

AHAED involvement in the preparation for CONFINTEA 7

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Introduction

Suppose education is the gateway to development and a guarantee of its sustainability. In that case, civil society is the true echo of its added value payoff. The link between education and civil society is through direct developmental entrances represented in the dimensions of knowledge, culture, values, building of citizenship and participation in practice, the relationship of education to the labor market, and the rooting of lifelong learning. There is also the strengthening of links between formal and non-formal education, hence the legitimacy of civil society interventions in education in terms of:

1. trends of the education/learning system (its skills and knowledge, educational/learning content, spending on education).
2. reforming and developing education methods, programs, and curricula consistent with the needs of citizens and the priorities of societal issues in line with current developments.
3. participating in the educational learning process in terms of planning and implementation.

Deriving from these perspectives, and the reality of its development responsibility, is the Arab House for Adult Education and Development's interest in increasing the involvement of Arab civil society and partnerships with the national and governmental coordinating bodies in preparation for the Seventh International Conference on Adult Learning and Education CONFINTEA VII in Morocco 2022.

Intensive cooperation between the Arab House for Adult Education and Development "AHAED" and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and the DVV International towards strengthening the partnership between Arab civil society and government agencies in the regional preparations for CONFINTEA VII

Both the Arab House for Adult Education and Development (AHAED) and DVV-International were invited by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning UIL, and the UNESCO office in Beirut to allow more space for civil society participation as a key partner in adult education policies and trends, and a candidate for more roles in the future, given the multiplicity and diversity of civil society institutions and the importance of making room for the largest number of participants. To this end, the Arab House for Adult Education and Development (AHAED) and the DVV International have been collaborating to hold a series of preparation and establishment activities in the Arab region. These events included the organization of a virtual webinar on 11 August 2020 that brought together national coordinating bodies and civil society bodies concerned with adult learning and education. This symposium was the initiative to launch joint work to support national coordinating bodies in monitoring reports of progress in adult learning and education, and lifelong learning, which will feed into the Fifth Global Report to monitor progress in Adult Learning and Education and lifelong learning (GRALE). A meeting was organized on March 17, 2021. It was attended by representatives from Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Gulf states. The speakers' interventions included shedding light on the current situation and existing challenges in adult learning and education and highlighting priorities and recommendations in this field in preparation for the Seventh International Conference on Adult Education from the perspective of civil society organizations (CONFINTEA VII Civil Society Forum, Marrakech, 2022).

A policy position paper representing Arab civil society

The Arab House for Adult Education and Development led a series of events starting February 2021 that resulted in the development of a position paper in a high-level participatory manner, with the participation of more than 475 Arab organizations. This paper summarizes the trends of adult learning and education in the Arab world, its lived reality, in addition to the main challenges it suffers from, ways to overcome them, and recommendations that civil society and relevant authorities see as priority. This paper expressed a common vision and reality for those interested in education/learning issues in the Arab region, and it indicates that human rights and development approaches are the only guarantee for achieving sustainable development, and this will only be achieved by taking into account life issues, especially promoting the values of peace, rejecting violence, promoting the values of citizenship, paying attention to women's issues, health, and the environment, introducing integrated education and paying attention to technology, especially in emergency situations and crises. Therefore, civil society remains the racehorse for advancing adult education/learning; this is done through real partnership and networking with relevant government agencies, civil society, and the private sector. The Arab House shared this paper with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning,

and it was also published and welcomed by international organizations working in the field of adult learning and education, such as the DVV International and the World Council for Adult Education.

In the summer of 2021, AHAED organized 6 preparatory meetings for CONFINTEA VII in six Arab countries (Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan) and published AHAED's journal special edition on CONFINTEA 7 in Arabic and English. The participants addressed the importance of civil society's role in the CONFINTEA process, especially with the representation of government agencies involved in the international conference and Arab civil society in this meeting. The importance of civil society's involvement in producing the GRALE is justified especially from the perspective of lack of data on ALE in most of countries outside of OECD. Civil society is one of the most important actors in the provision of ALE and it is not possible to understand ALE and accordingly have good quality reports on ALE without data about ALE implemented by CSOs. The Egyptian experience was highlighted, because it was considered a pioneer in implementing a partnership between the government and civil society satisfying the recommendations of national survey for GRALE.

Meeting with the UILL in AHAED October study visit to EAEA

In October 2021, a study visit was organized by the AHAED Arab partnership with DVV International to the European Association for the Education of Adults in Belgium. This was followed by a study visit to the German Adult Education Association (DVV) and DVV International headquarters in Germany. The visiting delegation of representatives of the various networks in the Arab House met with the staff of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UILL) in Hamburg responsible for organizing CONFINTEA Operations.

In this meeting, Mr. Werner Mauch, leader of the CONFINTEA Preparation Team at the Institute, summarized the efforts that have been made and the next steps that will build on all global and regional preparations. The participants at this meeting also reviewed the preparation processes, and discussed possibilities for improvement and development within the ongoing partnership. Discussions centered around ensuring civil society participation in the international conference. In addition, the attendees discussed ways to develop and improve information sharing and the quality of monitoring the country ALE reports by activating coordination and partnership mechanisms at national levels.

Preparation for Marrakech 2022

AHAED played a significant role with ICAE and DVV International North Africa and Middle East offices in organizing the Civil Society Forum (CSF) in Marrakech to

prepare for CONFINTEA VII. These preparations started in earnest in February 2022. AHAED General Secretary and Board members contributed to the CSF held in Marrakech on June 14, 2022. AHAED's representatives were part of the drafting committee of the Civil Society Forum's declaration in Marrakech.

AHAED participated during the official conference from 15-17 June 2022 in Marrakech in two parallel workshops. Interventions delivered by AHAED board members Zahi Azar, Refat Sabbah, and Elsy Wakil expressed the vision of AHAED and CSO ALE providers, from Arab countries, contributing to setting ALE priorities for the forthcoming years.

Conclusion

AHAED realizes that, with its paths and innovations, adult education remains an entry point for preparing citizen's life and quality. Adult education makes learning available to all without discrimination. It is a holistic education for the development of citizen's aspects, one intended to fulfill their personal, economic, social, political, and digital needs. There is no future without good education that offers opportunities for human development and adult education is generally regarded as the real gateway to this.

The human being in adult education is the focus of development, which will only be achieved in a free and democratic educational environment that believes in the humanity of people. Adult education should be regarded as not a favor but a right. Civil society, therefore, can serve as a lever for advancing ALE. This can be achieved only if the intentions in this regard, are genuine and wider spaces and areas are available to bring these intentions to fruition. This would start, from careful planning, passing through epicurus and assiduous implementation and to thorough evaluation and impact measurement. Finally, all this can be done through genuine partnership and networking with the government agencies concerned, civil society, and the private sector.

Adult Learning Education, Arab Regional and National Preparations for CONFINTEA VII

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Abstract

Intensive cooperation between the Arab House for Adult Education and Development "AHAED" and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and the DVV International towards strengthening the partnership between Arab civil society and government agencies in the regional preparations for CONFINTEA VII.

Keywords

Participation, strengthening, civil society, partnerships, the Arab world

Éducation des Adultes, préparations régionales et nationales Arabes our au Moyen Orient pour CONFINTEA VII

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Sommaire

Coopération intensive entre Arab House for Adult Education & Development ou Maison arabe pour l'éducation des adultes et le développement "AHAED" et l'Institut de l'UNESCO pour l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie et DVV International en vue de renforcer le partenariat entre la société civile arabe et les agences gouvernementales dans les préparatifs régionaux de CONFINTEA VII.

Mots-clés

Participation, renforcement, société civile, partenariats, le monde arabe

Educación para el aprendizaje de adultos, preparativos regionales y nacionales árabes para CONFINTEA VII

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Resumen

Cooperación intensiva entre la Casa Árabe para la Educación de Adultos y el Desarrollo "AHAED" y el Instituto de la UNESCO para el Aprendizaje a lo Largo de Toda la Vida y DVV International para fortalecer la asociación entre la sociedad civil árabe y las agencias gubernamentales en los preparativos regionales para CONFINTEA VII.

Palabras clave

participación, fortalecimiento, sociedad civil, partenariados, mundo árabe