



Montevideo, June 30, 2015

## **Proposal to Include Lifelong Learning to the Outcome Document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development**

to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2015

The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) welcomes the Final Draft Outcome Document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) to be held in Addis Ababa on July 13-16, 2015. Nevertheless, as a global network with a mandate to advocate **Youth and Adult Learning and Education as a universal human right**, ICAE would like to express the concern of its more than a hundred strong member organisations and partners over the omission of lifelong learning and adult education in the text of the Draft Outcomes Document. We consider this a backward step after the efforts and achievements of Muscat, Monterrey and Incheon.

Adult literacy, skills for life and work and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities are integral to Sustainable Development Goal 4 and to the **Declaration of the World Education Forum** (Incheon, Republic of Korea), which was adopted by more than 100 governments, calling for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, recognizing thus the key role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs. The governments in Incheon committed with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious, aspirational, leaving no one behind. The Final Draft Outcome Document of the FfD Conference however falls short of committing financial support to the full SDG 4 agenda, patently missing out on commitments to adult literacy and adult education, and leaving the learning needs of adults behind.

An ambitious and transformative global agenda that is supposed to address the challenges of sustainable development must be underpinned by an equally ambitious and credible means of implementation backed by resources. Without these, there is a risk:

- That the **SDG4, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”** may not be achieved;

- That the global community will again fail to address the challenge of **adult illiteracy** – where nearly 800 million adults worldwide - majority of them women – are denied their right to literacy.

- This would mean neglecting the tremendous potential of adult learning to help end poverty, hunger, promote health and over-all well-being, in securing jobs and decent work, and in promoting global citizenship and sustainable development.

- This could undermine the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals in their totality**. Few, if any, of the broad development goals can be achieved without education, lifelong learning and the engagement of adults, and in particular women, in learning new content, new skills or new approaches.

Therefore **Para 78** must be in accordance with the Incheon declaration and other related documents, focusing not only on education for children, but on lifelong learning for all.

*We propose: “We recognize the importance of delivering quality education to all children and young people, to secure universal literacy for adults, and to ensure lifelong learning and education for all as a key part of ensuring long-term sustainability of development. This will require reaching the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults (especially women) in fragile and conflict-affected states. We therefore call for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to be strengthened and scaled up to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality early childhood, primary, secondary education, adult literacy and second chance education for children, youth and adults, leading to the relevant and effective learning outcomes. To ensure sustainable development, no one should be left behind; therefore we call for the Global Partnership for Education to promote adult education and lifelong learning opportunities for adults, especially for marginalised and under-represented groups, recognising that the successful implementation of the full range of Sustainable Development Goals relies on the informed and active participation of adults. We agree to upgrade education facilities and increase the percentage of qualified teachers and adult educators in developing countries, including through international cooperation.”*

On behalf of ICAE’s members and partners,



Katarina Popović  
ICAE Secretary General



Sandra L. Morrison  
ICAE President