



Workshop 2 | Creating skills and competences for living and working in the ASEM area

REPORT

Facilitators: Dr Arne Carlsen, Chairman of the ASEM LLL Hub
Mr Francesco Volpini, Director of CCIVS
Mr Bogdan Imre, Programme Manager, CCIVS
Participants: 20 (see list) representing 15 ASEM countries
Rapporteur: Ms Que Anh Dang, Head of the ASEM LLL Hub Secretariat

Vision and key questions:

- How to build future cooperation between research in lifelong learning and the voluntary sector in ASEM countries?
- How to develop a set of standards to measure impacts of voluntary work in creating skills and competences for individuals, organisations, communities and societies at large?
- How to combine formal and non-formal education in promoting adult learning through voluntary activities and coordinating students' and young adults' participation in voluntary work?

Two organisations:

- [Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service](#) (CCIVS), based in UNESCO Paris, with 350 member voluntary organisations in many countries and regions.
- [ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning](#) (ASEM LLL Hub), based at Danish School of Education in Copenhagen, Denmark, with 70 university professors, researchers from some 30 ASEM countries in 5 thematic research networks.

Participants:

- 20 participants from 15 ASEM countries are universities professors and practitioners in LLL, and professionals in voluntary sector.

Method:

In order to answer the questions, we analysed the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in creating possible links between the five thematic research networks of the ASEM LLL Hub and international voluntary service in Asia and Europe, which bring about the development of key competences and facilitate lifelong learning, especially non-formal learning for personal, professional development of young adults .

a) Strengths

- The knowledge and expertise of the two organisations are seen as a strength and potential for developing complementary linkages between LLL and Voluntary sector.
- Voluntary sector can help implementing and disseminating research results through engaging thousands of adult learners in voluntary activities. Voluntary service can also serve as site for research in LLL.
- LLL research can help improving practices in voluntary sector, which in turn support the development of civil society through lifelong learning.
- LLL research brings about better understandings of different forms of learning, therefore enable voluntary organisations and professionals develop contents and processes which serve as tools for competence development.
- Linkages between LLL research and voluntary sector can provide potential for redesigning relations between education and work in today societies.
- Linkages between LLL research and voluntary work help improving recognition of value and meaning of voluntary activities, and increasing the opportunity for recruiting volunteers.

b) Weaknesses

- Different understandings of lifelong learning.
- Lack of interactions between stakeholders, lack of recognition of scope and values of LLL and Voluntary sector.
- Voluntary service and LLL are marginalised sectors in many countries. Therefore it is difficult to sustain cooperation between LLL and voluntary due to shortage of financial and political supports.
- LLL research and voluntary service have different philosophies and different contexts professionally and culturally.
- ASEM LLL hub and CCIVS have their own objectives, organisation, distinctive features.

c) Opportunities

- LLL and Voluntary sector can identify: Who are volunteers? Only youth or also senior citizens? Hence, identify possibility for reach into different groups through voluntary work in various fields in order to develop a set of indicators to measure impacts of voluntary work, especially for competence development of individual, organisation, communities and society at large.
- The increasing needs LLL in the globalisation make many governments recognise LLL as the way forward in developing their education systems.
- Voluntary service is seen as a field of practice, that uses formal, non-formal and informal learning continuum in diverse ways.
- The research in eLearning and the use of ICTs can facilitate knowledge sharing between LLL research and voluntary sector.
- In some ASEM countries, LLL research has high institutional status, but low recognition from politicians and the public, voluntary sector has lower institutional status, but higher recognition from politicians and the public at grass root level. The synergy between LLL research and voluntary may give a better access to financial resources.

d) Threats

- Lack of empirical data.
- Different concepts of non-formal education in Asia and Europe leads to different approaches.

- Lack of recognition, different political support from the government, different concept of democracy or even blockage of ideas for innovation, limited scope for new initiatives from civil societies in some ASEM countries.
- Unbalanced opportunities of European and Asian volunteers.
- Unstable funding for joint projects between LLL and voluntary sector.

Areas of common interest:

- Validate and recognise the learning through voluntary work at personal development for working and living as well-rounded person (professional knowledge, language, cultural skills). Self-assessment and external assessment for measuring impacts: what I have learnt, what have you learnt. Validity of each assessment.
- Conceptual understanding – to share and enhance the understanding of non-formal learning and concept of core competences.
- Potential for redesigning inter-relation between education and work, shifting workplace concept from seeing it as only environment for work, to seeing workplace as learning space, changing conventional concept of workplace as an office, factory , etc, to wider context, neighbourhood for community and through voluntary work.

Ideas for future cooperation:

- CCIVS has started a qualitative research using Radar model, 17 volunteers in 5 countries, interviews, life stories, life experiences in assessing impacts of voluntary work on learning for individual volunteers, organisation, community levels.
- How to develop a set of standards to measure impacts of voluntary work? Series of instrument: online questionnaire, what did young adult learn through youth project, people who participated in training volunteers.
- Establish a group (mini think-tank) to make a joint effort to look at research for measuring impacts: desk review, consulting some European-wide projects, such as www.youthstudies.eu.
- how to combine formal and non-formal education in coordinating university students' participation in voluntary work. Concept of LLL and rethinking learning, teaching, and curriculum at university. Look at youth and voluntary work: what competences do employers require? Are most competences developed in formal education?
- design training and competence development, attitude and values for volunteers. Share sample of handbook "Training of trainers tools: manual for project manager, project volunteers, people who live and work in multi-cultural environment" developed by Service Civil International (SCI- Ms Margherita Serafini).
- Share research results of ASEM LLL Hub project on "Participation in and motivation for workplace learning: voluntary or compulsory".

Recommendations for the ASEM leaders at ASEM 8 Summit:

Living and working in the ASEM area increasingly demands new and more complex skills and competences in personal, social and professional spheres. Therefore we recommend:

- 1) **the development, maintenance and updating of these skills and competences through lifelong learning to build and enhance constructive and closer cooperation in the ASEM region;**

- 2) the development of sustainable and participative learning societies by redesigning relations between all forms of education and working activities through lifelong learning;
- 3) strengthening of civil societies through lifelong learning that encompasses formal, non-formal and informal learning and by recognition of prior learning and voluntary activities.

Report by Que Anh Dang, November 2010