Faure Report

- Learning throughout life

- Learning to know; learning to do, learning to be; learning to live together
  - Delors Report, UNESCO
LIFELONG AND LIFEWIDE LEARNING

16 WAKING HOURS

0-5 K  GR 1-12  UG GRAD  WORK  RETIREMENT

FORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

(Source: LIFE Center: Stevens, R. Bransford, J. & Stevens, A., 2005)
3 Dimensions of Lifelong Learning

**When?**
Life phases: from cradle to grave; life-wide

**How?**
Modality of delivery: formal, non-formal, informal

**What?**
Learning domains: personal, social, cultural, developmental

Source: UIL, 2014, p. 12
Two competing versions of lifelong learning

‘the one visionary and all-encompassing, the other driven by narrower interests related to training, competency and the world of work’.

Aitchison (2004, p.2)

Photo: http://enewsletter.ukzn.ac.za/Newsletter.aspx?id=83
Where are we?

Lifelong Learning in five countries

- Australia
- Malta
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Trinidad and Tobago
Australia

**Aim:** Develop skills, upskill and reskill citizens for a dynamic economy

**Focus:** Strong economic and industrial orientation

**Programmes/Mechanisms:**
- National Foundation Skills Strategy (for adults)
- Open Access College

**Challenges:** No comprehensive national policy
Good Practice: AQF & Recognition of Prior Learning

- The AQF a national framework for formal and vocational education and training
- Includes Recognition of Prior Learning
- Being reviewed to include micro-credentials and MOOCs to address lifelong learning
Malta

**Aim:** To ensure economic development, social participation, personal well-being.

**Focus:** Education for employability. Also includes integration of migrants.

**Programmes/Mechanisms:**
- *Framework for the Education Strategy*: “increase participation in lifelong learning and adult learning”

**Challenges:**
- No provision for alternative learning pathways
Good Practice:
OER

• Open education and OER to promote connected learning.
• Harness the potential of OER and MOOCs for quality adult education, schooling and VET
• Draft national OER policy under discussion
**Aim:** To build a competitive economy by investing in Singaporeans to develop their fullest potential throughout life

**Focus:** Skilling and reskilling the workforce

**Programmes/Mechanisms:**
- Government subsidies on training
- Support for career guidance, job searches, placements

**Challenges:** Lack of ownership of government schemes by employers
Good Practice: Incentivising Lifelong Learning

- S$1 billion: Annual SkillsFuture funding per year from 2015-2020
- S$500: Initial credit per citizen to be used for agency-approved courses
- 90%: Subsidy for training costs of Singaporeans aged 40+
South Africa

Aim: To contribute to economic growth and address inequity resulting from apartheid

Focus: Skills development and learner mobility

Programmes/Mechanisms:
• National Policy and Strategy
• NQF
• Khetha: career advice portal

Challenges:
• Tension between learning for social equality vs. economic growth
‘to meet the challenge of lifelong learning successfully, we need to reorganize the delivery of education and training within an open learning framework.’

African National Congress, 1995: 77
Aim: To create a diversified knowledge economy within the framework of sustainable development.

Focus: ECE to Tertiary education and skills training.

Programmes/Mechanisms:
- Policy on the Tertiary Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and Lifelong Learning

Challenges:
- Effective integration of technology
Good Practice: Community engagement

• Community based telecentres
• Government funding of NGOs working in communities
• National Programme for soft skills training for youth (15 -17)
In Summary ...

- Countries develop policies/strategies within a visionary framework, but adopt a utilitarian approach.
- Strategies: QF, Incentives, OER, ODL, community engagement.
- Lifelong learning is understood differently in different contexts.
- More emphasis on formal education and training.
- Governments play an active role.
- Need for coordination between different ministries & stakeholders.
Role of Technology: the COL experience
At the end of 2018, 51.2 per cent of the global population using the Internet while mobile penetration 107%
Every $1 invested resulted in $16 worth of income and assets.
Arogya Mary - school dropout, grandmother, who never knew about the internet before the L3F project

Content and Web Manager for a Farmer’s Organization

**Facebook content:** 600 different content uploaded

**YouTube:** 500 videos of farmers field experiences

**WhatsApp:** 150 organic agriculture based content

**Trained:** over 1000 farmers
Using Aptus for Financial Literacy

Photo credit: Manndeshi
“I left school in year 5 when I got married at the age of 12. I am now 22 and have 3 children. I went back to school so that I could help my children with their schoolwork.”
Online learning - Food and Agriculture sector underserved. A consortium conceptualised by COL, supported by NPTEL
Reaching the Bottom Billion

• Use technologies that are appropriate and affordable
• Content designed for delivery in low bandwidth situations
• Open Content in local languages ie. OER
• Social media integration
• Online peer-to-peer interactions supplemented with blended approaches
What Next?
Need for Paradigm Shift
The Present Approach towards Lifelong Learning

• Focused more on acquiring skills and competencies
• Helping to adapt to changing circumstances
• Emphasis on formal learning
Ideal Approach towards Lifelong Learning

• Move beyond acquiring skills and competencies and focus on Transformative Learning
• Not just adapting to changing circumstances but acquiring ability to change circumstances
“to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgements, and feelings of others. ... Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking.”

Mezirow,

Outcomes in Lifelong Learning

Typical Approach:
• Acquisition of Skills and Competencies
• Employability and Entrepreneurship

Transformative Approach:
• Empowerment
• Environmental Conservation
• Social Cohesion/Pace
1% increase in empowerment 2.3% increase in profit.
Integrate formal, informal and non-formal learning

- **Informal**
  - Learner led
  - Not evaluated
  - Tacit knowledge

- **Non Formal**
  - Structured
  - Not usually evaluated

- **Formal**
  - Teacher Led
  - Sequential
  - Evaluated
Explicit Knowledge (know what)
- tangible/visible
- Codified
- Formal & Non formal

Tacit Knowledge (know how)
- Informal
- personal
- intuitive
- acquired through lived experience/practice

“The centrality of ..... tacit knowledge to the production and reproduction of society has typically been unrecognized”
3 Lifelong Learning: Integration of Three Approaches

Heutagogy in Practice

• Nursing, engineering and education professions have found heutagogy to be a credible response to the critical issues that the learners are faced with

• The University of Western Sydney has implemented the heutagogical approach in its teacher education programme

• Heutagogical approach in three HEIs in the UK have led to reflective learning with learners demonstrating capacity and capability.

Intergovernmental Agencies

• Advocacy for LLL policies
• Frameworks for implementing and monitoring progress
• Share best practices/lessons learned
• Promote regional and global partnerships
Governments

- Implement and monitor lifelong learning policies with a focus on transformative learning
- Accreditation mechanisms for recognition and mobility
- Promote lifelong learning through indigenous languages and cultures
- ICT infrastructure and governance
- Incentives for lifelong learning
Educational Institutions

- Provide seamless pathways between formal, non-formal, informal learning
- Integrate pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy
- Innovations for recognition and credentialing
- Use ODL, OER and TEL
Thank you