



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute
for Lifelong Learning

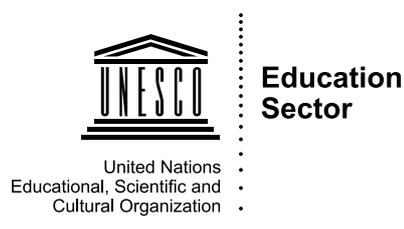


Annual Report 2019

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

UNESCO Education Sector

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation on which to build peace and drive sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education and the Education Sector provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens national education systems and responds to contemporary global challenges through education with a special focus on gender equality and Africa.



The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to *'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'*. The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and the related commitments.



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

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

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The challenges of today demand intellectual leadership in education

On 1 January 2020, I began my term as Chair of the UIL Governing Board. This annual report testifies to the important work done under my predecessor, Ms Malak Zaalouk. The relevant and wide-ranging activities and programmes of UIL are a unique contribution to adult learning and education and to the lifelong learning perspective. I thank her for leaving me and the Governing Board a vibrant organization.



Daniel Baril

Mr Daniel Baril is Chair of the UIL Governing Board and Director-General of the Canadian Institute for Cooperation in Adult Education.

As you will read in this report, UIL's work ranges widely, from sectoral work on literacy (for example, the Global Alliance for Literacy and family literacy programmes) to work taking a cross-sector perspective (such as the lifelong learning handbook). It includes capacity development and technical support to Member States (through, for example, workshops and video tutorials) and monitoring Members States' progress against their commitment on education (for example, through the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*). UIL also undertakes population-specific actions (focused, for example, on women, migrants and refugees, and indigenous people) and initiatives encompassing all adult learners (for example, recognition, validation and accreditation). The Institute works on many fronts.

Through this work, UIL contributes to UNESCO's priorities in education. In its capacity-building, research and policy development activities, UIL puts its expertise at the service of implementing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. Furthermore, UIL plays a major political and operational role in supporting the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and has been deeply involved in preparing UNESCO's new literacy strategy.

I greatly value the many resources that UIL produces and shares with Member States and the wider community of adult education practitioners and researchers. Through databases

(literacy practises; lifelong learning policies; recognition, validation and accreditation country profiles; and case studies), the UIL Library, and research publications, including the *International Review of Education*, UIL exercises intellectual leadership within the adult learning and education world.

Overall, UIL is truly a 'global centre of excellence for lifelong learning', as described in the Institute's Medium-Term Strategy 2014 – 2021.

This many-faceted work of UIL and its intellectual leadership are needed. The challenges that the human family faces are of great magnitude and could have dire consequences if not met. At its first meeting, in January 2020, the UNESCO International Commission on the Futures of Education highlighted some of them: recent geopolitical shifts, accelerated environmental degradation and climate change, the changing patterns of human mobility and the exponential pace of scientific and technological innovation. To this list, we can now add COVID-19, which is certain to have far-reaching social and economic repercussions for years to come.

To navigate this world of 'increasing complexity, uncertainty and fragility', argues the International Commission, we have to 'rethink the purposes of education and the organization of learning'. More fundamentally, suggests the commission, we

have to learn to become, underlining a learning aim that could be viewed as a fifth pillar, alongside learning to learn, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

The challenges of our time call for intellectual leadership in matters of education and learning. In that regard, within UNESCO, UIL's expertise is a valuable resource. Moreover, its commitment to adult education and learning keeps the lifelong learning perspective at the forefront of the policy debate and reminds Member States that adults' education and learning needs should not be forgotten and that answering them is key to solving the issues of our time. That is an essential contribution of UIL.

I thank UIL's Director, David Atchoarena, for his leadership and the Institute's staff for their quality work and commitment to adult learning and education. Through the years, I have been a reader of UIL's publications and an observer of its actions. Now it is a great privilege to have many occasions to meet and exchange with the Director and members of UIL's team. They are an inspiring group of people.

Asked about what she would tell her successor, the outgoing Chair of the Governing Board, Ms Malak Zaalouk, said to keep pushing for UIL's 'important mandate and continue to reach out to the necessary partners to make lifelong learning a reality'. Above all, she invited her successor to 'treasure UIL!' These words will accompany me in my mandate.

'UIL's commitment to adult education and learning keeps the lifelong learning perspective at the forefront of the policy debate and reminds Member States that adults' education and learning needs should not be forgotten and that answering them is key to solving the issues of our time.'

Working together for a better future for all

As I write this introduction, the world is coming to terms with the huge challenge of ensuring continuity of education for the millions of students whose learning has been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Member States are also beginning to consider the massive implications the pandemic will have for our societies and economies, for years and perhaps even decades to come.

It is critical that the international community, UNESCO and UIL included, plays a full part in supporting countries to emerge strongly from this crisis, while also providing the intellectual leadership that will be required in the weeks, months and years ahead.

The crisis highlights the importance of UIL's mission to strengthen the capabilities of UNESCO Member States in the field of lifelong learning. As well as supporting the emergency response, we must reflect on the world that will emerge from the crisis and the role of lifelong learning in supporting social recovery and in shaping a sustainable future.

This report shows how, in 2019, UIL worked to fulfil its mission, with a focus on youth and adults and a special emphasis on UNESCO's priority areas of Africa and gender equality. UIL's vision is for all children, young people and adults to benefit from quality lifelong learning opportunities, within the framework of sustainable development and peace. We promote lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies in the context of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides an ambitious set of goals and targets for Member States that together form a coherent, universal framework of reference for our activities.



David Atchoarena

Mr David Atchoarena is Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

Working to this framework, and recognizing lifelong learning's important transversal role not only with respect to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education but across all 17 SDGs, UIL has made an impact across a range of fronts, including in the areas of policy advice, capacity development, research, monitoring, and networking and advocacy.

A major highlight of the work in 2019 was the publication, in English and French, of the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*, which focused on participation, equity and inclusion. This represented the culmination of two years' work by the UIL GRALE team, and engaged the support of a wide range of stakeholders, from the national focal points who coordinated their country's responses, to the external authors and editors who collaborated with us on the report, and the senior experts who provided detailed reviews of the draft report.

The report's global launch, in Brussels during Lifelong Learning Week in December 2019, was an unprecedented success. There were some 245 separate pieces of news coverage on the launch, with an estimated online readership of 14.2 million. It has been gratifying to see the high level and quality of engagement with the report's findings, particularly at national level. Regional launches will follow throughout 2020, as preparations begin for her *GRALE 5*, which will focus on active and global citizenship education. Its findings will inform the Seventh International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII) in 2022.

A second major piece of work during 2019 was UIL's contribution to the development of a new UNESCO Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy for the period from 2020 to 2025. The strategy, launched at UNESCO's 40th General Conference in November 2019, will be the guiding framework for UNESCO's targeted support to countries and populations facing the biggest literacy challenges in the world. These include, but are not limited to, the 29 member countries of the Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (GAL), coordinated by UIL. GAL includes 20 countries with an adult literacy rate below 50 per cent, and the E9 countries, which represent more than half of the world's population and 70 per cent of the world's illiterate adults.

In October, UIL co-hosted the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities with the Colombian city of Medellín. Some 650 participants from all over the world attended the conference, including 50 mayors, and government officials and experts from all UNESCO world regions. The discussion, focused on the conference theme of inclusion, was rich and constructive, and the event as a whole underlined both the growing importance of the 'learning cities' concept and the key role played by the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities in fostering and sharing good practice in this critical area. The vibrancy of the network has been reflected in the ongoing webinar series on educational responses to COVID-19 organized among its members.

Other highlights of a busy year included the coordination, together with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) of the second phase of the taskforce for the development of measurement and reporting frameworks to monitor progress against SDG 4.6, within the framework of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML). The taskforce presented its work plan to the sixth GAML plenary session in August and a technical note was drafted to establish new global benchmarks for functional literacy and numeracy levels. UIL also continued to provide policy advice and technical support to Member States to assist them in strengthening policies and plans for lifelong learning and in designing, implementing and monitoring literacy and adult education programmes.

Capacity-building is an important part of UIL's work. In 2019, this included the organization of two capacity-building workshops for 12 countries in Africa, within the framework of Action Research: Measuring Literacy Programme Participants' Learning Outcomes (RAMAA), to develop test items and background questionnaires, in collaboration with the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), and its Dakar-based Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEFF). National capacities were also enhanced in Ethiopia and the Gambia through our family literacy project and the organization of capacity-building workshops in seven francophone African countries. UIL provided support to Ethiopia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda to assist them

in developing and implementing adult education strategies to foster community development, aligned with national education and development policies.

Partnership is key for achieving UIL's expected results. Several new partnership agreements were signed in 2019. As part of this effort, in November 2019, UIL and the Shanghai Open University (SOU) signed a three-year technical and financial agreement to implement a joint project on lifelong learning. The activities will cover research, with a focus on universities and lifelong learning, knowledge sharing through the creation of an online resource centre, and capacity building to support countries, notably in Africa, to develop and implement cross-sectoral and gender-responsive lifelong learning policies. The implementation of these activities will be facilitated by a dedicated project office established at SOU.

UIL can be proud of the progress it has made in 2019. Governing Board members, our donors, partners and stakeholders, and our dedicated staff all deserve credit for contributing to what has been a year of resurgence for the Institute, following several years of consolidation and financial constraint. I would particularly like to acknowledge the support of the German Foreign Office, which substantially increased its voluntary contribution in 2019, giving the Institute an important platform on which we have been able to build.

The challenges we face globally, from COVID-19 and the climate crisis to technological change and the entrenchment of deep social and economic inequality around the world, demand a greater focus on lifelong learning and adult education. That is why a strong UIL is so important. Although the potential of lifelong learning in contributing to numerous goals within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is increasingly well understood, we are still some way from fully realizing its cross-cutting potential. UIL must do all it can to raise the profile of lifelong learning, both on the international agenda and at regional and national levels. I am pleased to see the progress we are making in this direction.

I would like to conclude by thanking the outgoing Chair of the UIL Governing Board, Ms Malak Zaalouk, for her outstanding advice and insight during her term of office. She has been an effective and unstinting supporter of UIL and I very much hope that she will continue her engagement with the Institute in the years to come. I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome her successor, Mr Daniel Baril, Director General of the Canadian Institute for Cooperation in Adult Education. Although Daniel is only a few months into his new role, his engagement and energy, as well as the fresh thinking he is bringing to the role, have been a source of support and inspiration. I look forward to working closely with him in writing UIL's next chapter and helping shape the future of lifelong learning in the context of the huge challenges we collectively face.





Our mission

Vision and mandate

Services

Partners



David Atchoarena, UIL Director, and Federico Gutiérrez Zuluaga, the then Mayor of Medellín (Colombia), at the International Conference of Learning Cities 2019. © Medellín

Vision and mandate

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning is the only organization in the UNESCO family with a specific mandate to promote lifelong learning. It aims to strengthen the capacities of UNESCO Member States in the field of lifelong learning, with a focus on youth and adults, paying particular attention to the policies and systems conducive to lifelong learning pathways.

UIL does this through policy support, research, monitoring, capacity-building, networking and advocacy. Its publications constitute an important instrument to disseminate knowledge and inform policies. Contributing to the intellectual debate on lifelong learning, UIL also publishes the *International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning*,

an international forum on policies and trends that provides perspectives on contemporary issues in lifelong learning.

UIL's mandate places its work at the core of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, on education and lifelong learning, and its related targets. However, the Institute also works to promote and realize the important transversal contribution of lifelong learning to all 17 SDGs.

Services

UIL's work is organized into five themes: policy support, capacity development, monitoring, advocacy and networking, research and foresight. These are briefly explained below, and explored in greater depth in the sections that follow.

Policy support

UIL works closely with Member States and other partners, cultivating long-term cooperation with countries and working in tandem with ministries and local and regional stakeholders. We offer advice on lifelong learning, adult education and literacy policy development, and education sector planning from a lifelong learning perspective, working from the ground up to develop tailored support that can make a difference in a given country context.

Capacity development

UIL develops policy and action research, workshops and courses, case studies and other resources in order to build capacity in the fields of lifelong learning, adult learning and education, youth and adult literacy, and non-formal education. We produce training modules and video tutorials, and offer bespoke support in the form of workshops and publications, at national and regional levels, reflecting local need and aligned with the prevailing policy frameworks and priorities.

Monitoring

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

Advocacy and networking

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

Research and foresight

UIL publishes research, global and regional reports, policy papers and foresight studies in the areas of its mandate. We conduct research and development projects with a national, regional and global focus, and produce and disseminate new insights and recommendations. The UIL Library and our database of resources support researchers and policy-makers in developing an informed perspective. UIL produces the *International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning (IRE)*, the oldest journal of comparative education in the world, six times a year.

Partners

UIL works with UNESCO Member States, advocacy groups, researchers, non-governmental organizations and regional and global bodies to promote lifelong learning, support better policy, planning and practice in the field, and build capacities for better and more effective implementation.

Partnership is at the heart of our work and we welcome opportunities to work with new partners in realizing the huge potential contribution of lifelong learning to inclusive, sustainable development and to addressing some of the wicked challenges of our time, including the climate crisis, inequality, technological change and population displacement.

UIL strives to work collaboratively with its partners to identify practical, coherent, cross-sectoral solutions to the problems Member States face. It is important that organizations that advocate positive social change also exemplify it. Lifelong learning is, by its nature, an inter-sectoral, multi-partner undertaking. For this reason, we hope this report will be taken as an invitation to collaboration by our current and prospective partners, as well as an overview of how we have pursued our mission during 2019.

UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy 2014 – 2021: Overarching objectives

Peace – Contributing to lasting peace

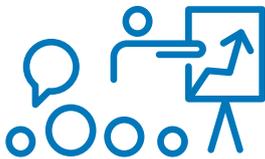


Equitable and sustainable development – Contributing to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty



UNESCO Education Sector strategic objectives

Developing education systems to foster quality lifelong learning opportunities for all



Empowering learners to be creative and responsible citizens



Shaping the future education agenda



UIL's strategic objectives

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

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

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

The expanded goals of SkillsFuture and life in Singapore, with inclusion as a planning principle

SkillsFuture is a national movement to provide Singaporeans opportunities to develop their fullest potential throughout their starting points.¹

Inclusion as a planning principle is embedded in the goals of lifelong learning in SkillsFuture:

Provide **learning opportunities for everyone**

Provide **funding support to equalise participation opportunities**



The fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*

159

countries participated in the *GRALE 4* monitoring survey

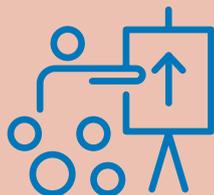


More than 50% of the countries surveyed reported an increase in ALE participation

However, over 37% reported not knowing the ALE participation rates of minority groups

75%

of countries reported improvements in governance



Yet 19% of countries reported spending less than 0.5% of their education budget on ALE

Only 2% of 111 countries reported progress in developing quality criteria for curricula in citizenship education

14.2 million people are estimated to have read about *GRALE 4* online

The launch of the report generated 245 separate pieces of news coverage

More than 140,000 *IRE* articles downloaded, a substantial increase on previous years

200-plus case studies highlighting the best practice in literacy and numeracy on UIL's LitBase database

Over 50 lifelong learning policies and strategies published on the UIL website

38 cities from 23 countries joined the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) in 2019

173

cities from 55 countries are active members of the UNESCO GNLC

248

national stakeholders were trained in family and intergenerational literacy and learning – 458 adults and children benefitted from FILL programmes, 52% of them female

29 countries participated in an online survey mapping literacy policies and strategies, as part of GAL

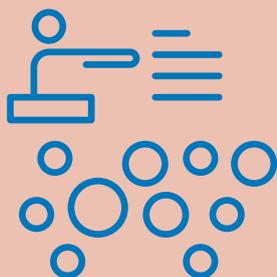
9,500 education stakeholders reached through UIL's newsletters

The fourth International Conference on Learning Cities

In preparation for the conference, 101 cities from 37 countries responded to a call from the UNESCO GNLC to identify members' priority policy areas for cooperation

650

people participated in the conference in Medellín, Colombia



Participants included 50 mayors, as well as government representatives and experts from all UNESCO world regions

10

African cities were represented at the conference

10

learning cities received an award for outstanding lifelong learning policies and practices



2019

in numbers

Policy support

UIL supports Member States in every world region in life-long learning policy development and education sector planning from a lifelong learning perspective. We work closely with ministries and local and regional stakeholders to develop tailored and targeted policy solutions that widen learning opportunities and improve quality.

This can take the form of technical support and advice in strengthening policies and plans for adult learning, literacy and non-formal education, as well as the design, implementation and monitoring of literacy and adult learning and education programmes. We offer support at national and local level, and develop global norms and standards.

In 2019, we provided technical support to a number of Member States, notably Afghanistan, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, the Philippines, the Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, to assist them in strengthening policies and plans for adult learning, literacy and non-formal education, and lifelong learning policies (Philippines), and designing, implementing and monitoring literacy and adult learning and education programmes (Chad).

‘The partnership that we have with organizations such as UNESCO, UIL and other affiliated organizations is a big asset for us because it provides an opportunity for learning from global and regional experience, and receiving updates about the recent developments in the sector that will help us consider how to proceed in future.’

Mohammad Yasin Samim, Senior Technical Advisor for Non-Formal Education, Deputy Ministry of Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Afghanistan

In Ethiopia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, UIL supported the development and implementation of adult learning and education strategies to foster community development, aligned with national education and development policies. In Ethiopia, UIL’s involvement led to the inclusion of a strategic goal on adult and non-formal education from a lifelong learning perspective in the country’s revised Education and Training Roadmap 2030.

UIL’s work in Mali involved the review of a series of major policy documents, culminating in a validation workshop in November 2019.

In Afghanistan, UIL contributed to a draft policy document on adult education and literacy, which is under discussion by the country’s Ministry of Education (see *In focus*).

Our priority in all this work is helping Member States develop cross-sectoral and gender-responsive lifelong learning policies, plans and strategies, according to countries’ specific contexts and needs.

At a global level, UIL led, together with UNESCO Headquarters, the formulation of the UNESCO literacy strategy, elaborating a UNESCO vision for literacy that will strengthen educational opportunities for youth and adults with low literacy skills, and build literate societies. The strategy will guide UNESCO’s targeted support to countries and populations facing the biggest literacy challenges in the world for the next five years. It was presented at UNESCO’s 40th General Conference in November 2019.

In focus: UIL in Afghanistan



Afghanistan is one of the countries in the world where less than half of the population have basic literacy skills (UIS, 2020). According to the latest data, the total literacy rate rose from 32 per cent in 2011 to 43 per cent in 2018 and this increase is also positively reflected in the case of girls and women. However, out of 12 million youth and adults in the country, more than 7 million are girls and women aged 15 and above who do not have basic reading, writing and numeracy skills (UIS, 2020). Rural girls and women are especially overrepresented in the low literacy rate figures.

UIL has been working closely with Afghanistan's Ministry of Education and the UNESCO Office in Kabul to improve the literacy, numeracy and vocational skills of 1.2 million people across the country's 34 provinces, with a special emphasis on women and girls. UIL contributed to the design of learning materials that are gender sensitive and reflective of the realities of Afghan girls and women. In the new textbooks for youth and adults, women and girls are explicitly reflected in the text as well as through visual illustrations. In addition, female textbook writers and illustrators were actively encouraged to contribute to the design of these learning materials.

In 2019, this technical support involved the design of a new competency-based curriculum framework for youth and adult literacy and basic education to replace the country's former basic and post-literacy curriculum. The new curriculum framework expands the concept of literacy as a continuum of learning and recognizes prior learning achievements up to Grade 9 of formal general education. It also attempts to align closely with the new general education curriculum standards and competencies in the country.

In addition, as part of a larger UNESCO team, UIL has also contributed to the development of a major project to improve Afghanistan's education system, called Better Education Systems for Afghanistan's Future (BESAF). BESAF, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency, is a comprehensive programme to support the reform of the country's curriculum for general education, non-formal adult education and higher education, as well as strengthening planning capacity, improving monitoring and evaluation, and expanding the provision of basic general literacy programmes. The project includes the development of a strategy as one of the expected outputs. Such a strategy will further strengthen efforts to mainstream gender in literacy programmes, including in their design and implementation, and in monitoring.

In the context of the BESAF project, UIL continues to provide technical support in policy and planning, curriculum design and development, teacher training, and literacy assessment. In 2019, this work included technical advice on sub-sector analysis and draft competency standards for Level 2 of

the youth and adult basic education curriculum.

To strengthen national capacity, UIL also provides residential fellowships and scholarships to selected officials from Afghanistan's Deputy Ministry of Education for Literacy (DMoEL) and the UNESCO Office in Kabul. During their residencies, officials conduct literature reviews and receive expert advice in the areas of national strategy and action planning, on how to design and conduct a literacy assessment survey, and on teacher training. Women are strongly encouraged to participate in these training opportunities.

Capacity

development

UIL develops policy and action research, workshops and courses, case studies and other resources in order to build capacities in the field of lifelong learning, notably in adult learning and education, youth and adult literacy, and non-formal education.

Our work in this area involves the development of resources, including publications, courses and visual media, the provision of workshops and other training opportunities, and bespoke support for Member States in developing policy, planning or practice in a particular area.

In 2019, UIL supported the development of the capacities of government officials in policy-making and planning through a second international capacity-building workshop on lifelong learning, in Shanghai. The workshop was based on UIL's handbook on lifelong learning, to be launched in 2020.

In addition, the capacities of officials in 12 African countries were extended through two capacity-building workshops organized within the framework of Action Research: Measuring Literacy Programme Participants' Learning Outcomes (RAMAA), in collaboration with the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEFF) of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

UIL also worked across the year with colleagues from the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in revising the UIL-IIEP online course to strengthen youth and adult learning and education in education sector plans, in preparation for the second phase of the course in 2020.

National capacities were also enhanced through technical support provided as part of UIL's family literacy and learning project in Ethiopia and the Gambia (see *In focus*) and the organization of capacity-building workshops in seven francophone African countries in collaboration with Pamoja West Africa, a network for promoting youth and adult literacy in 14 West African countries.

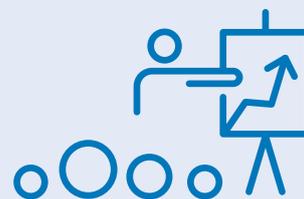
UIL continued to develop national capacities by organizing its Policy Scholarship Programme, providing concrete support to Member States seeking to implement lifelong learning policies that integrate literacy, adult and non-formal education.

The Institute also developed training modules on the basis of video tutorials on learning cities produced in 2018. They will be available in five languages.

'My approach to learning is not at all prescriptive, but rather a process of construction of knowledge based on the experiences and strengths of the participants. I try to create an atmosphere of equality between the participants and myself – we share knowledge, and we build something together. I think such an approach is particularly useful given that participants come from seven different countries, each with their unique social, cultural and political context.'

Yvon Laberge, facilitator of a workshop in Dakar offered within the framework of UIL's Family and Intergenerational Literacy and Learning programme

In focus: Building capacity in family learning



Family literacy and learning has been a major strand of UIL's capacity-development work in Africa and is an important dimension of efforts to address UNESCO's Priority Africa agenda. Funded by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, UIL's Family and Intergenerational Literacy and Learning (FILL) project has provided two sub-Saharan countries – Ethiopia and the Gambia – with direct, customized and systematic technical support to design and implement family and intergenerational literacy and learning programmes in their countries.

UIL's FILL project is based on the premise that the family plays a leading role in the education and learning of its members. UNESCO sees family literacy and learning as having three major objectives: (1) improving the well-being of children and their families; (2) ensuring universal basic education; and (3) advancing literacy and numeracy for all young people and adults – as part of a holistic approach to lifelong learning.

In 2019, UIL scaled up the FILL approach, enhancing existing pilot programmes and fostering links with national and local partners in countries in Africa and South Asia to deliver a series of capacity-building events on family literacy and learning. With regard to the latter exercise, sub-regional and national workshops were organized with literacy stakeholders from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Pakistan. The aim of these workshops was to familiarize key stakeholders with FILL and how such an approach

can successfully address issues relating to access to, and quality and relevance of, learning for children, youth and adults. Partners who participated in the workshops in West Africa and Pakistan have increased efforts to integrate or implement the FILL approach as a result of these sessions.

Meanwhile, the initial pilot projects in the Gambia have been augmented by facilitator training capacity enhancement, learning materials development, and baseline and endline studies. In Ethiopia, proposals have been made to make FILL a policy priority in the country's next education sector plan and further improve the partnership between the Ministry of Education's Directorate of Adult and Non-formal Education and local universities.

The work in the Gambia and Ethiopia in 2019 resulted in almost 500 adults and children benefitting from FILL, 52 per cent of them female. In addition, around 250 national stakeholders were

trained on different aspects of FILL programmes through eight capacity-building workshops. In the Gambia, three facilitator-training modules and two compilations of teaching-training materials were translated into regional languages, including Pulaar, Mandinka and Wolof.

Based on the FILL programme implementation in diverse country contexts, UIL was able to ascertain that productive partnerships, facilitator training programmes, monitoring systems and the availability of learning materials in local languages are essential for a FILL programme to be successful. In the future, the focus will continue to be capacity development, with the FILL approach being piloted in different contexts with different foci, as well as improving the knowledge base in this field.

Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation are critical in building a strong evidence base for lifelong learning and for assessing progress against global goals and targets, as well as regional and national policy interventions. They guide Member States as to the most efficient and effective use of resources and indicate the degree to which existing programmes can be considered successful.

The key global goals and targets for UIL's work include those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education and lifelong learning. UIL is also responsible for monitoring the Belém Framework for Action, adopted at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009, and the 2015 Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education, through its *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*.

'If we do not adapt and enhance adults' skills, they will be left behind ... Adult learning and education, as UNESCO's *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)* very clearly shows, has a crucial role to play in achieving this goal.'

**Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General,
in her foreword to *GRALE 4***

In 2019, UIL published the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)*, with a special focus on participation, equity and inclusion (see *In focus*). The report found that while participation in adult learning and education had increased overall since 2015, progress was uneven, with deep inequalities persisting and vulnerable groups often faring worst. One-third of countries reported that less than five per cent of adults participate in education. The report was launched in Brussels, in cooperation with the European Commission, during Lifelong Learning Week in December and was covered

widely in the press and on social media. Some 14.2 million people are estimated to have consulted *GRALE 4* online. Regional launches will take place in 2020.

Work also began on *GRALE 5*, which will be published in 2022, with a focus on citizenship education. The report will inform debate on the seventh International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII) in Morocco in 2022. UIL also initiated development work for the CONFINTEA preparatory conferences to be held in 2021.

UIL coordinated the second phase of Taskforce 4.6 of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML) with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). GAML is led by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics with an aim to support national strategies for measuring learning. Taskforce 4.6 aims to address SDG Target 4.6, which calls on UN Member States to 'ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy' by 2030. Its specific mandate is to consider ways to monitor data related to SDG indicator 4.6.1, which measures 'the percentage of the population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex'. In July 2019, the Taskforce initiated its second phase of activity. Its work plan was presented to the sixth GAML plenary session in Yerevan (Armenia) in August, and a technical note was drafted to establish new global benchmarks for functional literacy and numeracy levels by mapping out curriculum frameworks for youth and adult literacy programmes in selected countries. The draft note was presented in the 3rd virtual meeting of the GAML Taskforce on SDG indicator 4.6.1 in December 2019. UIL is revising the draft note based on the feedback received from the taskforce members.

In focus: Adult education and the challenge of exclusion



159 countries responded to the GRALE 4 questionnaire

More than 50% of the countries surveyed reported an increase in ALE participation

However, over 37% reported not knowing the participation rates of minority groups

75% of countries reported improvements in governance

19% of countries reported spending less than 0.5% of their education budget on ALE

Only 2% of 111 countries reported progress in developing quality criteria for curricula in citizenship education

Education for all is a global commitment. However, the educational challenges we face are complex and compounded by a number of issues, including demographic and climate change and the rise of inequalities around the world. Enhancing adults' skills, however, is dependent on them having equal access to opportunities to learn, not only literacy learning and learning for work, but also learning for social and civic purposes, personal fulfilment and well-being.

For this reason, the fourth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 4)* focused on participation in adult education. The report highlights the need for countries to do more to expand and widen participation, notably through increased investment and the development of policies that target the poorest and most vulnerable. One of the most troubling findings of

GRALE 4 is that participation of already marginalized groups is advancing at a slower rate than that of other parts of the population. In fact, over 37 per cent of the countries that responded to the *GRALE* questionnaire reported not knowing the ALE participation rates of disadvantaged groups, including adults with disabilities, older adults, refugees and migrants. More troubling still, in some countries, provision for these groups was found to be regressing.

While the picture painted in the report is uneven and in some respects concerning, it is important that it is taken as a call to action, rather than a cause of despondency. Policy-makers, education experts and the wider public are urged to use the report as guidance in moving forward. It is only by prioritizing adult learning and education – particularly for the most vulnerable – that the international community can honour its

commitment to 'leave no one behind' in the pursuit of equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

Advocacy and networking

UIL seeks to promote lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies. We do this through a combination of policy advice and support on the implementation of lifelong learning at national and regional levels, the active promotion of lifelong learning at a global level, and support to civil society and non-governmental organizations in petitioning for positive change in their countries and regions.

We give our partners and other stakeholders an opportunity to contribute to this process, share their own practices and develop a lifelong learning approach to policy and planning, through our conferences, expert meetings and workshops. We contribute to advocacy at global level through multi-stakeholder activities such as the Global Alliance for Literacy within the Framework of Lifelong Learning (GAL), which UIL coordinates.

In 2019, UIL reinforced the work of GAL through the following activities: developing with member countries a GAL strategy (published in 2020); conducting an exercise to assess the funding required to achieve literacy in the 20 countries with literacy rates below 50 per cent and the E-9 countries (the GAL countries) by 2030; and mapping and analysing literacy policies and programmes in GAL countries. This work is crucial in galvanizing action on literacy in those countries and in informing policy.

Another key dimension of UIL's networking and advocacy activity is the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), an international, policy-oriented network through which we promote collaboration and peer learning among members, share expertise and best practice, and stimulate and develop new thinking. The UNESCO GNLC includes 173 active member cities from 55 countries. Last year, 38 cities from 23 countries joined the network.

In 2019, a research agenda was developed within the framework of the UNESCO GNLC focused on issues of common concern to member cities. More than 100 cities from 37 countries responded to a call from the UNESCO

'During the last decades, Colombia has left behind times of pain and built hope. The education system of the country has developed substantially. We are making monumental efforts to change for the good of our country. I am proud that UNESCO is present here in Colombia with mayors and governors. I am proud to show participants a country that does not stop dreaming, that does not stop progressing, that does not stop growing.'

Iván Duque Márquez, President of Colombia, speaking at the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities, in Medellín, Colombia

GNLC to identify members' priority policy areas for cooperation. This allowed the coordination team to identify seven core themes – education for sustainable development; equity and inclusion; education planning, monitoring and evaluation; global citizenship education; entrepreneurship; health and well-being; and literacy – and to create thematic clusters which form the core of UNESCO GNLC's two-year strategy.

In October, UIL organized and co-hosted with the city of Medellín, Colombia, the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities. The conference, which was attended by around 650 participants, focused on inclusion and lifelong learning for vulnerable groups, specifically migrants, youth at risk, digitally excluded populations and people living in deprived neighbourhoods (see *In focus*).

In focus: The fourth International Conference on Learning Cities

Bringing UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) member cities together to share experience and develop new partnerships is the purpose of the biennial International Conference on Learning Cities (ICLC).

The fourth conference took place in October 2019 in the Colombian learning city of Medellín, itself an inspiring example of how a local government can create positive change and promote lifelong learning as part of a broader long-term public policy intended also to combat crime and poverty.

In the mid-1980s, Colombia's second largest city was the epicentre of the global drug war. Residents of Medellín's poorest hillside neighbourhoods were socially excluded from the opportunities and services offered in the city's centre. To connect these deprived neighbourhoods to the heart of the city, in 2004, the city council unveiled the Medellín

Metro, a cable-car system that, today, transports approximately 150 million passengers per year.

Further urban rehabilitation interventions to improve the socio-economic climate and the overall well-being of the city saw Medellín welcomed as a member of the UNESCO GNLC in August 2017. Large financial investments in educational projects, including scholarships, reading initiatives and sports for integration, have played a substantial role in improving the lives of Medellín's citizens and has won the city several awards, such as the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize, which is awarded to cities that display good governance and

innovation in tackling urban challenges, and the 'Most Transformed City of the Year' prize at the Bravo Business Awards.

Federico Gutiérrez, Mayor of Medellín and co-host of the 4th ICLC, told the conference: 'Only with education do we close the social gaps. Only with education do we overcome the vicious circle of violence and poverty. In Medellín, we invest in opportunities endorsed by its citizens. Medellín is a city that is known for rising from its darkest hours. Its people have found in education a possibility of resilience and transformation.'

In addition to the events organized by UIL, the Institute also made contributions on lifelong learning topics at numerous international conferences, including the third Biennale on the Validation of Prior Learning, which UIL co-organized, the European Conference on Educational Research, the ninth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, a UNESCO Symposium on Education for Sustainable Development, and European Vocational Skills Week.

UIL's blog site, Only Connect, continued to offer more policy-oriented thought leadership to the field and to support critical reflection and the effective dissemination of UIL's work. Posts published during 2019 covered topics such as the climate crisis, education for refugees and migrants, indigenous knowledge, lifelong learning and the SDGs, and intergenerational learning and literacy.

Research and foresight

UIL produces and disseminates knowledge in the core areas of its mandate through research and development projects, the development and publication of new insights and recommendations in the form of books, policy papers and forward-looking studies, and the expansion of its knowledge base.

Our work supports researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, partners and stakeholders around the world in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and SDG 4 in particular. We offer thought leadership in the field of lifelong learning, generating research and foresight that support advocacy at national, regional and global levels, and acting as a laboratory of ideas and innovation in adult and continuing education, literacy and non-formal education.

UIL also helps shape global discussion about lifelong learning through the publication of its journal, the *International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning (IRE)*. The latest volume included special issues on adult literacy in Africa, indigenous knowledge and sustainability, and prison education (see *In focus*).

In 2019, UIL commissioned and developed new research and foresight in a number of areas, notably inclusion in cities and global citizenship education.

In preparation for the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities in October 2019, UIL commissioned six background papers concerning how formal, non-formal and informal learning can promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups at city level. The papers provide a detailed insight into inclusive lifelong learning in cities, combining an exploration of relevant concepts with examples of city-based learning policies and programmes across world regions. They address the needs of specific vulnerable groups, including youth at risk, digitally excluded populations, migrants, and persons with disabilities.

The key findings from these papers were integrated into a conference background paper, which was discussed in depth during the conference. The papers will be harmonized and published in an edited form during 2020, in a book that will also include additional content on promising initiatives identified during the conference.

UIL also collaborated with the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) in developing a research project on global citizenship education in adult learning and education. Six thematic papers and five case studies (Finland, Mauritania, South Africa, Republic of South Korea and Uruguay) were commissioned to provide a deeper understanding of the field, while outlining key developments and existing gaps. The findings were synthesized in *Addressing global citizenship education in adult learning and education: Summary report*, published in December 2019.

'IRE is unique in combining high quality, relevance, and a genuinely global reach. I'm always recommending its articles to my colleagues and students.'

John Field, Professor Emeritus, University of Stirling

In focus: International Review of Education



The International Review of Education – Journal of Lifelong Learning (IRE) is the oldest journal of comparative education in the world. Since 1955 it has been edited by UIL. It strives to publish the best new scholarship from around the world, while also influencing the development of policy and practice in the field of lifelong learning through evidence-based research.

Six issues of *IRE* were published during 2019, including special issues on priority topics such as indigenous knowledge and sustainability, literacy in Africa and prison education.

The February issue considered indigenous ideas, practices and visions of education and discussed their relationship and potential contribution to sustainability. It featured seven articles by indigenous scholars from territories which now form part of Kenya, the United States, Mexico, and Peru. These articles, while rooted in the authors' own individual experiences, addressed issues of universal significance for indigenous peoples. The special issue was launched with two of the authors at the Comparative International Education Society conference in San Francisco in April.

The June issue explored the intersection of three distinct but inseparable aspects of learning in rural African societies: adult literacy, local languages and life-long learning. It drew together six articles on current empirical research, literacy programme and policy assess-

ments, and offered analysis of the social assumptions related to the practice of reading and writing in local languages in Africa. While multilingualism is common among Africans in rural communities, local language literacy instruction in this context is a novelty and helps to create new expectations of what literacy might be good for beyond the classroom.

A further special issue, published in October, addressed another area of strategic importance to UNESCO and UIL: prison education. The issue explored education in prison, both as a basic right and as an essential tool in supporting offenders to re-enter the workforce and reintegrate into society. Contributions examined prisons in the United States, Norway, Belgium, the Philippines and Latin America, while also considering the topic more generally from a human rights perspective. They highlighted benefits of prison education such as a reduction in the social and economic costs associated with recidivism, but also indicated how far most countries have to go in order to realize them.

Special issues in 2020 will include a double issue focused on literacy and numeracy, gathering together many of the leading scholars in the field, and an issue on the challenges to education represented by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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learning
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2020 and after

Our priorities

Putting lifelong learning at the heart of our efforts to achieve sustainability

UIL will continue to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all in 2020 and beyond through its policy, research, capacity-building, monitoring and advocacy functions. The activities described in this report reflect the scale of our ambition and our determination to deliver against UIL's mission to strengthen the capabilities of Member States, particularly in Africa, in the field of lifelong learning, and to establish lifelong learning as the leading educational paradigm for inclusive and sustainable learning societies.

The COVID-19 pandemic at the start of 2020 led UNESCO and UIL to produce new resources for cities and countries. With the closure of educational institutions affecting more than 90 per cent of the world's student population, UIL shared through a series of weekly webinars with members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities some of the best examples of ensuring continuity of learning. Video interviews with UNESCO learning cities representatives also allow UIL to highlight education strategies and practices responding to COVID-19.

Beyond the emergency response, UIL launched a series of blog posts reflecting on the world that will emerge from the crisis and the role of lifelong learning in supporting social recovery and in shaping a sustainable future. A special issue of *IRE* on 'Education in the age of COVID-19' will be published by the end of the 2020. A series of papers, guidelines and practical tools to support cities and countries through the crisis are also being produced.

More widely, UIL is continuing to work closely with its key partners to support the improved availability of high-quality lifelong learning, with particular concern for those individuals and communities with the least opportunity to learn.

An important focus of the work will be preparations for the Seventh International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII) in Morocco in 2022. CONFINTEA VII will provide a platform for policy dialogue and advocacy on adult learning and education within and across countries at the global level, with the participation of a large number of UNESCO Member States, United Nations agencies and international development partners, civil society representatives, research institutions and the private sector. It will set the

agenda for adult learning and education for the next decade and beyond. As part of its preparations, UIL will coordinate a series of regional preparatory conferences to take place during 2021, in collaboration with UNESCO regional bureaus.

A second, related, focus will be on preparations of the fifth *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 5)*, which will reflect on progress since the last international conference in 2009 and inform debate at CONFINTEA VII. The monitoring survey will be sent to Member States in 2020. The focus of *GRALE 5* will be on active and global citizenship education, which *GRALE 4* found to be by far the most neglected dimension of adult learning and education, as defined in the 2015 Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education.

In addition to *GRALE* and CONFINTEA, UIL's contribution to global monitoring will also include the development of assessment tools for measuring progress against Sustainable Development Goal 4.6, within the framework of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML).

UIL will continue to support the implementation of UNESCO's literacy strategy and the strategy of the Global Alliance for Literacy (GAL). The new GAL strategy aims to strengthen policies, equity, innovation, data and partnerships around literacy in the 29 GAL member countries, with ambitious targets to be achieved by 2025. UIL will coordinate the implementation of this strategy and will work closely with countries and partners to ensure progress towards universal literacy. An online platform will be developed and ideas and tools for measuring, monitoring and evaluating progress on literacy will be shared.

Work will also continue on the implementation of the UNESCO GNLC strategy for 2019–2021, agreed at the fourth International Conference for Learning Cities. The 170-plus members of the network agreed to focus their joint activities on seven key clusters: education for sustainable development; equity and inclusion; educational planning, monitoring and evaluation; education for global citizenship; entrepreneurship; health and well-being; and literacy. These will form the key strands of the work for the next two years, and have provided the framework for the network's COVID-19 response.

Lifelong learning policy and planning will be further supported by the publication of UIL's handbook on lifelong learning and a joint review of lifelong learning policy, conducted with UNESCO HQ, later in 2020.

Partnership will remain central to our work and UIL will continue to improve collaboration with other UNESCO institutes, while further strengthening support to Member States to offer lifelong learning opportunities to all in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

We will also further consolidate our focus on Africa and on women and girls, while deepening our engagement in issues of urgent policy concern, such as the socio-economic and cultural integration of migrants and refugees and gender inequality, and hot-topic themes such as education for sustainable development and global citizenship education. UIL will continue to support UNESCO's thought leadership function in education, through original research and foresight studies, and through our contribution to the International Commission on the Futures of Education.

UIL believes that lifelong learning has a critical role to play in enabling countries to rise to the challenges they face, from technological development and demographic change to climate change and the long-term social and economic implications of COVID-19. As *GRALE 4* demonstrated, many countries still fall short of the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and vulnerable and disadvantaged groups remain in danger of being 'left behind'. As we approach the mid-point in the 2030 Agenda, and look forward to CONFINTEA VII, it is more important than ever that we put lifelong learning at the heart of our efforts to achieve sustainable development, and that UIL's voice is heard loud and clear.

Distance education in the UNESCO learning city of Shanghai (Republic of China) © Shanghai







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Financial report

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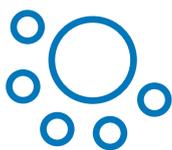
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Financial report

Income

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Income in USD \$		2019	2020	2019 – 2020
UNESCO	Financial allocation	783,400	783,600	1,567,000
Voluntary contributions	Core budget support Governments	1,769,000	2,309,000	4,078,000
	Host country Germany	2,371,000	2,371,000	4,742,000
Other income		216,000	172,000	388,000
Total		5,139,400	5,635,600	10,775,000
Reserves programme funds		3,110,000	3,832,000	6,942,000
UNESCO extra-budgetary programmes *		322,000	475,000	797,000
Grand total funds		8,571,400	9,942,600	18,514,000



82% Voluntary contributions
14% UNESCO
4% Other income

Expenditure

Expenditure in USD \$		2019	2020	2019 – 2020
Governing Board and Standing Committee		36,000	40,000	76,000
Direct programme costs		3,836,000	3,664,000	7,500,000
Institutional development		290,000	339,000	629,000
Host country Germany premises		223,000	223,000	446,000
General administration including ICT		658,000	700,000	1,358,000
Total		5,043,000	4,966,000	10,009,000
Reserves programme funds		3,206,400	4,501,600	7,708,000
UNESCO extra-budgetary programmes *		322,000	475,000	797,000
Grand total funds		8,571,400	9,942,600	18,514,000



75% Direct programme costs
6% Institutional development
14% General administration including ICT
4% Host country Germany premises
1% Governing Board and Standing Committee

* UNESCO funds administered by UIL





United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Education
Sector



Sustainable
Development
Goals