Adult Education in Israel: An Overview
Reflections on the State of Affairs of Adult Education: The Glocalization Paradox

Eitan Israeli

The article presents the glocalization paradox in adult education – despite widespread consensus regarding the need to connect the global and the local, this is not the case nor is it possible. The paper offers several explanations. Frustration is growing on both ‘sides’ owing to the inability to do so, alongside a sense of discouragement as to achieving global goals in the local context. Chapters of the article: defining the problem in a new light; the nature of the paradox; international conferences; worthy world and a worthy life; who “will educate” and how - the training paradox in Israel.

Defining the Problems in a New Light

For over a decade the world including Israel have slowly come to realize that global adult education is gathering momentum, mobilizing in new organizational structures, realizing post-modern theories related to

Dr. Eitan Israeli holds a Master’s degree in Education from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Master’s degree and a PhD in adult education from Columbia University, New York. Dr. Israeli has been a senior lecturer for almost 30 years in the School of Nutritional Sciences at the Hebrew University, on topics such as eating behaviors, nutrition education and nutritional training and communication. He was among the founders of the new Israel Adult Education Association in 1964, and chairperson of the association during the years 2006-2010. He was on the board of the European Association for the Education of Adults in 2009-2011. His work on adult education has been published in Gadish and in international journals. eitan.israeli1@mail.huji.ac.il
market economy and electronic media, redefining weak populations and poverty in general, highlighting women’s role in power struggles, distinguishing between livelihood and leisure activities and finally, producing behavior studies that are not grounded in previously accepted scientific frameworks.

This process of globalization in adult education, a term that replaces ‘universalization’ and to a lesser degree ‘internationalization’, reflects two central phenomena: first, the creation of a worldwide system, formal and informal, of civil society organizations involved in adult education. These organizations do not relinquish cooperation with state establishments, but rather circumvent it since they are confident that the establishment cannot solve the problems as they have been redefined. When it comes to adult education, civil society is both more flexible and more open to new perspectives and solutions to the problems it identifies.

Second, and in a way paradoxical, States hardly respond locally to the needs of adult education for which they are responsible, yet listen to calls coming from global adult education when worldwide issues are on the agenda and possess the allure of a trend and of pressing global needs.

What are the problems identified in the local adult education arena? (a) meager funds; (b) gender inequality; (c) the intensive degree and wider scope of illiteracy; (d) inadequate and insufficient preparation of individuals to enter and stay in the workforce; (e) partially treating the needs of third agers (60’s and 70’s) and fourth agers (80’s and 90’s); (f) the high cost of leisure activities; (g) uncertainty regarding the benefit or ‘profitability’ of adult learning.

Each problem itself, and the cluster of problems taken together, are at the heart of the action or inaction of the local arenas. These arenas are first and foremost the State and its institutions, in other words government ministries and the power behind them – their work
plans and the budgets. In countries with which the author is familiar the State is unable to adequately budget adult education, even if on paper the plans seem satisfactory. Not only is the budget paltry, but personnel engaged in adult education programs are not professionally comparable to the professionalization required from formal education workers. Furthermore, the goals of adult education programs proposed by government ministries are worded similarly year after year, without detailed assessment of their implementation. Professed adult education policies, verbal and written, reflect wishes and good intentions but do not include a requirement to monitor progress or success. The conclusion that can be drawn is that adult education, broadly defined to include lifelong learning and every individual’s right to learn, does not figure prominently on the list of national priorities and is either disregarded or discarded.

The other local arena is that of local government. In countries with which the author is familiar local government, in its various forms, is attentive to the needs of its citizens and offers annually a broad and varied system of adult education. Yet in this case as well, budget is lacking and the professional level of personnel is inadequate. Unlike the situation with respect to central government, local government goals are focused on identified population groups and results are measured, however activities are directly influenced by local politics and budget considerations.

Civil society is another local arena. It is diversified in its organizations, goals, budgets and human resources. Three qualities characterize civil society organizations involved in adult education: enthusiasm and perseverance; longevity and inventiveness. These organizations work with programs operated by local government organizations or supplement the offering and organization of adult learning opportunities in terms of added places and time.
The fourth local arena, the *business and private sectors*, engage in adult education activities that are for the most part discrete and particular. They sometimes join companies and cultural agencies in sponsoring trendy cultural projects where their contribution creates for them favorable public opinion which in turn helps their business. This sector engages in large visible projects, such as conferences, symposia, seminars and learning tours, usually targeted toward the narrow upper middle or upper socio-economic-professional stratum.

In summary: *the local arenas, of varying size and budget, are unsuccessful in dealing with the problems of adult education described above:*

1. **Budgets** are insufficient and in effect meager;
2. There is **gender** asymmetry: women, compared to men, are not the focus of available opportunities to learn advanced competencies suited to their abilities;
3. The **degree and scope of ignorance (or illiteracy)** is not fully addressed in any of the countries familiar to the author, in other words action taken to reduce illiteracy is **never adequate**;
4. **Occupational training** is growing, however the training personnel does not come from the field of adult education but rather from other disciplines in which adult learning and education is not part of their DNA;
5. **Third and fourth age** individuals can enjoy specific learning opportunities – only if they have the necessary financial resources;
6. **Leisure time activities** are developing among the educated with the available financial resources; disadvantaged populations cannot share in the myriad glamorous possibilities;
7. The **benefit and profit gained from adult learning** remains the key problem in marketing adult education to local government entities and organizations.
The Nature of the Glocalization Paradox

What is the glocalization paradox? The saying ‘Think globally and act locally’ or ‘think worldly and act locally’ cannot be realized. Global action, as described in the following, is not directly transferred to the local arena. The dictionary definition of ‘paradox’ is – an opinion that completely contradicts what is accepted and agreed, an uncommon statement that contradicts (only seemingly) common sense. paradoxicality is a state in which there are paradoxes, a state of internal contradictions’. ¹

What paradox are we referring to? The two components, global and local, are not inherently contradictory. The contradiction is found in the inability to implement the connection between the global and the local, between ideas and recommended action. Globalization proponents created the favorable image attributed to the global-local connection in their recommendation to couple rapid changes in the global sphere to the familiar and the real in the local context. In retrospect, the global is expressed in dictums, assertions, demands and action plans that look good on paper but cannot be implemented locally. This paradox results in two undesired outcomes: first – continued frustration of the local and its arenas regarding its inability to implement and fulfill global declarations; the second - a sense of guilt that drives the local to marginalize adult education even more. We maintain that the diminishing status of adult education in a country can be explained by these two effects of globalization. The gap between the desired and the possible widens and discourages the local stakeholders and operators.

Worldwide Conferences: CONFINTEA VI in Belem Brazil, VIII World Assembly of the ICAE in Malmo Sweden and RIO+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil

The world holds and will continue to hold international conferences: supra-national, regional and global. The conferences in Belem Brazil and in Malmo Sweden took place in 2009 and in 2011 respectively, and the third, Rio+20, was held in 2012. The first two focused specifically on adult education while the third on sustainable development with a major group dealing in adult education. The following points are common to all three conferences:

A. They are based on a long-term master plan, The Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) meets every 12 years, The ICAE World Assembly is held every 4-5 years and Rio+20 every 20 years;

B. They are conducted and organized by a combination of establishment entities and international-global civil society entities;

C. Papers are submitted prior, during and after the conference, all worded in similar ‘global’ language that takes the readers' time to absorb and is difficult to implement in practice at the local level;

D. Conference summaries offer countries action plans and their implementation is tracked.

It should be mentioned that, in addition to these conferences, UNESCO has annual and 10-year programs which focus on advancing the level of literacy and education in the world, with an emphasis on young women. They include periodic follow-up conducted by a special entity, yet in the long run the numerical results are not in line with their good intentions. In retrospect, if one has participated in one international conference it is as he/she have participated in all of them. These
conferences do however draw huge interest since they serve as a meeting ground for the best world ‘players’, and the social-professional ties forged at these gatherings are invaluable for international engagement and even for local action.

Segments of declarations issued by these international conferences are presented in the following. They are not full citations and were selected so that each segment is representative of our attempt at trying to portray the literal and actual gaps currently existing between the global and the local in the field of adult education.

Segment 1: First Follow-Up Report of the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education CONFINTEA VI (November 11, 2011) following the conference in Belem-Brazil (2009)

‘The following is important information received from UNESCO and from follow-up of CONFINTEA VI. It is vital for civil society organizations to be involved in this process. We request that you disseminate the information at the national level and hope that in doing so we will move forward in advocating the right of young people and adults to education and we will be able to act to support these processes through specific action, such as:

- Continue to disseminate information about CONFINTEA VI and about the progress made in every country.
- Share experiences and successful action, particularly initiatives that can be replicated in other countries.
- Engage the local UNESCO committee in every country as well as government ministries more immediately involved in youth and adult education.
- Learn how to prepare national reports and how to take part in civil
society activities in this process. It is important that civil society contribute to the formulation of national reports.

- Track governments preparing national reports to be submitted on dates specified by UNESCO - February 2012.
- Create discussion arenas to reassert the importance of a national youth and adult education agenda.’

**Explanation**

CONFINTEA VI, the International Conference on Adult Education held in 2009, was planned and conducted by UNESCO and international organizations involved in adult education in civil society – the ultimate combining of forces. The Conference published a binding international work plan for all countries and invited civil society to collaborate. The international work plan included preparation of national progress reports on issues discussed and decided. The topics were those with which we are familiar, the likes of which will be specified in the next segment.

In the first progress report, about two years after the conference in Belem - Brazil, the recipients are requested once again to contact, track, disseminate, discuss and be vigilant. The source of authority for this request is the CONFINTEA VI conference and the language is that of action and urgency. We should remember that the previous five CONFINTEA VI conferences were conducted in a similar manner, combining global forces in adult education and requiring preparation of national work plans and follow-up of their implementation. What if any of this was implemented in the countries with which we are familiar? Very little. The voice of the establishment was not heard. Civil society organizations continued what was already in place without any substantial changes to their work plans.

Objectives of the Conference of the International Council for Adult Education:

- To provide a collective arena to strongly uphold the right to lifelong learning and education for all; To assert the value of adult education and learning in enabling citizens to build a world worth living in.
- To identify the priorities of education and lifelong learning and to develop action frameworks at the global, regional and local level.

Conference participants

The 690 participants in the adult education field included: experts, activists, learning associations, researchers, practitioners and policy makers as well as learners from 80 countries that came from the following regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific Ocean, Latin America and the Caribbean’s, Europe, North America and the Arab region. There was robust participation from folk high schools in Scandinavian countries. Among the participants, 56% were women.

The program

Global Consultation of the Gender and Education Office (GEO) of the ICAE was held on June 14th. Female and male feminist activists gathered to discuss the multi-faceted crisis: the rise of new paradigms and the role of adult education in building a world worth living in. The Consultation outlined the global context and its gender ramifications. The four key thematic areas of the conference were also discussed from a feminist perspective.
On the opening evening of the conference a reception was held by graduates of the international course of the ICAE Academy of Lifelong Learning Advocacy (IALLA) which is discussed later in the article. The four thematic areas addressed at the conference were:
1. Adult education as a right and a profession - follow-up of international agreements: MDG (UNESCO’S Millennium Development Goals), EFA (UNESCO’S ‘Education for All’) and CONFINTEA
2. Lifelong learning for sustainability in view of climate change
3. No right to decent work without the right to learn
4. Nordic tradition of Folkbildning to help meet current global challenges

Comments

1. The Conference was a very impressive gathering. The strength and exuberance of adult educators from around the world was evident. The International Council more than doubled the number of participants compared to the previous conference held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2007. Those of us who participated in most of these conferences in the past found nearly all participants hailed from South America and Africa. Clear voices also emerged from Asia; women positioned themselves in the center; the small number of participants from North America was conspicuous. This is the ‘noise blueprint’ at the beginning of the third millennium.

2. The main goals of the conference were well-known: every person’s right to learn, the priorities of lifelong learning, freeing citizens from the shackles of illiteracy, combined action at three levels: global, regional and local. Similar goals were declared at previous conferences.

3. Feminists participated in preparing the program and on the opening evening a reception was held by graduates of the ICAE Academy of Lifelong Learning Advocacy (IALLA) international course. These
were new figures, mostly young women, articulate and colorfully dressed. This is the power of the ICAE, even if middle-aged individuals were elected to its senior positions.

4. The four thematic areas were new in terms of their formulation and potency:
   a. Follow-up of global programs should describe what is actually taking place. This reflects a resolute demand that follow-up reports provide information about what was achieved and what was not addressed or implemented;
   b. Involvement on climate is the first step towards the demand to recognize adult education as a significant force in promoting distinctly global socio-economic goals such as overseeing climate change. Here the conference is in effect ‘banging its fist on the table’ demanding global partnership on this issue;
   c. The specific wording used to articulate the idea that the right to work is linked to the right to learn is demanding and unqualified in its formulation and was not been voiced in conferences over the past decade;
   d. The Scandinavian legacy in the field of popular education, liberal education for adults, in the best tradition of Bishop Grundtvig, was exposed and presented in its alternation between theory and practice.

5. Let us return to our main argument regarding the paradox – what can be implemented locally from among the points put forth above? In places with which we are familiar, few adult educators attend international conferences while more come to local gatherings. Two of the four thematic areas are relevant for the State of Israel – the relationship of work to learning and the Scandinavian heritage. The two main global goals have been heard repeatedly for many years in local arenas in Israel. Though, the burning issues in these arenas
revert back to the individual and to populations of individuals who are in need of learning opportunities and do not have the sufficient resources. Upon their return from the exciting conference in Sweden, the participating Israeli adult educators once again face the unique environmental contexts in which they operate yet and they are not equipped with a new toolbox to “overturn” reality.

**Segment 3: Newsflash report: ‘It’s Always a Good Time to Learn - Final conference on Implementing the European Union Action Plan on Adult Learning (7-9 March 2011, Budapest).**

Educators, 350 in number from over 35 countries convened in Budapest, including international and global partners, members of the social and the private sectors, social partners and public agency representatives.

The conference marked three years of intensive European cooperation in the field of adult learning policy in the aim of reviewing implementation of the Adult Learning Action Plan. The goal was to identify the main challenges faced by adult learning in 2020 and to provide feedback by key stakeholders on future needs and action.

Participants unanimously acknowledged the success of the Action Plan in promoting the adult learning agenda in various ways and in different countries despite different perceptions of adult education. They noted the value of a common platform and milestones for its implementation as an instrument for debate with national establishment leadership. The Conference working groups reported on three years of intensive cooperation between EU Members States. A culture of mutual learning for better policy making and practice was consolidated and continues.
Conference participants were in agreement regarding the significant contribution of adult learning to addressing society’s major challenges: improving the level of knowledge, skills and competencies across the population as a vital factor in responding to the economic crisis, coming to terms with demographic change including an ageing society and increased immigration.

Challenges facing adult education were delineated and practical proposals to overcome them were presented:

Help low skilled and low educated individuals acquire key competencies for life and work, starting with basic skills - adequate literacy, numeracy and digital skills;

- A sophisticated counseling service to ensure that adults make the right choices, find the right offers and plan their life for the long-term;
- Tailor-made responses to the needs of individual learners supported by a range of pedagogies combined with ICT and supported by highly competent teachers to guide them in the knowledge society;
- Establish learning centers, learning communities and learning regions with a strong link to social networks that will offer adult learners a more prominent place in the community; robust partnerships with relevant local actors supported by the public sector;
- Massive contribution of higher education institutions which have the dual role of opening their doors to adult students and researching the learning sector;
- Develop a knowledge base of the adult learning sector; Develop a professional track for adult educators to ensure and maintain high quality teaching;
• Create a vibrant new sector of ‘lifelong learning’ for active, autonomous, and healthy third age individuals, that will cultivate inter-generational learning and solidarity and utilize the social and cultural capital of the elderly as well as their human capital. Regarding the future - 2020, it was unanimously agreed that the work which was launched with the 2007 Action plan should continue in order to ensure the value and benefit of adult learning for society.

Reflections

This segment differed from the previous segments presented. It reflected greater ‘localism’; expressed the satisfaction of European conference participants who represented all sectors; there was a written and organized action plan that served as a platform for action and follow-up. Yet, as we see it, the summaries and recommendations were familiar, with almost nothing in light of what has been learned or achieved over the recent years. The solidarity among the participants was evident in the wording. How pleasant and comfortable it was for those people who gathered in ornamented Budapest towards the end of winter. They wanted to continue to do what they have been doing, with several modifications, until 2020.

In our opinion, this was the case because the glocal paradox did not operate here. There was an European policy that was formulated collaboratively; there have been enormous differences between countries but adult educators had a strong sense of professional solidarity. They acted and were willing to continue to do so without feeling helplessness or banging their fist on the table. Those were most likely few of the necessary conditions for successful and satisfactory action in adult education.

Rio + 20 was a global event that addressed the environment and preservation. It took place in June 2012, twenty years after the previous 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, and hence its name. The International Council of Adult Education (ICAE) decided on its involvement in preparations for the conference from the perspective of adult learning, and invited its members from different areas of the world to express their opinion. It was a virtual seminar in which adult educators discussed vital questions of world order – positioning themselves directly and assertively in the global arena.

‘We are part of the thematic social forum held on 24-29 January 2012 in Porto Alegre on ‘Capitalist Crisis, Social and Environmental Justice’, in preparation for the Rio+20 Summit. The objectives of the virtual seminar that preceded the forum were:

A. To present an analysis and to point to the linkage of youth and adult education to the main themes of Rio+20;
B. To rethink the learning needs for a world worth living in, in a context where paradigms are shifting;
C. To broaden the opportunity for alliance-building between networks and movements involved in the right to education and other movements and civil society organizations for complementarity and collective actions aimed at social transformation;
D. To provide an inclusive virtual space for the Group on Education in preparation for the Rio+20 Summit and for those who will not be able to attend the Summit.’
A Flashing Thought

This foray of the ICAE into the main global debate was not its first. We bring this example in order to show the distant global arena to which we, adult educators, often travel as we perhaps distance ourselves from the urgent need to contend with ‘our own’ vital and unique problems.

A Worthy World and a Worthy Life

The highlight of the VIII World Assembly of the ICAE in Sweden was the summary declaration. It reflected the name of the conference: ‘a world worth living in’. The declaration was not the ICAE action plan for the coming years, since a strategic plan was also formulated and approved.

It was important to the organizers that the declaration presented at the last session of the conference be approved unanimously (new senior position holders were also elected in this session). This was a declaration about the relationship between the world, an individual’s life and adult education. Such a formulation was in the unique realm of ‘spirituality’, in which the individual and the world and what lies beyond them were frequently discussed.

Section 5: ICAE 8th World Assembly Declaration: A World Worth Living In (June 17, 2011)

‘A world worth living in is one where all women and men can live in dignity, where they can exercise citizenship, and their right to create, to learn and to think and act critically. It is a world where everyone can express and voice their opinion in a context that understands and celebrates plurality and the peaceful resolution of conflict as the cornerstones of democracy. A world where all can learn from our differences, strengthen
solidarity and community building, and where everyone can participate on equal terms in public life.

A world worth living in is one where the world economy is at the service of the wellbeing of women and men, where all can participate freely and with dignity, develop their full potential and enjoy the benefits of this shared achievement.

A world worth living in is aware of the need to radically change the ways we produce and consume, a planet where nature is not taken as a capital to be exploited for furthering economic growth, where citizens become more vigilant and proactive at both global and local level, and where clean and safe energy is secured for all.

So, a world worth living in includes a holistic view that recognizes the interdependence of environmental, social, cultural and economic perspectives, and poses challenges that demand collective sharing of responsibility - at the local, regional, national and global level.

A world worth living in is a world where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights must apply to all men and women living in one country or migrating around our planet. It is a world where equality and social justice prevail, overcoming all forms of discrimination, and where patriarchy is overcome. It is a world where, in achieving real equality, recognition and redistribution go hand in hand. A world worth living in is a multicultural world whose splendor and richness reside in the celebration of its diversity, and one which recognizes the linguistic rights of peoples.

A world worth living in is a world where everyone, children and adults, enjoy the right to read and write. Since we now have a world where seventy million children, mostly girls, do not have a place in school and where nearly one billion adults, overwhelmingly women, have no chance of learning to read and write, we need a commitment for urgent transformation.
A world worth living in is a world economy that includes values and recognizes the informal economy where women in great numbers are active in care work and in subsistence production and as informal educators. It is a world where care work is a shared responsibility of government, enterprises and families, and where educational programs and plans help to overcome stereotyping and the gender division of labor.

A world worth living in is a multilateral world complying with United Nations’ rules and a world governance strengthened by meaningful participation from a globally and locally informed civil society.

A world worth living in needs high quality learning experiences, skilled educators enjoying better work conditions, drawing on rich practices from all parts of the world, including popular education, feminist education and education for transformation.

Such an active learning world, enriched by mutual learning across boundaries of all sorts is today a necessity more than ever. Yet it cannot become a reality without the full participation and mobilization of a learning civil society.’

Sparks of Thought

The declaration does not end here. The second part includes details of action to be taken. Before we return to the second part of the declaration, here are several sparks of thoughts and reaction.

First, the Declaration couples the global and the local. The components of a world worth living in extend, exist and are needed in order to exist in these two ‘worlds’. This is so because this comprehensive vision, that has to do with the roots of human existence today, has no boundaries.

Second, a world worth living in consists of men and women, boys and girls, different economic systems, multiple cultures, stereotypes,
values and rules, educational programs and endless learning. It includes everything, and the vision is to organize this world, put things in order, globally and locally. This order can be achieved first and foremost when there are learning situations, learning opportunities, suitable teachers and adequate learning conditions.

Adult education is the condition that can make this possible and its role is central, comprehensive and inclusive. The current situation throughout the world is in stark contrast to this vision: adult education has meager resources, is marginal and shoved to the sidelines.

How do we overcome this huge gap? Let’s read the second part of the Declaration.

We, participants of this conference, declare that education and learning are a fundamental human right and also an enabling right that allows for the realization of all others. We are bound to ensure that this right will be realistic and will be enjoyed by adults and young people that are not in school, throughout the world.

We recognize that a great deal of international action has taken place. MDG (UNESCO’S Millennium Development Goals), EFA (UNESCO’S ‘Education for All’), CONFINTEA – these are interrelated, however solidarity and continuity in execution and follow-up are lacking. We must achieve these goals and we will continue our involvement in advocating them.

We call on civil society organizations to evaluate their actions, to create strategies that will foster new ways of life and new economic and ecological solidarity; to discuss how a different world is possible - a world in which everyone would have access to safe and clean energy – to reach the critical mass of awareness needed to sustain action towards achieving fair climate solutions.

We demand that countries, United Nations agencies and other organizations recognize that poverty and social exclusion are related to congenital inequality, reflected and reinforced due to unequitable
distribution of learning opportunities.

Social exclusion is not only exclusion from learning opportunities, but also the perpetuation of the knowledge hierarchy that excludes access to types of knowledge. In a world worth living in access to all types of knowledge is open and democratic, and we call on states to develop action plans towards this end.

We call on states to ensure the right to learn for young people and adults, especially the fundamental right to elementary education, without discrimination; to grant these rights legal status and to allocate the necessary resources to fully realize them. This is the most urgent priority of all.

We demand that preparing learning policy for young people and adults will not be viewed as an additional expense, an addition to existing education policy, but rather as a vital part of the solution to challenges currently facing all of humanity. Individuals without access to learning opportunities need state support and adequate infrastructure for adult education. Special attention should be given to programs that ensure freedom of expression, recognition, representation and empowerment of women as independent citizens.

We invite the states to become acquainted with adult education programs in Scandinavia and to learn about the effect of these programs on health, the environment, multi-generational education, citizenship and quality of life. Adults have the right to be well informed and to understand the changes affecting their life and broader society; to participate in these changes and to shape them. Learning plays a vital role in this endeavor.

We propose that countries, unions, companies and social players to link their work-related activities to education policy in order to strengthen the role that learning can play in technological and industrial changes and to prevent the threat to the provision of decent work to all. This policy must address exclusion of weak communities that already exists. The
changes raise new demands for learning opportunities for every man and woman in the workforce, with old jobs being replaced by technology and new work methods. They must recognize that comprehensive realization of the many facets of learning will create more efficient and sustainable jobs that will significantly contribute to the right to decent work for all.

With respect to work and learning, we ask countries to take into consideration the massive expansion of immigration. Immigrants are people escaping oppressive regimes and seeking a place to live or a decent workplace. We invite the United Nations and the International Labor Organization to monitor the full realization of the rights of immigrants and their families.

We call on countries and UN agencies: (a) to provide for the educational needs of the countries in the southern pacific that are under sea level and at high risk of flooding; (b) to prepare criminal offenders for their reintegration into their society; (c) to enable women working in caretaking jobs and individuals who have retired to realize their full potential by creating conditions for change in the family and in culture enabling participation in the public sphere. Learning is the key to all change.

We call on UNESCO to monitor the implementation of the Belem-Brazil Declaration from 2009 and call on countries to report their achievements with respect to the work plan adopted in 2009; to fully engage with civil society organizations; to disseminate this report throughout the world.

**Subsequently:**
The second part of the Declaration invited countries, professional associations, civil society organizations, industry and social actors to be mindful, to implement education programs, to protect the weak, to adapt the job market and to realize the right to learn in light of technological and cultural changes - and to do all this throughout the world. Do the
Detailed proposals advance the local agenda, and if so, in what way? It seems that we are still in the realm of non-binding and global wording that distances readers from new commitments. The call to internationally monitor the implementation of the Belem-Brazil action plan does not stand the test of reality among the majority of countries.

We can add that this conference published a detailed action plan that we do not address in this paper. We invite those interested to discuss with us the action plan and its implementation in local arenas.

**Who and How to ‘Educate’ - The Training Paradox**

As we see it, the strongest evidence pointing to the existence of the glocalization paradox is evident with respect to the training of adult educators.

**Section 6: ‘Introduction to Training of Adult Learning and Education instructors’ by the author of this article (article published October 2010)**

In another paper, ‘Adult Education in Israel and Around the World’, we maintained that there is a critical gap between the discipline and the practice of adult learning, a gap between theory and praxis. The discipline, in other words research, writing and discussion creates a world of terms and concepts, theories about behavior and adult learning as well as endless proposals about what to do and how to foster a field that is perceived almost everywhere in the world as marginal in terms of budgeting and professional training. Thus, while the discipline flourishes action flounders and cannot achieve the goals articulated so well by so many people and supported by endless international conferences.

*These are the failures everyone agrees we face:*

1. The tragic failure to bring learning to the adult population that needs
it most (from 20 years of age through the end of life).

2. A huge failure to mobilize financial resources in every country and in international organizations – resources that would fund learning among those for whom it is the most vital.

3. The failure to help learners who need it most to enter the workforce, lead an active civic life and a balanced lifestyle – all the things that strong populations enjoy.

4. The failure to persuade every country and every organization that adult learning is the most beneficial action they can take in order to advance society in general and increase human, social, economic and State capital.

5. The failure stemming from the painful gap between documents about lifelong learning national policy and creating a learning society on the one hand, and the level of stakeholder conviction that this is what should actually be done, fostered and persistently developed on the other.

Possible explanations for these failures

- Only a handful of professionals are involved in untiring efforts to find answers to the failures listed above. Academia is not interested, government cuts back, civil society organizations are not informed and the many learning options offered by the private and business sector only go to those employees who are lucky and qualified.

- With respect to the most disadvantaged populations, failure is not found only in the adult education field. Social work and community work, fields that also battle poverty and social inequality suffer the same fate. The common denominator is social and regional policy that suffers from a budgetary and practical approach that ignores those who are disadvantaged, excluded, marginalized, illegal
immigrants, women and the elderly.

- It stands to reason that the entire social sector should have mobilized and collaborated to bring about change in national social policy. However, in retrospect, every sector fights to satisfy its needs and is afraid that collaboration may come at its expense.

- The most important explanation in our opinion is that those currently working in the adult learning and education field both throughout the world and in Israel are unqualified. Current training of these workers in Israel is very limited and those that do receive training are powerless to change the state of affairs at the national level with all its failures and shortcomings.

**Training people who work in adult education is the key**

Training current workers, and those attracted to this field, is the key to dealing with the failures described. Training will provide the tools to address this issue and enhance the personal and organizational qualifications of those who will complete the training. Training adult education professionals is the best investment that can be made in order to change the current state of affairs.

The familiar training frameworks are:

- Undergraduate and graduate studies
- Expanded studies qualifying community, social and adult education professionals in a one or two-year program that will award a certificate.
- One or several professional development courses in addition to symposia, workshops, seminars and ‘weekend’ training.
**Sample modules:**

1. Recruiting disadvantaged individuals as learners.
2. Fostering municipal, regional and national collaborations
3. Promoting and developing learning cities and regions
4. Acquaintance with civil society organizations – the potential for collaboration
5. Designing adult learning programs
6. Practical experience with a variety of adult learning-teaching strategies and techniques
7. Adult learning history, philosophy and theory
8. Adult learning - a comparative perspective of the world and Israel’s immediate geographic area (the Mediterranean).

**Spotlight**

The glocalization paradox joins the training paradox. In both cases there is a gap between the global and the local that has not been bridged to date. The former produces global declarations articulated in general terms and directed at different types of countries as well as social and industrial-business organizations. The training paradox differs in that proposals are specific and implemented in training and continuing education courses in various countries – successfully! The training paradox refers to the gap between Israel and ‘the world’. The processes taking place in the world do not reach Israel. There is an impenetrable barrier in Israel with respect to everything that has to do with the training of adult learning and education professionals.

The following is a brief description of the ICAE Academy mentioned above. *The ‘Academy’ is an example of how the glocalization paradox can be undone*, perhaps a course of action or at least a direction to be considered in Israel.
Section 7: The ICAE Academy of Lifelong Learning Advocacy IV – IALLA

The overall goal of the Academy is to cultivate the skills of educators and social movement activists, in the aim of supporting adult learning and education for change; to consolidate the ICAE as a worldwide network committed to this goal, and to achieve this through a course offered annually that focuses on adult learning and education advocacy and conducted in a dormitory setting.

The specific goals of the Academy are:

1. Create a comprehensive vision of youth and adult education as part of the right to learn and engage in active citizenship, and to develop an affinity to the most important global issues currently influencing the world.
2. Support the development of new leadership for the global network of adult educators, committed and trained to work as a worldwide team, especially for the ICAE.
3. Ensure the continuity of social movements for lifelong learning.
4. Track and facilitate mutual ties among Academy participants to facilitate continued learning by enabling Academy graduates to share their experiences after the IALLA course.

The outcomes for Academy graduates:

- Individuals with a sweeping vision of adult learning and the role of civil society as a stage in the education process.
  - Leaders with advanced skills capable of monitoring the agreements and work plans of national and international conferences.
- Adult educators trained in adult learning advocacy in the aim of cultivating adult learning at the national, regional and global level.
- Individuals who have acquired skills for collaborating with civil society organizations and in working with and building social networks.

• Individuals able to comprehend and analyze mutual relations within and beyond the adult learning and education field.

• Individuals able to learn from varied inter-cultural databases within the context of culture translation.

The main contents of the Academy course:

1. Global governance
2. Civil society
3. The state, civil society and rights
4. Global movements
5. MDG (UNESCO’S Millennium Development Goals) and civil society
6. CONFINTEA VI, 2009
7. Creative participation and advocacy strategies

Is Such Training Feasible in Israel?

The Academy focuses on organization, objectives and arenas. The organization is the International Council for Adult Education that prepares its supporters, propagators, emissaries and trustees who work for the Council but are not salaried employees.

Its arenas are the global, the regional and the national. The recurring training topic is advocacy, a term that includes lobbying, support, negotiation, recruitment, achieving results and building continued relations. The International Council obtained a budget, recruited teachers, lecturers and trainers and designed an intensive curriculum and program offered in a dormitory setting. Participants in the six classes conducted to date were mainly from Africa and Asia and were accepted following a rigorous selection process. The course is taught in English and French.
separately. Graduates are awarded a certificate issued by the ICAE. Is such an academy feasible in Israel?

**Current situations in Israel**

The glocalization paradox in the field of adult education is evident in Israel – this is the starting point of our article. Global visions and formulations are disconnected from the various elements of daily activity in the local arena.

In Israel we can only dream of a framework similar to the ICAE Academy. The Academy does not operate within a known academic framework that grants degrees, but rather certifies its graduates by awarding a certificate that has gained respected and recognized international standing. There is no budget in Israel for such an ‘academy’, and its certificate would not have any formal status, even if teachers, lecturers and tutors were to be found.

My experience in this field of adult education in Israel is characterized by more wishful thinking than action. We deal with critical issues which are in dire need of improvement and follow-up.

The aim of the article was to shed light on global activity in the field of adult education in the hope that we can come together, organize the local arenas and embark on a journey into the realms of thought and action so vitally important for all of us.

**I Almost Forgot the Most Important Point**

This article will join the pool of ‘academic’ articles and will appear in a publication that is for the most part academic. Debate about the article may continue, but will remain in the academic sphere.

The current predicament of adult education in Israel calls for a breakthrough, and this will only be possible when all stakeholders join forces. Who will provide the required momentum – will it be someone from inside or perhaps from outside the field?