



# **Lifelong Learning Strategies: A Cross-country Analysis**

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## **Goal**

- **To conduct a cross-country survey and analysis of recent progress on lifelong learning, primarily in countries represented by RN4 members**

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# Overview

- **Definition of Lifelong Learning Strategies**
- **An Analytical Framework**
  - National strategies
  - Legislation
  - Governance
  - System
  - Funding
  - Good practice for promoting lifelong learning
  - ICT and distance education
  - Professionalization of teachers and trainers
  - Evaluation
- **Challenges and Issues**
- **References**

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# Lifelong Learning Strategies

- Lifelong Learning Strategies are “political decisions to turn the components of lifelong learning into an integrated and coherent system”.
- Within this framework it should be “possible to assess the outcomes (quality assurance) while the individual should draw a maximum benefit from his/her learning, which would be accredited and certified”.
- Aiming at “ensuring the effectiveness of lifelong learning”.
- A key determinant of sustainable success in the field of lifelong learning.
- Addressing issues of equality of opportunity to ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are available to all.

Source: European Commission (2002). Quality Indicators of Lifelong Learning.



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# Lifelong Learning Strategies

- Many European countries formulated national lifelong learning strategies a decade ago
  - An EU report (2002) indicates 15 EU member states had specific lifelong learning strategies in place
- EU
  - 2020 Education and Training: lifelong learning as the fundamental principle for this strategic framework:
  - Urging the member states to complete the process of national lifelong strategies, esp. on the validation of non-formal education
- OECD
  - Skills Strategy
- Developing countries have started developing their national lifelong learning strategies and policies in the past decade
  - China, Vietnam, Malaysia, etc.

# Recent National Lifelong Learning Strategies in Selected Countries

- **China:** The Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)
- **Vietnam:** The National Scheme on Building a Learning Society (2011-2020)
- **Malaysia:** The Blueprint on the Enculturation of Lifelong Learning in Malaysia (2011-2020)
- **Thailand:** The National Education Act (1999) states that lifelong education is the principle of education system of the country.
- **Latvia:** Lifelong Learning Policy (2007-2013)
- **Korea:** The Lifelong Education Act
- **Canada:** Learn Canada 2020: Joint Declaration Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Education



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# Lifelong Learning Legislation

- Countries with supporting legislation: Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Russia, Slovenia, UK, Korea
- China
  - Shanghai Lifelong Education Promotion Regulation stipulates that government at various levels provide financial support for lifelong learning and ensure the steady increase of budget on lifelong learning.
  - A national legislation on lifelong learning currently under discussion.



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# Governance

- In most of the countries, such as China, Korea, Malaysia, Vietnam, Latvia, the Ministry of Education is responsible for lifelong learning.
  - In some countries, a specific agency has been created within the Ministry of Education in charge of lifelong education. For example, National Institute of Lifelong Education in Korea
- Other national ministries other than the Ministry of Education as an active part of lifelong education
  - For example, Korea, China, Vietnam, etc.
- However, a cross-sectoral agency exists at the national level to coordinate lifelong learning activities conducted by multiple branches of the government.
- For example:
  - Malaysia: National Council for LLL in Malaysia
  - Vietnam National Steering Committee on Building A Learning Society for 2011-2020
  - China: National Leadership Panel for Education Reform



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# System

- Many countries have recognized formal education, informal education, and non-formal education
- Mechanisms set up to integrate learning in various forms
  - European: European Qualification Framework
  - European countries: National Qualification Framework
  - UK: lifelong learning account
  - Philippines: equivalency and accreditation program
  - Thailand: National Lifelong Education Promotion Plan
  - Malaysia: Recognition center and credit bank system
  - Korea: credit bank system, lifelong learning account
  - China: advocacy of a “overpass” and pilot system for credit bank in Shanghai, lifelong learning account



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# Funding

- Few countries have funding available for the development of lifelong learning: Denmark, Finland, France, Netherlands, Korea
- A cost-sharing scheme exists
  - Public expenditure, corporate involvement, and individual contributions
  - Ministry of Education versus other ministries
  - National government versus local government
- Many countries are increasing public investment in lifelong learning
  - China: to reach 4% of GDP on education overall
  - Germany: federal funds made available to strengthen lifelong learning increased by 44% in 2010 than the previous year
  - Korea: increasing budget on lifelong learning by the Ministry of Education



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# Good Practice for Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Different approaches to moving from a blueprint to reality
- China & Vietnam: a learning society
- Korea: lifelong learning city
- Japan: community center
- Thailand: community learning center
- Latvia: early school-leavers
- EU & OECD: skills

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# ICT and Distance Education

- The role of ICT in broadening access to education and decreasing education inequity
- China: Open universities, Chinese OpenCourseWare Consortium, “web colleges”, service platforms for lifelong learning
- Japan: The Open University of Japan, Japan OpenCourseWare Consortium,
- Korea: Korea National Open University, Cyber University, Distance Graduate School, e-Learning in training, etc.
- Thailand: OpenSource Initiatives



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# Professionalization of Teachers and Trainers

- An intensified focus on the quality of initial education and sustaining professional development opportunities
- Korea
  - Developed “Lifelong Learning Facilitators” to enhance the teaching force in lifelong learning
  - Strengthening the qualification for teachers and trainers in lifelong education
    - Increasing the credit hours from 20 credits (210 hours) to 30 credits (450 hours)
    - Extending the internship from 2 weeks to 4 weeks
    - Specific requirements about the mandatory hiring of by lifelong education institutes
- China: Shanghai Lifelong Education Promotion Regulation (2011)
  - Stipulating that instructors for lifelong education need to have relevant qualifications



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# Evaluation

- More attention switching to the impact of strategies and policies
- Various instruments designed to measure the progress and/or outcome of lifelong learning
- European Lifelong Learning Index: 2010
  - Adapted from Canada's Composite Learning Index (2006)
  - 17 indicators and 36 specific measures
  - Generating lifelong learning scores for 23 countries in 2010, including Denmark, Austria, Germany, France, and the UK
- Europe Union: Five benchmarks to reach by 2020
  - Early school leavers from education and training (10%), tertiary-level attainment (40%), adult participation in lifelong learning (15%), low achievers in basic skills (15), early childhood education (95%)
- OECD: PIACC
- China: Indicators of a full-fledged Learning Society
- Korea: Indicators of a Lifelong Learning City



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# Challenges and Issues

- For developing country
  - To transform from strategy design and development to strategy implementation
- For developed countries
  - To transform from strategy implementation to strategy evaluation
- Call for evidence-based research
- Call for empirical research on the benefit of learning in multiple dimensions



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**Comments?**

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