



Thematic Report 2

Integrated Approaches in Lifelong Learning and Recognition of Prior Learning

Working Group 2

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Introduction

1.1 SCOPE OF WORKS

Working Group II has been given the responsibility to initialise an International Network in the field of Integrated Approach to Lifelong learning and Recognition of Skills and Prior Learning. The tasks to be undertaken include the following:

- To identify and establish links with national, regional and international organizations, which have conducted substantial work, related to Lifelong Learning and Recognition of Prior Experiences and Skills
- In what ways can the Asian countries benefit from the work on Lifelong learning already done by organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, ISESCO, OECD and EU
- What are the seminal policy documents and scholarly works produced/generated by these organizations and how do these works translate relevantly to the realities in each of the Asian countries
- What are the purposes of Recognition of Prior Learning? What is the status of Recognition of Prior Learning in ASEM/ Asian countries
- Who are the individuals who have experienced lifelong learning and how can they contribute to enrich understanding of the Recognition of Skills and Prior Learning
- What are the criteria that are used and which could be used to Recognized Skills and Prior Learning nationally and internationally

Working Group II is also responsible in the identification of Models and Examples in the Field of Integrated Approach to Lifelong learning and Recognition of Skills. These include:

- Which are the European countries that have moved far forward in the policy decisions and implemented lifelong education, particularly those countries which have adopted an integrated approach
- What are the major Pilot Projects and in these countries and what are their best practices? There is a need to develop a Compendium of the Best Practices and accompanying Case Studies of such practices? What are the Critical Success Factors identified and what are the causes of failures of the Lifelong Learning Initiatives in these countries, if any
- What is the status of Asian/ ASEM countries regarding their policies and practices pertaining to lifelong learning
- Which are the international organizations that have practiced Recognition of Prior Learning? What are the approaches, systems and criteria used by these organizations to determine, assess and accredit Prior Learning
- Which are the national institutions that have practiced and are practicing Recognition of Prior Learning? What are the approaches, systems and criteria used by these institutions to Recognize Prior Learning
- What are the Asian/ ASEM institutions that are practicing Recognition of Prior Learning? What are their approaches, systems and criteria in assessing and Recognition of Prior Learning

Working Group II will also contribute towards the formulation of Policy Recommendations to be presented at ASEM IV in September 2002. These include:

- To propose an ASEM/ Asian Year of Lifelong Learning in 2005/6

- To propose the establishment of National, Regional and ASEM Internet sites to ensure sustainability of Lifelong Learning
- To propose a Regional/International Evaluation and Accreditation Centre for Recognition of Prior Learning
- To prepare Frameworks Documents which provide Guidelines to Non Governmental Organizations to contribute toward the realization of lifelong learning by conducting programs and courses, which adhere to recognition procedures
- To call for national, regional and International Projects each of which can constitute more than one event or activity
- To conceptualise, design and disseminate various kinds of promotional materials in various languages appropriate for various target groups
- To establish National and Asian/ASEM force on Measuring Lifelong Learning and modify and expand if necessary European Survey Data and Indicators
- To develop Asian/ASEM Time Use Survey and the Classification of Learning Activities
- To formulate powerful and relevant recommendations which would enable the systematic and coherent and criteria-based Recognition of Skills and Prior Learning to create and expand access and improve outcomes of Lifelong Learning

Working Group II is also responsible for the collection and analysis of information, identification of best practices in the field of integrated learning, approaches and systems to recognize prior learning, formulation of recommendations based on experiences as to how coherency, interplay, and recognition of skills can improve access and outcomes of lifelong learning, and, the preparation of input to the closing Conference and the final report. Other questions that are to be addressed by Working Group II include the following:

- What are the key elements of coherent systems to promote Lifelong Learning? What is being done to ensure flexible and integrated learning opportunities linking different learning settings together? How can interplay between formal and non-formal learning be improved, and how are outcomes from different learning settings assessed and recognized? Which approaches are found to improve access for adults to education and training
- What can be possible measures by social partners and public authorities to promote Recognition and Accreditation of Skills and Competencies? How are national standards developed and who are involved in this
- What are the linkages between training/education and actual employment
- What are the linkages between Non-formal and In-formal Learning and the Utilization of Media and IT

1.2 Key issues and challenges related to “Integrated approaches to Lifelong Learning and recognition of skills and prior learning”

The magnitude of the changes on national labour markets caused by globalisation and the increasing demands towards the continued and flexible development of work related as well as life skills related competencies cannot be adequately addressed through unilateral learning systems, which often are not properly linked to each other. Experience from the ASEM countries clearly points at the development and enhancement of integrated approaches to Lifelong Learning, where learning in formal systems are integrated with learning taking place in non-formal systems as well as in in-formal systems as being of pivotal importance.

Transparency and cohesion in formal education and training systems and non-formal learning opportunities is a key issue in relation to effective development and use of human resources. This both applies for transparency and cohesion within the formal education and training system as well as between education and training in formal systems and non-formal learning in enterprises, associations as well as learning in in-formal settings. Training and learning opportunities are presently often fragmented and education, labour market training programmes and community-based learning often operate in isolation from one another. Based on an understanding of the key elements in coherent systems promoting Lifelong Learning as well as an appreciation of the difficulty or ease with which different groups of adults may access alternative learning opportunities, the promotion of flexible education and learning opportunities and effective interaction between different education and training settings is therefore important to ASEM countries.

At the same time, recognition of skills and competencies wherever they have been acquired – formally or informally, at work or at home is another key issue, if learning in different contexts are to be combined and thereby lead to increased job mobility and other improvements in the functioning of labour markets. The development of national standards for recognition of skills may facilitate that outcomes from different learning settings are recognised. This calls for the active cooperation between public authorities and social partners in order to develop adequate Lifelong Learning approaches ensuring provision of skills training as well as promotion of recognition of skills and competencies in the labour market and society as such.

Experience from the ASEM countries clearly points at common challenges in relation to developing and sustaining integrated approaches to Lifelong Learning, where learning in formal systems are integrated with learning taking place in non-formal systems as well as in in-formal systems. If this integration of learning in different settings is to be successful, recognition of prior learning within and in between learning settings is of pivotal importance.

More specifically the ASEM Lifelong Learning Initiative will address these thematic key issues and challenges by:

- Identifying transparency and transferability between national learning systems across and beyond ASEM countries
- Identifying access to different kinds of national adult education
- Assess certification of learning originating from different national education/training systems within and beyond ASEM countries
- Discussing the role to be performed by stakeholders

1.3 Definitions of Key Terms

Lifelong Learning

All learning activities either through formal or non-formal sources which help improve the knowledge and skills of an individual throughout his lifespan. Lifelong learning helps an individual to develop his potentials to the fullest so that he could be a contributing member to his society.

Comments : This is an operational definition, which could be refined further to suit academic context.

Non-Formal Learning

Learning acquired by an individual through unstructured programs and activities within and outside the workplace. Non-formal learning includes informal learning, which goes on throughout the lifespan of an individual.

Comments : This operational definition does not restrict the scope of non-formal learning and could be easily applied across all situations other than formal learning programs and activities.

Informal Activities

Informal learning is specific to an individual based on his concrete experiences at work and outside the work context.

Comments : This operational definition would help to attest learning that is based on the informal experience to which an individual is constantly exposed to throughout his lifespan.

Formal Learning

This includes structured learning programs or activities resulting in the achievement of behaviorally specified objectives. Formal learning includes planned and structured educational and workplace training programs and activities.

Comments : This provides a wider operationally sound definition of all learning activities, which enhance the knowledge, and skills of the individuals.

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We sincerely hope that contributions of this report would benefit lifelong learners in ASEM countries as well as those in nations throughout the world. From the process of preparing this report, we learned that there need to be a unifying initiative that would enhance the well being of future generations.

Abstract

In making lifelong learning a reality, nations should be clear in their understanding of integrated approaches to lifelong learning. Special emphasis should also be given to the recognition of prior skills and learning. Various nations have undertaken lifelong learning as part of their national policies. Lifelong learning is said to contribute to personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and self-fulfilment. For the purpose of this report four themes and twenty-four sub-themes have been identified. The four themes and twenty-four sub-themes identified are as follows:

1. Enlightened Philosophies of Lifelong Learning

- a Changing Mindsets: Lifelong Learning for Educationalists
- b Lifelong Learning in Asia and Europe: A Comparative Perspective
- c Meeting Skills Needs: Private Sector Perspectives
- d Trade Union Promotion of Lifelong Learning in England 1999-2002 and Assessment of Different Approaches
- e Lifelong Learning for Gender Equality
- f Migrants and Social Exclusion: Lifelong Learning and the New Europe

2. Accreditation of Prior Learning

- a Lifelong Learning Legal Framework – With Reference to Accreditation of Prior Learning
- b Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: Formal Learning – European Qualification Authority
- c Lifelong Learning from the Learners' Perspective: Accreditation of Prior Learning and Credit Bank System in Korea
- d Lifelong Learning in the Workplace
- e E-Education for Accreditation of Prior Learning: Formal, Non-formal and Informal Learning Leading to Accreditation of Prior Learning
- f Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: Non-Formal and Informal Learning

3. Integrated Approaches to Lifelong Learning

- a Mass Education: The Role of Community Learning Centres (CLC)
- b Citizenship, Civil Society and Lifelong Learning
- c Mass Education: The Role of Regional Organisations
- d Vocational Education and Access for All
- e Social Inclusion: Helping create a culture of Lifelong Learning Among Veterans in ASEAN nations
- f Building Bridges for a More Integrated Approach

4. Best Practices of Lifelong Learning

- a Distance Education: New Initiative in China
- b Schools as Centres for Lifelong Learning – Bridging Formal and Non-Formal Learning Environments: The Case of Second Chance Schools Network in Greece
- c Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Japanese Experience
- d Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Italian Experience
- e Opening Pathways to Lifelong and Lifewide Learning: The Philippines Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency System
- f Capacity Building for Active Citizenry

Chapters V presents a comparative analysis of present application of approaches and models of integrated approaches to lifelong learning and the recognition of skills and prior learning, while Chapter VI outlines the identification of alternative practices in relation to integrated approaches to lifelong learning and the recognition of skills and prior learning. Recommendations on future alternative approaches and practices are outlined in Chapter VII. Chapter VIII consists of potential policy recommendations and future ASEM Lifelong Learning follow-up activities.

Literature Review of Present Approaches

In order to further understand the integrated approaches to lifelong learning and recognition of prior skills and learning, four main themes have been identified. These four themes were also used in the International Conference on Lifelong Learning held in Kuala Lumpur from the 13th to the 15th of May 2002. The four themes identified were:

1. Enlightened Philosophies of Lifelong Learning
2. Accreditation of Prior Learning
3. Integrated Approaches to Lifelong Learning
4. Best Practices of Lifelong Learning

For each of the four themes, six sub-themes were identified. The breakdowns of the sub-themes will be explained in the following paragraphs.

4.1 Enlightened Philosophies of Lifelong Learning

There is a need to formulate enlightened philosophies and principles relevant to ASEM member countries as a whole and to each country at its own individual stages of development, pertaining to all aspects of Lifelong Learning. Sub-themes for further understanding of Enlightened Philosophies of Lifelong learning include:

1. Changing Mindsets: Lifelong Learning for Educationalists
2. Lifelong Learning in Asia and Europe: A Comparative Perspective
3. Meeting Skills Needs: Private Sector Perspectives
4. Trade Union Promotion of Lifelong Learning in England 1999-2002 and Assessment of Different Approaches
5. Lifelong Learning for Gender Equality
6. Migrants and Social Exclusion: Lifelong Learning and the New Europe

Changing Mindsets: Lifelong Learning for Educationalists

Although the notion of lifelong learning has been embedded in European and Asian cultures for a long time, lifelong learning has not been formally institutionalised in education and training. During the last three to four decades, there has been an international movement towards lifelong learning. It is clear that there is a critical need to involve change masters, change leaders as well as change agents in this significant movement. There have to be new mindsets among all thought leaders, particularly among educationists. When thought and opinion leaders internalise the philosophy of lifelong education, they would then become the champions and movers of the lifelong learning agenda in their own nations and cultures.

Lifelong learning is an essential challenge for inventing the future of our societies: it is a necessity rather than a possibility or a luxury to be considered. Lifelong learning is more than adult education or training – it is a mindset and a habit for people to acquire. It creates the challenge to understand, explore, and support new essential dimensions of learning, such as self-directed learning, learning on demand, informal learning and collaborative and organisational learning. Lifelong learning requires a deeper understanding of the co-evolutionary processes between fundamental human activities and their relationships, and interdependencies with new media. It requires progress and an integration of

new theories, innovative systems, practices and assessment. To make lifelong learning an important part of human life, new intellectual and physical spaces, organisational forms and reward structures need to be created that allow individuals, groups and organisations to personally engage in and experience these new forms as risk takers who use their creativity and imagination to explore alternative ways of learning (Fischer, 1999).

The UK Government, as an example, has identified the need to develop and maintain a skilled and flexible workforce. Lifelong learning and widening participation are two of the key agents to achieve this goal by drawing on the active involvement of the range of education providers at local and regional levels. Six universities of the Northeast (formerly Higher Education Support for Industry in the North) have undertaken the Credit for Lifelong Learning project. The aims of the project were to develop a regional mechanism for linking work-related education at the higher levels into a national credit framework, attracting academic and/or vocational credits (Hare and McLeod, 2001).

Lifelong Learning in Asia and Europe: A Comparative Perspective

In all civilisations, there are strong evidences of the fostering of learning from the cradle to the grave. However, because of the success and the impact of formal schooling and a formal system of higher education in modern societies, the lifelong learning opportunities were left to the initiatives of particular individuals and families. In traditional cultures, lifelong learning is present but there are few examples of communities, which actually practice lifelong learning. A comparative perspective of lifelong learning in Europe and Asia provides significant insights regarding the civilisational and cultural support for lifelong learning. The contemporary agenda for promoting lifelong learning in Europe and Asia can draw strength from the philosophies of lifelong learning from the world religions, philosophies and cultures. The comparative perspective will also provide useful lessons and the framework for implementing lifelong learning in ASEM countries.

In his book *Lifelong Learning and the New Educational Order*, Professor John Field relates his belief in the “fundamental underlying shift in the behaviour of ordinary citizens”. He links this belief with the notion of “reflexive modernisation” and develops from this his four categories of lifelong learners: permanent, instrumental, traditional and non-learners. He also links the concepts of the economic/social poor and argues that lifelong learning may legitimate inequality and exclusion. He also explores the policy of “conscriptio” to learning for those in the workforce and the unemployed (<http://dandini.emerald-library.com/v1> - Book Review: *Lifelong Learning and the New Educational Order*, accessed on 29 March 2002).

Meeting Skills Needs: Private Sector Perspectives

In the context of the knowledge era and the high demands for knowledge workers, all sectors of the economy are reviewing the patterns of competencies acquired by their knowledge workers. As new industries emerge and as new work cultures evolve, new knowledge-based literacy is required. To this end, there are reconstructions in the patterns and profiles of the work force. As the private sector is often a catalyst for cutting-edge industries and economies, private sector perspectives in meeting skills needs of the new economy are very critical. The lifelong learning agenda focusing on learning in their workplace is an aspect of an enlightened policy of the new age.

Lifelong learning is important because continuous learning is essential for survival in a changing world. Individuals, who are not learning individuals, will be excluded, disadvantaged and will become disaffected. Organizations, which are not learning organisations, will fail (Sheperd, 1998 in Wijetunge, 2000).

The “*Why’s the Beer Always Stronger up North?*” report argues that lifelong learning is being turned into a moral obligation and a form of social control, and that the demands on employees to become and remain employable are escalating (<http://lucia.emeraldinsight.com/v1> - accessed on 28 February 2002).

The traditional career is disappearing as individuals look, or are forced to experience different types of work in different creative environments. Security no longer comes from being employed; it comes from being employable. Workers have to develop a range of skills that can be translated across various jobs. This increases their mobility and allows them to move between jobs as suits them best. The constant upgrading of skills and pursuit of opportunities is a lifelong proposition (<http://georgio.emeraldinsight.com/v1> - Book Review: *Speaking Truth to Power: Research and Policy on Lifelong Learning*, accessed on 28 February 2002).

Trade Union Promotion of Lifelong Learning in England 1992-2002: An Assessment of Different Approaches

At national and international levels, trade unions have contributed significantly to promote the rights and interests of workers and employees. Trade Union organisations have organised the unorganised and raised the level of consciousness of workers regarding politics, economics, law, cultures and social conscience regarding rights, equality, democracy, sovereignty and freedom. The Trade Union movement is one of the most important movements for raising the level of participation and involvement of workers in their respective societies. In the era when the demand for knowledge workers are sky-high, trade union education is especially critical and plays an important role to promote the continuing lifelong learning of employees and workers. Typically, the working population is larger than the school-going population. When trade unions adopt the agenda of lifelong learning for workers and employees, then a turning point in human civilisation is in the making.

Trade unions have been important actors in the history of the search for enlightenment. Although union education has often historically been diverse in its objectives and uneven in its quality, the conceptions and assumptions shaping “what counts as education” has closely paralleled the fortunes and particular context confronting the trade unions at any particular time or period. Trade union education has tended to mirror the wider fortunes and complexities both within the particular union (or unions) and within the wider socio-economic environment (Forrester, 2001).

In the United Kingdom, The Green Paper on Lifelong Learning and the restructuring of “post-16 learning” have highlighted important contributions from the unions. In addition, the unions are encouraged to play an active part in important government flagship initiatives such as Individual Learning Accounts, the University of Industry and in the emerging network of Learning and Skills Council. The Trade Union Learning Fund initiative introduced by the UK government has encouraged a more systematic engagement by trade unions with the emerging lifelong learning agenda (Forrester, 2001).

Lifelong Learning for Gender Equality

Throughout the ages and in most cultures, women have been discriminated against or at the very least disempowered. As societies move into the 21st century, there are strong movements to ensure that women play significant roles in the economy and in all other domains of life. Global population statistics reveal that, worldwide, the lifespan of women is normally longer than that of men. In order

to ensure that women continue to obtain the high quality of life in order to be able to contribute to an increase of quality living in their cultures, the education of women must be given top priority. The lifelong learning agenda is one of the most important vehicles for creating opportunities that will ensure gender equality.

The link between education and society includes not only scientific and technical aspects of society, but also cultural, religious, economic, and even sex-role-linked components of life (Cropley, 1980). Lifelong education should help promote and ensure gender equality among citizens of all nations. No one should be deprived of the opportunity for further education in his or her lifelong quest for personal gratification.

The world is experiencing structural economic change and dramatic shifts in the social environment, including the aging of society. These changes have created a strong demand for the realization of women's potential. The aim of women's education is thus the realization of a lifelong learning society and a gender-equal society. The provision and expansion of learning opportunities to meet the increasingly diverse and sophisticated learning needs of women, the promotion of women's social participation, and the expansion of educational and learning activities that help raise awareness of gender equality have become important priorities in this context (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan, 2002).

The Japanese government, through its governmental organizations, encourages the establishment of classes/courses for women by municipalities, women's organizations, and other organizations to enable them to improve their calibre and abilities and to learn skills that will enable them to deal with various issues in their lives. In addition to efforts to develop and improve women's abilities, there is a need to improve the social environment by raising awareness of gender equality through efforts that target men as well as women. Various organizations, including boards of education, women's education facilities and women's organizations, are advancing learning activities by implementing various training programs designed to improve the calibre of women's education leaders. Women's education facilities are established primarily to provide various forms of training for those involved in women's education and for women in general, to undertake exchange activities and to provide information.

Other efforts by the Japanese government include the promotion of social participation activities for women, fostering of women's organisations, and promoting gender equality through enrichment of education and learning. Education to promote gender equality at home, at school, in the community and in every area of society should be enhanced in helping to correct the public understanding of stereotyped gender roles and make gender equality take root in the minds of people. To realize an affluent and vital society in the future, it is necessary to build a society of lifelong learning where people are able to freely take advantage of learning opportunities whenever they want at any point in their lives, and where the results of learning are appropriately evaluated (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan, 2002).

Karim (2002) stresses that the philosophy of gender equality in lifelong learning should be geared towards addressing the following:

- Reduce and eliminate legislative, administrative, socio-economic & cultural barriers to productive resources & services
- Enable women to develop easy access to new knowledge and technologies which can advance their scientific & cultural literacy for a better economic and social life

- Empower women to increase skills in leadership and entrepreneurship to participate in decision-making processes affecting their productive, capacities & socio-economic status
- Promote women's psychological & behavioral emancipation through networking and other collaborative strategies of motivation & empowerment

Karim (2002) also provides some examples of educational centres involved in lifelong learning and gender equality. Efforts in Bangladesh include the Bangladesh Open University Distance Education for Higher Studies, which offers programs from Standard 10 to Masters degrees; Basic Education for Older Children, (adolescent literacy); Continuing Literacy Program (post-literacy and developing reading habits); union libraries; reading centres; community development libraries; and rural-information resource centres.

In Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia through its School of Distance Education offers in-service programs for working women, civil defence, and teachers since 1970. It has produced 12,000 graduates of which 40% are women. The university's Women Development Research Centre (KANITA) provides training in leadership, entrepreneurship and resource allocation as well as conflict resolution.

Karim (2002) concludes by stressing that the philosophy of lifelong learning in gender equality is to empower women through new knowledge, not only in the context of advancing economic, political and social security, but also in leading nations towards greater national wealth and stability. Engendered lifelong teaching is about reconstructing and restructuring society to accept women as an important source of human wealth. New knowledge creates multiple avenues for producing new institutions of autonomy and independence and women must have equal access to this resource to emancipate themselves from the shackles of patriarchy, poverty and persecution, which have plagued them for many centuries. Hence, the new century embraces women as the most powerful variable of change and conditions for change.

Migrants and Social Exclusion: Lifelong Learning and the New Europe

Throughout the world, there are over a hundred geographical points of intense conflicts. Most of these conflicts are internal, which cause death, destruction, diseases, displacement and despair. Worldwide, there are displaced minorities, sometimes into the millions, who tend to become legal or illegal immigrants to their new host countries. These migrants are without nations, families, education or property and very often with damaged self-esteem and self-confidence. The social concern of humanity must ensure the respect and dignity of every human being. Migrants should have the opportunity for basic, continuing and lifelong learning to rebuild themselves and their families, and reclaim their rights and dignity. Lifelong education provides the basis for learning, relearning and healing through the lifespan. Lifelong learning also will ensure the rehabilitation of migrants back to their homeland or their new citizenry with new identity and dignity in their adopted country.

Econometric studies from the late 1990s have shown that the number of people willing to migrate from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary to the EU totals 700,000. Of those would-be migrants, 150,000 have indicated that Austria would be their preferred target country. It has been estimated that, as far as Austria is concerned, yearly migration flows would amount to 23,000-40,000 people from the day of accession of the CEECs to the EU. These estimates are all based on figures from the late 1990s, although their relevance for projections for the first two decades of this century is basically undisputed. Other factors add a great momentum of uncertainty to any forecasts: such as the tightening of migration policies of the EU member states from the early/mid 1990s onwards, the

unique geographical location of Austria as well as its strong cultural and historical ties with the neighbouring CEECs, and the fact that most "transition economies" are still unsettled.

There are important uncertainties as to the extent to which the discrepancy between current real income and nominal earnings gaps might be closed over the coming decade. Existing estimates of the commuting potential between Austria and its CEE neighbours (between 50,000-70,000 over the first five years after liberalisation with some estimates going up to 150,000 over a ten year period) apply a similar framework to that used for estimating the migration potential. However, important explanatory variables are left out of existing studies such as the dependence of commuting on traffic infrastructure and conditions with respect to housing (for weekly, monthly or seasonal commuters). Given the uncertainty surrounding the quantitative potential of migration and commuting flows in the case of full liberalisation of labour market access between Austria and the CEE candidate countries, there may be a need for maintaining some type of regulatory framework so that adjustment processes initiated by such liberalisation can be phased in over a certain time horizon (Busek, 2000).

4.2 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

Making lifelong learning a reality requires a fundamental rethinking of the role of vocational training and how people learn (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). Accreditation is the process whereby an organization or agency recognizes a college, a university or a program of study as having met certain predetermined qualifications or standards. Inherent in accreditation activities is the process of self-study and evaluation, guided by standards, which are written and endorsed by academic peers (Bangert and Gratch, 1995). The goal of accreditation is to "strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of higher education, making it worthy of public confidence." (Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 1995 in White, 1999).

Accreditation of Prior Learning benefits both the individual and the organization (Newton, 1994). For the individuals, the benefits include:

- Building on their experiences and not having to relearn what they have already known and can do
- Shortening the time to complete formal qualifications
- Focusing on their own development and training needs
- Recognising the value of their accomplishments and
- Saving significant sums of money

For organisations, the benefits include:

- Maximising the effective use of their educational and training resources
- Meeting the needs of individual clients, students or employees
- Motivating their clients or employees to participate more willingly in, and to complete, the programmes
- Providing equal opportunities to a greater range of clients and
- Integrating APL with ongoing services to programmes

One of the challenges in policy formulation and implementation of lifelong learning is to fully grasp the multi-faceted issues of APL and equivalent issues of accreditation. The issues/challenges of APL have many implications from different perspectives. Sub-themes for further understanding of Enlightened Philosophies of Lifelong learning include:

1. Lifelong Learning Legal Framework – With Reference to Accreditation of Prior Learning
2. Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: Formal Learning – European Qualification Authority
3. Lifelong Learning from the Learners' Perspective: Accreditation of Prior Learning and Credit Bank System in Korea
4. Lifelong Learning in the Workplace
5. E-Education for Accreditation of Prior Learning: Formal, Non-formal and Informal Learning Leading to Accreditation of Prior Learning
6. Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: Non-Formal and Informal Learning

Lifelong Learning Legal Framework - With Reference to Accreditation of Prior Learning

The decision of a society to organise its educational system in accordance with the concept of lifelong education must be based upon manifold psychological, economic, and political factors. No matter how thoroughly such an educational policy may have been prepared and tested in theory and practice in other countries or on a supranational level, the form of its implementation in individual countries will have to be devised by the country concerned. Each nation's constitution and legislation will determine the possibilities and limitations of promoting lifelong education. Hence, no practical educational policy oriented according to the principle of lifelong education can disregard the relationship of education, especially an education understood as a lifelong and lifewide process, to the law (Karpen, 1980).

Since "education brings freedom", the establishment of a system for the realisation of universal basic education is a fundamental task for democracies and any democracy in the world. A state without educated citizens cannot develop into a true democracy. To that extent, any state and particularly any basic law democracy is obliged to promote education and to provide access to education to every citizen (Karpen, 1980). A modern state fulfils its duty of promoting lifelong education by means of:

- Creating the legal framework, both with respect to responsibilities, organisation, procedures and institutions, and to fundamental decisions on goals and contents
- Planning opportunities for lifelong education in conjunction with regional planning, economic planning and financial planning
- Giving financial support to non-state agencies offering education in the public and private sectors; Supervising educational activities and
- Providing institutions of education

Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: European Qualification Authority

The Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) is a network of National Centres in the greater Europe created in 1984 to help in regulating title recognition and facilitating the integration of national educational systems. It aims at improving academic recognition of diplomas and period of study in the Member States of the EU, the EEA countries and the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta. The European Commission is providing support for the activities of the NARIC Network within the framework of the SOCRATES programme. It aims to improve the quality and transparency of education systems and furthering the process of education and innovation in Europe through the exchange of information and experience, the identification of good practice, the comparative analysis of systems and policies in the field, and

the discussion and analysis of matters of common educational policy interest (Source: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/agenar.html> on April 5, 2002).

Academic recognition looks into the function and overall level of academic study for purposes of admission to further study or work. In these cases, degrees or study periods may be recognised elsewhere even when the degree programmes are not equivalent. An example of academic recognition would be that a graduate is granted a degree in another country on the basis of his/her studies in his/her home country without having to sit remedial or additional examinations. Three main levels of recognition can be considered, as well as the instruments attached to them:

- Recognition of qualifications, including prior learning and professional experience, allowing entry or re-entry into higher education
- Recognition of short study periods in relation with student mobility. The instrument attached to it is ECTS (transferable credits) and
- Recognition of full degrees. The instrument attached to it is the Diploma Supplement

Apart from the recognition for academic purposes, recognition should also be given for employability purposes. Employers should give credit to past experiences of their new employees in order to further develop the skills and knowledge they possess, as well as giving due recognition to their employability should they decide to leave for a better opportunity.

Lifelong Learning from the Learners' Perspective: Accreditation of Prior Learning and Credit Bank System in Korea

There has been a long-running historical concern with the nature of learning and its purposes in the context of professional and vocational preparation. Liberal learning, long associated with adult education, was once thought of as an essential prerequisite for a professional and lifelong "destiny". The current debate is about which core or key skills will constitute an adequate knowledge base for a future career. Examining bodies, professional bodies, qualification and curriculum authorities as well as professional educators and continuing education "developers" in this concern, are joining higher education institutions. Whichever version or vision eventually succeeds in becoming the dominant paradigm, the individual self will be an irreducible focus for our activities. Self-learning competency may prove to be the concept that would help us move away from the historical obsession with learning content towards the theme of how we learn. The idea of "self as learner" in the adult phases of life involves the key defining structures and experiences of that life, including membership of key organisations such as those found at the workplace. The self as individual is never a self-contained entity. It is work, for example, which not only confers income but also the sense of social and individual worth and self-belief (Davies, 1998).

Lifelong Learning in the Workplace

Workplace learning is extremely complex, and involves more than simple training and development issues. An understanding of the concept and application of workplace learning requires the integration of a range of diverse factors, such as learning adult theory, learning paradigms, organisational needs and individual interests (Mathews, 1999).

The workplace is but one of the places in which people learn in their lives. Other sites may include their homes, the sporting fields, the local shopping centres or educational institutions. They constitute the life-worlds of the employees in which each person functions, thinks, decides and learns. A closer examination will reveal that if people are actively engaged in relaxing at home, playing sport, doing

shopping or studying in a library, they will be thinking consciously about the different activities or events; making intentional decisions during the activity or event and reflecting on the quality of these decisions; deciding what to do next; and hopefully learning from these experiences. All of the experiences that people have in their daily living, including paid employment, offer a context for learning (Gerber, 1998). Key findings of a case study carried out by Pate et al (2000) in a major Scottish electronics company are as follows:

- The Education for All (EFA) programme had given the sample and control groups a strong sense that the company had promised and delivered lifelong learning and career development. Moreover, such promises and delivery seemed to correlate with positive views of the company, job satisfaction and continuous commitment among the sample group
- Participants in the EFA perceived that the knowledge gained was useful in broad terms, particularly in giving them a language for participating in a community of practice and in providing the basis for making improvements and innovations in their job context. In this sense, significant transfer was perceived to occur, and
- Where the company was perceived to have been less successful was in creating a stronger transfer climate, especially in manager support for learning transfer

E-education for Accreditation of Prior Learning: Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning Leading to Accreditation of Prior Learning

E-learning, e-education, or online learning refer to the way in which people communicate and learn electronically which has only recently emerged as a key source of competitive advantage in the information society. Interactive distance learning, intranet-based training, Web-based training, online learning – all appear in different names, for the different types of learning technologies, with different capabilities. However, the distinctions and capabilities that once separated these categories are now made fuzzier by advances in technology. Though there are particular differences between them, for instance in bandwidth, user interface, or interactivity, they share a common strategy to deliver flexible learning. Moreover, these online learning platforms have begun to converge around common technology standards and a delivery infrastructure, the Internet as a means to enable learning (Roffe, 2002).

The benefits of e-learning are now well rehearsed and are summarised in the list below, developed and derived from the analyses and reviews by Block and Dobell (1999 in Roffe, 2002):

- Just-in-time
- Accessible from any site with the right equipment
- Cost-effectiveness
- Personalisation
- Learner centred learning
- Contemporary
- Scalable structure
- Interactivity
- Uniformity of content
- Content updated rapidly
- Blindness of the learning engagement and
- Measurement of programme performance

Accreditation of Prior Learning in Europe: Non-formal and Informal Learning

Non-formal learning takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates. Non-formal learning may be provided in the workplace and through the activities of civil society organisations and groups (such as in youth organisations, trade unions and political parties). It can also be provided through organisations or services that have been set up to complement formal systems (such as arts, music and sports classes or private tutoring to prepare students for examinations). In the world of work, non-formal learning refers to skills and knowledge gained through learning experiences such as industry-based training, professional development workshops, seminars, private study, work experience and the like.

Informal learning is a natural accompaniment to everyday life. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not necessarily intentional learning, and so may well not be recognised even by individuals themselves as contributing to their knowledge and skills. But informal learning is likely to be missed out of the picture altogether, although it is the oldest form of learning and remains the mainstay of early childhood learning. The fact that microcomputer technology has established itself in homes before it has done so in schools underlines the importance of informal learning. Informal contexts provide an enormous learning reservoir and could be an important source of innovation for teaching and learning methods.

Promoting a balance between non-formal learning in the workplace and in social surroundings/ environments is particularly relevant to lifelong learning, reflecting the balance of objectives of lifelong learning between active citizenship, personal fulfilment, employability and social inclusion. Many reports referred to the value of learning opportunities (often non-formal or informal) provided by adult education initiatives of the voluntary sector, including NGOs and local community organisations. Non-formal education projects in the youth field, for example, increase the chances of young people participating in society and acquiring tolerant and democratic values. To promote a culture of learning across Europe, European Commission believes that there is a need to develop learning communities, cities and regions and to establish local multifunctional learning centres (European Commission, 2001).

Gaining insight into the learning needs of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), where learning typically takes place in a non-formal or informal context, is particularly important. Provisions have to be flexible, high quality, and tailored to individual firms. Learning providers and higher education institutions, for example, should offer courses tailored to their specific needs. SMEs themselves also need to fully explore how to facilitate access to learning, such as in partnership with other enterprises through learning networks and competence sharing, and in cooperation with guidance services (European Commission, 2001).

4.3 Integrated Approaches to Lifelong Learning

The implications of lifelong learning can only be realized through sustained and serious strategies that reflect integrated approaches with the drive to promote lifelong education. The integrated approach encompasses many significant and critical areas of systemic change. Critical areas and sub-themes identified in relation to Integrated Approaches to Lifelong Learning are the following:

- Mass Education: The Role of Community Learning Centres (CLC)
- Citizenship, Civil Society and Lifelong Learning

- Mass Education: The Role of Regional Organisations
- Vocational Education and Access for All
- Social Inclusion: Helping create a culture of Lifelong Learning Among Veterans in ASEAN nations
- Building Bridges for a More Integrated Approach

Mass Education: The Role of Community Learning Centres (CLC)

Many important learning influences are not found in schools or other elements of the formal system at all, but are part of the experiences people have during the course of their lives. For example, they learn a great deal by watching television, at work, when participating in recreational activities, or through social contacts with friends. This means that the place of work, trade unions, churches, museums and libraries, political parties, clubs and recreational centres, and many similar agencies, are important places of learning (Cropley1980). We may also learn in mosques, other places of worship and community learning centres.

The community learning centre (CLC) is defined as a local educational institution outside the formal education system, for villages or urban areas, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of people's quality of life (APPEAL Training Materials for Continuing Education Personnel, Volume VIII).

The CLC provides various learning opportunities for the empowerment of all people within a community, aims to improve their quality of life, and the resulting community development promotes social transformation.

Citizenship, Civil Society and Lifelong Learning

The Crick Report (Crick, 1998 in Potter, 2002) describes citizenship education as comprising *three* things, related to each other, mutually dependent on each other, but each needing a somewhat different place and treatment in the curriculum; that is; social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy.

Firstly, from the very beginning, children should learn self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other. Secondly, children should also learn about and become helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community. Thirdly, pupils should learn about how to make themselves effective in public life through knowledge, skills and values – what can be called “political literacy”, a term that is wider than political knowledge alone. The term “public life” is used in its broadest sense to encompass realistic knowledge of and preparation for conflict resolution and decision-making related to the main economic and social problems of the day, including each individual's expectations of and preparations for the world of employment, and discussion of the allocation of public resources and the rationale of taxation. Among values that underpin a modern, participating democracy stressed upon in the Crick Report (Crick, 1998 in Potter, 2002) are:

- Concern for the common good
- Belief in human dignity and equality
- Practice of tolerance
- Courage to defend a point of view
- Determination to act justly

- Commitment to equal opportunities and gender equality
- Commitment to active citizenship and voluntary service and
- Concern for human rights and the environment

Mass Education: The Role of Regional Organisations

Despite the economic progress achieved by various nations, especially in Asia, there are still areas for development, in particular in the areas of the reach of mass education programmes. There are still people in this region who do not have access to mass education. Although the various governments have taken measures to rectify this phenomenon, the responsibility should not only lay upon the shoulders of the governments of the day.

Regional organisations should also play an important role in promoting mass education. Networks of collaboration have been in existence and it is these networks that need to be further enhanced in order for education to reach the “unreachables” of the region. In South-East Asia, there are various organisations that may play the role of champions in promoting mass education as well as lifelong education. Education should be all-inclusive and should be provided in order for nations to emerge into developed nations.

Vocational Education and Access for All

The emergence of vocational education as a specific form of education and teachers as its proponents has not been a linear and purposeful development towards an aim, but rather a sequence of different phases, with varying foci and conceptions. Thus, vocational education is not something stable, but historically changing both as a phenomenon and as an educational perspective. At least in the Finnish case, the emergence of vocational education as a form of education is structured according to the distinctiveness of vocational education in relation to other forms of education, to the formal conditions for creation of vocational teacherhood, to the relations between the occupational order and educational order in society and to the vocational education challenge (Heikkinen, 1997).

Governments often expect their vocational education and training (VET) systems to perform feats that they would not expect such a general education from other systems. Governments have perceived an increased demand for training if the labour supply shows rapid growth, if employment grows quickly, or if unemployment increases significantly. They have called upon VET systems to help unemployed young people and older workers get jobs, to reduce the burden on higher education, to attract foreign investment, to ensure rapid growth of earnings and employment, to reduce the inequality of earnings between the rich and the poor, and so on (Gill, Dar and Fluitman, 1999).

Social Inclusion: Helping create a culture of Lifelong Learning Among Veterans in ASEAN nations

In a knowledge-based economy, citizens of all nations need to embrace the practice of lifelong learning, and nobody should be excluded in the quest for it. A nation of learners will determine economic growth and prosperity of the nation.

In Denmark it has always been seen as a public task to finance education and training as well as liberal adult (popular) education. Policies on lifelong learning are reflected in a series of more recent initiatives that are consistent with a long-established tradition of popular education in Denmark that has been influenced more recently by a growing emphasis on vocational outcomes. A 1984 parliamentary resolution was to provide an overall framework for improving adult development and

participation in civil society, by supporting popular and general adult education. During the 1990s more policy initiatives and legislation on adult learning opportunities with emphasis on vocational outcomes followed, including financing and support schemes.

The latest larger initiative is the Adult Education Reform, which took effect on 1 January 2001. This reform aims at offering a coherent and transparent system of relevant basic adult education and training as well as continuing and further education and training programs, with well-known and comparable competence levels – catering to all adults at all levels, from the low skilled to university graduates. The reform also offers new possibilities of more systematic recognition in adult VET programs of formal learning (especially CVT courses) as well as non-formal learning (especially workplace learning).

A culture of lifelong learning as evident in Denmark will help the ASEAN region to develop further into a hub full of educational and knowledge generating activities on this side of the world.

According to a European Commission survey of continuing vocational training conducted in 2000/01 (“Statistics in Focus”, EUROSTAT, Theme 3 – 2/2002), of all the member states, Norway and nine candidate countries, the proportion of Danish enterprises that provided Continuing Vocational Training in 1999 ‘topped the list’ with 96 per cent. In Denmark the difference between small and medium-sized enterprises and between medium-sized and large enterprises amounted to only 3 and 5 percentage points respectively.

Veterans, or post-retirement citizens should become part of the ongoing effort to promote lifelong learning initiatives. They should never be marginalized in programmes identified and implemented by governments of ASEAN nations. They should always be encouraged to engage in lifelong learning activities because it is through them that ASEAN nations would be able to further inculcate the lifelong learning culture in their respective countries. They should be signed on as champions to the cause of lifelong learning.

Building Bridges for a More Integrated Approach

Principles of adult learning result both from adult educators’ theoretical reflection and from observation during practice but no summary statement of these views can comprehend all the points made by various authors regarding principles of adult learning. However, four main characteristics of adult learners emerge, namely:

- Adults are different, both from youths and, depending on their developmental stages, from each other. As a result, they need learning approaches that recognise their self-concept as independent persons and that value their individual worth
- Adults are capable of learning throughout their lives, but their learning is affected by their stage of development
- Adult motivation to participate in learning is usually voluntary, although job loss and other exigencies may be compelling inducements. Adult’s decisions to enter education may involve competing tensions between incentives and disincentives, such as the need to improve income versus previous negative experiences with school or peer attitudes
- Adults are complex as individuals and heterogeneous within learning groups. Their lives encompass many competing demands in addition to learning, and they differ greatly from one another in how they learn. They benefit from flexibility and individualisation in their learning experiences

Implications from the above characteristics are as follows (Maehl, 2000):

- The learning experience should recognise and address the experience of adult learners. Their self-concept has been formed by previous experiences and learning may be facilitated or hindered by that legacy. Individual experience can be a valuable resource to new learning and to the learning group. The adult learner will evaluate new learning against prior experience and will seek to apply it to familiar settings. He or she is likely to respond to problem-centred learning and activities that involve direct experience
- Many adults prefer to play an active role in the planning, direction, and evaluation of their learning. Most authors of principles agree that however the learning activity is formulated, it should have clear goals and sequence
- Flexibility and adaptability in the learning situation are desirable to accommodate learners' variable and changing circumstances. This may apply to the time, place, pacing, and mode of learning
- The relation between the teacher and learner should reflect their mutual respect as adults and be characterised by facilitation and cooperation rather than control. There is some difference of opinion as how strongly the facilitator should lead or pose alternatives in the learning situation
- Adults benefit from a positive learning environment. Such an environment embraces the physical, social, and personal settings of learning and should include regular and constructive feedback

It is vital that promoters of lifelong learning take into consideration the perspectives of learners in their quest for knowledge. The Rover Group Limited in the UK, for example, has embarked on partnership programmes with schools to enhance and enrich the curriculum and help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the world of work, raising levels of aspiration, expectation and achievement. One of its five key principles in its strategy statement is the promotion of lifelong learning. The education partnership programme must promote and support the development of positive attitudes towards lifelong learning and encourage continuity and progression in education and training. In an attempt to ensure that work experience that pupils go through at the Rover Group delivers planned learning outcomes, the company has introduced learning agreements which set out what each pupil will know, understand and be able to do on completion, determined partly by what has been negotiated with the school and partly as a result of discussions with each individual. The same approach should be attempted in promoting lifelong learning initiatives. Lifelong learners should be part of the equation in the integrated approach to lifelong learning.

4.4 Best Practices in Lifelong Learning

Since Lifelong Learning was first introduced and implemented in various parts of the world, several nations and many institutions have gathered/built rich repertoires of policies/experiences and have created many innovations, which are very successful. There are many lessons to be learned by other countries and institutions from the examples of these best practices. The sub-themes identified in relation to Best Practices to Lifelong Learning are as follows:

- Distance Education: New Initiative in China
- Schools as Centres for Lifelong Learning – Bridging Formal and Non-Formal Learning Environments: The Case of Second Chance Schools Network in Greece
- Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Japanese Experience
- Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Italian Experience

- Opening Pathways to Lifelong and Lifewide Learning: The Philippines Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency System
- Capacity Building for Active Citizenry

Distance Education: New Initiative in China

The Chinese government has embarked on several initiatives in promoting distance education in China. These initiatives include the opening of a distance-learning centre in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, the China-Japan Distance Education initiative, the Opening of the Beijing Open Information Network, the development of a Distance Education Platform by Hunan University in 1989, the expanding of Modern Long Distance Education, the On-Line Long-Distance Education initiative at Beijing University, the Modern Distance Education Project between China Education TV Station and the Xinnuo Satellite Communication Co. Ltd., Education Television Channels and other similar initiatives.

The government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, for example, opened a distance-learning centre designed to help develop education and eliminate poverty in this western region of China, by using information and communication technology. The Ningxia distance-learning centre is the result of joint efforts by the regional government, the government of Australia and the World Bank. Connectivity between the Beijing hub and Ningxia is provided by the China Education and Research Network (CERNET).

Students from middle schools attached to China's Renmin University and Japan's Osaka Education Institute took part in the recent High School Distance Education Communication exchange. Breaking with traditional high school classes and previous long-distance education methods, the teachers of this class are the students. With fluent English and modern education technology, the new teachers are proving to be fully capable. Chinese students teach Japanese students solid geometry, which is not part of Japanese mathematics courses. In return, Japanese students give vector classes to the Chinese counterparts. To prepare for the classes, the Chinese students collect materials and exercises from the Internet and libraries. They also make the computer images and do all the translation work beforehand.

In relation to the Education Television Channel initiative, over 100 million Chinese are receiving training or further education through special television channels. China has established the largest transmission network for educational television programs in the world in the past 13 years, when the country's first satellite educational television channel began broadcasting. There are now more than 100 educational television channels operating at both the national and regional levels across China. Viewers of these education channels include farmers who are learning new practical farming skills, primary and middle school teachers seeking formal diplomas through further professional education, and the general public who wish to obtain some higher education in their spare time. Major education channels include China Education Television which offers service nationwide, and 14 regional and provincial channels in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Shanghai, and the provinces of Liaoning, Jiangsu, Sichuan and Hunan (<http://www.edu.cn/HomePage/english/education/disedu/>).

School as Centres for Lifelong Learning – Bridging Formal and Non-Formal Learning Environments: The Case of Second Chance Schools Network in Greece

Schools and their surrounding communities should engage in strategic partnerships in the evolvement of schools as centres for lifelong learning. While students can also engage in after school activities and

programmes conducted on their school premises, it should also be accessible by the community. In the United States, such efforts are called 'Community Learning Centres'. The program is designed to recreate schools as centres of lifelong learning in the communities that they serve. The City of Akron, for example, is investing nearly USD\$150,000 in the pilot program this year and will apply for grant funding to assist in next year's endeavour (Press Release: Mayor of Akron, "Mayor Pledges Support For School Levy, Proposes New After-School Programs", September 20, 2001).

Today, changes in the economy and advances in technology are driving wholesale changes in the way schools are organized and instruction delivered. Indeed, they are changing the very definition of "school". In a world where lifelong learning is the rule, education takes place anytime and anywhere, not just in school. Of course, this does not mean schools are fading away. In fact, they are more important than ever, as venues of learning open to the entire community (<http://www.att.com/communityguide/sch.html>).

Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Japanese Experience

"If our nation is to foster a society which is rich and dynamic enough to face the challenges of the 21st century, people must be provided with opportunities for participating in learning throughout their lives, whenever they like, in accordance with their needs. We must also shape a society, which can properly evaluate the accomplishments of peoples' lifelong learning and study. In order to promote lifelong learning activities, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, based on the Law Concerning the Development of Mechanisms and Measures for Promoting Lifelong Learning, has been developing infrastructures for lifelong learning activities, including relevant structures for their promotion. The Ministry has also been endeavoring to help school children acquire basic and essential knowledge and skills, to help them autonomously develop their learning abilities and to assist institutions of formal education in strengthening their function in lifelong learning. The Ministry has also tried to promote social education activities, as well as cultural and sports activities, all of which play an important role in lifelong learning."

(Extract from: the Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science and Culture, 1991).

The Japanese government believes that, in order to promote lifelong learning in Japan, institutions of formal education should play an important role in offering a basis of lifelong learning. At the elementary and secondary educational level, in particular, children should be enabled to fully acquire essential knowledge and skills, and educational programs are enhanced whereby pupils can fully develop their individuality. Emphasis is also given to helping pupils develop their willingness to learn on their own initiative, as well as their ability to adapt themselves to various changes in society. These elements were included in the basic major principles in the revision of the Courses of Study for elementary and secondary schools made in 1989. In addition, institutions of formal education in Japan are required to serve as facilities for lifelong learning and offer people diverse learning opportunities. The Japanese government is employing a variety of measures, including those for facilitating the acceptance of working adults into these institutions, conducting extension courses and opening school facilities to the public.

The Japanese government through its Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Culture (MESCC) developed the Social Education Policy (Sasai, 2002). The Social education policy that MESCC has planned and implemented to help local authorities are mainly divided into the following types.

- To support financially that each cities, towns and villages establish a citizens' public hall that is the main position for learning activities of residents
- To raise the disposition and ability of social education directors who grasp learning needs of residents and support learning activities of residents as their duties, by lecturing, by training and by other methods

- To provide subsidies to advanced/important programs implemented by local authorities for the promotion of social education

As the result of these policies, the infrastructure of lifelong learning has been developed and various experiences have been stored in the Japanese society for about 60 years, for example, citizens' public halls were established in each cities, towns and villages. The number of citizens' public hall was 17,440 in 1987, and was 18,256 in 1999. The number of libraries increased from 1801 in 1987 to 2593 in 1999. The number of the classes and lecture courses that were held in the citizens' public halls throughout Japan was 182,308 lectures in 1995, and also the number of participants was 8,682,583.

Japan also developed what was termed as the “new infrastructure” (Sasai, 2002). The “new infrastructure” has been embodied by two kinds of policies: development of an administrative structure to promote lifelong learning, and implementation of public enlightenment and the provision of information.

Funding of Lifelong Learning: The Italian Experience

In Italy, policies and public expenditure are directed towards a strategy considering training as a complementary aspect of all the phases of individual life. Adopting this policy results in the involvement of several Ministries including Education, Health, Social Affairs, Foreign Affairs etc., in the policies of lifelong learning. This choice also implies, at the same time, the involvement of several systems (specialized in training or otherwise), which sometimes work individually, but are more and more oriented towards integration. Lifelong learning policies in Italy need to be read according to the following phases and moments of life object of the lifelong learning policies in Italy. The phase and moments are as follows:

- Early childhood
- Pre-school age
- School age
- Transition from youth to adult life
 - Stages and plans for socially useful works, starting from school
 - Accomplishment and extension of compulsory education
- Introduction to social life
 - Military service
- Entering the labour market and adult life
 - Study-work contracts
 - Strengthening of employment (employment or self-employment)
 - Taking part in active social life
 - Admittance to informal free education
 - Building a family
- Going back into the school system
 - Foundation learning
 - Higher education
 - University
- Development of general competence, by means of alternating paid and unpaid jobs
 - Social life
 - Informal education
 - Use of cultural infrastructures
- Updating while in service
 - Training at work

- Building up careers
- Changing functions and mobility
- Management of all sorts of organizations, from the educational point of view
 - Place of work
- Cultural infrastructures
 - Family
 - Institutions
- Self-learning
 - Individual
 - Guided
 - Of social groups
- General development of civil society
 - Rights of citizenship
 - Ability for individual and organized initiative in civil society
 - Building group systems
- Leaving the labour market
 - Training
 - Retirement
- Old age
 - Creation of new roles
 - Development of new roles
- Beyond old age
 - Going beyond old age
 - Learning for the end of life

Italy Country Report, 1998, Alternative Approaches to Financing Lifelong Learning

Opening Pathways to Lifelong and Lifewide Learning: The Philippines Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency System

Those who work with lifelong learners have long sought a practice environment in which organised learning intersects with individual informal, and unplanned learning experiences in a deliberate and complementary way. They have sought conditions in which, on the one hand, institutional or school-based learning becomes more flexible and adapts to learners, whatever their stage, and in which, on the other hand, the experiences, learning, and achievement outside the formal setting are recognised, and, if desirable, recorded, as having equivalent value. They have looked for a comprehensive and supportive system that encourages and supports all forms of learning (William H. Maehl, 2000, "Lifelong Learning at Its Best: Innovative Practices in Adult Credit Programs", p. 5).

Two recent policy statements point in this direction. The European Lifelong Learning Initiative's first Global Conference on Lifelong Learning enunciated an active definition of lifelong learning: "A continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills, and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances and environments". The 1998 UNESCO World Conference on higher education in the twenty-first century charged higher education to embrace all forms of learning and to become an active provider of lifelong learning opportunities (William H. Maehl, 2000, "Lifelong Learning at Its Best: Innovative Practices in Adult Credit Programs", p. 5).

Different organisations in the world play their own unique roles in influencing public policies introduced by their respective governments in relation to lifelong learning. Organisations should play a more active role and become champions of the lifelong learning cause. They should assist their respective governments in promoting lifelong learning and as a result of it, help contribute towards the development of their respective nations.

Capacity Building for Active Citizenry

Throughout history, the associational life of citizens has been central to the goals of peace and social justice. Although the term “civil society” gained prominence after the overthrow of Communism in Eastern Europe, people have always come together to defend and advance interests they hold in common. This is the real meaning society – an arena for the exercise of active citizenship, a practical vehicle to express the visions that we hold in our hearts, and a “place where people matter” more than the profit or the pursuit of government power. At their best, civic groups are a unifying influence in society, a bulwark against the abuse of authority, a practical vehicle for the transformation of values and behaviour, and one of the best means to ensure that governments promote the goals of social justice (“Civil Society: Field Statement of Current Programming” Ford Foundation, April 2000. Source: <http://www.futurepositive.org/civilsoc.pdf>).

Civil society gains strength when grassroots groups, non-profit intermediaries and membership organisations are linked together in ways that promote collective goals, cross-society coalitions, mutual accountability, and shared action learning. Visions of associational life vary greatly across culture and context, civic groups have different norms and values, and not every part of the society works in favour of peace and social justice. Strong bonds of solidarity are vital, but citizens must also subsume some of their interests to the wider common good in order to curb particularism and prevent domination by any set of interests. Civic groups must build bridges across the lines of class, race and gender in order to mainstream civic values through the structures of social, economic and political power. They must be exemplars of the societies they wish to create, and always ask themselves the difficult questions about democracy, accountability, and values-based action inside their own organisations. Only when these questions have been answered, can we say that a “strong civil society” supports the goals of peace and social justice (“Civil Society: Field Statement of Current Programming” Ford Foundation, April 2000. Source: <http://www.futurepositive.org/civilsoc.pdf>).

Comparative Analysis of Present Application of Approaches and Models

In this section, integrated approaches to lifelong learning and recognition of skills and prior learning taken by ASEM countries as well as other European and Asian nations will be discussed.

5.1 Denmark

The promotion of employability and adaptability, active citizenship, self-fulfilment and social inclusion are important objectives for Danish priorities and efforts in relation to lifelong learning.

One of the main objectives in the Danish strategy for lifelong learning is to ensure that there are relevant high quality continuing and advanced education and training possibilities for all adults at all levels. It takes as its point of departure the continued education and training needs of the adult population, and aims at creating an even better framework for the supply of learning activities for adults in the labour market with a view to enhancing the employment possibilities of the individual and his or her participation in social life.

Such a strategy must also include good possibilities of validation of formal as well as non-formal and informal skills. All these possibilities are already included in the Adult Education System, which is part of the Adult Education Reform, but we aim to take initiatives to recognise non-formal and informal skills even further.

Also in the collective bargaining system and in the enterprises, a framework for supporting education and training and the development of competencies has been established, which contributes to ensuring the growth in society and the social and economic welfare of the individual.

Furthermore, a framework for enhancing the qualifications of the unemployed and other at-risk groups in the labour market has been created within the Government's active labour market and social policy.

Characteristics of the development so far in Danish adult training programmes for the unskilled or low skilled are:

- The importance attached to developing the adults' feeling of 'personal worth'. It is a characteristic feature that in general we refuse to accept the unskilled workers' status as a permanent condition

Corresponding to this characteristic, CVT is seen as the 'feeding channel' to skilled status. It is also interesting to note that during the last 10 years, developing new CVT programmes has helped develop new VET programmes in new trade areas.

There is increased, and increasing, focus on learning and developing skills at the workplace, ensuring flexible and integrated learning opportunities linking learning at the workplace and institutional learning.

5.2 Portugal

The Portuguese approach to Lifelong Learning in the field of vocational training has been established within the context of the knowledge and learning society requiring a flexible approach to learning as changes in the qualifications required on the labour market often lead to employment career shifts and there is therefore a high need for access to life wide learning. The objectives of the approach do therefore include improved access to basic skills education in order to reduce the risk for social exclusion. As the inclusion on the labour market of youth constitutes a separate challenge, initial training and counselling of youth has been strengthened to facilitate eased entry into the labour market.

5.3 Greece

The General Secretariat for Adult Education in Greece has redesigned the system of adult education, with specific reference to the creation of Second Chance Schools (SCS). The redesign of the system of adult education in Greece has been based on the principle of lifelong learning (LLL) and in particular on its four dimensions:

- The continuum of the different forms of learning on a life scale
- The interaction of formal, non-formal and informal modes of learning
- The common lifelong learning strategies implemented through the educational system, and, more specifically, the 'learning to learn' strategy
- The extension of lifelong learning in every space of life (school, workplace, social life)

According to the above principles, the new projects of adult education are carried out in the domains of:

- Second Chance Schools
- Basic Skills – New Basic Skills
- Parenting – Family Literacy
- Greek language for Immigrants
- Local History & Development
- Education for the Third Age
- Women's Entrepreneurship
- European Programs for Adults (Socrates – Grundtvig)
- Volunteerism

In Greece, the first Second Chance School (SCS) were created in 2001. In 2002 four additional SCS were established. It is estimated that twenty more such schools will be created within the next few years. These schools have not been set up on the basis of a specific model. Instead, they have been adapted to meet the needs of the specific local society in which they function, and as such one might differ from another. Despite these differences, Greek SCS have been created on the basis of the following common principles:

- Lifelong Learning: The aim of SCS is to encourage young people to re-participate in the learning process. This means that young people are encouraged not only to complete the compulsory education but also to participate in lifelong learning networks of post-compulsory lifelong learning. It becomes clear that SCS are a significant node of lifelong learning, which serves as a link between formal, non-formal and informal education

- Contents of learning: Learning within the framework of the SCS is identified neither with accumulation of academic knowledge nor with training of limited range of application and value. Rather, it has to do with the acquisition of multi-literacies in the domains of communication, information and enterprise. The goal here is the development of active citizens who will assume the responsibility of and take the initiative in updating themselves on continuous changes

Learning in the context of multiliteracies is not restricted to the acquisition of basic skills. Mathematics, reading, and writing are today as important as ever, perhaps even more important. However, literacies nowadays should not be conceived of as a number of rules and conventions on spelling and reading, or of a list of correct ready-made answers. The new social settings are less about imparting defined knowledge and more about shaping a kind of person open to changes, to diversity, and new ways of problem-solving. The new literacy approach is an endeavour to supplement the old basics with capabilities of effective communication in diverse settings using tools of text design compatible to the new kind of world we live in now and the world of the future. An indicative LLL curriculum in SCS covers the following areas:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Digital literacy
- Science literacy
- Media literacy
- Historic literacy
- Environmental literacy
- Literacies for the workplace
- Cultural literacy

5.4 South Korea

In Korea, the Credit Bank System has been in operation since its introduction in 1998 as a system for accrediting prior learning. Through the Credit Bank System, individuals could obtain credits not only in the formal schooling system, but also outside of it. The Credit Bank System also approves their prior learning, qualifications, and the certificates they hold. It is hoped that this system will eventually create a society of open education and of lifelong learning. When enough credits are accumulated to satisfy certain requirements, individuals can acquire a Bachelor's or an Associate Bachelor's degree (Moo-Sub Kang, 2002).

The Credit Bank System approves the individual's various experiences and qualifications to obtain credits from not only within the formal schooling system but also outside of it. When the credits are accumulated and satisfy certain standards, individuals can acquire academic degrees. It is hoped that this system will eventually create an open educational society as well as a lifelong learning society. Individual experiential learning is registered as a credit. When these credits are accumulated, individuals can acquire Bachelors or associated Bachelors degrees. The areas that can be accredited are as follows:

- Learning subjects accredited from educational institutions
- Accreditation of qualification certificates
- Self-study as an alternative to a Bachelor's Degree
- Credits acquired from accredited schools
- Completion of part-time attendance

- Accreditation of important intangible cultural skills

In essence the Credit Bank System is for those who missed the opportunity for higher education. The enrollment rate of students entering higher education at the designated time is 68.0%, which means that the Credit Bank System is for the relatively under-educated who aspire for a higher education degree. The following persons can qualify as beneficiaries of the Credit Bank System.

- High school graduates who were previously unable to attend post-secondary educational institutions
- Former college or university students who discontinued their studies
- Workers who hold professional certificates but did not acquire a Bachelor's degree
- College or university graduates who wish to commence studies in a different field
- People who wish to acquire formal credits for knowledge and skills gained through self-instruction, and workplace training and experience
- People who have studied at private institutions or junior colleges and wish to transfer to the university system

5.5 Japan

In Japan, “social education” had been the official and legal term for the programs for lifelong learning till 1980s. This term refers to all forms of organized educational activities, which fall outside the range of programs conducted as part of school curricula. Today, the term is still widely used and, in most of the cases, it overlaps with the newer term “lifelong education” or “programs for lifelong learning”.

The significant development in the field of social education was made possible by the revision of the Social Education Law, which was promulgated in 1959. This revision included 1) making it obligatory for local municipalities to appoint social education supervisors, 2) repeal of the prohibition against the expenditure of public funds on private organizations providing social education programs, and 3) establishment of an official standard for citizens' public halls. A substantial increase in the funds available for citizens' public halls since 1971 has stimulated them to become community learning centres. Libraries and museums have also been promoted in the 1970s. The idea of *éducation permanente*, permanent education, and concept of lifelong integrated education put forward by Paul Lengrand in 1950s and 1960s, and the UNESCO Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (1976) had strongly influenced and encouraged these movements in Japan.

In 1981, the Central Council for Education, an advisory body for the Minister of Education in Japan, released “A Report on Lifelong Learning”. The Council stated that the excessive dependence on formal education shall be revised by providing appropriate educational programs that would fit the demands from various life stages. It also required the comprehensive measures to promote learning at all ages.

Then in the mid 1980s, the National Council on Educational Reform, an ad-hoc advisory council for the Prime Minister, 1984-87, released its recommendations and requested a paradigm shift in the nation-wide educational system: the transition to a lifelong learning system. Development of the administrative structure to promote lifelong learning began with the establishment of the Lifelong Learning Bureau within the National Ministry of Education in 1988. In January 1990 the Central Council for Education produced a report “Development of an Infrastructure for Lifelong Learning.” These recommendations lead the new legislation in June 1990: the Law Concerning the Establishment of Implementation Systems and Other Measures for the Promotion of Lifelong Learning (“the

Lifelong Learning Promotion Law" hereafter). The Lifelong Learning Council, a new consultative committee for the Minister of Education, was created under the provisions of this law. The council produced a report titled "Measures to Promote Lifelong Learning in Response to Social Trends" in July 1992 and another titled "Measures to Improve Lifelong Learning Opportunities in the Community" in April 1996.

There are mainly two different phases in the established accreditation measures of prior learning in Japan. One is to recognize the achievements in the school context. The other is to confer qualifications and licenses.

In some senior high schools and colleges/universities, the credits are granted to the studies at special training colleges, and for the success in proficiency tests approved by the National Ministry of Education. Formal agreements to interchange the credits among schools at the same education level are quite common. An important move in the accreditation of learning achievements in the formal education context was the establishment of the National Institution for Academic Degrees (NIAD) in 1991, which enabled the conferment of degrees under certain conditions.

In the sphere conferment of qualifications and licenses, there are various government-approved or government-designated institutions and organizations. The type and nature of such qualifications vary widely. Some qualifications are highly professional and practically strengthen the employability. However, initial or elementary level qualifications function as the encouragement toward further learning activities.

There are strong possibilities that Japan will create some kind of independent authority responsible for the policies concerning accreditation of prior learning. However, characteristics of lifelong learning in Japan will require large-scale modification of the preceding systems in other countries. The demand for the social recognition to the personal development/enrichment learning activities cannot be overlooked. Particularly in the aging society, leaning endeavours and accomplishments made by the senior citizens deserve appropriate recognition and encouragement.

5.6 Singapore

On 12 February 1999, Singapore's Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced the setting up of a system, which he called the School of Lifelong Learning to help workers to study the labour market, invest wisely in continuing education, sell their skills to employers and enhance their careers. The system has five inter-connected and mutually enhancing elements comprising skills standards and recognition, incentives, information provision, learning infrastructure and promotion. To make learning more enjoyable, it is proposed that workers can earn learning credits on smart cards that can be exchanged for learning products or services; those who are too busy to go to the learning centre can visit their cyberspace counterparts to get the same information on employment and training. This network or system will be driven by partnerships to promote shared responsibility and personal commitment among individuals, employers, unions, community groups and the government.

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) organised *The Singapore Lifelong Learning Festival* to support its lifelong learning initiative. The lifelong learning movement aims to imbue in Singaporeans the spirit of continuous learning and improvement so as to achieve lifelong employability. Held between 28 August and 10 September 2000, the SLF brings to Singaporeans a whole host of learning-related activities to enrich their personal and work lives. The fortnight-long campaign is meant to give

Singaporeans a sampling of learning opportunities present in the nation. Amidst the array of activities in the SLF are three key events: the Opening Symposium, Exposition and Mind Sports Olympiad.

In August 2000, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced the S\$5 billion Lifelong Learning Fund. The Fund signals the Singapore's Government strong emphasis on Lifelong Learning. It will provide significant resources to support training programmes for workers. It will create more learning opportunities for individuals, particularly in courses to certify workers for enhanced employability.

5.7 Malaysia

The lifelong learning policy is part of the Malaysian Government's effort to invest in its people. Human Resource Development continues to remain a key strategy in ensuring that all Malaysians share in the nation's prosperity and become part of a dynamic labour force that is globally competitive. The thrust of human resource development in the Third Outline Perspective Plan is to prepare a workforce that is capable of meeting the challenges of a knowledge-based economy so as to enhance the productivity

Lifelong learning has always been a feature of Malaysia's human resource development program and underlined in the Malaysia Plans. Mustafa (2002) mentions that the earlier Malaysian Plans had focused on producing sufficient skilled manpower for the manufacturing sector until the Fifth Plan, where the first mention of skills upgrading and advanced training was made. The Fifth Malaysia Plan covered the period 1986 to 1990. The Plan noted that rapid advances and changes in technology had made it expedient for both the public and private sector to undertake in-service training as well as formal training to upgrade the skills of existing workers.

The Fifth Plan firmly established the Malaysia's resolve to intensify efforts at retraining and skills upgrading of the existing workforce to address the challenges of new technology. The chapter on human resource development ended with a most pertinent vision that the labour force, which should be prepared to face the challenges of the future, must be flexible, well educated and have the capability to acquire new skills within the environment of changing technology. Nevertheless, the issue of training efficiency during the Fifth Plan period was still very much focussed on the problem of skill mismatches between the outputs of training institutions with industry requirements.

Mustafa (2002) also stresses that greater attention was paid to lifelong learning under the Sixth Malaysia Plan when the country recognised the need to address the education demands of those who had dropped out of the formal system, especially the youth. The Sixth Plan period was also the turning point when the Malaysian economy began to face serious labour shortages. The country's National Skill Certification System was reviewed in December 1992 to ensure a more coordinated and integrated approach in the education delivery system.

The review noted that linkage between industry and the national education system to facilitate the upward mobility of those already in the workforce was still "missing". As a result, the review aimed to achieve amongst others the promotion of lifelong learning and upward mobility for the skilled workforce in the country placing emphasis on the achievement of previously acquired competencies, including prior work experience and on-the-job training. However, it was only at the start of the Seventh Malaysia Plan that the National Vocational Training Council (NVTC) introduced the Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA) approach in September 1996. The APA became part of the overall National Skill Certification System and allowed the existing work force to obtain formal certification namely, the Malaysian Skill Certificates. From thereon, the skilled worker could pursue

through the formal process of education skill-based careers at higher skill levels for better status and remuneration. The APA is a strategy to facilitate working individuals to continuously undergo training and lifelong learning.

Private sector participation in the skills delivery system, particularly in the training and re-training of their workers was given a strong boost during the Sixth Malaysia Plan when the Government established the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) in 1992. The Government provided an initial matching grant to the Fund and employers in the manufacturing sector, employing 50 or more employees, were required to contribute one percent of their monthly wages of their employees to the Fund. Employers would be reimbursed a percentage of training costs from the Fund when they send their workers for training. The HRDF is a strategy towards encouraging employers to implement life long education at the workplace. The Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF) administered by Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad (PSMB) has approved about 3.1 million training places involving a financial assistance of RM1 billion for the retraining of the workforce.

In addition, the Government also set up advanced skill-training institutions during the Sixth Malaysia Plan period namely, the German-Malaysian Institute and Malaysia France Institute. Skill development centres were also set up at state level in Johor, Kedah, Melaka, Pahang, Perak, Sarawak, Selangor and Terengganu. Currently, there are 14 Industrial Training Institutes (ITI), four Advanced Technology Centres (ADTEC), a Japan-Malaysia Technical Institute (JMTI) and a Centre for Instructor and Advanced Skills Training (CIAST). Under the Eighth Malaysia Plan, the Ministry of Human Resource plans to build more training institutes to further escalate the training capacity. Upon completion of the new training institutes under the Plan, the training capacity under the ministry will increase to 14000 training places, a twofold increase from the existing training capacity.

The Ministry of Human Resource has already put in place a number of policy initiatives and arenas of intervention, which include the lifelong learning dimension (Syed Muhamad, 2002). The establishment of industry-led national skills recognition system by the National Vocational Training Council (NVTC) through the Malaysian Certificate Scheme seeks to identify core skills of key industries and accelerate training and certification of job skills. This recognition system acts a motivating factor towards participation in learning. Acquiring recognised standards enhances workers' professionalism and quality of work, thus leading to employability. The National Skill Recognition System propels skills development in the country to new heights by providing a national framework for the establishment of job skills competencies. The National Occupational Skills Standards (NOSS) provides a means for human resource development through lifelong learning. The NVTC is working towards further developing NOSS especially in establishing competency standards for higher-level skills as well as new trades that are emerging following advancements in technology. Currently, there are 511 NOSS covering 39 major occupations in the industry, including Information Communication Technology (ICT), technical and service-related fields.

The government through the Ministry of Human Resource also established the Skills Development Fund (SDF) to assist those in need of financial assistance to undergo training. The fund caters for the needs of school leavers intending to pursue skill-based careers recognised by the NVTC. The financial assistance is also available for those intending to undergo training on a part-time basis. Since its operation in 2001, the SDF has received more than 23000 applications. A total of RM159 million in financing has been approved for 20596 trainees for the year 2001.

Mustafa (2002) highlighted the fact that the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) promotes lifelong learning, i.e. re-training and upgrading of skills amongst its members through its training

centre, the FMM Institute of Manufacturing (FMM-IM). Since 2000, FMM-IM has developed the following:

- Certificate programs
- A diploma program in Manufacturing Management
- Industrial technical programs in collaboration with the Malaysia France Institute, German-Malaysian Institute, Polytechnic Shah Alam etc
- Senior executive development programs for general managers and CEOs
- Programs in the areas of procurement, communication, production operation, logistics, supervisory and motivation, IT, finance, sales and marketing

FMM-IM also received approval from the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) to conduct seven of the Certificate courses under the Workers Retrenchment Scheme as follows:

- Certificate in Quality Engineering
- Certificate in Quality Technician
- Certificate in Safety and Health Officer
- Certificate in Store and Warehouse Management
- Certificate in Human Resource and Industrial Relations
- Certificate in Electrical and Electronics Engineering
- Certificate in Marketing

The Ministry of Education promotes higher education for all through the distance-learning program. The Distance Learning program offers opportunities for working adults to pursue tertiary education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels while remaining in full-time employment. The courses offered are at certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Programs are offered on a part-time basis with flexible academic structures where students are allowed to complete programs between five to seven years depending on the courses. In Malaysia, Distance Learning Programs (DLP) started with efforts made by Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1971. Courses offered were in social sciences and humanities at affordable costs. Other universities followed, starting with Institut Teknologi MARA (now Universiti Teknologi MARA) offering diploma level courses. In 1991, five more public universities offered degree and diploma courses. These universities are Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia (then Universiti Pertanian Malaysia), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Utara Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Collaboration initiatives between public universities and private colleges in the form of franchised programs have grown tremendously over the past few years. More and more students are gaining access to the public universities through these franchised programs. From these programs, students could later enrol in the public universities for advanced courses/programs.

A consortium of public universities formed a strategic alliance, which later evolved into the Open University of Malaysia. The university is currently offering degree programs for teachers in a joint effort with the Teacher Education Division of the Ministry of Education. The university through its Institute of Professional Development offers English Language Proficiency programs, Certificate in Basic English Communication Skills, IT-related programs and Corporate Directors' Training programs. The university together with Jaya Jusco Stores Berhad launched an apprentice scheme to develop the skills of school leavers by giving them the opportunity to work while they are still studying. The scheme also encourages school leavers' participation in the retail industry by providing a tertiary qualification and ongoing career opportunities. The apprenticeship scheme offers a Career Certificate in Retail Operations and at a higher level offers a Diploma in Retailing (Management).

Malaysia's first virtual university, Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNITAR) is about changing mindsets of Malaysians regarding virtual learning and online learning.

Public universities in Malaysia are also currently offering what is termed as Executive programs for working professionals. Types of programs include Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Economics, Bachelor of Accounting and a host of other areas. Post-graduate programs are also being offered as part-time programs by universities as well as private training providers who have joint programs with prestigious foreign universities.

Other initiatives being carried out in relation to lifelong learning in Malaysia include the setting up of Community Colleges throughout the country, training programs provided for rural folks conducted by the Social Development Department, training programs for youths provided for by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, programs conducted by the Ministry of Entrepreneurial Development and other training providers that are beginning to highlight the importance of lifelong learning and ongoing personal and professional development in contributing towards the development and well-being of businesses, the community and the nation as a whole.

Malaysia is currently working towards developing a Malaysian Grid for Learning, a project being spearheaded by the National Information Technology Council (NITC). Under this initiative a platform would be developed to enable Malaysians to gain access to online learning. The overall missions of the initiative are as follows:

- To connect and build quality educational content/resources for e-learning and lifelong learning
- To connect all schools, colleges, universities, public libraries and community centres via the Malaysian Grid for Learning (MyGfL)
- To provide an open platform to set standards and opportunities for the development of open resources
- To ensure an e-learning and lifelong learning culture in schools and communities

5.8 United Kingdom

Some of the practices in the United Kingdom with regards to integrated approaches to lifelong learning are as follows:

CHILD CARE – free or subsidised childcare for learners responsible for pre-school children

DISABLED ACCESS – learning venues required to provide wheelchair access and specialist support and equipment for learners with disabilities

E-LEARNING - 'Learndirect' advisors usually based in local colleges provide information and access to ICT courses nationally

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS (ILAs) – up to £200 available to all adult learners as an incentive, to put towards a course of their choosing

INITIAL GUIDANCE – available and accessible to people needing advice/ advocacy/ APEL

LOCAL MAPPING of learner progression routes

MOTHER-TONGUE GUIDANCE – advice, educational guidance and some courses available in the learners' mother tongue, where appropriate (e.g. targeted provision for Asylum Seekers and first generation migrants)

OPEN COLLEGE ACCREDITATION – opportunities for community groups and others to get courses accredited that have been developed to meet local or specific needs

OPEN UNIVERSITY – distance learning provision, with regional tutorials and tutor support

OUTREACH – to encourage access to ‘first-rung’ provision in local community venues

PERSONAL PORTFOLIOS – all learners expected to develop their own portfolios to demonstrate what they have learnt so far

REDUCED/ SUBSIDISED FEES for the unemployed and other disadvantaged groups (e.g. asylum seekers, single parents, people on low income)

SURE START – mobile toy/ book libraries and health care delivered to families in the home or the local community, designed to encourage pre-school and family learning

UNIVERSITY OF THE 3rd AGE – courses targeted at people post-retirement

5.9 Thailand

As part of the Lifelong Learning effort, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education are working together to set up a system for transferring credit between skills and basic knowledge. This initiative is to encourage the workforce to upgrade their skills and knowledge. Those who complete the programme would be awarded higher certificates up to the degree level. The workforce will benefit from having access to education and training opportunities, where employers would benefit from the higher productivity due to the higher qualification of their employees.

The National Skill Certification System was established in 1971 when certification standards were established for three trades, ARC welding, lathe operator, and electrician (for building). Since then trades have been added steadily and as of January 2002, a total of 119 trades are covered by the national certification system.

The general outline of the national skill certification system in Thailand is as follows:

Name:	National Skill Standard Testing
Leading agency:	Occupational Skill Standards Division, Department of Skill Development (DSD), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Test facilities:	DSD’s institutes/centres for skill training throughout the country and private registered skill training centres (in addition, facilities of private enterprises are increasingly used). The test is conducted throughout the year
Examiners:	A sub-committee consisting of 10-15 members is estimated for each trade, under the committee. 70% of members are representatives of the private sector (universities and private enterprises), and the remaining 30% are representatives of government organizations. The sub-committee is responsible for the development of skill standards and test problems

Classification of skill levels:

Each skill is classified into three levels; Level 1 – basic and Level 3 highest

General description of skill levels

Level 3	Capable of supervising and instructing workers
Level 2	Capable of making judgment on his own job by himself
Level 1	Capable of performing his job under the supervision and having basic skill required for the job

Qualification: For Level 1, any person who has completed compulsory education (elementary school) is qualified to take the certification test. Persons who cannot submit a certificate of completion are required to have at least two years of work experience in the trade. For Levels 2 and 3, work experience of more than one year after the passing of a lower level test is required, while persons who have obtained 80 points at the lower level test may take the test for a higher level

Evaluation standard:

The skill certification test consists of written and practical skill tests, with 50-50 weights. For some trades, 80% on the practical skill test and 20% on the written test. General description of test items is compiled for each trade in the form of a booklet, describing the scope of the test for each trade and detailed specifications, which is available to the public. Persons who have passed the test will be awarded a certificate

Examination fee: 100 bahts for Level 1
150 bahts for Level 2
200 bahts for Level 3

Trades for which the skill certification test is conducted:

44 trades as of the end of January 2002 (10 trades up to Level 3)

Number of examinees:

Approximately 2,000 per year, totalling 39,301 up to 1999

Identification of Alternative Approaches

There are various other nations beyond ASEM countries that have progressed in the field of lifelong learning. These countries include Canada, the United States of America, and Australia, to name a few. For the purpose of this report, approaches being practiced in these countries will be described as reference in developing integrated approaches to lifelong learning and the recognition of skills and prior learning.

One of the programs being practiced in the United States is the School-based Intergenerational Program. Kaplan (2001) describes how intergenerational programs enhance and reinforce the educational curriculum, contribute to student learning and personal growth, enrich the lives of senior adult participants, and have a positive impact on the surrounding communities. Intergenerational approaches in schools typically call for using the strengths of one generation to meet the needs of another. Civic-minded senior adults contribute to the educational process and make important contributions to children's lives. Conversely, children bring much energy, enthusiasm, and support into the lives of seniors. These new relationships can take place in any number of ways; the continuum of intergenerational activity seems endless.

One of the most common premises for bringing senior adults into classrooms is in the context of contributions they might make in the teaching of history. Accordingly, there are innumerable examples of senior adults enhancing classroom history lessons by sharing their personal experiences and opinions.

Elders Share the Arts (ESTA), a nationally recognized, New York-based, community arts organization founded in 1979, developed an intergenerational theater arts approach called "Living History." This innovative format uses the traditional arts of theater, dance, storytelling, writing, and visual arts to bring young people (ranging in age from preschool to high school) and senior adults together on a weekly basis to share and find meaning in their life stories. The community-building element of this approach is the public presentation of the group's work; this usually takes the form of a performance or a festival.

Within the Native American context, there are some important initiatives focused on language preservation. Generations United (1994), for example, highlights a program in which elders of the Seneca Indian Nation of New York were enlisted to work on a one-to-one basis with young participants to teach them the Seneca language, thereby reversing the trend in which an estimated 80% of the language was lost in the previous generation.

There are various intergenerational program models which center around computers. In some cases, the students are placed in the role of "trainer/technical assistant." For example, Intergenerational Innovations, a non-profit organization in Seattle, Washington, has established a "Computer Training Corps" model in which middle and high school students volunteer to tutor elders on how to use the computer. Another way in which intergenerational computer-related programs are conducted involves recruiting senior adults who have received specialized training in computers and are willing to share their knowledge with school children. In other cases yet still, students and senior adults sit down together as equal partners in computer learning. One such example is found in the "Generations and Innovations" project, implemented in four elementary schools in Memphis, Tennessee. Sixth-grade students who have been deemed to be "academically talented" sit side-by-side with senior adult volunteers to create web pages and conduct other computer-based activities (Generations and Innovations, 2001).

In environmental education, senior adults enter schools as a function of their interests and efforts in the realm of environmental activism. For example, members of a senior centre in Philadelphia established “Center in the Park,” a program that offers a variety of environmental education activities for school children, including exploratory canoe trips on the Schuylkill River, sailing on Delaware Bay to monitor water quality, and periodic visits to Philadelphia to discuss how urbanization and industrialization are affecting water quality (Ingman, Benjamin, & Lusky, 1998/99). Another intergenerational environmental education-type program is “Wildfriends,” an organization named for wild animals, wild teenagers, and wild older people. This program, sponsored by the Center for Wildlife Law, University of New Mexico, brings middle school students together with older mentors who love wildlife. Together, they write and support legislation to protect endangered species (Ingman, Benjamin, & Lusky, 1998/99). Kaplan (2002) suggests that a school that fully incorporates the intergenerational perspective would be:

- A place where intergenerational interdependence takes form – Local senior adults would generously provide their time, energy and even money to support school activities and students would warmly welcome their involvement and contributions
- A “school without walls” – Senior adults would help classes flow in and out of community settings. Teachers would integrate field experiences into the academic curriculum. In their interactions with senior adults, students would find out about the real world relevance of what they are learning in the classroom
- A place where character is forged and active citizenship promoted – As a function of an array of service learning opportunities, students and senior adult volunteers would experience firsthand the joys of caring for others

Maehl (2000) describes various programs in his book *Lifelong Learning At Its Best: Innovative Practices in Adult Credit Programs*. The programs he describes were selected based on levels, geographical locations, mission, and learner population. The programs represent multiple points of views and reflect different goals and values. Some are highly individualized and learner centred. Others prescribe particular curriculum goals but progress through processes attractive to their participants. Some are associate degree programs; others offer masters or doctoral degrees for advanced professionals. Some make extensive use of distance learning and electronic technology; others place greater value on intense, face-to-face contact. The chief value of the programs is that they represent models, or cases, of programs that work in terms of the goals and objectives they set themselves and the needs of the learners they serve. Individually and collectively they offer a resource bank of practices other institutions can draw upon as they adapt or create their own programs. Maehl classifies these programs under the following headings:

- Individualization and Self-Directed Learning
- Learner-Centered Design
- Competence-Based Focus
- Opportunities for Advanced Professional Development

Maehl argues that in order for programs to be successful eleven characteristics should be taken into consideration. These are:

- Clarity of mission and purpose
- A strong commitment, including funding, to undertake the program
- Appropriate match between learners and the program, as exhibited through recruitment, admission, entry, and continuing practices
- Provision of a favorable climate of learning, including advising and other services

- Provision of a learner-oriented curriculum and modes of learning
- Adaptability of learner circumstances, either individually or in context
- Recognition and involvement of learner experience
- Commitment and development of faculty and staff
- Clearly identified administration and governance
- Ongoing program evaluation and documentation
- Positive program impact and future purposes

Barker (1998) argues that Canadians are avid lifelong learners. Across Canada, public libraries in communities of every size are recognized lifelong learning centers that help people make informed personal decisions. The library plays an essential role in providing for the information needs of people in search of answers to “real” life questions: health concerns, personal development and enrichment, family crisis and other pressing issues.

Barker (1998) states that the Canadian federal government has distinct and different responsibilities; and the promotion of lifelong learning is embedded in strategies and policies related to national human resource development (HRD), social, economic and cultural development. Provincial and federal government policies and strategies will be different, but they often partner on initiatives that they agree to.

In the context of lifelong learning, HRD and social development, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) undertakes key initiatives. HRDC specifically provides the following:

- Targeted programs for designated equity-seeking groups: women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities
- Special initiatives for children, e.g. through family literacy initiatives, and youth, e.g. through youth employment strategies
- Considerable research and information specific to employment, occupational and career development
- A particular focus on literacy and other aspects of lifelong learning to help Canadian adjust to a changing society, and to equip them to participate fully in the knowledge-based economy
- Efforts to promote a strong workplace learning culture, e.g. in partnership with labour organizations, and community-based learning networks
- Initiatives to understand and utilize the Internet and electronic communications to increase learning opportunities and access to information
- Support top youth and adult students to further their education and/or access post-secondary education and
- Research and innovation in the assessment and recognition of prior learning (PLAR), essential skills for knowledge work, and quality assurance in education/training

As a partner in building a culture of lifelong learning, the Canadian federal government established the Office of Learning Technologies (OLT) within Human Resources Development Canada. Among its key activities is to help develop policies and strategies to guide the evolution and application of learning technologies in ways that best meet the lifelong learning needs of Canadians.

Another key initiative in support of lifelong learning is the development and promotion of the “Information Highway” by Industry Canada and its partners. Industry Canada assembled an Advisory Council on the Information Highway (IHAC) with its vision being that lifelong learning become a defining feature of Canadian society and that lifelong learning has served as a key design element of the Internet of electronic information highway. Industry Canada has developed many

telecommunications-based initiatives in support of lifelong learning, e.g. SchoolNet, the Computers for Schools Program, the National Graduate Register and the Community Access Program. Industry Canada also supports private training enterprises as a growth industry.

In Canada, policies and programs that are aimed at lifelong learning are under the rubric of education: typically adult education, continuing education, and sometimes, labour force training and development. Education has always been a provincial jurisdiction and training has become a provincial responsibility in most provinces and territories. At the provincial level, these observations were made (Barker, 1998):

- All provinces provide extensive formal education and training institutions and programs
- Most provinces have an aged-related notion of education and training, i.e. different programs and services depending on age
- Most provinces have an interest in exploring the concept of lifelong learning beyond traditional education and training
- All provinces consistently supported non-formal and informal learning
- Most provinces/territories participate as partners with the federal initiatives and
- Most provinces/territories participate either as partners or innovators in the conceptual initiatives in support of lifelong learning

In Canada, new approaches to the assessment and recognition of learning are reflected in the development of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) and the Skills and Knowledge Profile (SKP), work that is being led at the national level by the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB). Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and PLAR are being promoted as a means by which to improve education/training, support lifelong learning, and increase access to employment. The CLFDB has undertaken substantial work leading to a stated PLAR policy and national implementation strategy, recommended national quality standards, and a method of quality assurance. The intention is to ensure that Canadian's workforce development system in general, and PLAR processes and practices in particular, are effective, efficient and equitable. The CLFDB identified six public policy objectives that quality PLAR practices and services can positively address:

- The efficient use of resources
- The development of a lifelong learning culture
- The advancement of social justice
- Coordinated and coherent labour force development
- Education and training reform and
- The management of change

The CLFDB developed a learning record called a Skills and Knowledge Profile (SKP). The SKP is defined as a tool by which an individual can express his/her formal and non-formal learning in a standardized and credible manner to a wide variety of stakeholders for personal, economic and education/training development. It was concluded that a learning record such as the Skills and Knowledge Profile can be a mechanism by which individuals inventory or catalogue their acquired learning for purposes of skill upgrading, credential acquisition, and lifelong learning.

Chapman (2001) in her presentation to the Business and Higher Education Round Table (BHERT) Seminar in Sydney, Australia mentions some policy approaches in relation to lifelong learning. These policy approaches to lifelong learning include:

- Compensatory Education Model – compensating for inequality in access to initial education, improving basic skills
- Continuing Vocational Training Model – addressing changes in the workplace environment
- Social Innovation Model (Civil Society Model) – addressing social estrangement and promoting socio-economic transition and democratization
- Leisure Oriented Model – enriching leisure time and personal fulfillment

Chapman also stresses the core principles underpinning New Approaches to Lifelong Learning provision, which include:

- Coherence as an overall education strategy for government
- Equity in providing learning for the many, not the few
- Providing variety and diversity
- Acknowledging the need for quality and flexibility
- Building upon effective and inclusive partnerships
- Incorporating shared responsibility
- Building on a multi-faceted “whole” government approach

In terms of policy priorities, Chapman stresses the following:

- Adoption of a multi-faceted approach to policy development
- Re-assessment of the role of universities
- Acceptance of the concept of co-investment
- Development of articulated pathways and partnerships
- Promotion of the idea of the learning workforce
- Consideration of the demand and supply of lifelong learning
- Development of infrastructures of learning

Recommendations of Future Alternative Approaches and Practices

Alternative approaches and practices have been detailed in its own context and have not been assigned to any specific category or focus group such as Governments, Universities or the Media. Some of these approaches and practices may be in practice in some ASEM countries but there are variations to these approaches and practices that may be adopted/adapted to national agendas. A suggestion for the relevant agencies is also submitted.

Key:

- DENOTES THE RECOMMENDED PRACTICE/STRATEGY
 - ◇ Denotes the rationale of the recommendation
 - Denotes the implementation/action focus
 - ✓ Denotes suggested target group
-
- NATIONAL CENTRE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
 - ◇ There are many endeavours of lifelong learning that is being implemented in Malaysia and in other ASEM countries, most of which pertains to the self-need or self-focus of the providing agencies. This will lead to duplication in information, resources and infrastructure.
 - ◇ There is an urgent need to consolidate and collaborate from a central position.
 - Appoint an administrative and management structure to carry out task
 - Provide a one-stop centre for database, courses, quality control, quality assurance
 - Coordinates inter-agencies/states/national programmes (formal/non-formal/informal)
 - Offer guidance and assistance to 'small' projects
 - Provides the sharing of resources, experts and infrastructure
 - Networking of agencies, communities and the individual
 - Formulate nation-wide strategies (formal/non-formal/informal)
 - Publishes bulletin for public consumption
 - ✓ International, Regional, Government, Province/State-Level
-
- SELF-ASSESSMENT MECHANISM
 - ◇ Too often, the proficiencies, skills and knowledge are on a personal-to-holder basis.
 - ◇ It would be useful for an individual or agency to be able to assess the capabilities or even the interests of the members of the organization, that make up the population and channel it towards the stream of lifelong learning
 - Formulate an assessment form to tabulate the individual areas of interests, expertise, affiliations and positions in the community.
 - The self-assessment is made available at strategic locations such as libraries, community centres and schools.
 - The information can be loaded into the Malaysian Smart Card: positions such as paramedics, lifeguard, counsellors, fire fighters and paralegal can be useful anytime.
 - ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Individual

❑ THE ELDER CAMPUS/COMMUNITY

- ◇ Once a person is 'retired', they are 'almost' in cold storage except in those establishments where 'extension' is possible.
- ◇ In both ways, the wealth of knowledge, skills, proficiencies and experiences is 'lost': There has to be facilitation for the continuity of the knowledge environment whether one is in a teaching or learning position.
- ◇ Too, this requires a certain level of flexibility and innovation from the standpoint of administration, management and finance.
 - Invite retirees to give lectures in schools, colleges and/or universities on their traits or scholarly activities
 - Campus based population can benefit from the experiences of the retirees in areas such as patriotism, politics, international relations, etc.
 - Invite retirees to ATTEND lectures in colleges and universities as part of their knowledge quest.
 - Retirees need to continually update and replenish their knowledge as a member of the extended family and function as grandparents.
 - Invite them to spend scholarly hours at the premises on academic institutions and contribute in research, group discussions and even promote the writing of books and monographs or memoirs.
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Universities/Higher Education Institutions, Individuals

❑ COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION

- ◇ There is so much that the general public apart from offering courses to bona fide students can benefit a university.
- ◇ School children (primary & secondary) can benefit from the research work or the vast resources in the chemistry, physics & biology, industrial technology laboratory that can conduct 'supervised' learning tour to both children and adults
- ◇ Academic faculty members can also outreach to the community by lending their expertise during weekends at the community centres by way of imparting study skills, time & self management, child care, economics, politics, analytical skills, logical thinking and also ICT skills.
 - Encourage and disseminate academic findings to the community
 - Set up public meeting place in the universities
 - Considering the whole community as learners
 - Pro-active action from the community to create linkages with the universities
 - Incorporate visits to the colleges/universities as motivator to the school going children
 - University lectures can deliver guest lectures in schools.
- ✓ Province/State-Level, Universities/Higher Education Institutions, Schools, Education Department (central, regional, and international)

- ❑ COURSES ON-DEMAND (COD)
 - ◇ The facilitation for lifelong learning always appears to be a top-down approach and more often than not, fit a certain agenda or trend.
 - ◇ There has to be provision such that there exist a mechanism where a certain programme (from the community or specific group of people) can be created upon demand or relevance (after due discussion, of course)
 - Identify mechanism for the implementation of COD
 - Specify rules and regulations for COD
 - Create database for COD
 - Provide local educational support mechanism
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Educational Institutions

- ❑ INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES
 - ◇ The infusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) has changed the learning environment into a classless, borderless, gender-free as well as ageless façade.
 - ◇ As such, the traditional and conventional approach of lifelong learning should no longer be confined within the four walls of the classroom (or any other room, for that matter) and should now be developed to incorporate the different pedagogical approaches in this digital era.
 - ◇ To this effect, the learning environment need to be diversified into other formats than face to face, and include self-study, online learning, synchronous and asynchronous forms as well as distance and open learning.
 - Create diverse learning resources in the form of print and the electronic media
 - Develop self-learning, self-instructional materials
 - Develop modular concept of instruction
 - Provide access for online format
 - Penetrate the household digital learning environment (computers at home)
 - This topic can be a LL subject in itself
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Universities/Higher Education Institutions, Individual

- ❑ SMART-PARTNERSHIP
 - ◇ The concept of smart partnership will create a global and comprehensive learning community comprising of governmental bodies, educational institutions (public & private) as well as the multinationals and international agencies.
 - ◇ The concept of sharing and networking will be the catch phrase here and we are really looking at the pooling of resources and expertise as well as the smart disbursement of funds.
 - ◇ A typical partnership will be, say between the State, a company, and a local educational institution in collaboration with the local community.
 - Create facilitation for smart partnership such as premise and basic infrastructure
 - Establish working committee to implement
 - Devise action plan and programme
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Multinational Companies, Educational Institutions, Community

❑ CERTIFICATION/PROFICIENCY PATHWAYS

- ◇ This is akin the APL but not quite as this serves to create a mapping rather than an accreditation format.
 - ◇ This pathway is a mapping of certification such that an individual will be able to navigate through the LL process based on their own proficiencies and then decide on the route to embark upon for further learning
 - ◇ In this way, one will know the pathway to the next step in self-learning and lifelong learning. One can also know what is still lacking in the whole process
 - ◇ This pathway can also reveal the contributory sector of an individuals' proficiency, expertise and area of focus
 - Create mechanism for the certification pathway
 - Provide guidance or counselling service
 - Facilitate for further advancement of individual
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Community, Individual

❑ OPEN UNIVERSITIES

- ◇ The post digital learning environment has undoubtedly been a boon for the increased learning opportunities and the magnitude of populace reached. The infusion of ICT at all level too, means that accessibility is no longer an issue even if the only way of online access is via a cyber cafe.
 - ◇ Even in the traditional and conventional sense, there is much to be done and addressed and millions more to be reached under the context of formal, informal and non-formal education towards lifelong learning.
 - ◇ There is only so much that a formal educational setting can offer and do and the expanding local, regional and global market need a more dynamic, versatile, flexible and innovative strategies.
 - Establish more open universities to facilitate life-wide lifelong learning endeavours
 - Create more course to incorporate distance education, continuing education as well as online education
 - Harness the power of new educational technologies and conventional ones to create a comprehensive learning environment in support of the learner
 - Provide programmes which allow the accreditation of prior learning (APL)
- ✓ Government

❑ NATIONAL COMPETITION OF LEARNING COMMUNITY

- ◇ This is an effort to inculcate the notion of lifelong learning at all levels and with the involvement of all members of the community.
 - ◇ This will also bring forth a sense of belonging, esteem and appreciation of the quest for knowledge as a noble pursuit and a little incentive doesn't hurt.
 - Mount campaign to promote and raise awareness of the competition
 - Coordinate to organize competition
 - Seek sponsorship for reward scheme of the competition
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Regional, International, Community

□ ACCULTURATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

- ◇ The whole notion of lifelong learning needs a boost in terms of permeating the masses. It is easy to say from 'womb to tomb', assuming that the masses are 'academically' (in whatever form) inclined when the real picture is far from rosy. It might even be guilty of generating an 'elitist' lifelong learning endeavour where the educated become 'more educated' and the 'less' educated is left far behind.
- ◇ The notion of lifelong learning must have a mechanism to reach 'backwards', reaching out to those who know not to hold out their hand, the 'less' educated, the disabled, the home-based or home-bound, the retarded, visually impaired, those who are geographically isolated, the ethnic minority, the homeless and the single parent (I am sure there are many more).
- ◇ It is not good enough to have things in place for public consumption when the root of the problem is that there are those who do not know that they do not know, hence the 'backward' outreach mechanism.
 - Prepare modularised concept of activities available to all (even from the age of 4, the nursery school goes) implementable (by the parents) from home – in this case, how to create learning activities for 4 year olds.
 - Provide opportunities for the less fortunate to embark on 'learning or educational' activities
 - Provide access to individual mentors or guides.
- ✓ Government, Province/State-Level, Community

Recommendations on Potential Policy Recommendations and Future ASEM Lifelong Learning Follow-up Activities

8.1 Policy Recommendations

In making the following policy recommendations and policy imperatives, we accept, reinforce and endorse the existing recommendations of the World Conference on Lifelong Learning, 1994 (Please refer Annex 8).

- (1) Lifelong Learning shall be a life-wide program offered to all citizens beginning from age 4 until post-retirement age, which shall include formal knowledge Programs and skills/competencies programs preferably delivered at the community level.
- (2) Lifelong Learning shall ensure the engagement of all members of the communities in discovering common values of society and respecting diversity of cultures.
- (3) Lifelong Learning shall be a shared responsibility of the state at the national, regional and local levels and of social partners among business, industry and non-government organizations and of the individual.
- (4) Lifelong Learning shall be actively promoted through marketing and social advocacy programs to ensure that citizens see its benefits and usefulness. For this purpose citizens shall be provided access to locally provided guidance and Lifelong Learning career counselling.
- (5) Lifelong Learning shall be supported by the state by means of direct subsidies to Lifelong Learning providers and/or individuals and by promoting learning partnerships with non-government organizations or other agencies.
- (6) Lifelong Learning shall be supported by incentives and motivation towards lifelong learning. Efforts need to be taken to encourage people to learn.
- (7) Lifelong Learning shall take into consideration the cost and time involved in pursuing lifelong learning. Employers should provide avenues for workers to take time off work in order to study/go back to school.
- (8) Lifelong Learning shall give special focus to disadvantaged groups
- (9) Lifelong Learning initiatives shall make available multiple sites and providers in order to promote lifelong learning
- (10) Lifelong Learning policies shall include financial and other support to lifelong learners
- (11) Lifelong Learning initiatives shall set up advisory and guidance bodies in order to promote lifelong learning
- (12) Lifelong Learning shall involve sustained commitment among policy makers across nations
- (13) Lifelong Learning initiatives shall put into place legislation towards Lifelong Learning
- (14) Lifelong Learning policies shall positively promote the image of learning that is desirable – the outcomes of lifelong learning should be transformative.
- (15) Lifelong Learning policies shall look into the need for Higher education institutions need to change their approach towards accreditation of prior learning. Higher education institutions should not only broaden the possibilities for those who can take part, but also look at what they offer and how it is offered.
- (16) Lifelong Learning policies shall have all skills and prior learning recognized – not always and not necessarily through qualifications.
- (17) Lifelong Learning policies shall look into the coordination and integration of fragmented and compartmentalized approaches to lifelong learning.

- (18) Lifelong Learning policies shall look into the dissemination of state-of-the-art information to marginalized communities such as indigenous people and gender considerations.
- (19) Lifelong Learning policies shall look into the need for flexible teachers who have mastery of skills as opposed to having paper qualifications. Students should also be equipped with skills rather than paper qualifications.
- (20) Lifelong Learning policies shall look into the need of the coordination of informal learning.
- (21) Lifelong Learning policies shall be holistic, vertical, horizontal, comprehensive, and flexible. Policies and recommendations should be at all levels:
 - o Formal, informal and non-formal
 - o Family, social, schooling
 - o International, regional, national, community/ethnicity, workplace, family, individual
- (22) Lifelong Learning policies and recommendations shall take off from other recommendations by UNESCO, EU, Country Projects
- (23) Lifelong Learning policies shall be based on employability, active citizenship, social inclusion and personal development.
- (24) Lifelong Learning policies shall look at lifelong learning from the spiritual perspective – spiritual thrusts for example Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity etc. There should be emphasis on adaptability of approaches.
- (25) Lifelong Learning policies shall be based on seminal references from international sources as well as national and regional – Lifelong Learning in Europe, International Journal of Lifelong Education, Literacy in Information Age (OECD 2000), ILO studies, vocational education, scholars like Peter Jarvis and John Field, Adult Education initiatives in Malaysia (for example Universiti Putra Malaysia).

8.2 Policy Imperatives

Policy Imperative 1: To reaffirm cooperation in moving forward together to develop and advance human civilisation by creating opportunities, structures and systems to support joint efforts for lifelong learning.

Policy Imperative 2: To initiate a redefinition of the philosophy and purpose of formal education so as to embed the philosophy of lifelong learning as the organising concept.

Policy Imperative 3: To severally and jointly foster the overarching and unifying concept of lifelong learning as the enabling force in the development of human resources and in national development.

Policy Imperative 4: To cooperate to define and conceptualise policies across all sectors of government and articulate coherently the meaning and substance of human resources development and the development of potentialities of each person across the life-span.

Policy Imperative 5: To rethink, reconceptualise, and reengineer the machinery of government, the private sector and non-governmental organisations by strategically incorporating the notion of lifelong learning in the development of national and civilisational cultures.

Policy Imperative 6: To explore the formulation and development of Common Core Curriculum for ASEM countries at appropriate education and training levels, with the intention of celebrating the Oneness of Man and the common destiny of Mankind on Planet Earth and to emphasise the necessity for understanding and cooperation across the lifespan of individuals and across all cultures.

Policy Imperative 7 To explore the many faceted purposes, goals, meanings and implications of lifelong and life wide learning and to map out the areas of investment which must be addressed for the promotion of lifelong learning.

Policy Imperative 8 To use all existing advanced technology and other advanced emerging technologies for the benefit of making lifelong learning accessible and available to all persons.

Policy Imperative 9 To elicit cultural ideas, principles and traditions, which enjoin people to love knowledge and to use such drives for the promotion of lifelong learning.

Policy Imperative 10 To review and enhance the Universal Declaration of Human Rights pertaining to Education Rights by affirming the following: Every person has a basic right to lifelong learning and education.

Policy Imperative 11: To expand existing infrastructures and facilities and to develop new infrastructures and facilities to create demand and access and promote lifelong learning in ASEM countries and in all human cultures.

Policy Imperative 12: To create incentives for citizens and social groups to learn and for providers of education and training to offer programs for different interests and needs and levels across the lifespan.

Policy Imperative 13: To institutionalise philosophies, principles and procedures for the recognition of prior experiences and skills as equivalent pre-requirements for admission into higher institutions of learning and for the pursuit of advanced studies.

Policy Imperative 14 To establish national and international Referral Centres and Websites for the promotion of Lifelong learning.

8.3 ASEM Lifelong Learning Follow-Up Activities

- (1) To develop national, regional, and international networking frameworks for lifelong learning
- (2) To form a task force to look into:
 - o The compilation of resources and the setting up of a resource center
 - o The coordination of research and the compilation of existing knowledge – existing Web pages, funding available, various projects undertaken, databases available, especially in Europe and Asia.
 - o To search and analyse database to look for relevance for the ASEM countries and the Asian and ASEAN region.
- (3) To look into case studies of practices in the accreditation of prior learning. The concept of accreditation of prior learning needs to be understood in the context of the education and economic structures of a country. Case studies of South Korea, Norway, Denmark and France are worth looking at.
- (4) To continue the discourse for follow-up meetings and actions.
- (5) To keep dialogue moving between Asia and Europe with Asia-Europe Institute, Kuala Lumpur playing a major role.
- (6) To plan and implement joint development programs in relation to integrated approaches to lifelong learning.
- (7) To develop smart partnerships between Asia and Europe institutions of learning/higher learning.

- (8) To look for funding in order to facilitate programs and initiatives related to integrated approaches to lifelong learning.
- (9) To develop credit transfer/credit recognition between universities and higher education institutions nationally, regionally and internationally.
- (10) To develop recognition and accreditation systems between countries in relation to the recognition of skills and prior learning in order to increase the employability of workers across nations.
- (11) To develop curriculum that prepares students for lifelong learning at school and university levels in order to help them cope with future changes.
- (12) To set up an integrated system of funding to ensure that the funds go across all sorts of lifelong learning programs at national, regional and international levels.
- (13) To organize regional and international research programs and to produce literature, which synthesizes the experience of lifelong learning.
- (14) To develop and maintain transnational resources, especially teachers, conduct twinning programs between ASEM nations, ASEM-ASEAN, ASEM-Asian, within ASEAN, within Asia with expertise from ASEM countries.
- (15) To develop infrastructure to enable exchange of ideas and learning across borders – multicultural learning, intergenerational learning, cultural sensitivity, understanding of different cultures, beliefs, tolerance and cooperation.
- (16) To make e-education more accessible in terms of cost and accessibility. It should also take into consideration elders, senior citizens, retirees, single parents, the handicapped, the culturally disadvantaged, the economically disadvantaged, indigenous minorities, hard-core poor etc.
- (17) To look into the development of individual learning accounts. Individuals should be encouraged through incentives to accumulate his/her own money for learning. Employers and the government could match the amount accumulated by individuals with their own funding of such initiatives.
- (18) To develop educational websites for the purpose of lifelong learning across nations.
- (19) To initiate an ASEM Research Fund for Lifelong Learning.
- (20) To develop and coordinate liberal and enlightened accreditation philosophies across nations.

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