



DVV International

Education for Everyone. Worldwide.  
Lifelong.

# Annual Report 2024





# Contents

- 4 Introduction
- 5 Foreword



## Creating opportunities

- 8 Ukraine: Empowering war veterans through education
- 10 “Her Voice”: Georgian community radios by women, for women
- 11 Green start-ups in the Amazon region: strong young people, strong communities
- 12 Peacebuilding in the Ferghana Valley
- 13 New pathways for female entrepreneurs in Afghanistan
- 14 Reading, writing, participating: Christopher's second chance

## Working sustainably

- 18 Adult education in Morocco: a success story
- 19 From policy to action: Tanzania's new education sector development plan
- 20 Education and resilience: adult learning and education centres in the West Bank
- 22 UIL Director Isabell Kempf: “Lifelong learning is not simply an option, but an imperative.”
- 24 Evaluation proves a variety of positive effects from education centres in Uganda



## Learning from each other

- 28 Cross-border learning: Jordanian partners visit Kyrgyzstan
- 29 Shaping the future of adult learning and education in Africa
- 30 Municipalities spearheading ALE: an exchange of experiences
- 31 Rich in experience and moving: methods workshops in Global Learning
- 32 The ALE Toolbox: practical tools for adult learning and education worldwide

## DVV International at a glance

- 36 Our partner countries
- 38 Profit and loss account
- 39 Regional distribution of project funds, Origin of project funds
- 40 Achieving more together with global partners and networks
- 41 A strong voice for adult learning and education in Asia: ASPBAE turns 60
- 42 Project topics in 2024
- 43 Board of Trustees, Employee statistics, Legal notice

# Introduction



Martin Rabanus

Dear readers,

In a world that is rapidly changing and increasingly marked by conflict, adult learning and education (ALE) has a crucial role to play in helping people to understand global contexts, acquire new skills, and help to shape society. At the same time, ALE can provide the necessary confidence to face up to the changes at work and in everyday life. This applies in Germany and Europe, but also throughout the world. The German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband) is proud of the fact that, through DVV International, we can promote the expansion of learning opportunities – especially for disadvantaged population groups – in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe.

Last year, I had the opportunity to see our institute's work first hand while on a project trip to Uganda and Ethiopia. I was very impressed by what I saw. In Uganda, I was able to observe how the community learning centres, set up with government partners, impart valuable skills to directly improve people's income situation. In Ethiopia, where DVV International ended its involvement in 2024 after many years, it became clear that years of work in the country have made a decisive contribution to building sustainable adult learning and education structures.

I was particularly pleased last year by greater interest in international work at our German ALE centres (Volkshochschulen) and the many opportunities for fruitful collaboration. On the one hand, this is certainly due to the generational change in our management teams, in which more and more colleagues with international experience now bear responsibility and seek to build on their international experiences. On the other hand, there are an increasing number of specific areas in which it makes sense to closely coordinate national and international work. One example of such coordination relates to displacement, migration, and the influx of skilled labour, which can benefit greatly when international and national experiences, and structures, come together. Finally,

there is a growing need for ALE in particular to shed light on global issues and interdependencies in dialogue with our citizens so as not to leave the field to populist voices.

I would like to conclude by taking this opportunity to thank our colleagues in the regional and country offices as well as at the DVV International headquarters in Bonn. We appreciate their commitment and are glad to include DVV International as a distinguished and successful member of our association's family!

Yours sincerely,

**Martin Rabanus**

*Chairman of the German Adult Education Association  
(Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband)*



# Foreword



Uwe Gartenschlaeger

Dear readers,

We are living in times of enormous upheaval and change. Many certainties are being called into question, new developments are challenging us, and digitalisation is revolutionising not only the world of work, but also our social coexistence and our interpersonal communication. Moreover, we are confronted with the increasingly visible consequences of climate change and the rise of authoritarian regimes – more than half of the world's population currently lives in unfree societies. Many people are searching for direction and – more fundamentally – for security and a decent life.

One might think that such global conditions would be motivation enough to invest in international cooperation and education. Unfortunately, we are seeing the opposite. As in many Western countries, development cooperation has also come under pressure in Germany, and its usefulness is being questioned not only by populist politicians but also by large segments of the population. Instead of increasing global cooperation, we are experiencing fragmentation, renationalisation, and a large number of wars and violent conflicts. At the same time, the work of civil society is being curtailed and harassed in more and more countries, while we increasingly see controls and restrictions placed upon the activities of non-state actors.

A similar, worrying trend is also emerging in public funding for education. Compared to 2020, global average spending on education has now fallen by more than 13%, while development aid spending on education fell by 7%.<sup>1</sup> The serious consequences of these developments are foreseeable: More and more people will lack basic education, and fewer and fewer people will be able to actively shape processes for positive change.

Against this backdrop, the work of DVV International as an organisation at the interface of adult learning and education and development remains vital. Our projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe contribute to giving people access to lifelong learning opportunities, improving the framework conditions for adult learning and education, and qualifying staff. In addition, DVV International is increasingly involved in ever more important international co-operation. To this end, new partnerships were established last year, for example, with the European research network ESREA and the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame. Existing alliances were intensified, first and foremost with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in Hamburg. This annual report provides an insight into the diversity and strength of our work.

To conclude, I would like to thank our global partners, without whom our projects would not be possible and who often do amazing work under difficult conditions. My thanks go to the donors who fund our work, first and foremost the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), but also the Federal Foreign Office, the European Union and the children's mission "Die Sternsinger". And finally, I would like to thank our colleagues in our offices abroad and here at our Bonn headquarters. Without their commitment, our work would simply not be possible!

Warmest regards,

**Uwe Gartenschlaeger**  
*Director DVV International*

<sup>1</sup> Figures for 2023, see UNESCO: Education financing, <https://bit.ly/3DHI1eA>

# Creating opportunities

DVV International works in over 30 countries to help disadvantaged young people and adults access education. Education opens up new opportunities for people, strengthens social cohesion, and contributes globally to stable and peaceful societies.







Members of the Cofán indigenous group during the launch of the project “Let’s go! Strengthening skills of young people and indigenous communities in the northern Amazon region of Ecuador”.



# Ukraine: Empowering war veterans through education

**The reintegration of war veterans into civilian life is a significant and complex challenge for Ukraine, which will have an estimated 5–6 million veterans after the war with Russia ends. To facilitate this transition, DVV International and local ALE centres leverage adult learning and education to help veterans rebuild their lives.**

Veterans, as well as their families, face various challenges in their transition to civilian life: problems with physical and mental health, the need for legal support, and issues finding employment. Very often, people with combat experience returning to their communities re-evaluate their personal and professional goals, often seeking entirely new career paths.

DVV International in Ukraine, in collaboration with seven adult learning and education (ALE) centres, implemented the project “Reintegration of War Veterans Through the Creation of Educational Opportunities” between 2023 and 2024. Funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, this project offered critical support to veterans and their families, helping them rebuild their lives by providing them with knowledge, skills, and economic opportunities.

This project was designed to support veterans and their families in transitioning to civilian life by enhancing their professional skills and employability. More than 3,200 participants received expert counselling, while over 1,500 completed various educational courses. Specialists in legal, psychological, professional, and business fields provided approximately 10,000 hours of individual and group consultations. Additionally, more than 800 veterans and their families gained new labour market skills, boosting their confidence and career prospects.

## Veterans as entrepreneurs – fostering economic independence

Veteran-led businesses play a crucial role in fostering economic independence and driving local and national economies. More than 300 veterans and their families participated in business courses and received guidance on developing business plans. As a result, 36 veteran-led enterprises were awarded grants of up to €10,000 each.

“All my savings went to support my family – so this grant was my only chance to start a new business. I never give up,

despite the fact that I lost my arms. By my example, I have proven that nothing is impossible. Thank you for allowing veterans to realize their potential and reintegrate into society through entrepreneurship,” says Serhii Zhukovskiy, a veteran and 2023 business grant competition winner. After losing both arms in combat and undergoing rehabilitation and prosthetics, Serhii and his wife started a business producing meat snacks.

Another participant, Dmytro Kutsenko from Nikopol, is a junior sergeant in the Armed Forces. “During the fierce battles for Bakhmut, I was caught in an enemy airstrike and seriously wounded. But despite the challenges, I did not lose my thirst for life. I joined the adult learning and education center in Nikopol, where my wife and I completed several educational programmes. After receiving business consultations, I

Serhii Zhukovskiy lost both arms in combat. With the help of a grant, he and his wife started a company that produces meat snacks.







Dmytro Kutsenko was seriously injured while fighting to defend Bakhmut. After returning from the frontline, he attended a series of courses and is now working in agriculture. He was able to purchase the tractor pictured here with the help of a grant.

decided to launch my own business growing super-early varieties of cherries. With the business grant, I acquired a modern tractor. Today, I can cultivate my land independently, assist others, and provide for my family. This project helped me reintegrate into society, regain confidence, and take action.”

### **Community-orientated approach creates sustainable support**

The project created strong synergies by collaborating with local stakeholders. Across seven regions, 36 memorandums of cooperation were signed with state administrations, businesses, NGOs, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and educational institutions. More than 14 events were organised, engaging over 500 stakeholders in discussions on veteran policies and support programmes.

The success of this project highlights how high-quality non-formal education can create sustainable support systems for local communities affected by war and crisis. Its integrated, community-driven approach serves as a model that can be adapted by other countries facing similar challenges in reintegrating and supporting traumatised populations.

Liliia Matviichuk, the wife of a fallen defender and a project coordinator in the Poltava region, says: “This project became a lifeline for me and our team. It engaged us as target audience, allowing us to be useful to others and reintegrate into civilian life. Participants gained new knowledge and skills for adapting to civilian life. They built connections, and created a strong veteran community based on mutual support, assistance, and trust. The true value of the project lies in the people who maintain these connections and continue to support each other even after the project ends.” ●

# “Her Voice”: Georgian community radios by women, for women

In rural Georgia, women’s voices often go unheard. Facing gender-based violence, limited access to education, and restrictive traditional roles, many struggle with isolation and economic hardship. “Her Voice” is a project introducing 12 community radio stations – safe spaces where women could share their stories, raise concerns, and connect with their communities.

“Her Voice” was launched by DWV International with financial support from the German Federal Foreign Office and in partnership with the Georgian civil society organisation “FINE” as well as the German Radio Z. From April to December 2024, community radio stations were set up at adult learning and education centres in rural areas, giving women a platform to express themselves and advocate for change.

## From listeners to leaders

Rather than remaining passive audiences, women actively shaped the radio programmes by suggesting topics, highlighting human rights violations, and discussing issues such as gender-based violence, lifelong learning, and stereotypes. Many shared personal experiences on air, fostering solidarity and creating a strong sense of community.

In addition, 24 female radio leaders were trained – with guidance from journalists from the German Radio Z and the US channel Radio Liberty. Regular mentoring ensured high journalistic quality. A study trip to Germany enabled the radio leaders to exchange ideas with activists and media professionals, providing them with practical experience and new perspectives.

## Beyond broadcasting: community engagement

In addition to the radio programmes, “Her Voice” promoted community engagement through public lectures, film screenings and discussion groups as well as supplementary educational programmes on gender equality. A particular highlight was a radio play written by a renowned screenwriter about gender-based violence, women in politics, and family roles.

Training for female radio hosts of the future at the adult learning and education centre in Leliani.



To ensure a lasting impact, the programme focused on training grassroots civil society organisations and aspiring journalists. In total, 200 NGO members and 100 young women participated, thereby strengthening networks of community leaders dedicated to advancing gender equality.

## A voice that lasts

“Her Voice” was more than a media initiative – it became a platform for empowerment and inclusion. The project strengthened the voice of women and encouraged social, economic, and political change in rural Georgia. Even after the project ended, the local radio stations have continued broadcasting. They are now run by dedicated community members. ●



# Green start-ups in the Amazon region: strong young people, strong communities

**In the northern Amazon region of Ecuador, an innovative project shows how young people can become real drivers of change for their communities through developing social skills and sustainable business ideas.**

For many years, DVV International Ecuador and its partner FUNDER have been involved in educational work with disadvantaged young people. In April 2024 they launched the project “Let’s go! Strengthening the skills of young people and indigenous communities in the northern Amazon region of Ecuador”, thanks to support from the children’s mission “Die Sternsinger”. The project focuses on three indigenous communities in the border region with Colombia. These areas are geographically isolated and lack access to education, health, and justice. In the words of local leaders, these communities are “forgotten places” where young people have hardly any future prospects. Conflicts caused by illegal mining, oil extraction, and drug trafficking further exacerbate the situation.

Despite the high demand for educational programmes, trust first had to be built among the communities and families for the project to get off to a successful start. The project partners focused on a broad approach that linked education with other topics relevant to everyday life, such as health and safety, and thus focused on the concrete, everyday problems of young people.

## **A holistic approach for new future prospects**

150 young people from various indigenous communities are now taking part in “Jóvenes Constructores”. The course combines social skills with vocational training and entrepreneurship. The young people are encouraged to discover their unique skills, design their own projects, and develop green as well as gender-sensitive business ideas. Líder Aguilera from the community of Dureno describes it this way: “For us, the course is an opportunity to learn new things, share our knowledge, laugh and learn from each other [...] because we are young people who dream, young people who want to be good people.”

To provide them with the best possible support, 15 teachers were trained and the specially developed “Curriculum JuvenALE” was introduced. The programme focuses on transformative learning, and creates open and appreciative learning environments in which solutions to pressing problems such as security, peace, and the environment are developed in groups. Líder summarises the transformative approach as follows: “We young people can be the engine for change if we are given the right skills and the opportunity to get involved. We need to take action to bring about the change that our society needs.”

The project will run until March 2026. In 2025, the focus will be on teaching skills in various professions such as baking, food services, or car mechanics, and developing business ideas that integrate aspects of environmental protection and respect for all genders.

The project shows how education not only empowers individuals, but can also promote the sustainable development of entire communities. ●

Graduation ceremony for the first part of the course “Jóvenes Constructores” with 45 young people from the community of Dureno. For many participants, this was their very first certificate.



# Peacebuilding in the Ferghana Valley

**Border conflicts, ethnic tensions, and scarcity of resources put a strain on coexistence in the Central Asian Ferghana Valley. The TRUST project of DVV International and its partners relies on adult learning and education along with cross-border cooperation to foster dialogue, peacefully resolve conflicts, and create new prospects for a shared future.**

The Ferghana Valley, home to over 15 million people, is one of Central Asia's most densely populated and economically vital regions. Stretching across Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, it is a melting pot of cultures, languages, and histories. However, border conflicts, competition for resources – especially water – and historical disputes have also led to tensions and conflicts. In 2021 and 2022, military clashes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan highlighted the need for regional peacebuilding initiatives.

To address these challenges, DVV International, in partnership with the civil society organisations Mehrjon (Uzbekistan), Youth of Osh (Kyrgyzstan), and Saodat (Tajikistan), launched the TRUST (Together Unite efforts for regional Stability) project. Funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, this two-year project (February 2024–January 2026) promotes

conflict-sensitive practices, intercultural understanding, and cross-border dialogue through non-formal education.

## Strengthening civil society and local decision-makers

In the first year of the project, employees of 24 civil society organisations in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan received training in peacebuilding, project management, conflict prevention, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), and risk assessment. Cross-border activities, experience exchanges, and fieldwork deepened participants' understanding of local challenges. With their newly acquired skills, participants developed 24 pilot initiatives to foster sustainable peace in cross-border communities.

These initiatives, set to be implemented in 2025, will include dialogue and debate forums, festivals, and education programmes focused on sustainable peace and conflict resolution. The aim is to foster dialogue among the people of the Ferghana Valley, encourage new perspectives and mutual understanding, and strengthen cross-border cooperation.

Additionally, local Advisory Groups consisting of key local decision-makers – such as representatives of local govern-

ment, religious leaders and media representatives – have been established to enhance the project's impact. Members received training in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, enabling them to act as mediators and advocates for long-term stability in their communities. ●



At the launch of the TRUST project: employees of civil society organisations testing mediation techniques during the methods seminar.



# New pathways for female entrepreneurs in Afghanistan

The ban on girls' education and severe restrictions on women's work, along with a deteriorating health system and widespread poverty have created immense challenges for women in Afghanistan. DVV International's long-standing partner, the Afghan National Association for Adult Education (ANAF AE), uses its deep community ties to find creative ways of supporting women's development without jeopardising their safety. Ms. Roqia\*, a professional tailor and mother of two, is one of 45 participants in a course for female entrepreneurs. Here, she shares how she continues to grow her business despite all restrictions.

\* Name changed



The training sessions hosted by ANAF AE provide business knowledge along with crafts and trade skills.



My business specialises in tailoring clothes for women and girls, offering everything from traditional and cultural outfits to bridal and special occasion wear. I currently employ five women and train new female apprentices in tailoring and dressmaking to expand my business.

Since the de facto government took over, I have faced significant challenges. With fewer women working outside the home, demand for custom clothing has dropped, reducing sales and revenue. Travel restrictions and safety concerns make it difficult to source materials and reach customers. Women are now required to have a male *mahram* (member of the family) when leaving their homes or attending meetings, further limiting my ability to conduct business. Additionally, the economic downturn has strained household budgets, forcing families to prioritise essentials over custom clothing. Because my workshop is in my home, marketing relies heavily on word of mouth and private networks. Digital outreach is becoming increasingly important to attract new customers.

To sustain and grow my business, I participated in an ANAF AE training course – one of the few still available to women under the current restrictions. This training helped me update my sewing skills, learn new techniques, and adapt to shifting customer preferences. For

example, there is now greater demand for modest, traditional Afghan clothing with personalised touches.

Beyond tailoring skills, the course also provided essential business knowledge, including pricing strategies, online sales, remote orders, home delivery, and social media marketing. Learning how to better train my apprentices has been particularly valuable, as they contribute to production and help improve product quality. Through discussions with trainers and fellow participants, we also shared strategies on navigating new restrictions and sustaining our businesses.

Despite the many challenges, I remain committed to providing tailoring services and training opportunities for women. By adapting my business strategies, I strive to sustain and grow my workshop in this ever-changing environment. ●

# Reading, writing, participating: Christopher's second chance

**What does it mean to learn to read and write as an adult, what challenges are there, and how might it change your life? We asked Christopher Olur from Uganda, who took part in a literacy programme supported by DVV International. He is 54 years old, married and has seven children, all of whom go to school.**

## Why did you want to learn how to read and write?

I was motivated to join the Kwan Aye Anyim Community Empowerment Group (CEG) in 2021 to learn how to read and write. During meetings, many of my friends could read and write very well, while I had to ask for help or use my thumbprint for a signature. This made me less confident in community affairs. I needed to learn reading and writing to overcome this stigma. Additionally, I wanted to track the progress and performance of my children in school so that I could fully support their education. Illiteracy had been limiting my participation in development programmes, many of which required filling out forms. I also had problems in business because I was repeatedly cheated due to my illiteracy.

## Why didn't you learn to read and write when you were a child?

I am the eldest child in my family. My parents asked me to stay at home and take care of my younger brothers and sisters while they tended the family farm. Whenever they returned from the farm, I would help scare away birds in the garden or join them in hunting.

## What was the most difficult thing about learning as an adult?

I had the privilege of learning in the same class alongside my dear wife, Christine Adong. Although some men may be apprehensive about such an experience, to me it was a blessing. We were able to assist each other in completing assignments and would always encourage each other to get there early. As a result, I won an award for being on time. However, at the beginning, some of my friends looked down on me for learning as an adult, especially with my wife in the same class. Learning became even more challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic and government restrictions, which



Christopher Olur

caused us to miss many sessions. Additionally, reading and writing long words and sentences proved to be difficult, but I kept at it and finally managed to learn them. After two years and nine months, I successfully graduated.

## What does learning mean for you? How has your life changed?

I am now a highly respected and responsible man both at home and within my community. Previously, I used to take up casual work in exchange for trivial things such as alcohol. However, after acquiring literacy and business skills, I started farming as a business and saving money for my family's well-being through the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA). My reputation in the community has also increased. I no longer need help with reading documents or filling out forms. The only support I need is for documents in English because we learned in our local language, Acholi. My household was selected and received funds from the government under the Parish Development Model. We received 1,000,000 Uganda shillings [about 250 euros] to improve our agriculture and retail business. Last year, my wife and I were selected to represent all adult learners during the International Literacy Day symposium in Kampala. It was my first trip to the capital city, and I delivered my testimony before many high-profile guests.





### What message would you like to give to other adults who cannot read or write?

I urge men not to be afraid of attending adult literacy classes. There is more to learn beyond just literacy, and staying illiterate only increases stigmas and disadvantages as one grows older. Furthermore, I encourage men to support their wives in attending literacy classes because having a literate wife can greatly benefit the welfare of the family. ●

Graduation ceremony in the district of Nwoya for all course participants: Christopher and his wife Christine on their way to receive their certificates.

## Literacy – a global challenge

To be able to read and write is not a natural matter of course for many people. There are still at least 750 million illiterate individuals around the world; two-thirds of them are women. Due to that, their participation in social and economic life is severely restricted.

In Africa especially, the illiteracy rate is still high. DWV International is committed to enabling access to education for as many people as possible in its African partner countries. Sustainable educational structures are essential for this to happen. DWV International carries out lobby work and advises governments, reinforces educational institutions, and develops concepts for innovative educational offers for adults.

The literacy courses supported by DWV International meld reading, writing, and numeracy skills with, for example, areas like health, farming, business start-ups or civic education.





# Working sustainably



Government representatives and education authorities visiting a community learning centre co-established by DVV International in Hogoro, Tanzania.





Strong educational structures are necessary to sustainably ensure high-quality education for all. Together with its partners, DVV International engages in lobbying and government consulting to create better legal and financial framework conditions in adult learning and education. At the same time, DVV International qualifies teaching staff and strengthens educational organisations along with national and regional networks.

## Adult education in Morocco: a success story

**From new learning methods and the establishment of education centres to the training of teaching staff, DVV International and its Moroccan partners have initiated long-term changes with an impact on the country and the entire region.**

Opening DVV International's office in Morocco in 2008 not only represented a first step in a new country, but a new presence in the region of North Africa as well. At the outset, the focus in Morocco was strongly geared toward literacy. In response to the Moroccan partners' request to make existing programmes more attractive and thus counteract high dropout rates, DVV International introduced the participatory REFLECT approach, which has already been successfully implemented in sub-Saharan Africa. Today, REFLECT is used throughout the country and is recognised as a national literacy method. The close cooperation with West Africa has also made it possible to establish numerous institutional and personal contacts. To this day, Moroccan networks are members of Pamoja, the West African adult learning and education (ALE) network.

### Building sustainable structures

DVV International's central partner was initially the Directorate for the Fight against Illiteracy in the Ministry of Education, which DVV International closely supported when it was upgraded to an independent national agency. Adult learning and education structures quickly moved to the centre of attention. In addition to the promotion of rural education centres, establishing urban adult education centres was a milestone. Inspired by the model of the German centres for adult learning and education (Volkshochschulen), the concept of "Universités pour Tous" emerged: a process that could be supported by German Volkshochschulen, including through advisory assignments, study trips, and further training. The collaboration gave rise to an umbrella organisation to which ten centres now belong. Other African countries were inspired by the Moroccan model, thus promoting continental exchange.

Another important component was the training of teaching staff. In 2020, we were able to support the establishment of a Master's degree programme in adult learning and education at the University of Mohammed V in Rabat, thereby improving training opportunities over the long term.



Participants of a local REFLECT circle. The REFLECT approach is now recognised as a national literacy method.

Model projects for specific groups were added to the portfolio: Together with the General Delegation for Prisons and Reintegration, DVV International developed a model project for distance learning in prisons, which is now being used in five facilities.

### A strong system with a future

Today in Morocco, there is a broader, more modern understanding of adult learning and education which goes beyond literacy programmes. The project has left behind a strengthened system: government structures with a holistic understanding of ALE, a wider range of educational centres that employ modern methods, and well-trained teachers. In addition, two civil society networks are involved, representing the interests of ALE and striving for regional expansion across the Maghreb.

Even though DVV International's work in Morocco ended in June 2024, the country remains an important partner in international adult learning and education. At the same time, DVV International is continuing its work in North Africa through projects in Tunisia and Algeria.



# From policy to action: Tanzania's new education sector development plan

**Investing in adult learning and education is key to tackling Tanzania's high illiteracy rates. With the support of DVV International, the government is strengthening policies and expanding access to lifelong learning opportunities.**

To respond to the persisting high illiteracy rate of 18% (Census 2022), Tanzania is intensifying efforts to improve education offers and ensure lifelong learning for all. The Education and Training Policy 2023 highlights the importance of adult learning and education (ALE); in addition, the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) 2025/26–2030/31 now recognises ALE for the first time as an independent sub-sector with specific targets and indicators. One of the indicators is dedicated to the nationwide establishment of Community Learning Centres (CLCs) to provide inclusive lifelong learning opportunities.

DVV International has contributed significantly to the development of both the strategy and the development plan, providing advice and expertise to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG).

## Policy commitment and strategic action

During the International Literacy Week 2024, which was supported by DVV International, the Permanent Secretary of MoEST, Prof. Carolyn Nombo, emphasised the need to make ALE engaging and accessible: "In order to encourage more people to participate, adult education and lifelong learning needs to be made interesting. Lifelong learning is part of our daily lives. We must develop a solid strategy for implementation, monitoring, and delivery of quality and creative ALE services."

At the International Literacy Week National Symposium, Tanzania reaffirmed its commitment to ALE through four key actions:

1. Revitalising ALE coordinating committees at all governance levels.
2. Empowering national and local education officers.
3. Establishing at least one CLC per district, especially in rural areas.
4. Enhancing training for ALE practitioners through the Institute of Adult Education (IAE).

## DVV International's role in ALE development

DVV International supports the government, its decentralised structures, and the IAE in implementing these initiatives. In a participatory process, it is working with key stakeholders to develop a national ALE implementation framework. This framework will regulate coordination, monitoring, practitioner qualifications, and programme quality.

To enhance training, DVV International has equipped master trainers through its international core curriculum – Curriculum globALE – and enables them to offer comprehensive training for ALE practitioners. In addition, DVV International is working with local authorities in four pilot districts to set up model CLCs that offer young people and adults in rural areas educational opportunities in literacy, numeracy, vocational skills, and livelihoods. One focus for further cooperation between DVV International and its government partners is the introduction of CLCs throughout the country, based on the experiences in the four pilot districts. ●



The coordinator of the Hogoro Community Learning Centre (left in the picture) handing the activity report of his centre to the local educational authorities and a member of the district council.

# Education and resilience: adult learning and education centres in the West Bank

**Amid war and uncertainty, local adult learning and education centres in the West Bank have become lifelines for their communities – adapting, mobilising local resources, and sustaining education against all odds. Their resilience is a strong testimony to the lasting impact of robust social structures.**

With the support of DVV International, five municipal adult learning and education (ALE) centres have been established in the West Bank since 2019 and have played a vital role in serving local communities. During the most recent war, these centres became indispensable – one of the few social structures able to withstand severe funding cuts and navigate an increasingly volatile security situation. Despite enormous challenges, they have continued providing direct, needs-based support to their communities.

Over the past years, DVV International has supported the centres in strengthening their capacities in management, networking, outreach, methodology, and resource development. Before the war, their focus was on learning for employability, equipping individuals with skills for professional and economic independence. The centres also served as communal hubs where people could connect, collaborate, and engage in cultural initiatives. Through community learning programmes, the centres mobilised volunteers committed to addressing local challenges, and fostering resilience and solidarity.

## Responding to an unprecedented emergency

In 2024, the world witnessed the devastating impact of the war on Gaza. Lesser known to the international public, however, was the massive impact of the war on the West Bank. The education system nearly collapsed and unemployment soared as tens of thousands lost their jobs. The installation of almost 900 checkpoints severely restricted movement, while settler violence and forced displacement escalated. Entire towns endured months-long sieges, causing shortages of food, medicine, and essential goods. Teachers couldn't reach schools, and the demand for healthcare and basic services surged.

Faced with this crisis, the ALE centres had to redefine their role. “The security and economic deterioration impacted every aspect of our community's life – psychosocial, educational, and societal,” says Huda Nawahda, Director of the Al Yamoun Centre for Youth and Adult Education. “We had to act because we are part of this community. Frustration and despair were looming over us, and our first mission was to help people hold on to hope and positivity.”



**“We relied on local solidarity, mobilised volunteers, and tapped into our network of friends.”**

*Huda Nawahda, Director of the Al Yamoun Centre for Youth and Adult Education*



Adapting quickly wasn't a choice – it was a necessity. With international aid temporarily frozen and municipal budgets stretched thin, the centres had to find creative ways to sustain their work. “We relied on local solidarity, mobilised volunteers, and tapped into our network of friends. This experience brought us closer together and proved that, no matter what, we would continue to serve,” Nawahda adds.





Huda Nawahda, Director of the Al Yamoun Centre for Youth and Adult Education, leading an orientation session for new participants. Together they prioritised aspects of the course based on needs they all identified previously.

## The Al Yamoun Centre: a model of resilience

Located northwest of Jenin, Al Yamoun Centre was established in 2019. In response to the crisis, it expanded its regular courses, including beekeeping, tailoring, embroidery, culinary arts, and graphic design – helping families launch small home-based businesses. “The beekeeping project, in particular, saw significant growth, with learners enjoying a successful harvest season, encouraging more families to start their own beekeeping ventures,” explains Nawahda. The centre also launched social media pages to support participants in marketing their products.

Hind Samoudi, a participant and a mother of six, says: “I attended various training courses at the centre, which helped me start a small business producing pickles, dairy products, sweets, honey, and handmade soaps. After the start of the war, when my husband lost his job, I expanded my business to become our family’s main source of income. With my family’s help, this project has provided us with financial stability despite the economic hardships we face.”

To better address emerging needs, the centre expanded its network, engaging community volunteers and local stakeholders. This group coordinated with municipal departments to unify relief efforts, gathered data on vulnerable groups and mobilised local businesses for support.

To help farmers – one of the hardest-hit groups – the centre partnered with the Agriculture District office and launched initiatives to support the olive harvest, educate farmers on protecting crops from harsh weather, and improve honey production for beekeepers.

In addition, the centre also provided psychosocial aid, offering first aid courses, academic support, and guidance on managing children’s stress and anxiety.

## Looking ahead

Despite almost no external funding, Al Yamoun Centre – like other ALE centres – was able to sustain and expand its programmes using local resources. Their ability to continue their work, even in times of crisis, stands as a powerful testament to the resilience of these centres, their teams, and the communities they serve.

“We look forward to seeing more individuals participate in our activities, invest in their personal growth, and contribute to their community. With the backing of the municipality and the support of DVV International, our team remains committed to mobilising resources and supporting families in this town and others nearby,” says Nawahda. ●

## UIL Director Isabell Kempf: “Lifelong learning is not simply an option, but an imperative.”

In order to improve the framework conditions for adult learning and education (ALE) worldwide, DVV International engages in global lobbying work together with its network partners. A central partner is the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) based in Hamburg. In this interview, Dr Isabell Kempf, Director of the UIL, talks about global challenges, the importance of adult learning and education, and the role of civil society organisations in building future-proof learning systems.

**You have been Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning since January 2024. What has been particularly important to you during this time, and what future topics do you see for your work and international ALE?**

My first year as Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning has been a journey full of insights and inspiration. I have seen impressive initiatives around the world and met very committed stakeholders, but I have also experienced the challenges of implementing lifelong learning programmes.

A particularly formative moment was a meeting with DVV International office directors from all over the world. They reported on the increasing restrictions on civil society activities in many countries, which make their work considerably more difficult, while the need for ALE is increasing in these countries in particular. I was deeply impressed by the creativity and resilience of the DVV International team in facing these challenges and finding innovative ways to make learning possible for everyone, regardless of age. Adult learning and education can only succeed in co-operation between state and civil society actors as well as other partners, and it is more important than ever.

We are facing enormous challenges around the world. Economic systems and jobs are under pressure, social cohesion and human rights are threatened in many places, conflicts are on the rise, the digital revolution is transforming work and life, and climate change is forcing us to aggressively question our way of life. In this context, it is clear that lifelong learning is not simply an option, but an imperative.

Only by building future-proof learning systems can we ensure that people acquire the skills and knowledge they need to navigate and actively shape an ever-changing world. At the UNESCO Institute, we will support countries around the world to develop these learning systems to equip people of all ages, backgrounds, and countries with the skills they need for the future. Civil society organisations are close partners in this.

**What specific initiatives or measures is the UIL planning as part of the CONFITEA process, and how can civil society organisations get involved?**

The entire work of our institute is dedicated to the implementation of the “Marrakech Framework for Action”, which was adopted by over 140 UNESCO member states at the CONFITEA VII conference in Morocco. My team and I support the signatory countries worldwide in realising their commitments to promote lifelong learning. We do this by supporting them in the development of laws and policy guidelines, implementing innovative programmes in the countries, and creating the necessary database to enable evidence-based political action. Close cooperation with civil society organisations is essential in this regard.

Let me give you two examples: We are currently working on the sixth UNESCO Global Report on Adult Learning and Education, which is due to be published in 2026. This report will provide a comprehensive overview of the state of ALE worldwide and shed light on its role in transformation processes. Civil society institutions play a central role in the preparation of the report. They are represented on our advisory committees, contribute to the conceptual direction of the report, and have the opportunity to contribute important topics and best practice examples via open calls. We have already received over 1,400 contributions to the thematic focus of the report, many of them from civil society. This is invaluable to us. Last but not least, we rely on close cooperation with civil society organisations to disseminate the report, as the knowledge gained should serve as a basis for future measures, which will only be successful in cooperation with civil society.





Isabell Kempf

The second example is the promotion of lifelong learning in the countries themselves. Last year, for example, we worked with DVV International in numerous countries to support governments and civil society actors in promoting lifelong learning. For UNESCO Learning Cities in Ukraine, for example, we set up a capacity-building programme to support local actors in adapting their learning programmes in the face of war. Here too, civil society organisations are indispensable partners when it comes to providing practical support on the ground!

#### **How do you view the cooperation with DVV International?**

DVV International is a central partner for our UNESCO Institute. Allow me to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the entire DVV International team for their trustworthiness and effective cooperation!

We look forward to benefiting not only from DVV International's comprehensive expertise in our programme work in the future, but also to jointly promoting adult learning and education in the countries on the ground. This cooperation is already a reality in Ukraine, many Asian countries, the Arab states, Latin America and Africa. We would like to expand it even further – and we are counting on you! ●

#### **WEB**

More information on the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) can be found at: [www.uil.unesco.org/en](http://www.uil.unesco.org/en)

# Evaluation proves a variety of positive effects from education centres in Uganda

**With support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, DVV International is committed to establishing sustainable structures for adult learning and education (ALE) worldwide. An external evaluation of the Institute's work in Uganda shows how Community Learning Centres not only promote education, but also drive local development.**

To establish a sustainable ALE system in Uganda, DVV International has launched the ICOLEW (Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation) programme in close cooperation with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. An important component of this programme is the establishment of local adult learning and education centres, so-called Community Learning Centres (CLCs). These centres offer needs-based education locally, particularly for disadvantaged population groups.

In the second project phase (2023–2025), the focus lies on expanding the pilot phase and preparing for the nationwide introduction of the ICOLEW programme and the CLCs. An external evaluation in 2024 examined the impact the project has already had at the local level, and was able to demonstrate that the Community Learning Centre model which was developed supports the ministry's objectives and is now anchored in key government documents and strategies – an important basis for long-term funding.

## Local educational programmes with a big impact

The positive effects of the programme were confirmed by various target groups during the evaluation. Participants in the CLCs received training in financial literacy and set up

savings groups. Many invested their savings in agricultural projects such as chickens, pigs or seedlings, which led to increased agricultural production and rising incomes. In addition, sound agricultural practices and financial management skills also spread among community members who had not directly participated in the training.

Another positive aspect was that parents developed a better understanding of the value of education for their children through literacy and basic education courses. Many parents also reported that they were now able to send their children to school thanks to their newly acquired income opportunities. Women in particular benefited from the economic opportunities: they became more financially independent, which not only improved their own living situation, but also improved gender relations within the community. In some cases, this led to a decline in domestic and gender-based violence.

## Positive changes at municipal level as well

The CLCs offer educational programmes directly on site, eliminating long journeys and reaching more people. The libraries set up in the CLCs are used by children and adults alike to promote reading, and many community members who do not have a television at home watch the news at the libraries. A pilot CLC distributed fruit tree seedlings, which are now bearing fruit and supporting family income and food security. The CLCs also serve as meeting places for community activities such as sports, cultural events, and gatherings.

The CLC management committees' close relationships with government authorities have improved communication between the municipality, district, and region. Examples were cited in the evaluation interviews in which CLC committees recorded complaints and needs, such as for clean water, and passed them on to the regional authorities. In this way, the CLCs strengthen the community's ability to represent its interests and demand government responsibility.

## Recommendations for further work

Overall, the evaluation confirms that the CLCs not only directly support the participants of the education programmes, but also improve the living conditions in the communities and sustainably strengthen social cohesion. The



Tailoring course in the municipal education centre of Madowa, in the district of Namayingo.



Graduation ceremony for course participants in the district of Mpigi.



evaluation team recommended that DVV International in Uganda continue to provide advice to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in the implementation of the ICOLEW programme and the improvement of the CLC system. This also includes the further development of national legal frameworks and corresponding regulations. In particular, the National Adult Literacy Strategy should be revised, as it is currently too strongly focused on literacy and neglects other forms of adult learning and education.

DVV International will therefore continue to work with the Ministry to sustainably strengthen the structures of adult learning and education in Uganda and thus create long-term prospects for education, social development, and economic stability. ●

## Evaluations 2024

Regular evaluations are an integral, accompanying instrument of DVV International's work. In 2024, a total of eight evaluations were carried out.

Country/Project	Evaluation title
Malawi/Mozambique	Regional evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Mali	Evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Morocco	Evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Palestinian territories	Evaluation of the EU-funded project: Palestinian communities promote their culture – Stories of Palestine
Tajikistan	Evaluation of the EU-funded project: Protecting the Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights of Prisoners and Ex-prisoners in Tajikistan (SECRET 4)
Togo	Evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Tunisia	Evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Uganda	Evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025

# Learning from each other

Working around the globe, DVV International brings together the experience of the German adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) with that of its national and global partner networks. We support a global exchange of information and professional knowledge, and share our expertise through curricula and publications. International experiences contribute to adult learning and education in Germany through the Global Learning project for Volkshochschulen.



In October 2024, representatives from 16 countries came together to attend DVV International's first African conference for adult learning and education.





## Cross-border learning: Jordanian partners visit Kyrgyzstan

**A study visit to Kyrgyzstan introduced six new Jordanian partner institutions of DVV International to the Kyrgyz adult learning and education (ALE) system. The visit provided fresh perspectives and strategic insights, inspiring Jordanian partners to enhance ALE initiatives in their communities.**

In 2024, DVV International began working with six new partners in Jordan – three non-governmental community organisations and three governmental community development centres. They aim to develop new participatory, needs-based ALE programmes by the end of 2026 that contribute to local development. To give the partners an international perspective on adult learning and education and to promote exchange with other countries, DVV International in Jordan organised a study visit in cooperation with the DVV International office in Kyrgyzstan.

From 23 to 28 September, 18 participants from Jordan explored Kyrgyzstan's ALE system. They engaged with both governmental and non-governmental ALE providers and networks in the field of formal and non-formal education, gaining valuable insights into successful service delivery models.

### Learning in context: key takeaways from Kyrgyzstan

Visits to the Kyrgyz Adult Education Association, "Youth of Osh", Osh State University, libraries, and training centres showcased innovative community education approaches. "The study visit helped me see the importance of a holistic concept of adult learning and education that is not limited to literacy alone," said one participant, summarising his impressions.

A key takeaway for participants was the importance of building collaborative networks with local educational organisations and municipal institutions. For example, sharing knowledge, using joint resources – such as infrastructure and trainers – and referring participants to each other can improve the quality and availability of educational programmes. Participants also recognised the vital role that universities play in the professionalisation of the sector and the training of adult educators – a dimension that remains underdeveloped in Jordan and warrants greater attention.

### From inspiration to action

The study visit became a catalyst for change. Jordanian partners returned with concrete ideas to strengthen ALE in Jordan, including promoting adult learning and education through local and national festivals and leveraging social media for awareness campaigns. To raise awareness about the importance of ALE among governmental and non-governmental community centres, one partner centre proposed conducting workshops in collaboration with the Jordanian Ministry of Education. Another centre, drawing from the Kyrgyz experience, initiated steps to formalise an agreement with a renowned Jordanian institute to accredit its IT courses. DVV International will support its partners in the coming years in implementing their ideas and improving their educational programmes. ●

The delegates at a visit to Osh State University.





# Shaping the future of adult learning and education in Africa

At DVV International's first African Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Conference, experts, educators, and policymakers discussed how ALE can drive a just transition towards sustainable and equitable communities. In this interview, Rebecca Lekoko, Professor of Adult Education at the Defence Command and Staff College, Botswana, shares key takeaways from the conference, emphasising the role of ALE in addressing critical social challenges.

**In October 2024, you took part in DVV International's first African ALE Conference in Cape Town. What were the key insights you gained?**

The conference emphasised the need for a unitive approach – Africans must work together to identify challenges and develop strategies to address them. The theme, Adult Education for a Just Transition, calls for a move towards a more equitable and sustainable future. While many African countries aptly identify challenges and would-be strategies to address these, implementation often lags behind. A major takeaway of the exchanges during the conference was the need to learn from each other's experiences to effectively transition from inequality and injustice toward thriving community-driven development. The panel on climate change illustrated how shared experiences can foster solidarity. The key message was clear: African nations must collaborate, exchange knowledge, and use ALE as a tool to address development challenges.

**In your opinion, what are the most important areas ALE should focus on in the coming years?**

Climate justice education must remain a priority. Climate change is devastating, yet many still lack awareness of its root causes and solutions. We need to mobilise climate-responsive funding, use ALE to support vulnerable populations, and build resilience, particularly among farmers and marginalised groups. Literacy is another crucial area. To address contemporary challenges, literacy programmes should go beyond reading and writing to equip individuals with the tools to engage in their communities meaningfully. We need to prepare the most affected and vulnerable populations to understand and navigate their evolving environments. Active ageing

Rebecca Lekoko



must also be prioritised. Older adults continue to learn, yet ALE rarely focuses on them. In Botswana, they are classified as vulnerable, and ALE must be positioned to support their lifelong learning needs.

**What changes should governments introduce to improve ALE implementation?**

ALE remains marginalised in many countries due to weak policies and fragmented leadership. Governments must redefine ALE's role in national development and foster a shared vision that values ALE as essential rather than secondary. ALE efforts should be coordinated across sectors and include community voices in decision-making. A unitive approach – bringing together providers, policymakers, and communities – is key to ensuring ALE fulfils its transformative potential. ●

## Municipalities spearheading ALE: an exchange of experiences

Adult learning and education (ALE) promotes social participation and economic development, but what role do municipalities play? Around 30 delegates from Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, and Ukraine met in September 2024 at the invitation of DVV International to discuss “Adult learning and education in municipal responsibility” with German colleagues as part of a study trip. Among the participants were deputy mayors and representatives from business, ALE, and civil society.

The visit began with a one-day conference at which the legal and organisational framework for ALE in Germany was presented. Almost all federal states have their own laws in which they define continuing education as a public task. The approximately 850 Volkshochschulen (German adult learning and education centres), most of which are run by local authorities, play a central role in fulfilling this educational mandate and represent a proven model for community-based continuing education. A presentation by the Volkshochschule in Rostock also illustrated how non-formal education can contribute to social development, for example, by promoting social inclusion, personal development, and civic engagement.

All participants were inspired by a forum in which the guests reported on experiences from their countries. The Deputy Mayor of Chişinău, Republic of Moldova, presented the city's adult learning and education centre, which was founded in 2022 with the support of DVV International and is co-financed from the municipal budget. Another example came from Lviv, Ukraine: Since 2020, municipal libraries there have been serving as education centres and have flexibly adapted their services during the war, including offering psychological support, political education, career counselling, and services for veterans and their families.

### From theory to practice: visits to Bonn and Siegburg

In order to experience concepts in practice, the participants travelled to Siegburg at the invitation of Mayor Stefan Rosemann. There, they toured the Rhine-Sieg Volkshochschule as an example of an educational institution with a strong municipal network. Together with nine towns and municipali-



During the conference, participants discussed many topics, including the legal framework and social role of adult learning and education centres.

ties, it ensures continuing education in the region as a special-purpose association. The subsequent visit to the Volkshochschule in Bonn focused on specific educational programmes. After an introduction, the heads of department presented the various subject areas of the centre, including politics, science and international affairs, careers, IT and digital education as well as foreign languages. The visit ended with a reception at Bonn City Hall.

### Networking as the key to success

The exchange in Germany made it clear that successful ALE requires close cooperation between educational institutions and local authorities. The participants also emphasised the relevance of the cross-border exchange of experiences. “Adult education will play an even greater role for Ukraine in the future, which is why the exchange with the Volkshochschulen, deputy mayors and experts was very informative for us,” said Serhii Koreniev, Deputy Mayor of Mykolaiv, Ukraine. The participants were able to take away many ideas for a stronger institutionalisation of adult learning and education in their countries, be it through legislation, strategic anchoring or targeted support. ●



## Rich in experience and moving: methods workshops in Global Learning

**How do power imbalances arise and what is our role within these power structures? Over the course of three methods workshops organised by DVV International, employees of German adult learning and education centres (Volkshochschulen – vhs) explored these questions, and made some surprising discoveries.**

It's February 2024: Eleven people are sitting in a circle of chairs in a room at the vhs Frankfurt. They have just spent half an hour trying to accumulate wealth. The privileged group was the most successful, the others fell far behind or completely failed. One participant stated with dismay: "We were not even aware of our privileges. Everything felt so safe and comfortable." Another: "I was speechless about how few opportunities we had. I felt paralysed and powerless." Shame also set in as the group realised that no one had tried to alter the unfair rules of the game and therefore the conditions.

Usually, the climate crisis and global injustice are discussed from a fact-based perspective. Right-wing attacks on democracy are often rationally analysed and refuted. However, such existential issues not only affect us cognitively, but also speak to us on an emotional level: they require us to take a position. For example, political measures for climate protection can have a major impact on our everyday lives

and those of other people. In order to make fair decisions or judgements, we not only have to reflect on our own perspective, but also that of those who experience other realities. It comes down to power and powerlessness, privilege and marginalisation – and these were precisely the topics raised in Frankfurt.

### **Experiential learning: not only cognitive, but also emotional**

Experiential learning intentionally creates dilemmas that resemble real-life challenges. Learners undergo emotional experiences that encourage long-term reflection and behavioural change. Educational research has shown that changes in attitudes and behaviour must be triggered not only cognitively but also emotionally. Experiential learning is therefore particularly suitable for human rights education and related topics such as Global Learning or democracy education.

The methods workshop at the vhs Frankfurt was one of three sessions that DVV International conducted with educational staff and course leaders at Volkshochschulen. Some experiences were painful – for example, when participants perceived themselves as particularly weak or dominant.

The group also reflected on the experience on a meta-level: What do I take away for my courses or my department? Do I represent all perspectives or am I missing some, for example from the Global South? How can I address the attitudes of participants? Which topics and formats are still missing?

At the end of the Frankfurt workshop, one participant realised: "We allow ourselves to take on a role too easily and accept the rules of the system." Others experienced a Eureka moment in other ways: "Sometimes unjust structures just emerge from convenience, often without malicious intent. We have to progress and develop ourselves to overcome this." ●



Participants of the methods workshop in Frankfurt am Main.

# The ALE Toolbox: practical tools for adult learning and education worldwide

DVV International has made its own tools, methods, and approaches for adult learning and education (ALE) freely available through the ALE Toolbox. The toolbox is aimed at adult educators, educational institutions, civil society organisations as well as government authorities, and offers practical materials for organisational development, the professional qualification of adult educators, and the development of ALE systems.

The tools provided can be adapted to different regional and local contexts as well as individual learning needs. The ALE Toolbox offered by DVV International represents an important contribution to quality assurance and the further development of ALE worldwide.

All instruments are available in English and various other languages.

## International framework curricula

The three international curricula of DVV International serve to qualify adult educators, strengthen adult learning and education centres, and professionalise centre managers. All three curricula have now been tested in many DVV International partner countries and adapted for different local contexts



The **Curriculum globALE** is an internationally recognised, UNESCO-recommended framework curriculum for the training of adult educators. In five modules, the curriculum describes the relevant competences that teachers need in ALE and provides guidance on practical implementation. It was developed jointly by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) and

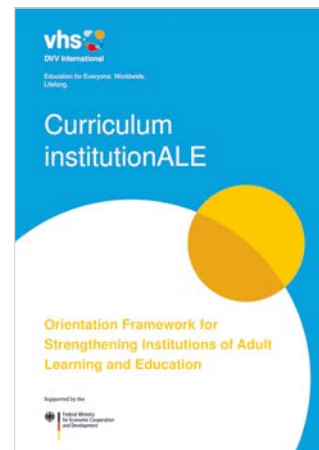
DVV International. It was last updated in 2021 in a consultation process with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE).

*Languages: English, French, Russian, Arabic, Georgian*

The **Curriculum institutionALE** is a reference framework for the organisational development of ALE institutions. The curriculum provides the necessary building blocks for defining goals and criteria for the capacity development of adult learning and education providers, collecting reliable baseline

data, designing and implementing the capacity development process, and evaluating progress. The Curriculum institutionALE helps educational institutions to develop strategically and make their programmes more sustainable and effective.

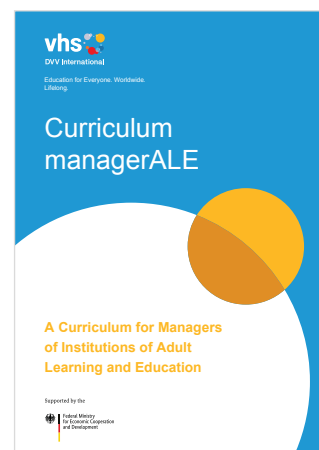
*Languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Laotian*



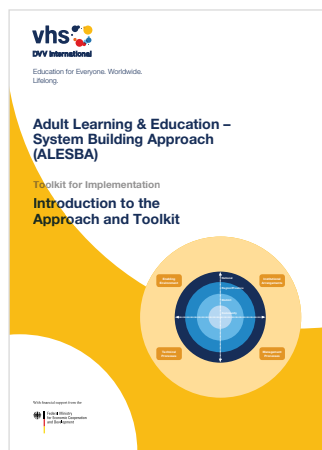
The **Curriculum managerALE** is a modular, competence-based programme for managers of ALE institutions. It provides them with the necessary skills for effective management.

The Curriculum managerALE also ensures close integration with the Curriculum globALE and Curriculum institutionALE.

*Languages: English, Spanish, Arabic*







### ALESBA: Approach to system development in ALE

#### The Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA)

is a tool that supports governments, civil society, universities, and others (e.g. private sector) in the complex task of building adult learning and education systems. ALESBA was developed in Africa, but is based on a general conceptual framework for an adult learning and education system and can therefore be applied in any country. Participation, partnership, ownership, capacity building, and sustainability are fundamental principles for implementation.

In addition to an introduction to the approach, the ALE Toolbox contains manuals for all five phases (1: Consensus building, 2: Assessment and diagnosis, 3: Alternatives analysis and design, 4: Implement and test, 5: Review, adjust and up-scale).

Languages: English, German

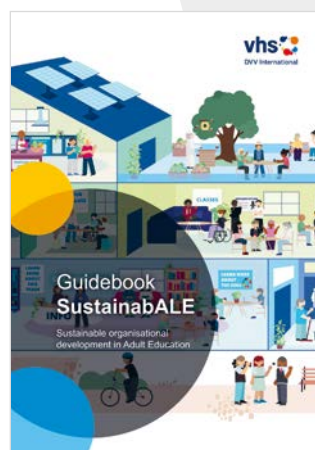
### Further instruments (selection)

The **Gender in ALE Toolkit** is an easy-to-use, practical guide that includes information, practices, activities, and concrete methods. The guide serves as a useful aid in dealing with gender and women-specific content in adult learning and education. The practical tools presented are based



on the lived experience of almost 50 actors actively working in the field of ALE in Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia. They address the key challenges faced when integrating gender issues into adult learning and education.

Languages: English, French, Arabic



### The Guidebook sustainabALE

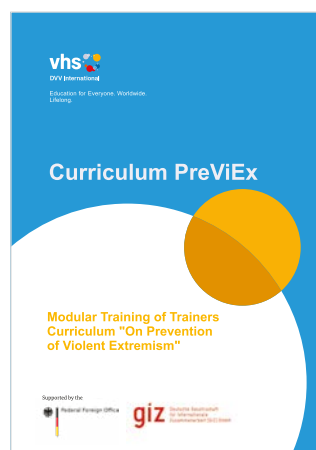
and the accompanying working materials support further education organisations in implementing the Whole Institution Approach (WIA): a holistic, sustainable organisational development process. The materials promote the anchoring of Education for Sustainable Development

(ESD) as an interdisciplinary basis within an educational organisation. This enables organisations to make a contribution to socio-ecological transformation that goes beyond the implementation of educational programmes and promotes a holistic alignment of the respective organisation with sustainability criteria.

Languages: English, German

The **Curriculum PreViEx** (Prevention of Violent Extremism) is a modular, skills-based curriculum to train teachers working in extremism prevention. It includes methods and tools for organising training courses and a large number of practical exercises. It was developed by DVV International Uzbekistan together with experts from the region.

Languages: English



WEB

All the instruments presented here and more can be found at: [www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox](http://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox)

# DVV International at a glance



Participants of an international adult learning and education conference in Chisinau, Moldova with the slogan "We are ALE" (adult learning and education).

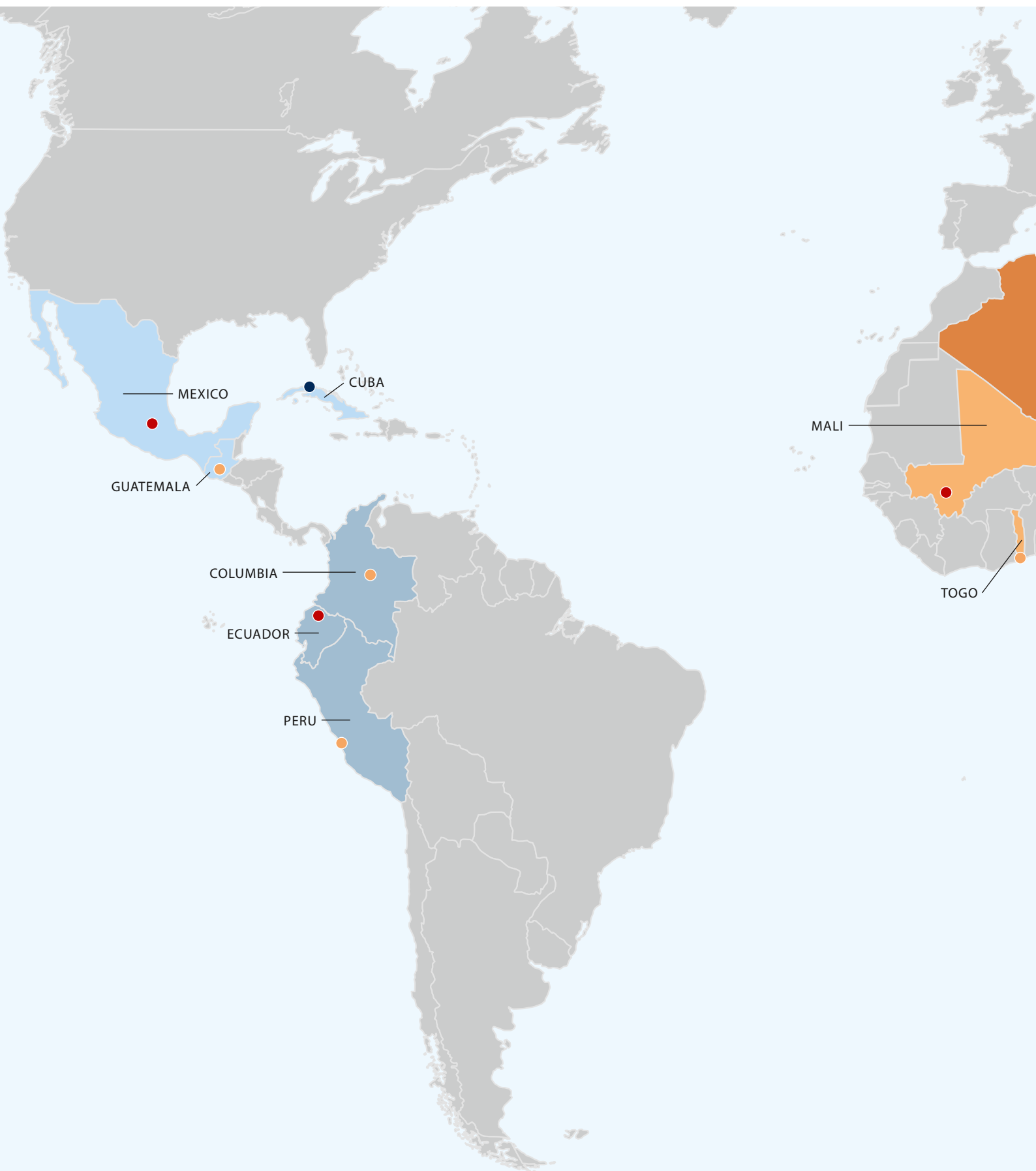
DVV International

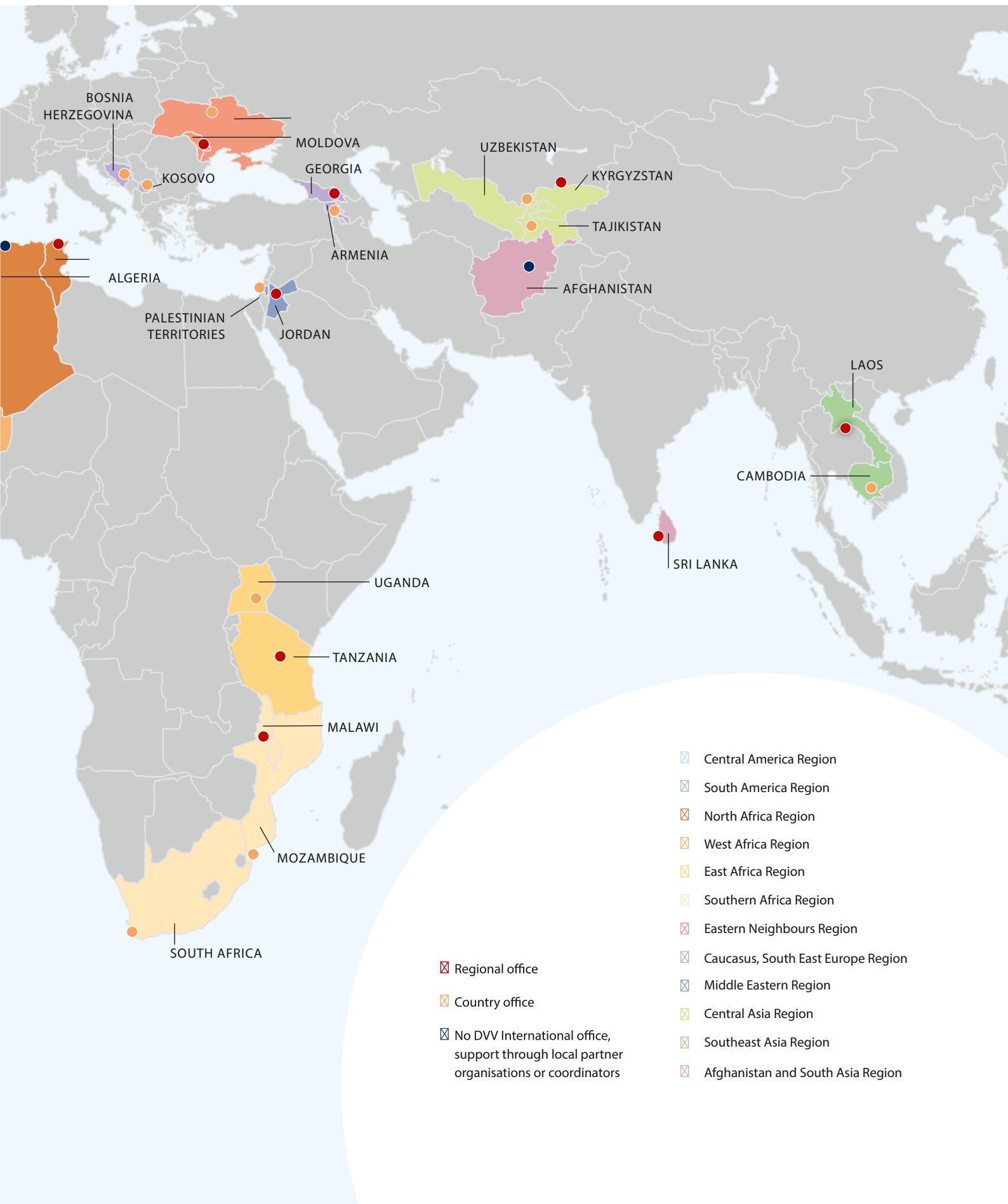




As the leading professional organisation in the field of adult learning and education and development cooperation, DVV International has committed itself to supporting lifelong learning for more than 50 years. DVV International provides worldwide support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for adult learning and education.

## Our partner countries (as of December 2024)





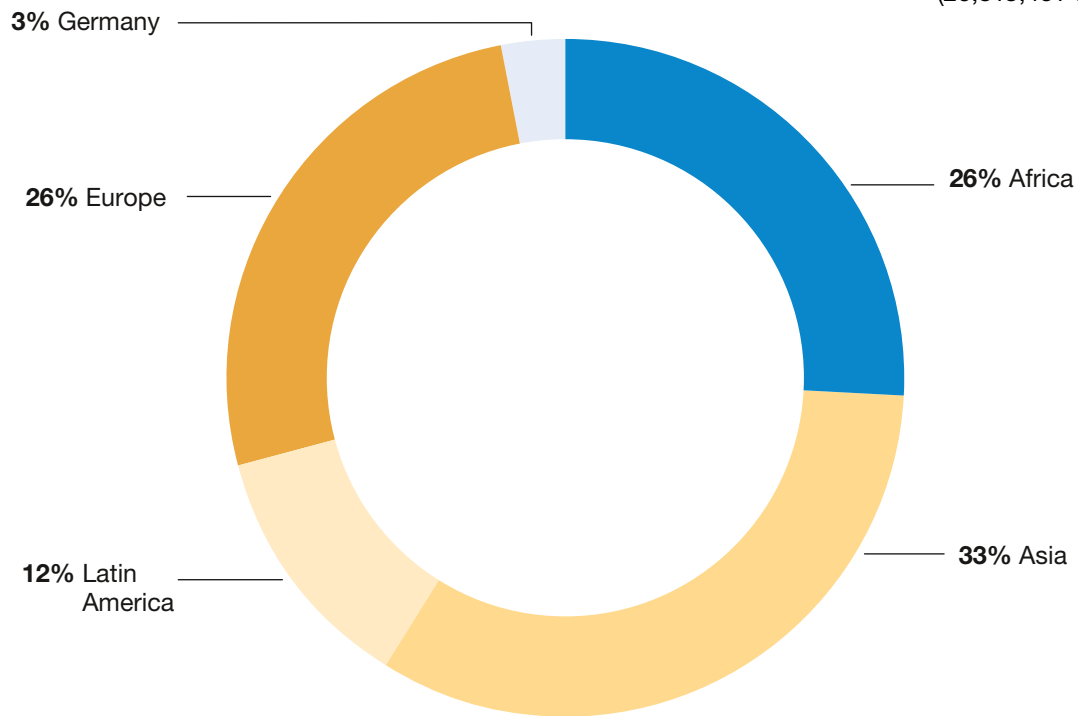


## Profit and loss account for the period 1 Jan. 2024 to 31 Dec. 2024

Income	2024	2023
<b>A. Income at headquarters</b>	<b>2,297,873</b>	<b>2,439,902</b>
1. Administrative costs	2,293,360	2,270,545
2. Income from EU project cooperation	3,673	145,238
3. Other income	840	840
4. Liquidation of provisions	-	23,280
<b>B. Project grants</b>	<b>20,313,451</b>	<b>19,636,425</b>
1. AA	1,554,030	1,420,473
2. BMBF	81,888	261,072
3. BMZ	16,436,870	16,494,390
<i>International projects</i>	<i>16,174,000</i>	<i>16,265,507</i>
<i>Global Learning</i>	<i>262,870</i>	<i>228,883</i>
4. EU	1,270,050	428,925
5. GIZ	717,484	921,196
7. Other projects	253,129	110,370
<b>Total income</b>	<b>22,611,324</b>	<b>22,076,327</b>
Expenditure	2024	2023
<b>A. Expenditure at headquarters</b>	<b>2,297,873</b>	<b>2,439,902</b>
1. Staff costs for central services	1,808,562	1,983,811
2. Building	176,313	194,773
3. Operating expenses	98,470	100,171
4. Communications/information/technology	61,081	39,672
5. Travel costs	31,740	27,689
6. Other administrative expenditure	53,214	53,589
7. Membership to organisations	20,465	20,296
8. Public relations and events	48,029	19,900
<b>B. Project expenditure</b>	<b>20,313,451</b>	<b>19,636,425</b>
1. International projects	19,968,693	19,146,471
2. Global Learning in the vhs	262,870	228,883
3. BMBF project	81,888	261,072
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>22,611,324</b>	<b>22,076,327</b>
<b>Result of the year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

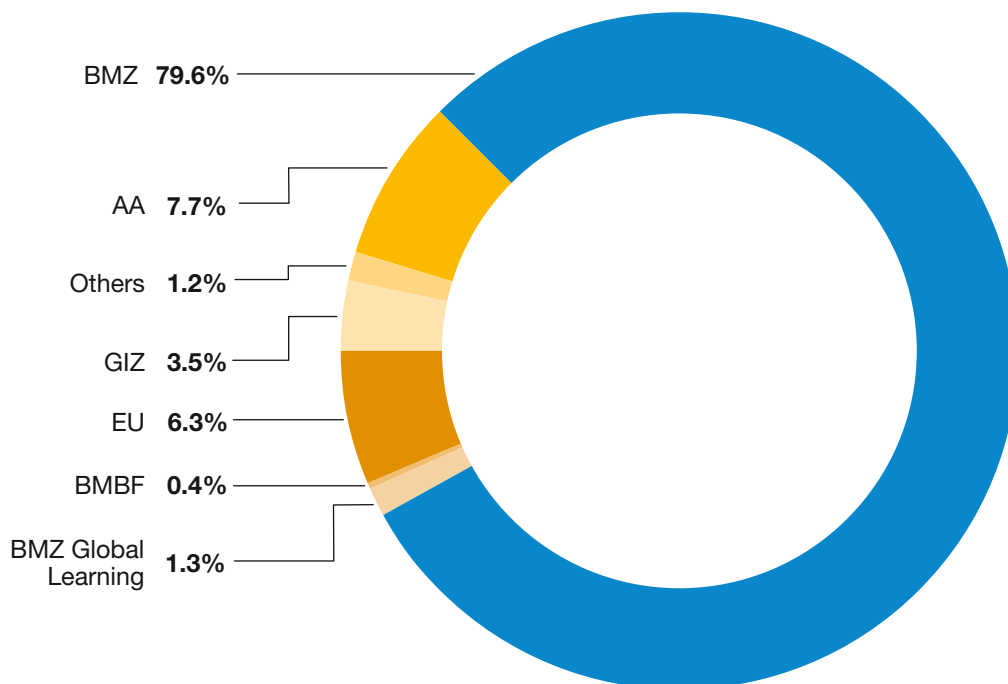
## Regional distribution of project funds in 2024

(20,313,451 euros)



## Origin of project funds in 2024

(20,313,451 euros)



### List of abbreviations

AA: Federal Foreign Office; BMBF: Federal Ministry of Education and Research; BMZ: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; EU: European Union; GIZ: German Society for International Cooperation GmbH



# Achieving more together with global partners and networks

**In order to improve the global framework conditions for adult learning and education and support sustainable development, DVV International works closely with the following national, regional and international specialist partners, associations and networks.**

**AHAED** – The Arab association AHAED (Arab House for Adult Education and Development) was founded in December 2019 after five years of partnership and efforts among four major Arab regional educational networks. The founding members are “Arab Campaign for Education for All” (ACEA), “Arab Network for Popular Education” (ANPE), “Arab Network for Civic Education” (ANHRE) and “Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education” (ANLAE).

**ASPBAE** – The Asian South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) focuses on global and regional lobbying work as well as training key personnel. The association has more than 260 institutional and individual members from 31 countries.

**CCNGO** – The Collective Consultation of NGOs (CCNGO) is an international network of more than 300 national, regional and international civil society organisations from the education sector. The network enables an institutionalised exchange with UNESCO and collects, among other things, the opinions, contributions, and constructive criticism of civil society for the implementation of the global 2030 Agenda.

**CEAAL** – The Latin American Adult Education Council (CEAAL) is the largest association of non-governmental adult education organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. A total of 195 organisations from 21 countries belong to it.

**CLADE** – The Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE) is a network of civil society social organisations, present in 18 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which promotes lifelong learning and good education for all as a human right and as a responsibility of the state at the national, regional, and international level.

**EAEA** – The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) represents non-formal adult learning and education in Europe. It includes 120 member organisations across 43 countries in Europe, representing the interests of more than 60 million learners.

**ICAE** – The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) acts as an advocate at the global level for youth and adult education as a universal human right, and represents more than 800 non-governmental organisations in more than 75 countries.

**PAMOJA** – The Pamoja West Africa adult education network supports and represents national networks in 13 West African and two North African countries, particularly in the area of functional literacy and lifelong learning for young people and adults.

**REPEM** – More than 100 women’s organisations from 18 countries have come together in the Latin American women’s network REPEM (Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres) to bring education for women and girls to the centre of attention and to support women in all areas of society.

**UIL** – The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) is a non-profit, policy-driven, international research, training, information, documentation and publishing centre run by UNESCO. The focus of the Institute is on adult learning and education, especially literacy and non-formal education and alternative learning opportunities for marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

**VENRO** – VENRO is the umbrella organisation for development policy and humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Germany, to which around 140 organisations belong. VENRO’s central goal is to bring about justice in globalisation, and to eradicate global poverty in particular.

# A strong voice for adult learning and education in Asia: ASPBAE turns 60

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) is one of DVV International's key partners in Asia. The network represents 264 civil society organisations and individual members in 31 countries. On the occasion of ASPBAE's 60th anniversary in November 2024, Helen Dabu, Secretary General of ASPBAE, talked about the successes and challenges of this civil society network.

**ASPBAE can look back on a history of over 60 years. From your perspective, what were key successes over the past decades?**

First, ASPBAE persisted in safeguarding civil society spaces in education processes and sustained a strong voice for civil society in the Asia Pacific region, articulating education as a right for all generations and paying greater attention to the most marginalised. This has been possible through ASPBAE's many efforts in continuously strengthening the capacities of its members in protecting and defending the education agenda, from basic education to youth and adult learning and education.

Second, ASPBAE has successfully influenced the regional and global agenda for education and development over its six decades of operation. We achieved this by building on the efforts of our members at the country level and forging strategic links in inter-governmental policy, where we can hold governments to account on their commitments to education. This included shaping the "Education for All" agenda during the era of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through to the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG4 on education. More specifically, for adult learning and education (ALE), ASPBAE has worked closely with its long-standing partners, in particular DVV International and the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), in shaping the outcomes of the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) over the decades.

**Civil society is under pressure worldwide – how does this affect your work? How do you support your members to address this challenge?**

Indeed, we are always being challenged to prove our value and constantly need to protect our role in accountability pro-



Helen Dabu

cesses. ASPBAE has navigated through these pressure points in the last 60 years by confidently occupying decision-making spaces at various levels and skilfully demonstrating our capacity to engage and work with governments, UN agencies, development partners, and other stakeholders in shaping the agenda for education and development. We also work closely with our members and provide the forum they need to share their difficulties and country realities, fostering wider solidarity within ASPBAE's members and partners at the regional and global level. In certain instances, and in consultation with our members in specific countries, we offer our regional voice and issue statements of solidarity and support to civil society work amidst the restrictions and pressures meted out by state forces or governments.

**What role does the partnership with DVV International play in your work?**

DVV International's sustained, context-based and empowering partnership approach with ASPBAE has allowed us to articulate our Asia Pacific civil society voice and agenda for education, especially on adult learning and education. It supports us to pursue our intergenerational actions for peace, inclusion, gender equality, global citizenship, climate action, and social justice by strengthening ALE policies and practices in our region. ●



# Project topics in 2024

DVV International operated projects in more than 30 countries in 2024. The Institute usually develops and implements these projects together with local civil society partner organisations and in close collaboration with ministries and other governmental agencies. The diagramme below shows which topics were addressed in 2024 with the support of our donors.

## AA

### – Federal Foreign Office

- redevelopment
- democratisation
- international cities dialogue
- media literacy
- vocational education and entrepreneurship
- gender equality

## EU

### – European Union

- vocational education
- youth education
- cultural education
- professionalisation of adult learning and education
- preventing extremism
- education in prison
- advocacy for adult learning and education
- peace building
- gender equality
- citizenship education
- local development

## BMZ

### – Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

- boosting adult education structures:
  - establishing, strengthening, and further developing adult education systems
  - government advice in legislative procedures and policy development
  - promoting multisectoral approaches and structures in adult education
  - establishing and professionalising adult education centres
- supra-regional exchange of expertise, policy dialogue, and networking in adult education
- advocacy and public relations for adult learning and education
- literacy and basic education
- vocational training
- global and intercultural learning
- environmental education; education for sustainable development
- migration, integration, and refugee work
- health education
- gender equality
- community-building
- citizenship education

## GIZ

### – German Society for International Cooperation

- vocational education and entrepreneurship
- migration und integration
- preventing extremism
- environmental education and green economy
- professionalisation of adult educators
- gender equality

## Sternsinger

- youth education
- education for indigenous populations
- creation of youth and adult learning and education centres
- vocational education and entrepreneurship

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The Board of Trustees supports and advises the Institute in its international work.

Board members are elected for a term of four years.

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## Employee statistics (as of December 2024)

	Number of employees	Edu./Acad. staff	Admin./techn. staff
Regional and country offices	200	96	104
Seconded employees	14	14	–
DVV International Bonn	29	14	15
<b>DVV International total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>119</b>

## Legal notice

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Published by  
Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes e. V.  
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**Responsible party:**  
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### Layout:

MediaCompany – Agentur  
für Kommunikation GmbH

### Printed by:

molberg medien, Bonn

### Cover:

Participants celebrating on the occasion of the 2024 International Literacy Week in Kibaha, Tanzania. Pictured are the district commissioner for adult learning and education along with educators and participants of a Community Learning Centre co-established and supported by DVV International.

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Printed on FSC-certified  
recycled paper, labelled with the  
Blue Angel.



Print product with financial  
**climate contribution**  
ClimatePartner.com/11776-1908-1001

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With financial support from the



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development