Citizenship Education and Adult Learning and Education (ALE)

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Adult Learning and Education (ALE)

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The relevance of citizenship education (CED) for the further development of adult learning and education (ALE) and its impact on (current and future) ALE practice from ICAE's perspective

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Citizenship Education and ALE

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ICAE's understanding of citizenship education – concept and needs of the global world

There is hardly a concept, paradigm or topic that is used, promoted and advocated as much as citizenship education, while remaining so vaguely defined and differently understood. The idea itself is very old, but efforts to clarify its meaning and develop related policy followed the adoption of the Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen (The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen) passed by France's National Constituent Assembly in August 1789 – an important document and a milestone in the history of human and civil rights. Global efforts promoting citizenship education intensified with the adoption in 1948 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That recognised these rights provide the foundation for freedom, justice and peace, and asserted that the state no longer has total control over its citizens. In 1950, T. H. Marshall formulated three components of *social citizenship*: civil rights, political rights and social rights. The political practice of democracy, by raising awareness of human and minority rights and the role of the welfare state in establishing a new relationship between the state and its citizens, contributed to the further conceptualisation of citizen and citizenship education.

Citizenship – or civic – education has always been part of national education systems and has been defined by national discourses about what constitutes a good citizen. This is still the case in many countries (citizenship tests in Canada, Australia, United Kingdom; the civic test in the United States of America (USA); naturalization test in Germany), but a needed a change is needed in a narrow, single-country perspective in order to broaden the concept of citizenship and citizenship education. When the state and/or nation-state provides the frame for what constitutes the good citizen, the educational implications are largely shaped by the concrete local political and cultural context. Thus, the concept of citizenship was developed primarily within European and Western understandings (rooted in the ancient Greek origins of democracy and citizenship), which limited it by the boundaries of the nation-state, orienting it towards the political engagement and representative democracy of individuals living in industrialised countries. The process of European integration and the creation of the EU moved parts of national sovereignty to the supranational level and inspired stronger inclusion of issues such as minority rights (added to human rights) and inter- and multi-culturalism.

While the development of the concept of citizenship in Western Europe was related to popular sovereignty ideas that challenged the power of monarchs and emperors, and demanded the right of common people to take part in decision making, the understanding of citizenship in Africa was marked by the experience of British and French colonialism in the 20th century – it

> was the systematic imposition of colonizing interests on the territory, and the institutionalized separation of master and colonial subject. This meant that the majority of native Africans, under the auspices of the British and French empires, did not enjoy the same rights to citizenship as European-born or African-born whites. This resulted in a form of bifurcated citizenship that confined the majority of the population to second-class citizenship... The policy of indirect rule pursued by the British channelled citizenship rights to more territorially bounded units, and it could be said that this was the model that inspired the form of statehood that now prevails in Africa (Mngomezulu, 2015).

Still, African traditional education and the principles of *ubuntu* offer another approach to citizenship education.

> Ubuntu is unique in the following respects: it emphasizes respect for the non-material order that exists in us and among us; it fosters man's respect for himself, for others, and for the environment; it has spirituality; it has remained non-racial; it accommodates other cultures and it is the invisible force uniting Africans worldwide. Therefore, unlike Confucian or European philosophies, it transcends both race and culture. Ubuntu seems logical in our situation because our democracy is unique in that it must evolve from the beginning within a multiracial and multicultural context. It must deliver freedom with opportunities while addressing values and cultural systems (Makgoba, 1996).

Although democracy must have *a local touch* and *colour*, some authors perceive *ubuntu* as not sufficiently different from the European understanding because the emphasis on responsible citizenship in *ubuntu* resembles depictions of citizenship education in any other liberal democracy (Enslin, Horsthemke, 2014).

The current notion of citizenship in Latin America was substantially influenced by the social movements in the 1970s and 1980s.

> The notion of citizenship has become a common reference among social movements such as those of women, blacks and ethnic minorities, homosexuals, retired and senior citizens, consumer, environmentalists, urban and rural workers, and groups organized. In this process of redefinition, strong emphasis has been placed on citizenship's cultural dimension. [Thus] the construction of a new notion of citizenship has come to be seen as reaching far beyond the acquisition of legal right[s] (Dagnino, 2003).

Redefined by social movements and by various civil society actors working in different fields, citizenship became recognised as political and social power, a crucial weapon in the struggle against social and economic exclusion and inequality, challenging the structure, players and mechanisms in the whole political arena. Moreover, political debates, academic and intellectual analysis contributed to the Latin American understanding of citizenship as concept, tool and action.

Asia is a diverse region with rich cultural and religious traditions, dynamic and diverse histories, and great variety in all spheres of life. Because it is multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-lingual – it poses a real challenge for citizenship education. Many countries in the region have a history of being colonised or of colonising other countries themselves. The majority of them only became independent around the middle of the twentieth century and we can still witness the citizenship consequences of this relatively recent independence today (Vonk, 2017). Decolonisation has many important consequences not only for legal systems, but also on the process of migration. Many authors underline the cultural and religious features as determinants of the concept and practice of citizenship and talk about *soft authoritarianism* and *limited forms of democracy* (Huntington, 1996). The public-private distinction, and the community as the framework for the citizenship – concepts that shaped European understandings, wasn't so strongly dichotomized in several Asian countries grounded on Confucian tradition that perceives the moral self as intertwined with the public or social self (Lee

in Choo, 2015). Discussions about soft authoritarianism in Asian countries are similar to those in countries of Eastern Europe and former socialist countries.

> These societies have often replaced the rule of law with [neo-Confucian] rule of virtue in which the duties of the citizen to the state are more important than the responsibilities of the state towards the citizen. In these authoritarian polities, the state constructs an educational system to discipline the electorate rather than to create an informed citizenry, simply because there is low trust between leaders and electorate (Kamaludeen, Turner, 2012).

Such political contexts provided fertile ground for the creation of a very strong human-rights based civil society sector, which became the main provider of and advocate for citizenship education, with a strong focus on the emancipation of economically and socially deprived groups and their rights.

Citizenship education has become an increasingly important topic in education policy in the countries of Arab region, and many of them are making efforts to introduce concepts such as democracy and human rights into civics textbooks and curricula. But numerous contextual factors are quite unfavourable for its implementation. The region is extremely diverse – economic development and wealth distribution vary dramatically, there are armed conflicts and wars, followed by the destruction of land, people and cultural heritage. Consequently, there are large numbers of migrants and internally displaced people (IDPs). A colonial past has left deep traces in some of the countries, while cultural and religious diversity adds to the tensions between cosmopolitan principles and nationalist agendas that are still shaping education policy. Although some governments have made moves toward a broader conception of citizenship, in most nations, plans for education reform are divorced from political realities and do not include political commitments to educate free, democratic, and creative citizens (Faour, 2013). Bassel and Ghosn-Chelala (2018) underline the complexity of national and religious identity, where many countries embrace a pan-national Arab identity, which parallels the peoples' commitment to the Islamic faith, which supersedes patriotism.

In situations where educational programmes promote patriotism or exclusionary nationalism, school climate is generally authoritarian and sometimes repressive, which is not conducive to the development of civic competency. There are also longstanding traditions of excluding minorities and

women and widespread unease with growing diversity (Bassel and Ghosn-Chelala, 2018). In these circumstances, adult learning and education, especially within the civic sector, becomes increasingly important. While the countries involved in conflicts, troubled by persistent poverty and large numbers of fleeing people tend to nationalist discourses in education, civil society makes tireless efforts to work on participatory, inclusive and cross-country programmes, and pays special attention to vulnerable groups, to the rights of women, youth, people with disabilities, and others.

Civil society organisations in the Arab region often use Freirean approaches and related emancipatory and transformative educational practices. By accepting the ideas, approaches and values of global citizenship education, they try to *use* them to enhance citizenship and political competencies at the country-level, struggling to reconcile traditional values with modern approaches to achieving a just and equal society for all.

North-American understandings of citizenship are closely related to European views – partly as the historical continuation of largely *Western* ideas and partly in opposition to them. Since citizenship is developed at the interface of duties and rights of the state and duties and rights of citizens, citizenship is still very much understood as active participation in a sovereign political community, where the legal base of citizenship and the economic status of *tax payers* is the basis for an agreed-upon set of rights and obligations. Global citizenship is often understood as knowledge of other countries and cultures (Katzarska-Miller et al., 2012), or through the lens that in a globalized economy, capital and corporations have transcended their countries of origin, thus freeing capitalists from the nation-state, […] corporate leaders don't think any more about being from *here* or outsourcing to *there*. The world is their game board and they deploy pieces wherever cost-effective (Liu, 2012). Understanding global citizens as possessing a consciousness about the worldwide impact of our actions, and the worldwide forces shaping our actions (Liu, 2012) provides a kind of *template* for mutuality and pro-social behaviour. In the social climate marked by individualistic ethos, where competitiveness is more valued than social justice and intergroup empathy, it's up to civil society organisations, professional associations of educators and programmes of educational institutions to endorse and reinforce values like solidarity, social justice, intergroup helping, concern for the environment, and to understand the global impact of economic development and its potential harmful effects on people and the environment.

The Council of Europe, as the main European body shaping European understanding of citizenship, provides a definition which brings human rights into the agenda of Education for democratic citizenship. Education for democratic citizenship (EDC) focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society, while human rights education is concerned with the broader spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of people's lives (Council of Europe, 2010, p. 6). So, EDC is seen as the key instrument for the promotion of core European political values: democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as in the prevention of human rights violations, and more and more, as a defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance (Popović, Despotović, 2018).

Indeed, citizens´ need to participate in civic and political life is at the core of the continuous effort to ensure the accountability of the state and the legitimation of democracy. But this Western-European concept turned out to be too narrow for the reality of a globalized world, its dynamic changes and its growing interconnectedness. The processes of decolonisation and powerful social movements changed the discourse of humanity and human rights, citizen and its relationship with the state, and challenged the traditional notion of the power of the state over its citizens, having thus great impact of the notion of citizenship. These social powers, combined with the work of important international players such as UNESCO, broaden the approach to citizenship education and the Western-shaped concept of education for active citizenship, including human rights education, peace and intercultural education, prevention of violent extremism through education, education on the Holocaust and genocide, international understanding and solidarity, and the broad range of global issues where lower-income countries suffer because of the unfair trade and unequal position in the relationship with upper-income countries. Cosmopolitanism thus became not a state of possession of globally-relevant information or a global level of awareness, but also a moral choice that invites action.

Global development in the 21st century has not only added more topics to citizenship education but has also sharpened the critique of existing curricula. This is based on the recognition that the world has become a global village in terms of means of communication, and a *global market* where goods and services of one country can be purchased or sold in other corners of the world, while the mobility of people is still limited,

often for selfish political and economic reasons. In education, this was accompanied by the awareness of the fact that large groups were left behind through globalisation, especially in lower-income countries, inequalities increased within upper-income countries (Milanović, 2016).

The dominant modern idea of citizenship was linked closely to the emergence of individuals endowed with entitlements or rights in relation to the government of territorial sovereign states, but numerous changes re-shaped this understanding. The nation state no longer [has] absolute claim over the individual as belonging to a particular state as individuals now have dual or even multiple citizenship because of states membership of regional organizations (Nwaogu, Nwaogu, 2009). The examples are free movement regulations in European Union (EU) or Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment adopted by the Economic Community of Western African States (ENECA, 1979). There is also increased movement of people across national borders for political or economic reasons. Financial crises, migrant and refugee crises, the alarming effects of climate change and environmental degradation, and the several waves of pandemic, most recently COVID-19, has strengthened both the feeling that the world is very much connected and that national boundaries are meaningless. Damián Barr's popular statement (Barr, 2020) that we are not all in the same boat; we are all in the same storm, but some are in yachts and some have just the one oar. Even worse, millions of people are *stranded*, and for reasons that are preventable. Counter to Ulrich's Beck thesis that neediness (poverty) is hierarchical, smog is democratic (Beck, 1992), COVID-19 showed that environmental impacts are not distributed in a socially equal manner, but it did confirm that we live in a risk society which has not sufficiently developed systematic ways of dealing with hazards and insecurities.

COVID-19 was not the first pandemic in modern times. HIV/AIDS reshaped nearly every aspect of our societies – people were rethinking medical privacy, sexuality and homosexuality, issues of intimacy, death – they have all been taken up by adult learning and education as well. In this case, adult learning and education (ALE) mobilized around HIV prevention and designed courses in many countries focusing on the *enlightenment* of people about transmission of diseases, human rights of infected people etc. Very often, public education and *teaching* offered in non-formal and informal settings are *unusual* learning sites and using non-traditional means. For example, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), founded in 1987, was the first international organization to raise awareness and bring attention to the AIDS epidemic through protests and demonstrations, and to provide accurate information and support by means of education and radical, nonviolent protest (Banales, 2017).

The virus H1N1 was also a global-scale catastrophe, which caused, among many other things, the postponement of CONFINTEA VI in Brazil. But none of the *modern* pandemics stopped the world in the way COVID-19 did. The interconnectedness of the world was shown in a brutally simple way, when a virus, through a kind of butterfly effect, ignored national borders and spread across the globe. In a different way, wars and armed conflicts around the globe illustrated the connections between countries and regions, where those on the sending end of the policy making and arms trade business are in a far better position compared to those on the receiving end of these policies and trade practices. More than ever, humanity is coming to understand that Earth is a common home for everyone, and a citizen taking care only of his/her own country's issues and its progress is not enough. And this is a major source of topics focusing on global responsibility and solidarity.

One of the most important elements of the human rights discourse within citizenship education is the inclusion of groups especially at risk and underrepresented, most notably women and girls. For centuries, women have been struggling for the recognition of their rights, and many of the reports of achievements and policy documents about human rights have not historically included women. Changing patriarchal structures and disrupting traditional roles is a long process and is far from complete in most of the world. It was only in 1993 that the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna confirmed that women's rights were human rights. Contemporary discourses about citizenship and human rights includes women, although the fight for gender equality in all societies continues. The UN and UNESCO address gender equality with numerous initiatives, paying special attention to the rights of women and girls to education and learning. For ICAE, empowerment of women is a crucial part of its mission (especially through its Gender and Education Office) and therefore underlines the view represented in SDG5: *Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world* (UN, 2015).

Other groups also deserve attention in discussions of diversity and inclusion in global citizenship education. Specifically, ICAE understands the rights of indigenous peoples and preservation

of their biological, cultural and linguistic diversity as crucial commitments of those who aspire to be responsible global citizens. Traditional knowledge systems and teaching/learning practices of indigenous people are part of the global mosaic that should be required content of contemporary global citizenship education.

Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) became a dominant paradigm of citizenship education and one of the strategic areas of UNESCO's Education Sector programme during the period 2014–2021. GCE has its normative foundation in UNESCO's 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation, Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, where the concept of *international education* was used as the forerunner of GCE, stressing not only human rights and peace, but also justice and freedom, international understanding and co-operation, solidarity and responsibility (UNESCO, 1974). It is amazing how these recommendations are now valid more than ever. They underline a sense of social responsibility and of solidarity with less privileged groups, critical understanding of problems at national and international levels, education that should stress the inadmissibility of recourse to war for purposes of expansion, aggression and domination, or to the use of force and violence for purposes of repression, contributing to international understanding and strengthening of world peace and to the activities in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism in all their forms and manifestations, and against all forms and varieties of racialism, fascism, etc. (UNESCO, 1974).

As a global network, ICAE is also sensitive to the issues affecting vulnerable groups and those most exposed to the harmful consequences of global inequalities and `conditions which perpetuate and aggravate major problems affecting human survival and well-being – inequality, injustice, international relations based on the use of force´ (UNESCO, 1974, p. 150), and oriented towards the concepts, strategies and measures likely to eradicate the deep causes of these problems and to help solve them. Since its establishment in 1973, ICAE connected education with democracy and human rights, especially thanks to members from the Global South, to the spirit of decolonisation and the return of democracy in the Southern Cone countries (ICAE, 2013). ICAE's first World Assembly, (i.e., the first International Conference on Adult Education and Development, was held in the Zimbabwe in 1989) in the spirit of liberation, discussed the importance of education for political freedom and democratic leadership (ICAE, 2013). The values of solidarity, the spirit of cosmopolitanism, the global issues-especially peace, human rights, democracy and justice-remained a main component of ICAE's mission and activities for many years and has shaped ICAE's understanding of the role and focus of citizenship education.

Even before intersectorality became a widely-accepted concept in the implementation of the global agenda, ICAE during its General Assembly in Montreal June 2015, embedded the right to education for peace centrally in its mission, requiring *democratic participation, justice, equality, respect, care and solidarity among our diverse people. We must be in harmony with our cultural and environmental rights* (ICAE, 2015). Education for sustainable development, awareness of climate change, knowledge and skills needed for living responsibly towards the planet and nature cannot be excluded from global citizenship education.

ICAE and its members played a significant part in the post-2015 process, and when the Agenda 2030 and SDGs were adopted by the UN in 2015 (UN, 2015), the connection between education and lifelong learning (SDG4) and other SDGs was already at the core of ICAE's advocacy and activity. Goal 4.7 is consistent with ICAE's vision of a learner that should become a global citizen:

> By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (UN, 2015).

ICAE is always mindful of the values captured in the 1974 Recommendations:

> `equality of rights of peoples, disarmament; the inadmissibility of using science and technology for warlike purposes, racialism and its eradication; the fight against discrimination in its various forms; ways and means of assisting lower-income countries; the struggle against illiteracy; the campaign against disease and famine; the fight for a better quality of life and the highest attainable standard of health; population growth, and related questions´ (UNESCO, 1974, p. 150).

ICAE is reiterating its commitment to the concept of ALE in the Renewed Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (UNESCO, 2016), that includes education and learning opportunities for active citizenship, variously known as community, popular or liberal education. ICAE members worldwide practice exactly these various forms of education, empowering *people to actively engage with social issues such as poverty, gender, intergenerational solidarity, social mobility, justice, equity, exclusion, violence, unemployment, environmental protection and climate change. It also helps people to lead a decent life, in terms of health and well-being, culture, spirituality and in all other ways that contribute to personal development and dignity* (UNESCO, 2016).

For ICAE the concept of Global Citizenship is a logical response to the challenges of today's globalized world in which socio-political and environmental problems occur across the counties and regions (for example climate change, forced migration, etc.), because they cannot be adequately addressed through education that serves the narrow purposes of an individual in an isolated context, ignoring the global community and humanity. Many decisions are taken on an international level, and there is an increasing need for common, global efforts and coordinated action. Therefore, citizenship education remains of crucial importance, and refers to the issues of political, economic and social problems that could be dealt on the national level, with the strong focus on democratic and participatory processes. In addition, it includes human rights, minority rights, environmental issues, consumerism and so on, but within the national frame of scope and possibilities. It remains the core content of citizenship, but in order to deal with many emerging problems, citizenship education must also raise awareness of global problems, promote an international perspective, increase sensitivity and openness toward *otherness*. Earlier concepts like *education for democratic citizenship* and *education for active citizenship* are redundant – if it is not democratic, participatory and inclusive, it is not citizenship education; if it provides data and information, and does not develop both critical thinking and *agency*, and doesn't move people to action – again, it is not citizenship education.

Being mindful of the diversity of countries and regions where ICAE is present, its global viewpoint, and the urgency and seriousness of the problems of the world today, ICAE considers global citizenship education for a more just and sustainable world. Additionally, this concept transcends the narrow understanding of citizen as an individual who fulfils his/her political and civic duties, but instead requires solidarity between people, groups and countries, putting justice and equality in the centre

of the value system upon which global citizenship education is based.

Citizenship education and GCE in ALE

Historically, citizenship education has been central to adult learning and education.

> `The popular belief which considers that adult education emerged from a political attempt to broaden access to education and provide a second chance of educational upgrade to underprivileged adults is not so close to the genuine start-facts. A different social scenario is closer to truth: adult education emerged from the needs of adults to bring about social change, to improve their life, to solve actual problems and to understand social reality. Therefore, it is not strange that adult education is historically connected with the principles of democracy, community and social justice.´ (Popović, Koulaouzides, 2017, p.1).

In different epochs, adult education was used and sometimes misused for developing desirable norms among the citizens but was always recognized as the powerful force in individual and social life and understood as an emancipatory practice. John Dewey stated that the purpose of adult education *is to put meaning into the whole of life* (Dewey, 1998), and many educators promoted an education that empowers people for social change and emancipation, probably the most famous being Paolo Freire. His ideas influenced educational theory and practice towards social change, liberation and emancipation.

His seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), proposed a theory of conscientization, a process through which marginalized and oppressed groups move to a critical consciousness, creating the conditions for the transformation of society in accordance with social justice. Citizenship is understood in both a narrow sense – as political action, and in a broader sense – as critical thinking, social justice education, democratic education, which starts with acquiring critical literacy. His famous statement that literacy is about reading the world, and not only reading the word, is at the core of modern understanding of citizenship education, still very influential around the globe, with amazing universality.

Not only the theory, also policy concepts recognized that citizenship education is at the heart of ALE. This is obvious in

another seminal text – the Delors Report from 1996, where the forth pillar requires *learning to live together*, but is inseparable from the other three pillars (learning to be, to know, and to do).

Critical pedagogy and contemporary authors show that an active, critical, open-minded and engaged citizen has to be an educational goal of ALE, if he/she is to respond to the growing challenges and even more – to inspire change. The works of Henry A. Giroux (2015), Gert Biesta (2011), Elisabeth Ellsworth (1997) and others, are clearly indicating this.

It is the very nature of adult learning and education to help learners find answers to important questions about the reality of his/her social and political environment, to empower the engagement in the community and to manage and influence fast moving change. Is it knowledge that is needed, but also adequate skills and competencies, accompanied by specific attitudes and behaviours – engagement and actions? Many roles of adults are defined and shaped through relationships with political, social and natural environments, therefore education that helps adults to fulfil these roles and to take control of these relationships is the first task of ALE.

Further reasons why CE and GCE are at the core of ALE, especially non-formal ALE, are the following:
– Compared with formal education, ALE is more open to changes and requirements from the environment and it is able to quickly respond and adapt. Formal education systems are usually subject to numerous administrative procedures, norms of various regulatory bodies and several—sometimes lengthy—layers of decision-making. Organisational structures in non-formal education are typically more flexible and allow combinations of long-term pre-prepared curricula and emerging topics that require immediate educational intervention. This was evident in the cases of global health issues and pandemics (HIV, H1N1, COVID-19);
– Non-formal ALE can be more responsive to changes and needs in the social and physical environment, and more motivated by the real demands and life necessities than by prescribed or imposed content;
– Since non-formal ALE is seldom organized by subjects and content areas, and more often by sectors, topics, problems and issues, it is much easier to include topics related to citizenship education either as independent content or integrated with other topics such as literacy or vocational skills. This approach offers opportunities for intersectoral connections, which is at the heart of the SDGs, enabling citizenship education to contribute to poverty reduction,

gender equality, responsible consumption, and other goals It is clear that sustaining progress toward many of the SDGs requires continuous learning at all levels, including ALE;
– The flexible structures and intersectoral potential of non-formal ALE enable the development of transferable competences, which can be applied in various sectors and changed situations, thus also contributing to the cross-sectoral approach to the SDGs and synergy in pursuing their achievement;
– One of the most important reasons to promote citizenship education in ALE is simple: Time is running out to address the problems of our time. There is a *sense of urgency* that must be fostered, since there are only 12 years left to the 2030 deadline, as UN SG António Guterres pointed out in 2018. Two years later, after new crises, wars, growing extremism and environmental disasters, this call is even more urgent. *Achieving the 2030 Agenda requires immediate and accelerated actions* (UN, 2018). By investing only in children's education, it will be too late to mitigate the harm to the planet, people and the societies, and to prevent further deterioration. In the times of violence and egregious destruction of human lives and the natural world, our recognition of the need for education that promotes peace and justice becomes particularly pressing (Bromley, Lerch, Jimenez, 2016).
The maladies currently plaguing the planet are not new but they seem to be converging in alarming ways and reaching – or exceeding – *tipping points*, wherein addressing them becomes even more difficult (Sork, 2019).
– Another advantage of supporting citizenship education within ALE is its capacity to help participants become lifelong learners and to enable them to acquire new knowledge and skills continuously and independently, which is imperative in the world where formal education system cannot adapt quickly enough to the accelerated pace of change;

ICAE considers global citizenship education (GCE) crucial for achieving Agenda 2030, but not only the kind of education that helps people adapt, develop resilience and cope with change. What is required is truly transformative learning, a 'game changer' that helps adults understand and critique current paradigms and structures, and to inspire change and take innovative actions. For ICAE it also means:

in order to solve the problems in a sustainable way, adult education shouldn't have a palliative character, but go deeper to the roots of the problems of the modern

world and the situation in lower-income countries. It should 'enlighten' people in upper-income countries about the interconnectedness of political, economic and social phenomena. Besides, it should raise their awareness about the role of upper-income countries in contemporary problems of developing the world (including ideology, politics and military) and it should try to be one of the agents of social change and positive transformation of the modern world (Popović, 2016).

From that perspective, a global citizen needs to be able to understand how global policy and international developments influence local realities, but also how actions at the local level can impact the global. Values such as peace, justice and equality are the basis of engagement, and – as Richardson points out (according to Hoskins, 2016) that in this regard global citizens are expected to identify social injustices around the world and have the motivation and skills to undertake peaceful action to redress these situations.

Therefore, in GCE all aspects have to be included: relevant knowledge and information; competencies and skills needed for engagement and action; development of emotional relevance of the topics for the participants, in order to increase motivation for engagement and develop agency. Agency is considered not only a possibility for individuals to create and change the environment, but also a process of active co-construction of social reality (Berger, Luckman, 2011). It is a crucial part of civic education, since it includes (re)connection with a community, very often through the new ways of community learning, civic actions and civic activities, which are understood as the kind of agency (Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović, 2020). Development of critical thinking is the starting point, and it is also essential for the development of media or information literacy as a means to identify fake news and evaluate information sources and online content. Critical thinking, as a form of information literacy, provides a means to critically engage with online content, for example by looking for evidence to support claims and by evaluating the plausibility of arguments (Machete, Turpin, 2020).

The role of social movements and civil society organisations in citizenship education

The historical transformation of the concept of *citizen*, defined through the relationship with the state, means that citizenship education can no longer be exclusively seen within this frame and can be provided by other actors. Since ALE has often been understood as enabling citizens to control or change their relationship with the state, state-run organisations and governmental structures, and playing an important role in seminal changes of social and political structures, it is expected that non-state providers of ALE will continue to be important actors and providers of citizenship education.

The increased role of non-state actors, most importantly civil society, also reflects the relationship between citizens and various social groups and associations, and the increased number of roles citizens have and contexts they perform. It is the civil society that can fulfil these new needs and fill in the gap the traditional education providers leave when confronted with the new challenges. New political structures and relationships, new connections between local, regional and global level (especially the complex interdependency and interconnectedness of political, economic, social and cultural norms and decisions), new ways of community organising, they all require providers that will not only offer relevant knowledge, but also enable informed decision-making and constructive engagement in these dynamic processes. Thus, citizens can have more important role in the governance of their communities; being familiar with and knowledgeable about the political, social, and economic issues of both their country and the global world, and having their voices heard through civil society, they will be prepared, motivated and engaged in partnership with the government(s) in solving various problems of their societies.

Civil society is a traditional provider of education for the vulnerable and marginalised groups – exactly those that might have additional interest in citizenship education in order to be empowered and get means for the transformational engagement around their life and work situation. Moreover, the migrant crises and the number of refugees exposed the fact that there are millions of people without even a formal status of a citizen, without traditional supportive environment, in a situation where their human rights might be jeopardized, and not covered by the usual educational provision. This is one of the most important areas of the civil society educational engagement nowadays, helping to solve the problems from the local to the global level.

Above the important role of an educational provider that helps government, civil society is also its critical friend, and supports citizens to participate in civic and political life in order to ensure the accountability of the state, and the legitimation of democracy. Gaining and maintaining rights requires constant action and vigilance from citizens (Hoskins, Kerr, 2016). Civil society can support democratic practices at local, national, regional and even global level and that's exactly where global citizenship education can play an important role and have significant impact. Still, the caution applies to the – the danger that all responsibility for some of the major social issues (social justice, lifelong learning) is shifted from the state to civil society in order to get rid of the financial burden. The actors in civil society also have their own agenda and interest (which out analytical and critical thinking at the top of the required skills of active citizen), but they are by rule the main player of citizenship education in most of the countries. Hoskins (2016) even suggests that participation in a representative democracy at all levels is an important part of the skills for global citizenship. Teaching critical citizenship is similar to Freire's conscientization - revealing to the learner *the realities of socioeconomic inequalities and power relationships between countries and region*s Hoskins (2016) – which is one of the missions of ICAE since the very beginning.

Critical pedagogy, even when in a very non-formal way, was in the core of the educational endeavours of many social movements. A long-term one is the World Social Forum (WSF), lasting for more than 20 years (ICAE is long-standing member of the Executive Council), a visible manifestation of global civil society, bringing together very diverse actors, gathered in a fight for ‚global justice' and opposition the process of globalization run by the large multinational corporations. Education and lifelong learning play a very important role in the WSF and is understood in the ‚intersectoral' way – as a mean to achieve many different goals.

Regarding the economy transformative actions, the challenge was posed in establishing a non-patriarchal, decolonial, anti-capitalist and non-exploitative educational and research system. For this end, it was proposed to put the care of the planet and the dignity of life in the centre of the educational system, along the lines of solidarity and holistic model not only linked to childhood but a practice that lasts throughout life (WSFTE, 2019).

The WSF provided not only a space for critical rethinking of dominant paradigms (such as unlimited economic growth and use of natural resources), but also the place for exchange of innovative practices that encourages and informs citizens about the possibilities and ways of active individual and communal engagement in addressing global problem (such as the agro-ecological and food sovereignty movements, feminist re-peasantry, work and housing cooperativism, ethical finance and fair trade, community economies and social enterprises, etc.).

Although WSF politics has an identifiable core centred on struggles against global capitalism and imperialism. Advocates for women's sexual rights and for the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders – LGBTI or queers – have found sympathetic ground at the Forums held in Brazil and India and many of the regional Forums, although not all of them (Wilson, 2009).

The WSF has challenged dominant social structures and global power relationships through its activism, but also inspired fruitful theoretical work and research dealing with the questions of global governance, alternatives to representative democracy, etc. The World Social Forum also emphasizes diversity within the progressive movement itself.

Some social movements in the second half of the 20th century dramatically changed society and the understanding of citizen, state and education, such as the civil rights movement in the USA to end institutionalized racial discrimination; the feminist movement with its campaigns for reforms on issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, maternity leave, equal pay, sexual violence, etc.; gay rights movement dealing with the rights of people regardless of their gender identity or sexual preferences; the ecological movement, consisting of a broad range of activist activities related to the environment, climate change, energy dependence, health disparities, etc., but also movements around single issues like the peasant movement, sub-branches of the labour movement, etc. These movements and their numerous and diverse actions were also spaces of learning about equality and human rights of various groups, about sustainable development – issues that are equally or even more valid and justified today. They have also included an understanding of human and citizens' rights that has transcended the usual boundaries of national borders or *traditional* social groups.

Other social movements can also be considered as forms of non-formal civic education (e.g. Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring). Today there are also numerous examples of how various social movements, organised civic actions and sometimes protests, serve as the places for learning about democracy and how to be actively engaged in fighting for democracy (or human rights, or environmental protection...).

The *old* didactic principle of *learning by doing* gets new meaning; civic actions are autonomous, self-organized and self-performed, and self-organization can be seen as the daily production of a not-for-profit climate of self-empowerment. Individuals not affiliated with formal institutions and groups who work in a self-empowered way are self-organizing subjects who take responsibility for shaping their own community. So, it's not only about learning democracy (its values, rules, mechanisms and limits), it's about doing democracy (Popović, Maksimović, Jovanović, 2020).

Many of those movements tackle global issues – climate change, rights of migrants, criticism of armed interventions, freedom of speech worldwide, women's rights around the globe, etc. New learning environments, learning cities and public spaces – broadened the traditional understandings of citizenship education providers, content and groups. Civil society, in its traditional and most innovative forms, has a crucial role in this new landscape of citizenship education.

Projects, programmes and action promoting citizenship education and GCE within ALE among ICAE members and partners

The core of global citizenship education in recognized in ICAE's mission:

> [...] to promote learning and education for adults and young people in pursuit of social justice within the framework of human rights in all its dimensions, to secure the healthy, sustainable and democratic development of individuals, communities and societies (ICAE, 2020).

In its broad network, ICAE is a vivid example of education and learning that deal with the most important problems of modern humanity. ICAE members address nearly all elements of the modern understanding of active and global citizenship, in a contextualised manner, responding to local needs and urgent issues, but guided by global goals and universal human values.

These examples also illustrate a very organic way of dealing with problems in an intersectoral manner in ALE, grasping them in their real-life complexity.

COVID-19, health, environment and learning in times of crises

Timely, engaged and informed response of civil society to COVID-19 crises is an example of global citizenship in action - local, but globally-informed action. These actions were shaped by the sustained contribution of adult educators, who have been organizing communities to fight not only the virus, but also other issues like poverty, injustice, discrimination, etc. And it is this critical thinking and capacity to mobilise that has helped initiate the first responses to COVID-19. This informed action is also based on a clear understanding about how the pandemic has made more visible and exacerbated inequalities.

Within the crisis–with the extent of injustices and inequalities being revealed for all to see – a new social awareness arose. There are many examples of acts of human solidarity. One example is **Cape Town Together**, formed as the pandemic was

emerging. Public health doctors, who had experience in the containment of the Ebola virus, asserted the need for an organisational structure that would mirror the novel coronavirus – it must be adaptable, invasive, quick-footed, non-discriminatory, learn on the job, be ahead of the game, continually develop. They recognised that COVID-19 combined with the lockdown would have serious impacts on every family in every community and that the most vulnerable people from poor and working-class homes especially would struggle (Walters, 2020).

There are now about 200 self-organising **Community Action Networks** (CANs) across greater Cape Town as part of the network. The CANs are encouraged to form partnerships across socio-economic areas so that middle- and working-class communities mutually support one another. The philosophy which underlies the network is that this is not charity but social solidarity – it's in our collective interest to keep one another healthy. The network provides information, training materials, and resources to assist people to self-organise. Much of the organising has to be virtual through the use of WhatsApp and other social media. There is cross-generational learning as a CAN may have 18 to 80-year olds working together. Besides learning how to fundraise, how to communicate within the CAN and across CANs, how to distribute food and other goods, and how to continually plan and adapt to changing conditions, there are opportunities organised by Cape Town Together coordinators for learning across the network through weekly co-learning events using Zoom technology. Within the broader context and in collaboration at times with Cape Town Together, there are a host of regular webinars on issues relating to food security, the climate crisis, and the relationship to COVID-19; water and COVID-19; inequalities across sex-gender, class, race, etc. Adult learning and education (ALE) pulses through the veins of Cape Town Together and is critical to its success. It is thus a COVID-19 university!

In Asia, the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (**ASPBAE**), a regional network of more than 200 civil society organisations and individuals operating in around 30 countries of the Asia-Pacific region organized numerous events

tackling multiple challenges of the COVID-19 crises. One example is a regional webinar on *Education Financing: Challenges in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic*, exploring the impact of COVID-19 on public investments in education, mobilising civil society to strengthen their advocacy efforts and engage in constant monitoring and tracking, holding governments accountable to their commitments and safeguarding education budgets to build back better after this crisis and protect the right to education for all. Networking, strategizing, research, analysis and call for actions related to both causes and the consequences of COVID-19, were in the core of ASPBAE's engagement on the Asia South Pacific. Many webinars and events were organized around important days such as International Literacy Day, for example on the occasion of the International Youth day, listening to youth voices, their research findings, and recommendations, and celebrating community youth actions. ASPBAE has convened the first all-in Zoom online meeting of the 18 national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific region, with the aim to gain a sense of how respective government measures regarding the coronavirus are impacting on education, how coalitions have been able to respond, and the key education issues that are being raised in each country. ASPBAE also reached out to alumni of its flagship programme, the Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC), to understand the impact of the lockdown on their work and on post-BLDC action plans which were part of a Tracer Study that ASPBAE is conducting to create a Community of Practice (ASPBAE, 2020).

In the USA, ICAE members are adult education organisations, together with universities as one of the main providers of ALE. In March 2020, efforts to slow the pace of the COVID-19 pandemic led to community-wide closures and a rapid pivot to emergency remote teaching and learning (ERTL) for students of all ages and settings, including adult basic skills programs. An urgent need to build capacity of programs and staff to serve their communities produced a groundswell of effort across the diverse landscape of adult education providers. The EdTech Center @ World Education convened researchers leading studies on the field's response to COVID-19 in a Technical Working Group (TWG), where they analysed their collective research efforts. The brief resulting from this effort captures shared high-level findings unearthed during a series of synthesis meetings and related activities, including: the role of leadership; the quantity and quality of professional development; strategies for engaging learners together with supporting access to devices, connectivity, and resources; partnership opportunities; policy and practice challenges; and the learning that is guiding planning for fall 2020 and beyond. As an adult education response to

ERTL, in an impressively compressed time frame, adult education professional development expanded into tools to support asynchronous instruction to accommodate learners who could not join set class schedules and to organize learning events. As the reality of the crisis timeline became evident and more guidance was provided from leadership on not only wrapping up the school year but also continuing to enrol and serve students remotely into the future, professional development sessions on remote outreach, intake, and assessment grew. Educators began to ask for serialized training, recognizing their need to 'stack' their own professional development with opportunities to implement and address new challenges. Distance education *office hours* and coaching sessions also proved to be successful strategies with practitioners receiving one-on-one support from a technology mentor. Much has been learned about the learners 'experiences, partnership, integrated education and training. Perhaps a silver lining from COVID-19 will be the greater attention given to the interconnected nature of our communities and a commitment to providing the resources and attention needed to ensure interrupted learning is addressed with high quality, evidenced-based strategies long into the future (World Education, 2020).

In **Canada**, the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE/ACÉÉA) organised the Pandemic Pedagogy series, that focuses on the roles of adult education in the time of COVID-19, especially on the innovative work adult educators are doing as they engage marginalized communities, community building, literacy education, and popular education; critical and theoretical reflections in adult learning and education, and creative pedagogies, methodologies and methods mobilized for scholars and practitioners to deal with COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 severed key points of digital connection for the 36% of low-income Canadians who rely upon schools, libraries, and even fast food chains for Internet connectivity. This has had dire implications for timely access to vital information and resources, revealing the extent to which lives and livelihoods are tethered to digital technologies, so this series conversed with educators working on the 'front lines' of the pandemic in British Columbia.

In **West Africa**, ALE faced serious challenges even in the time before COVID-19, and civil society made huge efforts to meet these challenges. COVID-19 hit the most vulnerable. The closure of adult learning centres had an especially negative impact. The intergenerational learning that took place when parents and their children discussed homework in the evenings was interrupted because there is no new learning content for both children and adults. The lock-down has led to the slowdown

of economic activities and the exacerbation of poverty in lower-income countries where education levels are already exceptionally low. As a result, adults who were engaged in education programmes enjoying their right to education have been forced to stop their studies.

Unlike the formal education sector where distance learning using radio and television is being introduced, the non-formal education sub-sector was mostly ignored by education planners. However, there are some initiatives taken by CSOs and activist. In Togo, for example, the facilitators of adult education centres are involved in a door-to-door awareness campaign on COVID-19 in national languages. In Benin, Pamoja Benin designed posters on hygiene measures and social distancing practices in four national languages. In Guinea, a picture kit was designed to raise awareness on infection, the symptoms of the disease and important hygiene measures. In Gambia, a food bank was set up to assist the population who lives in poverty. So, using ICT-based learning in adult education centres was important to avoid the interruption of learning in times of crisis, but in addition, literacy approaches such as family and inter-generational literacy enabled the continuity of learning in a conducive and safe environment.

Environmental issues and climate change are cross-cutting topics, which indicates their perceived importance. Some ALE institutions are running these courses at the college level, such as *Environmental Citizenship course* at Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology in Ontario (Algonquin college, 2020). Others – as ASPBAE – have, for many years, had education for environment-related issues as one of the main pillars and values of their work (see ASPBAE Newsletter, 2022).

COVID-19 was at the heart of civil-society provided ALE in various ways:
– The COVID-19 crisis was met by immediate response of civil society organisations to immediate problems. Many non-formal educational activities fostered learning about how to prevent infection in everyday life and how to adapt to the new behaviours (including physical distancing, hand washing, face covering, staying indoors and even working from home where possible). Education has also played a role in teaching people how to better use digital technology, as it enables us to continue learning, schooling, find a job or work from home. Numerous webinars of ICAE members and partners such as EAEA, ASPBAE (2020), PRIA (2020), GCE (2020), Pamoja (2020), DVV International (2020), CEAAL, CLADE, etc. are visible efforts to confront the new situation and to adapt by using new technologies.

– Another important function of civic education that found its place in ALE programmes was raising awareness about the importance of **upholding human rights** during the pandemic, including the ways in which citizens can participate in democratic societies and decision making (cases in Brazil, Philippines, Serbia, etc.)
– Very important was raising awareness about the **global issues** of sustainable development, anthropogenic climate change and environmental degradation that could cause or encourage the spread of new diseases (i.e., large-scale deforestation, habitat degradation and fragmentation, agricultural intensification, trade in endangered species and plants, eating habits, etc.), which was addressed for example in Asia, Latin America, etc.

But COVID-19 was only a new topic for civil society, while the issues were 'old' and the health crises only revealed **existing inequalities**, which were exacerbated. Thus, many ICAE members highlighted and informed, through numerous events, the differential impacts of the crises on different communities, showing that the pandemic was hitting harder those living under the poverty line and under conditions of poor housing, precarious labour and poor health services. For example, physical distancing was not possible for many communities and countries, especially in the Global South, but also in remote areas, cities and neighbourhoods in the North; vulnerable and marginalized communities, especially in high density, socio-economically unequal and predominantly migrant areas, can also be affected by the new measures. Social distance and stigmatization can increase, as well as harassment based on gender, political, racial or religious biases. Physical distancing can easily lead to social distancing and consequently increase existing gaps in society or create new ones. People with disabilities and older people were deprived in terms of health care, social services and access to education. The scavenging women (Dalit community) and sanitation workers in India coined the word *coronapocalypse*; in many countries in Asia physical distancing, staying home, avoiding gatherings and working from home are luxuries that millions cannot afford.

Democracy, human rights and political literacy

Many countries face additional challenges with increased threats to democracy and human rights – their forms of action and engagement are limited, and authoritarian regimes use the opportunity for further cuts in civic rights, freedom of speech, participation of citizens, etc. In **Serbia,** for example, civil society

organisations, free media and journalists used online tools and means of digital communication to inform citizens about their rights and ways to practice democratic procedures in spite of anti-COVID measures, but also to help them to **recognise propaganda, fake news and media manipulation** (being awarded with the Fact-Checking Award for the Balkans for that). The civil society network *Civic Initiatives* (Građanske inicijative) has established an online platform *Three freedoms under the magnifying glass* (Tri slobode pod lupom) – a monitoring system that did regular surveys about human rights during the declared state of emergency (Građanske inicijative, 2020). The platform has regularly reported and reviewed the violations of freedom: of association, of assembly and of expression. These three freedoms must be guaranteed to all, as they are the basis of civil society and no country can call itself democratic without guaranteeing these rights.

> We believe that regularly collecting and publishing cases of violation of these rights can help to raise the visibility of this trend that is growing rapidly and draw attention to the seriousness of the problems we face. Here is an overview of key violations of freedom of assembly, association and expression in Serbia since March this year, when Serbia was placed on the CIVICUS Monitor Watch List as a country where these freedoms are seriously threatened. In addition, representatives of 20 civil society organisations signed in Belgrade the Three Freedoms Platform for the Protection of Civic Space in the Republic of Serbia, in order to protect and promote the freedom of association, assembly and information. The Platform is intended to act as a joint block of civil society organizations (associations, professional organizations, foundations, endowments, and other forms of associations including informal groups of citizens) to stand for the protection of endangered freedoms and create conditions for unhindered participation of citizens in public affairs through civil society development. (Građanske inicijative, 2020).

Fighting fake news was the focus of a programme in **Sweden**. A small activist group was at the beginning of this initiative for democracy, in view of the coming elections. The ensuing cooperation with the folk high schools and popular adult education associations made it a nationwide and continuing program to fight fake news and promote democracy. Some of the specific activities included:
– More than a hundred prominent speakers on democracy and related topics offered to participate in local ALE events

all over Sweden, at no or a very small fee. There were actors, journalists, researchers, politicians, writers, CEOs, representatives of CSOs etc.
– Three writers of the original group produced an anthology of texts on democracy. The project added guidance on how to initiate talks and discussions about the different texts, to be used for discussion in study circles or around the coffee table at work.
– *Democracy days* – larger events organised throughout Sweden. The project was responsible, but much depended on the cooperation with local CSOs.
– *Sweden talks* – a digital tool to organise conversations between persons of differing views (inspired by a project in the Netherlands).
– Thematic conversation cards to inspire discussions on democracy.

The Swedish government has supported the initiative. Several of those who started it are *celebrities* in Sweden, but there would not have been the same kind of nationwide effect and momentum to the project had not the adult education associations engaged in it.

An interesting example of citizenship focused on political issues comes from **Gambia**, implemented in Banjul, by the NGO *Future In Our Hand* (FIOH). Using the MARP tools - active method of participative research, used in the Reflect circles (such as the discussion tree, classification, maps, diagrams, planning, etc.), the members of a Reflect circle mapped their village and this gave them a clear idea of the number of inhabitants of their village. During the elections in Gambia, the national electoral commission sent the voters list of the village. The comparison between the electoral commission's list and the village mapping list revealed that the electoral commission counted more inhabitants in the village. The village management committee therefore went to the electoral commission to challenge their list and demand that the list be corrected. Through this action, electoral fraud was thwarted.

From 1990 until 2017, the great experience of the Porto Alegre *experiment* with the participatory budgeting inspired similar examples around the globe. This Brazilian city introduced an innovative policy of involving the population in planning the city budget - participatory budgeting, thus changing the relationship between the city administration and civil society, succeeding as a model for mobilizing communities, including the poor, improving access to small-scale infrastructure and services, and transforming citizenship. (Sintomer, Gret, 2002). Recently,

a project *Programme SSF Mali Sud/ Mise en place de structures sociales pérenne* was implemented in Mali by NGOs, supported by DVV International office in **Mali.** Thanks to this program, the members of the Reflect circle learned to read the municipal budget and they carried out budget monitoring actions at the town hall level. They advocated for the drilling of wells, the construction of schools and health centres in their localities. Even though this effort didn't institutionalise the role of citizens in municipal budgeting, it has enabled people to understand their responsibility and the power they have in monitoring community structure and processes.

Some regions mobilize learners through celebration of democracy and non-formal education. The International Democracy Festival Association, which represents eight democracy festivals from the **Nordic and Baltic regions,** as well as a **European-wide** festival, aims to support and promote the establishment of other democracy festivals as vehicles for democratic change. Democracy festivals are platforms for democratic dialogue between civil society, politicians, business, media, universities and citizens. The vision is to revitalise democracy by strengthening the link between a political system and citizens as well as creating spaces for dialogue and participation.

The democracy festival *The People's Meeting - Folkemødet*, occurring since 2011 in Bornholm, **Denmark**, is a special opportunity to celebrate, promote and develop ideas about democracy, active citizenship and non-formal adult learning. It aims to strengthen democracy and dialogue in the country, with seminars and meetings free of charge and organised in informal settings. Although the initiative is coordinated by the authorities of Bornholm, it is organised on a practical level by organisations, political parties and groups, who express a wish to be involved. In this sense, the participants are also the organisers, as an example of democracy in real life.

Community learning, neighbourhood and youth

In **Pakistan**, celebrating in spite of difficult circumstances was organized by Bunyad Literacy Community Council – an NGO working for development of mankind on various sectors (e.g. Micro Credit, Child Protection, Education, Water & Sanitation, Adult Literacy & Non Formal Primary Education, etc.) all over the Punjab. They organized the celebration of the International Literacy Day by participating in arranging various activities. Among others, they have celebrated this day among the flood affected community in Basti Manzoor Choonia and Bait Parara

of Tehsil Liaquat Pur and arranged a walk to highlight the importance of education, with children and teachers from the affected school, with many people from the local community (Bunyad Foundation, 2020). Also, through the celebration, the initiative of mobile library was introduced in the region of Lahore. A two-day event to launch Kitab Gari – a mobile rickshaw library by Children's Literature Festival (CLF) was held in Lahore; children from slum communities, government schools, student and community members participated in story telling sessions, workshops, film screenings used as a medium for learning with tablets, an in-built LED screen and sound system (Pakistan today, 2019)

In **Palestine,** suffering from prolonged and multi-layered conflict, DVV International with local NGOs introduced the learning neighbourhood *Mujawara* approach in the community-based centres for youth and adult education. It is based on a moral (almost sacred) obligation to care for your neighbours (not only the adjacent one, but also the *seventh* in a row), not to accept any harm or hardship that affects them without giving a hand or sharing the pain and not to leave any happy occasion without sharing it with them. Learning with and learning about neighbours - courses and activities about personal development, vocational training and community development were implemented by eight community centres for youth and adult education in Gaza, Jerusalem and West Bank.

The approach builds on an important aspect of citizenship education which entails citizens being capable of understanding and adjusting with their own realities not only for themselves, but also to be able to support and protect their families and surrounding communities, involving mutual appreciation, understanding, acceptance and recognition of others, their needs, interests, viewpoints and ambitions. The approach uses the term ***education of hope*** because one of its main goals is to promote the concept of constant effective learning that can transform the lives of participants and their communities through restoring hope, raising awareness about their rights and responsibilities, and striving for a better life.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, a coalition of adult educators working in one of Canada's poorest communities organised the *Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable* (DTES, 2021), aiming to increase social inclusion in a marginalized urban community. Members meet monthly to share information and resources that benefit their learners, for example, about access to basic services in the community (including food and shelter); how to communicate timely information to community

members (including updating an App that communicates vital information about services); and how to support families with children (including disseminating 'learning kits' to families). There was also discussion about coordinated community actions to support the most vulnerable during the pandemic. The *Roundtable* is an excellent example of asset-based approaches to community development, despite its very limited resources.

One successful initiative of CEAAL is a program to **promote student leaders in Ayacucho** region, in order to face the problem of political violence. It was organized in all schools, where each class appoints four delegates who develop the work plan with the students, so the plan emerged from the needs of the students. There was also a programme for teachers. The content was from culture, sports, support to the community, environment, sexuality, community work, and for each theme there were small committees organized, where everybody participates. Duration was one year with regional and local meetings. Participants addressed the issue of citizenship, violence, etc. The project started in the capital of Ayacucho but spread into six parts of the region.

Gender, indigenous population and diversity

The Education for International Understanding (EIU) / Global Citizenship Education Best Practices programme is one of **Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)** efforts to share diverse experiences, practices, and approaches to bolster EIU and GCE which can inform and inspire education professionals who wish to design and implement policies, activities, and educational programmes on EIU and GCE. EIU programme aims to foster global citizens with values, attitudes, knowledge and skill sets necessary for learning to live together and overcoming racial, cultural, and religious conflicts. Through its best practice initiative, EIU provides practical ideas and insights on how to design and implement EIU and GCE by sharing specific examples and practices carried out by practitioners on the ground. In ten selected villages in **India** the trainings for girls were organized, the methodology of action research presented and explored, the workshop on Gender, Sexuality and Patriarchy arranged and they were prepared for the field work, thus empowered to become leaders of their village and the nation in the next few years, ready to challenge oppressing structures and to fight inequality, taboos, violence and harmful practices against women and girls. By coming and acting together, they have also earned the identity as

the 'Shodhini' meaning seekers. The action research project has given them this identity, which goes beyond the one internalized as meek, passive and shy (EIU, 2018).

Many experiences have shown that women and girls were harmed more by the social, economic and political consequences of COVID-19 than men - the experiences and analysis up until this point show that **girls and women** are particularly affected and exposed to exclusion, poverty and violence in the new situation. For instance, the new social norms and economic measures that arise as a response to the pandemic could easily serve to justify exclusion, unnecessary distancing and increased social inequalities. Therefore, many efforts of civil society were organized to support women and girls, but they also included all means of digital communication to draw attention to dramatic increase of inequalities during COVID and to strengthen global awareness of the importance of **gender issues** as an integral part of global citizenship education and cross-cutting issues in efforts to achieve other SDGs.

Girls were the focus of the programme in Lahore, **Pakistan**: Several organisations took part in the *Improving Adolescent Lives* project. The overall objective of the project was to improve education, support a reduction in early marriages and early pregnancies. Under this project Bunyad Literacy Community Council-BLCC organized Adolescents in 255 groups, aimed to enable them to have increased access to and use of information, enhanced confidence, avenues to form and express their opinions, parents and communities enabled to understand adolescents' rights, support their realisation, as well as institutional and administrative structures and services that strengthen the protective environment around them (DAWN, 2017).

Working with vulnerable groups is inherent to civil society – they are traditionally crucial providers of education and learning for groups that are denied quality education and learning, advocating at the same time for their right to learn. Among those groups, **indigenous communities** became prominent, and there is increased recognition of the importance of their contribution to local and global development, especially to the planet's sustainability and cultural diversity. Many ICAE members focus on educational work in indigenous communities, which has a strong link to sustainable development. In accordance with the principle '*In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations*' (Seven Generations International

Foundation, 2020), being/becoming a global citizen involves 'becoming a good ancestor', understanding and 'living' this principle and fostering a sense of responsibility to and for the other through ALE. Recognizing the wisdom embedded in indigenous knowledge is related to our responsibility to others, in terms of 'intergenerational solidarity' – with those who will live on the planet in the future.

New Zealand and its adult education association, **ACE Aotearoa**, are home to numerous projects relevant to Māori communities. For the indigenous people of NZ, Māori ways of learning were through osmosis which can be categorised as non-formal, informal and lifelong. It is important to note that for Māori (as with other indigenous populations) adult education is part of a broader political and cultural agenda with an aim towards cultural and linguistic retention (Morrison & Vaioleti, 2011). Citizenship education must also include overcoming historical amnesia constructed by colonial powers. It is critical and decolonising. It is understanding citizenship as more than individual rights; citizenship is a relational thing, *nohonga tahitanga* – citizenship as unity, living with each other, overcoming possessive individualism and accumulation of property. It is about taking care of the natural order, other people and future generations. It represents a wealth of traditional knowledge and cultural practices with a holistic and integrated approach to learning which has tribal wellbeing as its end.

Becoming 'a good ancestor' captures the deep meaning of global citizenship, including the kind of 'intergenerational solidarity' that stretches over centuries and thinks of the future of the planet, too.

Since education for Māori and Pacific people is an important goal of the government, ACE Aotearoa gets support for ALE in different sectors: schools, communities, Institute of Technologies and Polytechnics (ITP) and Wānanga (Māori based tertiary institutions of learning). The ACE Aotearoa 2018 Annual Report articulates an impressive set of key events/ projects with key indicators of success and key outcomes. Some examples include: resources and services to support ACE learner outcomes, building capability to improve learner outcomes, revision of ACE Sector standards and a Quality Assurance and External Evaluation Review which is reflective of analysing what is quality education according to SDG 4. A key strategy for ACE Aotearoa is to lift the participation and success of Māori and Pacific learners in the sector. This is in line with its constitutional commitment to *Te Tiriti o*

Waitangi' / The Treaty of Waitangi[1] and further reflects the requirements of the SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (Reducing inequality) and SDG 11 (Building Sustainable Cities and Communities). Yet a recent report commissioned by ACE has noted the participation of over 600 ACE organisations plus 73,000 learners and these are conservative numbers (Chauvel, 2019). While many of these organisations and learners may not come under ACE Aotearoa specifically, one can see the breadth and depth of the sector.

There are many programmes of citizenship education among ICAE members that work with combined vulnerabilities and tackle several related problems (such as violations of the rights of black, indigenous and racialized people). **Cohort X** project was developed by the Community Knowledge Exchange (that integrated its operations with the Carold Institute, a leader in adult and popular education in **Canada** since 1989), in response to gaps seen within traditional fellowship and cohort experiences, which too often have been shaped by colonialism, cis-hetero-patriarchy, white-supremacy and neoliberal-capitalism. In developing this cohort experience, members of projects observed the ways in which these same forces have historically impacted climate and gender justice spaces, as well as gaps in the popular understanding of the intersections and interconnectedness between these movements. Cohort X is virtually connecting six leaders and their communities over the course of nine months and provides time, space and financial resources to engage, reflect and learn deeply together, including:

– a stipend to support their ongoing, community-rooted efforts
– regular virtual convenings for relationship building and knowledge exchange
– workshops and trainings as identified by the cohort
– access to storytelling platforms to amplify their insights and learnings.

The Cohort X experience will resource flourishing community leadership across climate justice and gender justice movements, honouring the work that is already underway and fostering new relationships and connections across these spaces, contributing thus to fighting inequalities and increasing social inclusion (Cohort X, 2020).

Latin America provides insights into the broad range of educational activities in indigenous communities. The concept

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1 Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi allowed for British settlement. It was signed in 1840 by Māori chiefs and the Queen's representative.

of popular education, the movement fighting for the right to education and social justice in the best Freirean tradition, inspired numerous projects and programmes. In **Peru**, working for peace and human right and for democratic education has a long tradition, combined with the activities of young political parties of Latin America, sometimes in the remote areas such as Ayacucho. **CEAAL, Popular Educational Council of Latin America and the Caribbean**, works today in 21 countries, with the mission to support people in fighting poverty, injustice, discrimination, violence, antidemocratic systems and exclusion. Citizenship education in the deeply heterogeneous region, rich in linguistic, cultural, ethnic and geographical diversity, with indigenous, Afro descendent and mixed populations, which is also the most unequal region in the world, faces many challenges. The most important ones are high unemployment, migration, corruption, violence, disparities between men and women... But in the core of the Latin American understanding of citizenship education is belonging to a specific culture with relationships based on solidarity, be in favour of inclusion and social, economic and political justice, take care of each other and our Mother Earth, emancipation and justice. It is not by accident that Rio +20 Social Forum took place in Latin America, and that the World Social Forum, although global, has its home in Brazil.

Peace, international understanding and fight against racism

The opposite of the narrow, autarkic and nationalistic tendencies observed in some countries, many ICAE members addressed topics related to international understanding, interculturalism and openness for the global issues and in their educational provision. The Institute of International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (**DVV International**) fosters the promotion of global perspectives on Education for Sustainable Development through the project **Global Learning at Adult Education Centers (VHS)**, supporting the implementation of a wide variety of topics, methods and formats related to global issues and sustainability. This holistic project facilitates the know-how transfer and action-oriented learning on global sustainability issues to the community level of adult learning and education. With topics like climate change, consumption and production, international agriculture and human rights, 'Global Learning' interconnects the daily lives of people with complex global economic, ecological, social and political structures. Participants are capacitated to better understand complex interconnections in our globalized world. They are enabled to reflect their own behaviour and mind-set, change their perspective and gain new insights on the above mentioned topics. One of the particular qualities of Global Learning is the empowerment of participants to become self-dependent global citizens and responsible consumers.

In **Latin America,** through its Working Group for peace and democratic coexistence (CEAAL, 2020) **Popular Educational Council of Latin America and the Caribbean** has developed a special kind of collective experience. Its objective is the exchange of experiences for the collective construction of knowledge (methodologies, thematic proposals, publications) within the framework of popular education for peace and democratic coexistence, from the human rights perspective. The following *branches* were developed in the group:

a) in Argentina, *Schools and Communities of Peace*, a project directed by the Center for Participation for Peace and Human Rights (CEPADEHU) in the Libertad neighbourhood, within the municipality of Merlo;

b) In Chile, the Corporation for Collective Action, Education and Community (ACEDUC), seeking to contribute to a quality, equitable and inclusive educational system for Chile;

c) in Colombia, the project *Building peace with rights*, and the activity of the Capuchini Mobile Tent were seeking to reclaim the street as a space for socialization, dialogue and a culture of peace among children and young people in the Aguablanca district in the city of Santiago de Cali;

d) in Peru, the Alternative institution, the work focused on equity and inclusion, promoting human rights and social change in the Metropolitan Lima.

Also, in **Canada**, the **Québec Institute of cooperation for Adult Education (ICÉA)** prepared the opinion – statement paper for the Government of Quebec *Adult education: An essential tool for an effective plan to combat racism*, with the dual objectives: to illustrate the manifestations of racism in the world of adult education and, on the other hand, to demonstrate the need to lifelong education as a tool to counter racism. This document deals with the racism experienced by non-white and indigenous people. The paper suggests eight measures and proposes plans for concrete actions for adult education that could help fight racism and increase social inclusion. (ICEA, 2020).

A number of activities – public lectures, workshops, trainings, debates etc. focusing on the topics related to the **Black Lives Matter** (BLM) movement-- were organized by civil society and educational providers not only in USA, but world-wide. The Black Lives Matter movement is a powerful, non-violent peace movement that systematically examines injustices that exist at the intersections of race, class, and gender; including mass incarceration, poverty, non-affordable housing, income disparity, homophobia, unfair immigration laws, gender inequality, and poor access to healthcare. There was, for example, Black Lives Matter at School - Week of Action that expanded its proposed activities to a *Year of Purpose* on-line courses and anti-bias trainings, etc.

Citizenship education, skills, private sector and employment

ICAE members report another approach to citizenship education, where **companies and other private sector actors are involved**, promoting the issues and values of active citizenship, pursuing social justice, empowering individuals and communities, very often in partnership with civil society.

The Community Learning and Service Partnership program (CLASP) is an intergenerational, mutual learning opportunity for the employees of **Cornell University (NYC)** and students to work together in learning partnerships. CLASP pairs employees pursuing self-selected learning goals with students studying adult and community learning. Meeting together weekly, each Learning Partner pair focuses on the employee's goals, and both the adult and the student benefit from the mutual, professional relationship. Adults enjoy the support of their younger educational mentors while the undergraduate students gain new colleagues and develop their skills as designers and facilitators of non-formal learning. Founded as a collaborative endeavour in 1990 of UAW Local 2300 (a chapter of the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers) and Cornell University, the program has maintained good will and support for three decades. Adult learners can request a Learning Partner for almost any educational subject, and nearly all participants go on to put the fruits of their mentorships to good use in the community through volunteer service, entrepreneurship, civic involvement, naturalized citizenship, or public service. Some return as peer Learning Partners for their co-workers. For undergraduates, the Learning Partnership is frequently life-changing and transformative; many cite their

CLASP experience as clarifying a future direction, prompting a change of career focus or solidifying a commitment to work for social justice (CornellCALS, 2020).

Building a future through the sustainable development, in combination with the entrepreneurship, is in the focus of the project in **Lebanon**, developed through the partnership: GEC (Global Enterprise Challenge) – run by Broadclyst Community School, UK and Microsoft. More than 230 schools in 25 countries participated due to its great importance since it incorporates a wide range of business and entrepreneurial skills while encompassing the children's learning into a real-life context using Microsoft Office 365 technology to allow worldwide collaboration and creativity. The project aims at helping the students build up their future career in a progressively global economy. It also targets at expanding youngsters' understanding of global environmental issues in order to grow green. This global project gives students the chance to gain the needed cultural awareness to live and work as global citizens.

The challenge offers the students a scenario of creating a company, designing and manufacturing products based on recyclable material, marketing, trading and gaining a profit. Throughout the ten stages of the project, which are the company's formation, designing logos and slogans, product research, market research, project business report, companies' fundraising, advertising and ordering, and production and sales the students are to follow up a logistics process. They suggested products to the panel of which selected ones are to be manufactured.

COABE (The Coalition on Adult Basic Education) from the **USA,** is the largest adult education association worldwide and represents the field of 65,000 adult educators who serve 1.5 million adult learners that operate out of more than 2,000 adult education programs nationwide. They exist to provide leadership, communication, professional development, and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners to advance quality services for all adult learners, shares success story about the impact of adult basic education programs that are funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the US. COABE services include teaching foundation skills in reading, math, and English, coupled with college and career readiness skills that lead to employment or the transition to post-secondary education or certifications, and present a good example of partnership: public schools, community colleges, libraries, and community-based organizations offer programs at the local level.

By the support to education and employment, COABE contributes to the achievement of broad ranges of social goals: low-skilled adults are two times more likely to be unemployed; three times more likely to be in poverty; four times more likely to be in poor health; and eight times more likely to be incarcerated. Educating adults creates stronger communities. Higher education levels are also correlated with lower rates of chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma, and a mother's education level is the highest determinate of a child's academic success. Inmate participation in adult education reduces recidivism by 29 per cent. Adult education and family literacy are the best available weapons against inter-generational low literacy.

New forms of engagement by companies in support of human and civic rights, and values of democracy and justice, are coming from the private sector. An example is a widely-reported incident at a Starbucks outlet in Philadelphia in 2018, when the treatment and arrest of two African-American men led to the closing of all **Starbucks** stores nation-wide for a mandatory four-hour anti-bias training program. Curriculum was designed by nationally recognized experts and was available for other companies to use. Starbucks also moved beyond this single short-term program into to a multiphase bias training initiative.

This light-speed scramble - from a day of training to a full-on anti-bias overhaul – suggests a rapid evolution in Starbucks's understanding of what taking on bias means. If Starbucks follows through, it will be one of the first major corporations to develop a comprehensive plan for tackling bias head-on – and potentially forge a new path for its peers to follow (Sork, 2019a).

Suggestions, recommendations and steps forward in promoting citizenship education and GCE in ALE

Presenting ICAEs concept, discourse and understanding of citizenship education, together with the examples from various regions, shows clearly that citizenship education, especially understood as global citizenship education, is an urgent issue in the contemporary world. COVID-19 crisis, which prompted the initiation many of programmes and activities of ICAE members, has exposed and compounded existing global problems, and clearly, almost brutally showed that this world is connected in a way that requires both common values and joint efforts.

Studies point to the impact of human activity on the habitats of wild life as the major explanation for the current pandemic. In other words, the current pandemic concerns two central issues – the question of public health and the question of climate change. Despite the impact of the first, we cannot forget the second when considering how adult learning and education should engage with such issues. We could perhaps add a third central question, which appears to have dictated public policy in many countries – the relative importance of human life versus economic activity. We need to relate this to the questions of public health and climate change and how that will impact our lives and to the equally important question of democracy and democratic government. This brings an additional element to the further conceptualisation of GCE – rethinking current paradigms and existing structures. Society is based on a series of checks and balances. ALE can be a vital part of these checks and balances by forming critical and questioning citizens to participate actively in society (Ireland, 2020).

The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the complete incapacity of neoliberal policies to deal with this magnitude of social and economic crisis. It has equally demonstrated the shortcomings of the existing model of globalization. Recently the narrative of ALE has been built around these pillars with their obsessive focus on the market and training and retraining for employment. ALE now has the opportunity to contribute to the writing of a new narrative in which human life is placed above purely individual economic and materialistic concerns and cooperation above individual demands. It is time, once and for all, to bury the tragic words of Margaret Thatcher that *There is no society, only individuals* – the negation of the essence of humanity (Ireland, 2020).

Ultimately, Global Citizenship Education cannot simply advocate for new approaches and measures that are suitable for upper-income countries and communities, but needs to acknowledge the global context, and what these measures, new ways of behaviour, new approaches to learning mean for other regions. This is especially true for vulnerable communities – not only in lower-income countries, but also for marginalized and excluded individuals and communities in upper-income countries, because recent data and researches show that even when global inequalities are decreasing, inequalities within the countries are increasing (Milanović, 2016). These elements should be considered in measures to reduce regional gaps.

Further research results from several areas should inform the *global* aspects of citizenship education, and careful analysis of the advantages and failures of the process of globalisation is needed.

Citizenship education and GCE have to be clearly conceptualized, including relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours based on values; contextualized – re-grounded in the realities and perspective of the majority and put into a global perspective, and pedagogically informed by de-colonising, feminist, Freirean and ecological movements and approaches.

In its development, GCE was broadened by incorporating new issues and topics. Being active as citizens in the 21st century requires more than *the ability to read a bus timetable*. It requires, for example, citizens to have an `[…] awareness of the implications of varying transport policies upon atmospheric degradation´ (Clair, 2003, p. 75). Environmental and climate issues have become indispensable elements of GCE; while

peace, interculturalism, democracy and human rights remain its cornerstones.

There are further areas that have entered the domain of GCE, including financial, digital and workplace citizenship. Although the knowledge and skills in these areas are necessary for a modern individual, and these topics should find their place in GCE curricula, there is a danger to broaden GCE too much and to fill it with such diverse content that the concept of GCE loses its meaning and unique contributions. This might have harmful consequences for educational provision and for professional, high quality educational service to learners. Teaching these content and skills could be done in a way that supports the development of critical thinking, open-mindedness and tolerance, and that empower individuals and groups. Therefore, proper methodologies should be developed and teachers and trainers in non-formal education should be trained in them – to integrate elements of citizenship education into the other areas.

There are projects aiming to develop innovative approaches and methodologies, especially through the synergies of networking and partnership in implementing GCE. Such a project is **Bridge 47,** created to bring people and organisations together to share and learn from each other on the topic of GCE and target 4.7. of the Global Agenda. Bridge 47 mobilises civil society from all around the world to contribute to a transformation towards global justice and eradication of poverty through Global Citizenship Education, but it works with policy makers at all levels as well, especially in Europe. Bridge 47 aims to foster new and innovative approaches to Global Citizenship Education (GCE), being aware that there is more than one answer to how it can be done. Through capacity building activities, they seek to offer learning spaces and support CSOs and educational change makers in engaging in meaningful and potentially transformative Global Citizenship Education. Beyond extensive advocacy work for GCE, Bridge 47 initiated many innovative mechanisms for achieving GCE goals. For example Innovation Stories - regular blog posts from sub-grantees that showcase innovative projects; invitation to educational activists from all over the world to embark with the Bridge network on the Transformative Learning Journey, an intensive 8-month long experiential and experimental training course on transformative education for systemic change, that involves the head, the heart and the body; Train-the-Trainer Seminars across Europe catering for the needs in the respective context, with the topics ranging from Decolonial and Critical GCE, Advocacy for GCE, Working with New Target Groups, Creative Civic Action, GCE and SDGs to Theatre and Storytelling as a Method. And the

recent innovative achievement: Bridge 47 developed an Online Game, testing possibility of gamifying educational content around GCE (Bridge 47, 2020).

For promoting GCE, policy support as well as the integration of research evidence and best practice examples is required. Furthermore, taking global political and economic realities into account, and addressing structural problems and their deep roots is crucial – these elements should both find a place in advocacy work and in the GCE curricula. GCE should not play a reactive and palliative role, trying to cure existing problems, but should be based on universal values and oriented by a truly transformative agenda, which is provided by the target 4.7. But this target is quite vague, addresses several important areas that were *merged* into one target, with only one indicator, which is neither strong nor binding: Indicator 4.7.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment. (UNESCO Bangkok, 2017). Even if the defining and measuring the achievements in this field would be extremely difficult, the adequate methodologies should be found, which remains as an important task.

Exactly because GCE has a weak position in the global agenda, ICAE, with its members and partners, advocates in the UN and with actors involved in the implementation of SDGs. ICAE regional members (ASPBAE, EAEA, Pamoja, etc.) had numerous advocacy activities for GCE in their regions, and they organised events within the HLPF in UN, New York, such as: official side event *Global Citizenship Education- Response to Global Crisis* (HLPF 2020, organized by ICAE; UIL, Bridge 47), event and reception for hundreds of participants at 2019 HLPF, in order to *celebrate the importance of SDG 4.7, a targeted goal to achieve global citizenship and sustainable development through lifelong learning* (Bridge 47 and ICAE); official event *Global Citizenship Education – Why is it important? Insights and cross-cutting practices* (Bridge 47, 2020a, organized by Finland, Fiji, APCEIU, Fingo and Bridge 47).

> There is an unprecedented need to shift our perspective as adult educators from what has fundamentally been an overly reactive, locally focused, felt-needs-based posture to a more assertive, insistent, globally oriented approach to our work... Many adult educators around the world already approach their work from this more assertive, globally oriented stance – most notably

popular, environmental, and activist educators – but […] many more of [them] need to make this transition if there is to be a habitable, relatively peaceful planet in the future (Sork, 2019).

We are witnessing the euphoria around the use of digital tools and online platforms for exchange, meetings and learning. There is a strong tendency - accelerated by the pandemic - to move ALE fully to the virtual space. In the current situation of the COVID-19 crises, this is understandable. But at least in the developing world, the COVID-19 pandemic has served to demonstrate the falsity of the notion that we live in an inter-connected world in which easy communication is accessible to all. Access to information and communication technologies (ICT) is as unequal as the distribution of income. The large majority of adults and young people who are the public of adult learning and education are those who do not have access to ICT. Hence, we need to think again about our delivery strategies for ALE. How best to reach those who most need ALE? That means taking ALE to where the learner lives or making sure that community learning centres have good access to the internet. Alternatively, WhatsApp or similar applications can be used to provide a two-way link between educator and student and the enormous potential of radio should not be neglected.

For the GCE, an additional challenge of learning in the digital space is lack of potential for a constructive, dynamic encounter, lack of group dynamics and social learning, as well as missing emotional aspects – all of them crucial for the development of competencies, skills and dispositions needed for GCE. It is hard to imagine effective GCE without developing agency, critical thinking and motivation to act. These are limits that should be kept in mind when planning programmes and other activities in GCE.

ALE alone will not rewrite our collective narrative but without ALE, it will be exceedingly difficult to achieve the kind of world that we want. It is a narrative which will need to include the true meaning of participative democracy, the recognition of the need to reverse the causes of climate change, unlimited economic growth and extreme inequalities, with emphasis on respect for diversity and all forms of life. Just as we have been promising Education for All, since Jomtien in 1990, we now need to reaffirm that education for all is a prerequisite for democracy and that life is a prerequisite for both. New versions of Freire's critical consciousness or Mezirow's perspective transformation may be necessary to provoke the commitments to act required to reverse many of the trends that currently threaten humanity.

Executive summary

There is hardly a concept, paradigm or topic that is used, promoted and advocated as much as citizenship education, while remaining so vaguely defined and differently understood. Presenting ICAEs concept, discourse and understanding of citizenship education, together with the examples from various regions, this paper shows clearly that citizenship education, especially understood as global citizenship education, is an urgent issue in the contemporary world. The core meaning of global citizenship education is recognized in ICAE's mission:

> [...]to promote learning and education for adults and young people in pursuit of social justice within the framework of human rights in all its dimensions, to secure the healthy, sustainable and democratic development of individuals, communities and societies (ICAE, 2020).

Citizenship – or civic – education has always been part of national education systems and has been defined by national discourses about what constitutes a *good citizen*. In situations where educational programmes promote exclusionary nationalism, school climate is generally authoritarian and repressive, which is not conducive to the development of civic competency. There are also longstanding traditions of marginalizing minorities and women and widespread unease with growing diversity (Bassel and Ghosn-Chelala, 2018). In these circumstances, adult learning and education, especially within the civic sector, becomes increasingly important. While countries involved in conflicts, troubled by persistent poverty and large numbers of fleeing people tend to nationalist discourses in education, civil society makes tireless efforts to promote participatory, inclusive and cross-country programmes, and pays special attention to vulnerable groups, to the rights of women, youth, people with disabilities, and others. Civil society organisations (CSOs) often use Freirean approaches and related emancipatory and transformative educational practices. CSOs incorporate the ideals, approaches and values of global citizenship education to enhance civic responsibility and political competencies at the country-level where the struggle occurs to reconcile traditional values with modern approaches to achieving a just and equal society for all.

Global development in the 21st century has not only added more topics to citizenship education but has also sharpened the critique of existing curricula. This is based on the recognition that the world has become a global village in terms of means of communication, and a *global market* where goods and services of one country can be purchased or sold in other corners of the world, while the mobility of people is still limited, often in the service of narrow political and economic reasons. In education, this was accompanied by an awareness that large groups were left behind economically through globalisation, especially in lower-income countries, while inequalities increased within upper-income countries (Milanović, 2016).

The dominant modern idea of citizenship was linked closely to the emergence of individuals endowed with entitlements or rights in relation to the governments of territorial sovereign states, but numerous changes re-shaped this understanding. The nation-state no longer [has] absolute claim over the individual as belonging to a particular state as individuals now have dual or even multiple citizenships because of states' membership in extra-national organizations (Nwaogu, Nwaogu, 2009).

There is also increased movement of people across national borders for political or economic reasons. Financial crises, armed conflicts, the alarming effects of climate change and environmental degradation, and several waves of pandemics– most recently COVID-19 – has strengthened both the feeling that the world is very much connected and that national boundaries are increasingly meaningless.

It is civil society that can fulfil new needs and close the gap that traditional education providers leave when confronted with these new challenges. New political structures and relationships, new connections between the local, regional and global (especially the complex interdependency and interconnectedness of political, economic, social and cultural norms and decisions), and new ways of community organising all require providers that will not only offer relevant knowledge, but also foster informed decision-making and constructive engagement in these dynamic processes. Civil society is a traditional provider of education for vulnerable and marginalised groups – exactly those who might have additional interest in citizenship education as a means of empowerment and transformational engagement to improve their lives.

Representing a broad network of civil society organisations, ICAE promotes education and learning that deal with the most pressing problems facing humanity. ICAE members address nearly all elements of the modern understanding of active, global citizenship, in a contextualised manner, responding to local needs and urgent issues, while being guided by global goals and universal human values. In this paper numerous practical examples illustrate a very organic way of dealing with problems in an intersectoral manner in ALE, understanding them in their real-life complexity. Examples include:

– COVID-19, health and learning in times of crises
– Democracy, human rights and political literacy
– Community learning, neighbourhood and youth
– Gender, indigenous population and diversity
– Peace, international understanding and the fight against racism
– Citizenship education, skills, private sector and employment

Ultimately, Global Citizenship Education (GSE) cannot simply advocate for new approaches and measures that are suitable for upper-income countries and communities. Instead, it needs to take into account the global context and what these initiatives, new forms of behaviour, and new approaches to learning mean for other regions. Recent research shows that even when global inequalities are decreasing, inequalities within countries are increasing (Milanović, 2016).

Further research should inform the evolving *global* aspects of citizenship education. Careful analysis of the advantages and failures of the process of globalisation is needed. Citizenship education must be clearly conceptualized; include relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours; be contextualized in the global and the local; and be pedagogically informed by de-colonising, feminist, Freirean and Indigenous perspectives.

ALE alone will not rewrite our collective narrative. But without ALE, it will be exceedingly difficult to achieve the kind of world that we want. A new collective narrative must reflect a renewed commitment to participative democracy, recognize the imperative to reverse the causes of climate change, question the consequences of unlimited economic growth, and promote respect for diversity and all forms of life. Just as we have been promising Education for All, since Jomtien in 1990, we now need to reaffirm that education for all is a prerequisite for democracy and that sustaining life is a prerequisite for both.

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Table of acronyms

ACT UP	AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power
ALE	Adult Learning and Education
APCEIU	Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding
ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
BLDC	Basic Leadership Development Course
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CEAAL	Consejo de Educación de Adultos de América Latina
CEPADEHU	Center for Participation for Peace and Human Rights
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLF	Children's Literature Festival
CED	Citizenship education
CLADE	Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education
COABE	The Coalition on Adult Basic Education
CANs	Community Action Networks
CLASP	Community Learning and Service Partnership program
CONFINTEA	CONFérence INTernationale sur l'Education des Adultes (International Conferences on Adult Education)
ACEDUC	Corporation for Collective Action, Education and Community
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DVV	German Folkhighschool Association
EAEA	European Association for the Education of Adults
ECOWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
EDC	Education for democratic citizenship
EIU	Education for International Understanding
EU	European Union
FIOH	Future In Our Hand
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GEC	Global Enterprise Challenge
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
ICAE	International Council for Adult Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ITP	Institute of Technologies and Polytechnics
IDPs	Internally displaced people
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
MARP	Museum Alliance Reciprocal Program
NYC	New York City

ICÉA	Institute of cooperation for Adult Education, Québec
ERTL	Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TWG	Technical Working Group
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WSF	World Social Forum

CONFINTEA VII

المؤتمر الدولي السابع لتعلم الكبار

تعلم الكبار و تعليمهم

مفتاح للتنمية المستدامة

15 - 17
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