



ICAE NEWS UPDATE - January 2025

Dear ICAE Members, colleagues and friends!

Our ICAE Newsletter includes a variety of updates and events for you:

- **Message from the President: Jose Roberto ‘Robbie’ Guevara: We will do it - together!**

Reports:

- Training of Trainers on the GlobALE Curriculum in Benin & Education Champions Honored in West Africa by Carole Avande Houndjo, ICAE Vice President for Africa
- ASPBAE 9th General Assembly and 60th Anniversary Concludes in a Joyful and Inspiring Celebration in Vietnam, by Helen Dabu, Secretary General ASPBAE
- North American Regional Update, by Peter Waite, ICAE Vice President for North America
- ICAE at the XIII CLADE Assembly: Strengthening Adult Education Advocacy, by Nora González Chacón, ICAE Vice President for Latin America
- ICAE at ICLC6: Empowering Climate Action through Learning Cities
- 2024 Digital Transformation and Lifelong Learning Conference

Calls for Application, Project and Other News:

- **Apply for the ALE Advocacy Training for the Twin Transition, May 5-7 2025 in Brussels**
- JUST4ALL Webinar Series: Advancing a Just Transition Through Adult Learning and Education
- New PIAAC Results Highlight Challenges for Adult Education
- **Call for Stakeholder Engagement in 2025 HLPF Voluntary National Reviews**

We hope you will enjoy the read :)

Your ICAE Team

We will do it - together! **Message from the President: Jose Roberto** **‘Robbie’ Guevara**

We have always believed that we are living in a very dynamic world – where change is the only constant. And we have advocated that adult learning and education plays an important role in helping individuals and communities not just adapt to the change but be part of helping to make change.

I cannot think of a more challenging time for our global adult education movement when we are confronted by what we can characterize as multiple, complex and interconnected crises – protracted conflicts; extreme poverty amidst a growing number of billionaires; rapid development of communication technologies, like AI and social media, and the accompanying spread of mis- and dis-information, the reality of exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming, and the growth of democratically elected authoritarian governments.

However, amidst these global realities, the title of the most recent [OECD Report](#) (more commonly called PIAAC) of the Survey of Adult Skills 2023, asked the question “**Do adults have the skills they need to thrive in this changing world?**” And they came to an alarming conclusion – “*Literacy and numeracy skills among adults have largely declined or stagnated over the past decade in most OECD countries. ... Declines have been even larger and more widespread among low-educated adults.*” ([OECD press release](#), 10 Dec 2024)

This is alarming because the proficiency of adults in literacy, numeracy and adaptive problem solving are *“key information-processing skills that both individuals and societies need to thrive. ... Skills help adults manage and embrace complexity in both private and civic spheres. Skilled adults can better navigate the modern information landscape, thereby contributing to more informed collective decision making and policy choices.”* (from the [Executive Summary](#), 10 Dec 2024)

The ICAE has always had a commitment to Transformative Learning – a commitment that has two dimensions. First, is the more recognizable role of learning for transformation – where we, as civil society organizations, deliver and advocate for learning that transforms the lives of individuals and societies, where learning helps to transform our world. The second, is often less recognizable and more challenging, that as educators and advocates we commit to transform ourselves, our educational practice, and the very organizations that support our work, to develop the capacity of our learners to effectively engage with this dynamically changing world.

2025 welcomes us with these dual challenging realities – a declining adult literacy and numeracy skills that is essential if adults are to effectively understand and navigate the complex and interconnected crises of our dynamic world.

2025 also welcomes us with the recognition that as ICAE we are ready to face these challenges. We have the global policy framework that we all worked together to achieve – the Marrakesh Framework for Action. We have strong strategic partnerships with the likes of the UNESCO, and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), and the Education and Academic Stakeholder Group in the UN. But more importantly we have you – our members, representing regional and national networks of educators and advocates, who are all committed and actively engaged in pursuing transformative lifelong and life wide learning.

We are counting on each one of you – together we shall learn, together we shall advocate and together we shall transform ourselves to face these challenges, and achieve a more just, equitable, healthy, gender-fair and sustainable world – for all.



Training of Trainers on the GlobALE Curriculum in Benin by Carole Avande Houndjo, ICAE Vice President for Africa

From November 18–22, 2024, Pamoja Network, with the support of DVV International, hosted a **Training of Trainers on the GlobALE Curriculum** in Grand-Popo, Benin. The event brought together 17 participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Togo.

The GlobALE Curriculum, an international framework designed by UNESCO, comprises five modules. This training focused on **Module 1**, revisiting key concepts such as learning pillars, major educational theories, and the role of social movements in adult education.

Participants also explored themes including the influence of international organizations, decision-making processes, education policies, funding tools, and challenges in adult education governance and financing.

This collaborative effort strengthened the participants' capacities, fostering cross-regional engagement and advocacy for adult education.



Education Champions Honored in West Africa

In 2024, the **Concours des Champions de l'Éducation** was held to identify and honor exceptional contributions to the education sector in West Africa. Supported financially by the **Swiss Cooperation**, the competition highlighted innovative practices and impactful projects in education.

Following a rigorous selection process, three outstanding organizations from **Benin, Burkina Faso, and Senegal** were awarded for their remarkable achievements. These champions exemplified excellence and innovation in advancing education across the region.

The awards ceremony took place in **December 2024**, celebrating the winners and their contributions to the field of education. This initiative underscored the importance of collaboration and investment in education to inspire progress and innovation.

More information here: <https://media.eduactions.bj/concours-des-champions-de-leducation-education-surclasse-le-burkina-et-le-senegal/>



[Read further updates from Pamoja here in the Monthly newsletter from December](#)

ASPBAE 9th General Assembly and 60th Anniversary Concludes in a Joyful and Inspiring Celebration in Vietnam by Helen Dabu, Secretary General ASPBAE

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) 9th General Assembly Regional Strategic Planning Workshop and 60th Anniversary celebration culminated on November 25-28 in Da Nang, Vietnam, bringing together more than a hundred representatives of ASPBAE members and partners from around 30 countries.

Hosted by ASPBAE's member, the Vietnam Association for Education for All

(VAEFA), the consultative discussions and capacity building sessions embedded in this milestone event were guided by the theme “60 Years of Learning and Acting Together: For a Peaceful, Inclusive, Gender-Just, and Climate-Ready Future for All.”

The ASPBAE Secretary-General, Helen Dabu, framed the opening ceremony taking inspiration from a local Vietnamese proverb which states “When eating fruit, remember who planted the tree”. For the Vietnamese context and culture, it is a constant reminder for them to be grateful to everyone who contributes to their lives. In the same vein, ASPBAE’s journey of 60 years produced transformative good fruits, and this is a moment to celebrate and appreciate those who planted the ASPBAE tree and the collective journey of members, Executive Council, staff and partners who continue to nurture ASPBAE.

Further, the ASPBAE President and ICAE Vice-President for Asia Pacific, Nani Zulminarni, warmly welcomed the ASPBAE members and partners, emphasizing the importance of building capacities to advocate for the education rights of marginalized groups and sustaining a strong voice to advance the learning needs and interests of all, especially marginalized children, youth and adults in the region.

With ASPBAE being a founding member of ICAE, and one of the most enduring civil society regional networks advancing transformative adult learning and education (ALE), this event also included a dedicated plenary session on “Reinforcing a Rights-Based Approach to ALE within a Lifelong Learning (LLL) Framework,” with a framing input on ‘Transforming Adult Learning and Education Through System Building Approach (ALESBA)’ provided by Uwe Gartenschlaeger, the Director of DVV International and ICAE Executive Committee Member.

The last day of the programme featured a session entitled "Sustaining our Movements for Education at National, Regional, and Global Levels: A commemorative reflection inspired by ASPBAE leaders who have passed on since the 50th Anniversary." Among others, this included an input from ASPBAE’s Consulting Director for Policy and Strategic Directions, and former Secretary-General from 1995 to 2020, Maria Khan, recalling those who have contributed to what ASPBAE has become, an organisation able to dare strive for a future where it remains relevant, credible and powerful. Closing and

synthesising insights for this movement-building session were also provided by Dr. Jose Roberto Guevara, the President of ICAE, who joined the discussion via Zoom platform.

As part of the Assembly, the new Executive Council (EC) for the term 2025-2028 was inducted. The incoming ASPBAE President, Peter Clinton from the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa, New Zealand, was introduced and recognized for his leadership.

Incoming ASPBAE EC (2025-2028):

- ASPBAE President: Mr. Peter Clinton (Adult and Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa, NZ)
- South Asia: Ms. Archana Dwivedi (Nirantar Trust, India)
- South Asia: Mr. Shantha Kulathunge (Coalition for Educational Development, Sri Lanka)
- East Asia: Ms. Tungalag Dondogdulam ("All for Education" National Civil Society Coalition of Mongolia)
- East Asia: Mr. Takafumi Miyake (Japan NGO Network for Education (JNNE), Japan)
- Southeast Asia: Ms. Hawng Tsai (Thinking Classroom Foundation, Myanmar)
- Southeast Asia: Mr. José de Jesus (Civil Society Education Partnership, Timor Leste)
- South Pacific: Ms. Shirley Abraham (Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organization (VANGO), Vanuatu)
- South Pacific: Mr. Jack Kalisto (Coalition for Education Solomon Islands (COESI), Solomon Islands)
- Central Asia: Ms. Rahbar Majidova ("Gurdofarid" Public Organization, Tajikistan)
- Central Asia: Mr. Tilebaldy Uulu Eliizar (Institute for Youth Development, Kyrgyzstan)



North American Regional Update by Peter Waite, ICAE Vice President for North America

The latest activities in the North American region are surrounding some initial planning on developing a series of meetings around the upcoming GRALE report as well as continued work on drawing attention to the Marrakesh Framework.

New leadership in both the United States and in Canada are also important

issues we are following and assessing the impact on adult education in both countries. We will look forward to reporting on these and other activities as they unfold.

ICAE at the XIII CLADE Assembly: Strengthening Adult Education Advocacy by Nora González Chacón, ICAE Vice President for Latin America

On November 28, 2024, Nora González Chacón, Vice President for Latin America of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), presented a comprehensive report at the XIII CLADE Assembly. The report highlighted global challenges and opportunities in adult learning and education, emphasizing the need for innovative strategies and strengthened partnerships.

Key discussions included ICAE's 2024–2027 strategic objectives, which focus on advancing advocacy, capacity building, and equitable lifelong learning opportunities. Nora González Chacón reinforced ICAE's commitment to empowering marginalized communities and promoting the human right to education while advocating for improved financing mechanisms and policy reforms.



Campaña
Latinoamericana
**por el Derecho
a la Educación**

ICAE at ICLC6: Empowering Climate Action through Learning Cities

At the **6th International Conference on Learning Cities (ICLC6)** in Jubail, Saudi Arabia, **Katarina Popović**, Secretary General of ICAL, delivered a powerful address during the plenary session. She highlighted the **crucial role of civil society organizations (CSOs)** in forging effective climate action partnerships within learning cities.

A key focus of her speech was on the transformative impact of **women-led CSOs**, demonstrating how their initiatives drive inclusive and sustainable solutions in local communities. Her address underscored the importance of collaborative efforts that place **education, equity, and empowerment** at the heart of global climate strategies.

[Read more about the event here](#)



2024 Digital Transformation and Lifelong Learning Conference

The “2024 Digital Transformation and Lifelong Learning” International

Conference took place on **October 24–25, 2024**, at Shanghai Open University, China. Delegations from **12 countries** explored how digital transformation can enhance lifelong learning.

Highlights included:

- **Workshops:** *“Empowering Cities for Lifelong Learning”* and strengthening digital competencies for adult educators.
- **Launch of the Open Learning Metaverse** and the **Global Network for Digitalization in Lifelong Learning**.
- Discussions on AI, innovation, and equity in lifelong education.

The event showcased global best practices, driving collaboration and innovation in education for a sustainable future.

[Read more on the ICAE website.](#)



Apply for the ALE Advocacy Training for the

Twin Transition May 5-7 2025 in Brussels

Are you working in an Adult Learning Centre on the topics of sustainability and the digital transition? Join us for a 3-day funded training in Brussels, May 5-7, 2025, on advocacy for twin transition.

[Read the full opportunity and register by 28 Feb 2025 HERE.](#)

How can adult learning support the twin process of green and digital transition? During a three-day training based on principles of co-design, participants will look at the possible roles of adult learning in the process of twin transition in their contexts, and will explore arguments and tools for advocacy.

What will you do in the training and why join?

- Meet and get to know other key adult education institution experts working on the green and digital transition.
- Understand the twin transition as social phenomena and its link to adult education.
- Have an overview of the EU setting for advocacy for ALE providers in Europe and understand how they can be involved.
- Simulate dealing with challenges that professionals may face advocating in the field.

How do I fund my participation? If you meet the selection criteria you can access a certain travel and lodging fund. [Full information in the call page.](#) If you have already taken part in the first ALE4TT training course: you are welcome to join the second course. However, some of the content may overlap with the first course.

You're invited to

ALE Advocacy for the Twin Transition Training



5 - 7 May 2025

Brussels, Belgium

Funding available for all participants

3-day training for Adult Learning and Education Professionals.
More details in the description.
Deadline to apply: February 28 2025, 17:00 CET

   

JUST4ALL Webinar Series: Advancing a Just Transition Through Adult Learning and Education

JUST4ALL webinar series is an inspiring initiative aimed at showcasing how adult learning and education (ALE) can be a catalyst for achieving a just and inclusive transition to sustainability. This series brings together global experts, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss practical strategies and initiatives that empower communities to navigate and benefit from the shift toward greener, more equitable economies. From climate resilience to social justice, each session dives into the role ALE plays in shaping a sustainable future for all.

[More on this YouTube channel](#)

Join us on this journey towards an inclusive, fair, and sustainable future by participating in the Just4All webinar series. [Register Now](#) and contribute to building a Just Transition for all and with all! More information [here](#).



New PIAAC Results Highlight Challenges for Adult Education

The latest findings from the [Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies \(PIAAC\)](#) reveal troubling trends, including declining literacy levels and widening inequalities in many countries. These results highlight significant disparities in access to education and opportunities for skill development among adults, with vulnerable populations disproportionately affected.

For ICAE, the results underscore the critical role of adult learning and education (ALE) in addressing these challenges. By promoting lifelong learning as a human right, ALE can help bridge skill gaps, reduce inequalities, and foster social inclusion. The data also emphasizes the importance of resilient education systems that can adapt to the needs of diverse learners in a rapidly changing world.

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) and the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) have expressed deep concern over these findings, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive lifelong learning strategies. They advocate for stronger governance, increased investment, and innovative approaches to adult education to promote equality, social inclusion, and competitiveness. Find more [information and their analysis on the EAEA website HERE](#).

PIAAC's findings serve as a powerful reminder of the ongoing need to

strengthen adult education systems globally to support individuals and societies in achieving their full potential.



Call for Stakeholder Engagement in HLPF 2025 Voluntary National Reviews

The Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS) invite independent stakeholders to actively participate in the 2025 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). With 39 countries scheduled to present their VNRs, your involvement is crucial in shaping these presentations and contributing valuable insights.

How to Get Involved:

1. **Participate in Stakeholder Engagement Webinars:** Join upcoming sessions hosted with UN DESA to learn about the VNR process and effective engagement strategies.
2. **Contribute to VNR MGoS Statements:** Collaborate in drafting country-specific statements to be presented during the HLPF 2025 VNR sessions, ensuring civil society perspectives are included.
3. **Spread the Word:** Share this invitation with relevant networks and stakeholders to broaden participation.

For more details and to express your interest, [please visit the MGoS website.](#)

Your participation will help amplify civil society voices and foster a more inclusive dialogue at HLPF 2025.



Please do not hesitate to contact us at anytime in case you do have any further questions.

Your ICAE Team



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