



DVV International

Education for Everyone. Worldwide.
Lifelong.

Annual Report 2025



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Acting Director of DVV International



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Foreword



Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer

Dear readers,

in Germany, adult learning and education is seen as the “fourth pillar” of education, and for good reason. It enables people to participate in society and professional activity throughout all stages of their lives. In an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world, adult learning and education strengthens key future skills such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and personal resilience. In doing so, it empowers people to shape their lives independently. Moreover, it supports those who often have insufficient access to the formal education system.

In Germany, the Volkshochschulen, as locally rooted municipal institutions, ensure that education is available close to home, easily accessible, and available to everyone. Through its international work, the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV) presses forward to promote this idea of “education for all” on a global scale.

It is clear that high-quality and inclusive adult learning and education (ALE) requires reliable framework conditions — both at home and abroad. These include a sound legal basis, long-term funding, well-trained teaching staff, and programmes tailored to different target groups. This is precisely where the work of DVV International begins: Together with our governmental and civil society partners in more than 30 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe, we support the development of such sustainable ALE structures.

This work would not be possible without the substantial support provided by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) within the framework of social structure promotion. At the same time, development policy and international cooperation are facing increasing criticism, and are often even fundamentally questioned — in politics, but also within society. I view this trend with

concern. After all, global challenges such as migration and displacement, climate change, or digital transformation, to name just a few examples, cannot be overcome by any one country alone. International cooperation is therefore not an option, but a necessity. Strong social structures, such as resilient and sustainable systems of adult learning and education, are an important building block in addressing both national and global challenges.

An important complement to this mission is development education work in Germany — for example, through the project “Global Learning in the Volkshochschulen (ALE centres)”. Through a range of formats for different target groups, Volkshochschulen make international interconnections visible and foster a lively dialogue within their local communities. At the same time, links between domestic and international work are being strengthened.

I would also like to highlight the international commitment of the Volkshochschulen themselves. To honour this remarkable work, DVV International established the Rita Süßmuth Award for the International Volkshochschule in 2019. In 2025, it was awarded for the third time. Its namesake, Rita Süßmuth, long-serving President and until the very end Honorary President of the DVV, passed away in February 2026. She worked tirelessly for education and continuing education — in Germany as well as abroad. Her legacy remains both an obligation and motivation for us to continue strengthening education worldwide as a key to peace, participation, and mutual understanding.

I wish you an inspiring read.

Yours,

Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer

President of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.

In conversation with Esther Hirsch



Esther Hirsch

Esther Hirsch, Acting Director of DVV International, looks back on the year 2025 and discusses the challenges and successes of international cooperation in adult learning and education.

How might you explain the work of DVV International in a few sentences?

Education is a key building block for development at almost every level – personal, social, and economic. It affects people of all ages. To enable people to fulfil their potential and to ensure access to high-quality education which meets current needs, education systems must be both stable and adaptable. This is equally true for adult learning and education. DVV International works to advance this goal around the world.

What gives you confidence in international cooperation despite global crises?

Global crises and upheavals, the criticism of development cooperation and the declining willingness to invest in it are often the first things that spring to mind when we think of international cooperation today. These are developments that concern me, too. Yet international cooperation in practice goes beyond these challenges. Our current annual report provides vivid examples of successful cooperation: When five South American countries come together to form an Andean Parliament, when decision-makers from 13 European countries discuss adult learning and education systems, when a study tour from North Africa visits educational centres in Armenia, or when the Rita Süßmuth Award for the International Volkshochschule is conferred, people come together, exchange ideas and develop new perspectives with one another. In this way, the lives of individuals – but also entire societies and systems – can change. We should

not lose sight of this foundation of international cooperation. These are the aspects of our work that motivate me and fill me with confidence.

How do you look back on the year 2025? What has particularly stayed with you?

2025 was a challenging year for us. I think of the many crises and conflicts which, in an ever-increasing number of countries and over ever-longer periods, are overshadowing and restricting people's lives, and thus our work as well – for example, in Ukraine, Palestine, or Mali. Moreover, there is a growing number of countries in which civil society organisations experience a steadily shrinking scope for action, which also has a direct impact on our projects. At the same time, I recall the successes we have been able to achieve together with our partners worldwide, despite difficult circumstances. I would like to cite Uganda as an example: In this country, our long-standing cooperation has contributed to the government's decision to invest 20 million euros in the expansion of the adult learning and education system over the coming years. On a personal level, it is first and foremost the encounters and conversations that remain in my memory – such as the exchange with a ministerial delegation from Algeria, which came to Germany on a study visit in autumn 2025. As always, the dialogue on different systems and approaches, as well as the keen interest in German Volkshochschulen, was enriching for all of us.



In Jordan, DVV International works with organisations such as the Jerasia Charitable Society for Women in Jerash. On the basis of a joint needs assessment, the educational institution developed an initiative to promote local tourism, which represents an important source of income. The participants pictured were trained in photography, videography and image editing. The educational institution has been cooperating since 2025 with the Ministry of Tourism and a royal foundation, which use the media content to boost tourism.



Strengthening structures

Strong educational structures are necessary to sustainably ensure high-quality education for all. With funding from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and in cooperation with its partners, DVV International works to improve the legal and financial framework for adult learning and education through lobbying and policy advice. At the same time, DVV International qualifies teaching staff and strengthens educational organisations along with national and regional networks.

A new legal framework for adult learning and education in the Andean region

For the first time, the Andean Parliament has adopted a regional legal framework – a so-called Marco Normativo Andino – specifically dedicated to adult learning and education (ALE). The framework is paving the way for coordinated rights-based ALE policies across five countries.

In 2025, the Andean Parliament, based in Bogotá, Colombia, approved its 71st Andean Regulatory Framework (Marco Normativo Andino) – the first in the region to focus specifically on adult learning and education (ALE). As a supranational body, the Andean Parliament represents Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and its frameworks reflect consensus among member states. The body provides guidance for harmonising legislation and shaping public policies at national, local, and regional levels.

The new framework addresses six priority areas: I. Access and coverage; II. Funding and sustainability; III. Relevance of curricula and teacher training; IV. Use of technology and educational innovations; V. Governance and institutional management model; VI. Public policies for specific groups and issues.

A participatory process

The process of developing the Regulatory Framework included an extensive consultation phase, led by the Continental Project of DVV International in Latin America. Representatives from governments, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector, and international groups contributed to the legal framework and its structure through participatory methodologies, such as interviews, focus groups, and round tables. Parallel national and regional consultations were held in DVV International's partner countries Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru to ensure local perspectives were fully represented.

María Elena Urbano of the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education highlights the importance of the process: “The participatory methodology engaged actors across ten Colombian departments, including indigenous



Consultations in Lima: Teaching and administrative staff members discuss the content and goals of the Marco Normativo.

and women's groups, ensuring diverse voices shaped the framework.”

In Ecuador, the consultations have contributed to positioning ALE in public discourse. “This process has strengthened our advocacy efforts and brings ALE into public debate, where it has largely remained invisible until now”, notes Paola Jácome, Education Director of the independent think tank Grupo FARO.

Transposition into national legislation

The next crucial step is to integrate the framework into national legislation. Coordinated efforts will be essential to harmonise policies and ensure that adult learning and education is recognised as “a key pillar for social justice and sustainable development”, as stated in the introduction to the Andean Regulatory Framework. DVV International will continue to support this process in the upcoming years. ●

Uganda invests 20 million euros in national adult learning and education programme

From now through 2030, the Government of Uganda is investing 20 million euros on a nationwide roll out of the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation (ICOLEW) programme. This initiative is expected to benefit over 60,000 Ugandans in rural areas who either never received or did not complete formal education.

Education is a fundamental human right under Article 30 of the Constitution of Uganda. Moreover, Uganda's Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan IV (2025–2030) highlight education as essential for socio-economic transformation. But despite progress, around 26% of the population aged 18 and above remain illiterate, limiting their access to health-care, agricultural knowledge, and economic opportunities.

Addressing literacy and skills gaps

To tackle these challenges, the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD), with support from DVV International, designed and piloted ICOLEW, the Integrated Community Learning for Wealth Creation programme. ICOLEW aims to provide young people and adults with competencies in literacy and numeracy, combined with life and vocational skills. These learning opportunities are delivered through Community Learning Centres (CLCs).

“The CLCs are where policy meets the people. We're not just building classrooms – we're building pathways out of poverty,” says Everest Tumwesigye, Commissioner of Community Development and Literacy. “Our goal is clear: a Uganda where no one is denied opportunity because they lacked formal schooling. That is the future we're building – one learner, one community at a time.”

Representatives of the Nwoya district administration presenting micro-irrigation technologies at a model CLC.

During the pilot phase of ICOLEW, local authorities played a key role by raising awareness, mobilising communities, and allocating resources. Four regional model CLCs were established, in Namayingo, Nwoya, Mityana, and Rukungiri, serving as hubs for peer learning and guiding districts in establishing their own centres. Evaluation showed that ICOLEW improved educational outcomes, increased household incomes, and enhanced community resilience.

Providing important impetus beyond national borders

Following the pilot's success, ICOLEW has been integrated into the Public Investment Plan, with an allocation of 20 million euros. The funds will support training for teaching staff and managers, the renovation and expansion of 228 CLCs across the country, and the development of national ALE policies, management systems, as well as frameworks for recognising prior learning.

Uganda's experience demonstrates that investing in adult learning and education drives social and economic transformation. DVV International will continue to support MGLSD in rolling out ICOLEW. The programme provides a replicable model for institutionalising ALE and Community Learning Centres, offering valuable lessons for countries across the region. ●



Strengthening adult learning and education systems on the path to EU integration



Participants at the meeting on lifelong learning in Turin in the context of accession and policies for the EU neighborhood.

Despite numerous reforms, adult learning and education in many EU candidate countries remains fragmented, and participation varies significantly across population groups. At the invitation of DVV International and the European Training Foundation (ETF), policymakers from EU Member States as well as candidate and neighbouring countries met in Turin to discuss ways to make ALE more coherent, accessible, and effective.

Between 18–19 November 2025, DVV International and ETF convened a High-Level Round Table in Turin, Italy, under the title “A Framework to Drive Adult Learning Reforms. Advancing Lifelong Learning in the Context of EU Accession and Neighbourhood”. Under the patronage of the City of Turin, the event brought together deputy ministers, secretaries of state and senior officials, as well as representatives of the European Commission.

Representatives from Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine, as well as Italy, Poland and Slovenia joined the round table. Particular attention was given to addressing fragmented legislation, unclear institutional responsibilities, and the lack of effective coordination between stakeholders.

Increasing participation in ALE while reducing inequality

A central objective of the meeting was to explore how countries can increase participation in ALE while reducing barriers to access. Achieving the EU's 2030 target of 60% adult participation in learning remains challenging for many Member States and candidate countries alike. The round table took place against the backdrop of recent European initiatives such as the European Skills Agenda and the “Union of Skills”, which highlight the strategic importance of ALE for competitiveness, technological transformation, and social cohesion.

Discussions focused on the governance and financing of adult learning and education systems, the implementation of reforms in candidate countries, the validation of non-formal and informal learning, micro-credentials, individual learning accounts, and the development of lifelong learning ecosystems at the national and local level.

Additional study visits to local institutions, including the Provincial Centre for Adult Education Turin 1 “Paulo Freire” and the Camerana Learning Hub, illustrated how public, private, and civic actors can cooperate to create inclusive and responsive learning environments.

The event was organised in the framework of DVV International's European Continental Exchange Project, which facilitates dialogue and mutual learning among countries on their path towards EU integration, contributing to resilient, well-governed, and inclusive adult learning and education systems across Europe and throughout its neighbourhood. ●

WEB

A policy brief on the event is available online at: <https://vhs.link/VZrzDw>

Kyrgyzstan introduces National Day of Adult Education

A milestone for the recognition of adult learning and education (ALE) in the Kyrgyz Republic: In 2025, the Kyrgyz parliament established a National Day of Adult Education. It will be celebrated annually on April 17.

The new national holiday is the result of a joint effort by DVV International and its longstanding partner, the Kyrgyz Adult Education Association (KAEA), a non-profit, membership-based organisation that brings together 15 adult learning and education providers from across the republic. The initiative builds on previous cooperation: KAEA and DVV International already contributed to the elaboration of the Kyrgyz Education Development Programme (EDP) from 2021 to 2040. This programme ensured that for the first time, non-formal ALE was formally integrated into the national education system. In addition, KAEA has been organising a public annual Adult Education Festival since 2022 with support of DVV International, combining professional exchange, cultural activities, and open dialogue.

The initiative to establish a National Day of Adult Education stems from numerous discussions within the KAEA association as well as active cooperation with the Social Partner Councils. These councils bring together representatives of local administrations, educational institutions, the business community, and civil society organisations, and contribute their expertise and networks to promoting ALE and advocating for the learning needs of local communities.

Subsequently, a dedicated working group developed a strong policy rationale for the initiative, which was then presented to members of parliament. Following discussions and refinement, members of parliament advanced the proposal as a legislative initiative and successfully secured political support. DVV International provided technical and financial support for the whole process.

More than a commemorative day: a platform for advocacy and collective action

The National Day of Adult Education has now been included in the national calendar of commemorative days. While it is not a public holiday, it represents an important policy signal that acknowledges ALE as a national priority. The National Day of Adult Education provides a platform for visibly representing the interests of adult learning and education, and collectively advocating on its behalf. At the local level, Social Partner Councils stand ready to support and operationalise this initiative by ensuring that the voices of learners, educators, employers, and communities are heard.

“For KAEA, this achievement is not an endpoint, but a foundation for stronger advocacy and systemic change,” says Gulzhamal Urkunbaeva, Executive Director of KAEA. “We see the National Day of Adult Education as a strategic platform to influence public discourse, advance policy dialogue, and strengthen partnerships at national and regional levels.” ●



Celebrating the Annual Adult Education Festival in Manas, Kyrgyzstan, in April 2025.

Strong structures for strong communities – evaluation of adult learning and education centres in Asia

External evaluations help DVV International to understand which approaches are effective and where programmes can be improved. An evaluation of adult learning and education (ALE) centres in four Asian countries confirms their positive impact on participants and on local development – whilst also highlighting existing challenges.

The external evaluation, carried out in 2025, focused on ALE centres supported by DVV International in Cambodia, Jordan, Laos, and Uzbekistan. It examined how these centres operate, what services they provide, and what role they play in their respective national education systems. On this basis, the evaluation provides concrete recommendations for DVV International's future work.

DVV International's engagement in its Asian partner countries takes place within the framework of social structure support funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and aims to strengthen adult learning and education so that people can improve their living conditions and play an active role in their communities. ALE centres play a crucial role in promoting these goals. DVV International supports them through consultancy, organisational development, and staff training. At the same time, DVV International works to improve the policy framework in the form of laws, strategies, and sustainable funding mechanisms for adult learning and education.

The evaluation was based on four country studies. This involved analysing documents, conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders, and visiting education centres on site. Measures implemented between 2018 to 2025 were examined. The results are documented in an overall assessment as well as in four country-specific reports.

Education centres as drivers of local development

The evaluation shows that support from DVV International has made a significant contribution to the development of existing community-based facilities into modern ALE centres which are strongly geared towards the needs of the local population: In all four countries, the centres work with the communities to regularly identify which educational programmes are needed and develop suitable programmes to address precisely those concerns.

The centres provide many people with access to educational opportunities that would otherwise be scarcely available. The courses are usually well attended, and many participants successfully complete them. Through further training and technical support, DVV International also strengthens the professional and organisational skills of the staff. This enables the institutions to develop high-quality and practice-oriented educational programmes.

Furthermore, numerous centres are actively involved in their communities – for example, through environmental campaigns, programmes for children and young people, cultural events or information services on vocational topics. In this respect, they not only improve the qualifications of individual participants but also strengthen social and economic life in the broader community.

Another key finding is that the centres are now successfully integrated into national education systems. Their work is guided by legal standards and government regulations in the education sector, and they are increasingly recognised as part of the system. In some cases, they even serve as model centres for the further development of similar institutions.

The impact is also becoming evident at the political level. In Cambodia and Laos in particular, DVV International has helped to develop new laws, strategies, and standards for adult learning and education. In Jordan, there are plans to draw up state quality standards for



A computer skills course at an educational centre in Sre Knong, Cambodia.

ALE institutions and enshrine them in law for the first time. On this basis, relevant centres will be able to seek accreditation in future. In Uzbekistan, the focus is on establishing a legal framework, national curricula, and state funding mechanisms.

Challenges and prospects

Despite this progress, the long-term success of the centres depends heavily on whether stable political frameworks and reliable sources of funding can be established. In all four countries, there is currently a lack of sustainable public funding for ALE. Many centres therefore remain dependent on support from local authorities, international partners or networks. DVV International therefore promotes approaches that enable the institutions to tap into additional sources of income and strengthen their financial stability in the long term.

The evaluation sets out several recommendations for future work. These include producing regular national reports on the development of ALE to strengthen the exchange between the local and national levels. Proven methods for identifying educational needs should also be systematically documented and shared. Greater exchange of experiences in the management of adult learning and education between different countries is also recommended.



At an educational centre in Karak, Jordan, women are learning macramé in a handicrafts class.

The impact of educational provision should also be examined even more systematically in future – both in terms of individual learning processes and the development of communities. Finally, the evaluation recommends further developing successful models of ALE in collaboration with governments and sharing them with other regions as well. ●

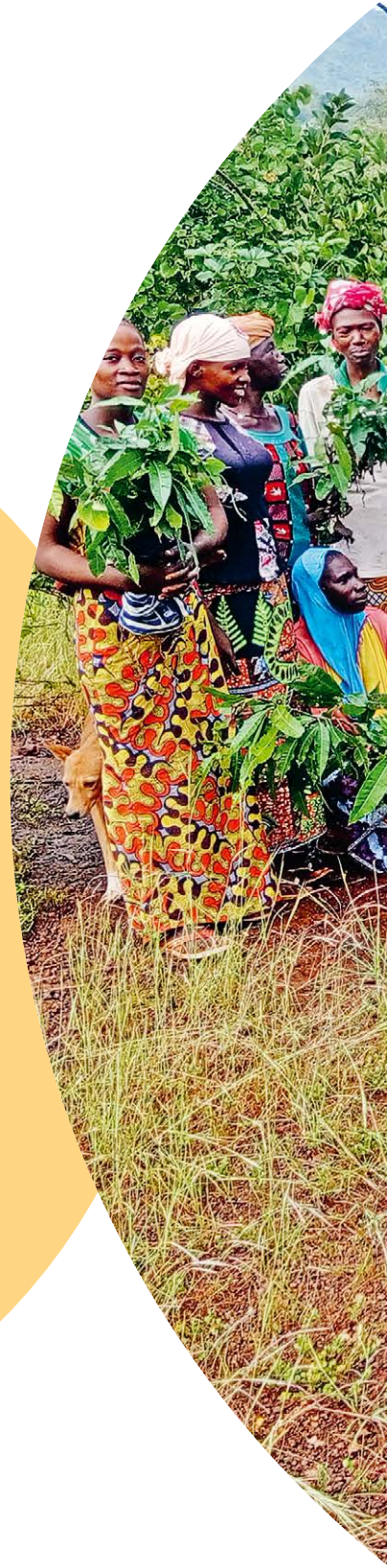
2025 Evaluations

Regular evaluations are an integral, accompanying instrument of DVV International's work. In 2025, a total of four evaluations were carried out.

Country	Evaluation title
Laos, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, Jordan	Regional evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2024–2026; Focus: Adult Learning and Education Centres
Tanzania	Regional evaluation of the BMZ-funded project for the promotion of social structures in the period 2023–2025
Uzbekistan	Evaluation of the EU-funded project: Promoting Gender Transformative Communities through Civil Participation
Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan	Evaluation of the EU-funded project: TRUST – Together Unite efforts for regional Stability

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.





In Mali, DVV International supports initiatives that combine adult learning and education with environmental protection and income-generating opportunities. The photo shows participants from Noumoussabougou during a joint effort to plant 100 mango trees.

“Knowledge that grows” – adult learning and education for a sustainable future

As part of the PASSIP project in Mali, farmers in REFLECT learning circles are not only learning reading, writing, and arithmetic, but are also developing sustainable farming methods and new sources of income. Bourama Coulibaly explains how adult learning and education is transforming his fields, his family, and village life.

Since November 2024, DVV International has been responsible for an education component as part of a project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) on implementing the national programme for sustainable small-scale irrigated agriculture in Mali (PASSIP). The approach behind the project combines adult learning and education, environmental protection, and income-generating opportunities. A key part of the programme involves participatory REFLECT learning circles (Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques). In these groups, participants learn to read, write, and do arithmetic. At the same time, they analyse problems from their everyday lives while working and developing solutions together.

All participants also receive practical training in environmental protection and conservation. They then implement the environmental services identified in this process as part of

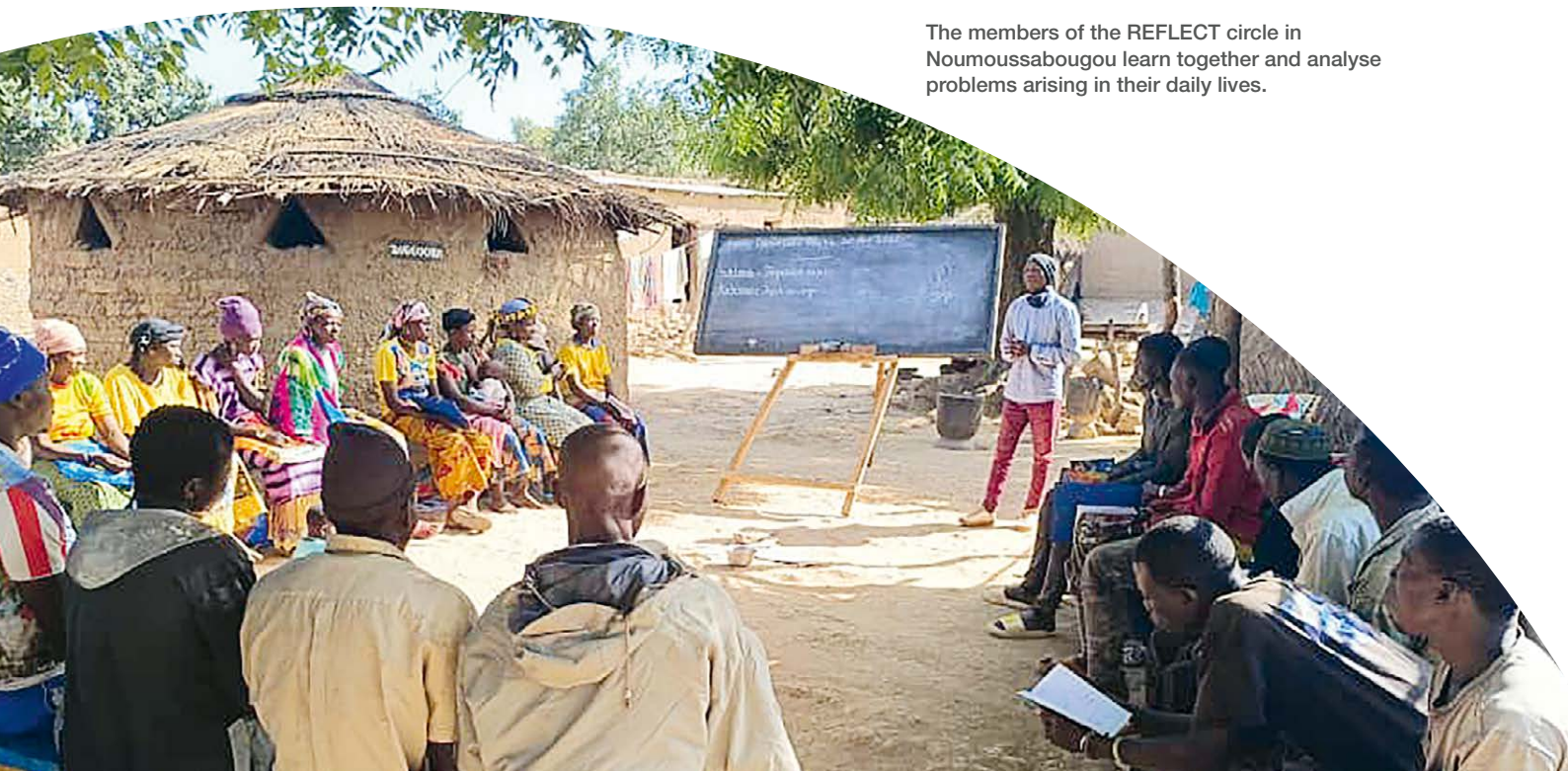
Bourama Coulibaly



paid, work-based initiatives. This combination of skills training, paid work, and expert support opens up new land suitable for agriculture, strengthens communities' resilience to environmental problems, secures income, and creates sustainable employment opportunities.

Bourama Coulibaly is a farmer. During the rainy season, he grows maize, millet, rice, and other crops. During the dry season, he grows vegetables and garden crops. As part of the project, he is taking part in a REFLECT circle in Noumoussabougou in southern Mali.

The members of the REFLECT circle in Noumoussabougou learn together and analyse problems arising in their daily lives.



What motivated you to join one of the REFLECT circles?

I wanted to learn more about sustainable farming methods. My lack of knowledge was causing some problems in my daily life. For example, I didn't know about agroforestry – that is, the combination of trees and crops on the same plot of land. I used to grow just a single crop in a field. In the learning circle, I learned about these methods and then put them into practice – both on my own field and on the land belonging to the REFLECT circle. Another problem was haphazard sowing. We used to plant without clear spacing. I've learned that the correct planting distances – depending on the seed – are crucial for yield and quality. If you maintain the distances instead of letting everything grow crammed together, every single plant produces more. These new techniques have helped me a great deal. A farmer constantly needs new ideas to keep developing.

What happens in the REFLECT circle – and what have you learned?

We discuss the planned work in the circle, share experiences and revise previous learning modules so that we don't forget anything. We make all decisions regarding environmental measures together in the REFLECT circle. We have learned many new techniques: building stone walls to prevent erosion, making plant-based biopesticides, composting, and much more. But the most important achievement is the stronger sense of unity among us. We have learned to work together. Before the project, there was hardly any interaction between many of us – some didn't even know each other beforehand. The circle has created new connections. Through cooperating and sharing ideas, we have learned how to listen to one another and respect everyone's opinion – including that of the women. That wasn't a given in the past. In the REFLECT circle, we've understood that every opinion counts. That's why we sit in a circle when we discuss, so that everyone can speak freely. I've also introduced this principle in my family. We sit down together, listen to one another, and resolve our problems with mutual respect. This has significantly improved our family life.

What else has changed in your life?

A lot has changed since I took part. I've become more open-minded and now understand ideas that used to be foreign to me. My income has also improved: my fields are



Members of the REFLECT circle in Noumoussabougou working together to produce liquid organic fertiliser from cow manure.

yielding significantly greater harvests. I also work on local infrastructure projects and receive financial remuneration as part of these work-based initiatives. I have invested this money wisely, for example in livestock: I have bought goats, sheep, and poultry. I have also been able to pay my children's school fees.

Have you noticed any changes in your community?

Many changes are visible in the village: stone walls to prevent erosion, small dams made of clay sacks to repair washed-out paths, and drainage ditches lined with dead-wood hedges. We have also made progress in the area of health. We used to use chemical pesticides that were harmful to our health. Today, we produce plant-based organic pesticides, which are cheaper because the materials are available locally. What's more, we can eat the harvest straight after spraying – unlike with chemical products. Many people are now following our example and putting similar protective measures in place in their own fields. This positive example motivates many people – and that makes me particularly happy. I want to pass on my knowledge and teach others who also want to learn.

What do you say to people who think they are too old to learn?

As long as you can think and understand, you can learn – even as an adult. I am proof of that myself. I am no longer young, and I never thought I could learn so much at this age. It is important to seize the opportunity. ●

Women's Rights Ambassadors in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, women continue to face significant barriers in exercising their economic and social rights. The project “Women's Rights Ambassadors for Empowerment and Change” addresses this challenge through adult learning and education (ALE), empowering women and young people to advocate for women's rights and to contribute to sustainable change within their communities.

Although legislative and strategic frameworks for gender equality exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina, their implementation at the local level often remains limited. This is due to a lack of information, weak institutional cooperation, and low levels of female participation in public and social life in general. These challenges are particularly pronounced in smaller communities, where access to education that would enable women to understand and actively claim their rights is still insufficient.

The EU-funded project “Women's Rights Ambassadors for Empowerment and Change in Bosnia and Herzegovina” has been implemented by DVV International in cooperation with local partners since early 2024 and will continue until mid-2026. It is grounded in the conviction that adult learning and education can be a powerful driver of social change – not only by transferring knowledge, but also by strengthening self-confidence, mutual support, and active engagement within communities.

During the project implementation, 200 women successfully completed a series of training cycles combining theoretical input with strong practical orientation. Through interactive learning activities, peer exchange, mentoring support and networking, participants gained the skills and confidence needed to actively participate in public processes. In addition, 20 of these women received further training to take on the role of Women's Rights Ambassadors in their local communities.

From empowerment to lasting change

Young people – both female and male – are another important target. To foster long-term awareness of gender equality, the Women's Rights Ambassadors will conduct workshops for around 100 young people to share their knowledge and practical experience. In addition, the project developed creative, digital educational materials tailored specifically to young audiences. Through these resources, 1,500 primary school students acquired basic knowledge of women's rights, successfully completed accompanying assessments, and were awarded the title Junior Women's Rights Ambassadors.

In collaboration with representatives of public institutions, civil society organisations, and other key stakeholders, the project also developed 12 local gender action plans. These strategic documents are tailored to the needs of individual municipalities and serve as practical frameworks for improving gender equality and women's rights at the local level. In the next step, the Women's Rights Ambassadors will actively participate in consultation processes and provide feedback on the strategic frameworks, enabling the project to not only empower individuals and communities, but also to contribute to embedding women's rights more firmly within local governance structures. ●



Participants on a study trip to Sarajevo were able to network and exchange ideas.

Inclusive adult learning and education for the deaf in Ecuador

Until now, young people and adults with hearing impairments in Ecuador had only limited access to education due to a lack of adapted methodologies, accessible materials, and trained personnel. In response, Ecuador's Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, with technical support from DVV International and funding from the BMZ, designed and implemented a distance learning programme specifically for deaf learners.

The programme is delivered at the Juan Montalvo Educational Centre in Quito through a Moodle platform specifically adapted for deaf learners. The educational offer has been officially accredited, allowing participants to obtain recognised certificates and diplomas corresponding to formal educational levels. This includes basic general education or upper secondary education, depending on the programme they completed.

The programme forms part of a broader national ALE strategy aiming to expand inclusion for historically excluded groups, which reached 29,000 young people in 2025 alone. At the Juan Montalvo Educational Centre, 290 learners of all ages completed their studies in 2025, including ten deaf students.

Overcoming structural differences between sign language and written Spanish

A central element of the programme is the recognition of the Ecuadorian Sign Language as the main language of instruction. The pedagogical team includes two deaf teachers and six sign language interpreters. Together, they developed highly visual teaching strategies to address one of the main educational barriers: the structural differences between sign language and written Spanish. This approach has been shown to strengthen academic comprehension, autonomy, and learners' self-confidence.

The Moodle platform was adapted in close collaboration with the teaching team and validated by the National Federation of Deaf People of Ecuador. It prioritises videos in sign language, visual resources, and user-friendly navigation.



Online course with a sign language interpreter.

It also incorporates consensus-based processes to create new signs for concepts that do not exist in Ecuadorian Sign Language, while also taking into account regional and international variations.

Adapting educational content is not enough

While virtual modality significantly expands access to education, challenges remain, such as limited synchronous interaction and the mandatory use of written chat, which represents a second language for many deaf learners. These experiences highlight the need to adapt not only educational content, but also the entire educational process and institutional practices.

Nevertheless, the programme demonstrates that inclusive digital ALE is viable, necessary, and replicable. By placing deaf learners at the centre of the educational process and recognising their linguistic and cultural identity, inclusion moves beyond compensation and becomes a transformative principle of education policy. This helps to reduce structural inequalities and promote equal opportunities for all. ●

Building educational bridges in skilled labour and apprenticeship migration

The demand for skilled workers in Germany is growing while at the same time, many young people worldwide are looking for career prospects. Migration for vocational training can open up opportunities if it is supported by reliable information, language support, and guidance. Together with its partners, DVV International builds educational bridges to support people on this path.

Many of DVV International's partner countries face the challenge of integrating a growing population of young people into their labour markets. In populous Colombia, for example, the unemployment rate among young people stands at just under 20 per cent.¹ At the same time, there is already a shortage of skilled workers in Germany – as in other European countries and parts of East Asia. This situation will be further exacerbated by demographic change: projections by the Institute for Employment Research suggest that the number of people in the labour force in Germany will fall by around 1.1 million by 2040. Without appropriate counter-measures, the already strained labour market will come under additional pressure.

The resulting shortage of skilled workers and labour opens up new prospects for people intending to migrate. At the same time, however, skilled labour migration carries the risk of a so-called “brain drain” – the outflow of qualified professionals – with negative consequences for the development

of their countries of origin. Careful selection of partner countries is therefore essential to ensure that countries of origin also benefit, for example by opening up new opportunities for young people – especially in countries with high youth unemployment. Against this backdrop, DVV International sees particular potential in migration for training: targeted migration with the aim of vocational training in Germany. In this way, young people acquire the skills needed locally in the destination country, and lengthy recognition processes are avoided. At the same time, the German training system contributes to the qualification of young people and strengthens their prospects both in Germany and in their country of origin.

High barriers to entry

Immigration to Germany via legal migration channels was facilitated by the Skilled Labour Immigration Act (*Fachkräfteinwanderungsgesetz*), amended in 2023; nevertheless, the requirements remain high. For example, anyone wishing to apply for a visa for vocational training must demonstrate in advance that they have been admitted to a specific training programme, possess German language skills – generally at B1 level – and have a secure means of support.

This gives rise to key educational needs: interested individuals must learn German and demonstrate their proficiency through a recognised certificate. They must identify a suitable occupation with good training opportunities and acquire the skills required for application procedures. Local educational institutions can provide support in this respect through advisory and educational services.

Enabling informed decisions

In many countries of origin, there is a great deal of misinformation regarding the requirements, procedures, and concrete opportunities of labour migration. Unrealistic expectations regarding the effort required to learn the language, vocational training programmes or life in Germany often lead to disappointment and high drop-out rates.



“The ‘Arriving in Bavaria’ project made it much easier for me to get started and integrate in Germany. Learning German is particularly important to me, as it is essential for work and training. The project helped me feel confident and well-prepared both before and after my arrival.”

Arina Bekbolotova from Kyrgyzstan is currently completing her training as a registered nurse in Vilsbiburg, Bavaria.

¹ These statistics do not include the many people who, although they are effectively in work, are in informal, precarious employment and are affected by poverty.



The Kyrgyz partner organisation Youth of Osh visiting the vhs Cham as part of the “Arriving in Bavaria” project.

Reliable information on legal migration routes, the labour market, career prospects, and daily life in Germany is therefore an important basis for informed decisions. Such content should be an integral part of educational and advisory services. Pre-integration measures can also protect against fraudulent practices, such as forged language certificates, and convey realistic expectations regarding the migration process as well as working and living conditions in the destination country.

Adult learning and education plays an important role not only in pre-integration but also during the integration process in Germany. Over the long term, it is primarily those who feel at home who stay. This requires functioning welcome structures in the host communities, including job-specific language courses as well as events where migrants and the local population can get to know one another. Adult learning and education centres (Volkshochschulen, vhs) can serve as a central hub for networking. An important task for the future will therefore be to strengthen the partnerships between DVV International and the Volkshochschulen.

Recruiting skilled workers for Eastern Bavaria

One example of such educational bridges is the project “Arriving in Bavaria/Welcome to the Cham District” run by vhs Cham, which is being implemented in Kyrgyzstan and the Bavarian Forest in collaboration with DVV International. Funded by the European Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), the project offers German language courses, certification of language skills, and career guidance in cooperation with the DVV International country office and a local partner in Kyrgyzstan (Youth of Osh). The aim is to prepare young people for vocational training and to facilitate their access to apprenticeship places in the Cham district. To this end, they are put in touch with German companies to which they can apply. A signed apprenticeship contract, alongside German language skills, is a prerequisite for the relevant visa.

In the Cham district, the vhs has also established numerous integration services that provide support in everyday life as well as when dealing with government offices. Moreover, they promote language acquisition and assist with finding leisure activities. Companies can take part in workshops on intercultural skills for trainers. In addition to reliable funding, the success of such projects depends on sustainable networks on both sides of the border, linked through educational partnerships. To strengthen such structures in a sustainable way beyond individual projects, DVV International also focuses on overarching initiatives.

Deutsch Global – strengthening structures for language acquisition and certification

A new cooperation launched in spring 2025 between DVV International and the language provider telc, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the DVV, is a good example of one such overarching initiative. The Deutsch Global project is establishing and strengthening a network of partner organisations in three pilot countries – Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan, and Colombia. The aim is to support educational institutions in expanding their German language teaching through teacher training, teaching and learning materials from telc, the vhs learning portal (<https://vhs-lernportal.de>), and the opportunity for telc certification. In addition, the project will develop advisory and information services relating to labour migration – key components of a comprehensive pre-integration programme. Furthermore, the project initiates cross-border cooperation between educational institutions in the partner countries and German adult education centres, for example in the administration of telc exams, exam preparation, conversation courses, or transnational exchange programmes with the diaspora.

Over the long term, this form of collaboration could lead to the creation of continuous educational pathways not only in Kyrgyzstan but also in other partner countries. The aim is to further strengthen international cooperation with Volkshochschulen – for successful educational migration and the expansion of global adult learning and education networks. ●

WEB

An expert paper on the topic of “Adult learning and education in the context of migration and displacement” is available online at: <https://vhs.link/Qk6JMK>



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.





During a study trip to Armenia in December 2025, partners from DVV International in Tunisia and Algeria exchanged views with their Armenian colleagues on approaches and models in adult learning and education. The trip included a visit to the Green Lane Education Centre.

Rita Süßmuth International Volkshochschule Award

On 3 June 2025, DVV International conferred the Rita Süßmuth International Volkshochschule Award for the third time. The theme was “International partnerships to strengthen democracy and participation”. The prize was awarded to three Volkshochschulen (adult learning and education centres, vhs) in Frankfurt am Main, in Reutlingen and the Potsdam-Mittelmark District.

The award ceremony took place during the General Assembly of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) in Leipzig. The directors of the three honoured Volkshochschulen accepted the awards, each worth 2,000 euros, in person from Dr Ernst Dieter Rossmann, Honorary Chairman of the German Adult Education Association (DVV), and Jennifer Endro from the Federal Foreign Office, which sponsored the prize as part of the Urban X-Change project.

Rita Süßmuth, the DVV's Honorary President who passed away in February 2026, had sent a message of congratulations to the winners for the award ceremony in June 2025. It read: “Anyone who wants to help shape the world democratically must start with education – and not just in their own country, but across borders. [...] My special thanks go to the award-winning centres and their partners, who, through their great commitment, demonstrate how education builds bridges – between people, cultures, and ways of life. That is democracy in action.”

International partnerships for education and democracy

The vhs Frankfurt was honoured for its “Democracy Ambassadors” project. The project connects participants from Germany and Sweden, strengthens intercultural exchange, and empowers people to champion democratic values in their communities and at EU level. The vhs Reutlingen received the award for its long-standing partnership with the city of Bouaké in Côte d'Ivoire. Since 2010, this partnership has facilitated teacher exchanges as well as joint learning and solidarity initiatives. The jury praised the initiative as “a living testament to the power of sustained commitment and intercultural exchange.” The kvhs Potsdam-Mittelmark was honoured for the “Namibia Forum Kleinmachnow”. In collaboration with the Kleinmachnow-Keetmanshoop partnership



Winners of the Rita Süßmuth Award on 3 June 2025 in Leipzig.

initiative, the project promotes dialogue formats, local engagement, and bilateral visits that reflect on shared history and future cooperation. The jury described the forum as a “courageous and forward-looking model for international educational work based on historical responsibility and democratic dialogue.”

The Rita Süßmuth International Volkshochschule Award was first given by DVV International in 2019. It is held under the patronage of the German Association of Cities and honours adult education centres that are particularly dedicated to the theme of internationalisation. ●

Prof Dr Rita Süßmuth (*1937 † 2026)

Prof Dr Rita Süßmuth, after whom the prize is named, served as Honorary President of the DVV until her passing on 1 February 2026. She was president of the DVV from 1988 to 2015 and remained a passionate advocate for inclusive and integrative education policy. For her, education was the key to an open and just society. International cooperation in adult learning and education was a particular concern of hers. An obituary can be found at: <https://vhs.link/rBGtbw>

Development education under pressure – a journey through eastern Germany

Education on development issues is coming under increasing political pressure. At the same time, it is needed more urgently than ever. A look at eastern Germany shows how committed actors are nevertheless finding ways to convey global interconnections and strengthen democratic spaces. Benedict Steilmann, project officer for the “Global Learning in Volkshochschulen (ALE centres)” project at DVV International, reports on a development education bus tour and the work of German ALE centres under difficult conditions.

In September 2025, you took part in a “development policy bus tour” through eastern Germany organised by the Nord-Süd-Brücken Foundation. What key insights did you gain?

Organisations involved in education on global development and democracy work are facing growing hostility from the right and increasingly difficult operating conditions. This is particularly evident in parts of eastern Germany. There, far-right politicians and individuals have been attacking development policy actors and denigrating their work for years. With the rise of the AfD, nationalist positions – which fundamentally question international solidarity and cooperation – have gained significant visibility and influence in the political arena. Unfortunately, and presumably partly for this reason, more and more citizens are doubting the importance of international cooperation, which, in the spirit of a global society based on solidarity, is particularly evident among democratically governed states. Yet it is precisely international cooperation that offers key opportunities to at least mitigate global crises such as climate change, social justice, and species extinction.

How are Volkshochschulen (ALE centres), particularly in eastern Germany, responding to these challenges? How does the “Global Learning in Volkshochschulen” project support their work?

They do so in a variety of ways. The Saxony-Anhalt regional association has published a strong position paper in support of democracy and against the far right. In Brandenburg and Thuringia, Volkshochschulen are collaborating with other civil society actors and preparing, for example, poster campaigns for an open and democratic society. As part of our



Benedict Steilmann

funding programme “Global Learning in Volkshochschulen”, we receive applications from ALE centres that wish to counter nationalistic thinking in their local areas with an international perspective. At the course format level, however, it is by no means easy to find ways to approach these topics. The AfD has managed to attach a stigma to everything global. Approaches that tie in with local issues are particularly successful: in Brandenburg, for example, experiments are being conducted with old Latin American cereal varieties that require less water and could also be used in Germany. Such stories combine global perspectives with concrete, lived realities and open up new avenues for educational work on the ground, which we are developing further together with the ALE centres.

What lessons do you draw from these impressions for your own work?

Development cooperation and global issues are integral to a cosmopolitan and globally responsible society. These issues are currently being debated across the entire spectrum of the German population – and increasingly so in eastern Germany. Although civil society in eastern Germany is committed and capable of taking action, it is, for historical reasons, less developed than in western Germany. With their own fundamentally democratic mission, Volkshochschulen are crucial institutions when it comes to standing up for democratic and global values. We must stay on the ball, become even better and stronger – and provide support through financial backing, networking, and expertise. Democracy as we know it is being defended in these institutions right here and now. ●

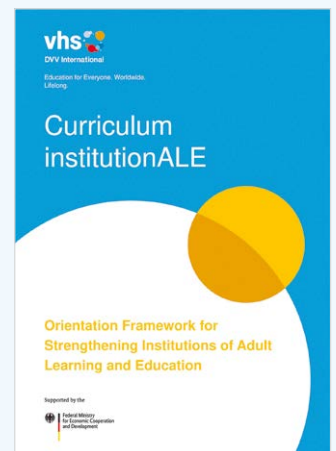
The ALE Toolbox – practical tools for adult learning and education worldwide

DVV International has made its own instruments, methods, and approaches for adult learning and education (ALE) freely available through the ALE Toolbox. Aimed at teachers, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and government authorities, the toolbox offers practical materials for the professional development of adult educators, organisational development, and the establishment of adult learning and education 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.

The **Curriculum institution-ALE** is a reference framework for the organisational development of adult learning and education institutions, helping them develop strategically and to make their programmes both more sustainable and more effective.

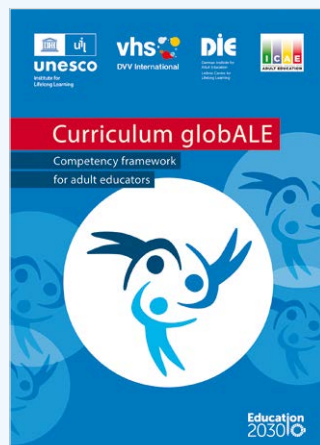
Languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Lao



International Framework Curricula

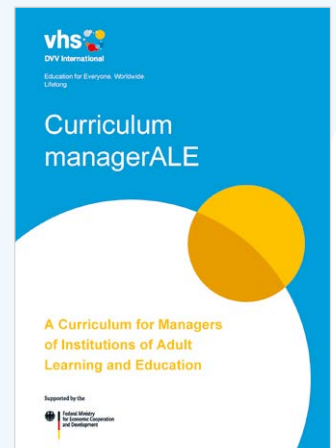
The **Curriculum globALE** is an internationally recognised, UNESCO-recommended framework curriculum for the training of adult educators. In five modules, it outlines the relevant skills required of teachers in adult learning and education. The curriculum also provides numerous guidelines for practical implementation.

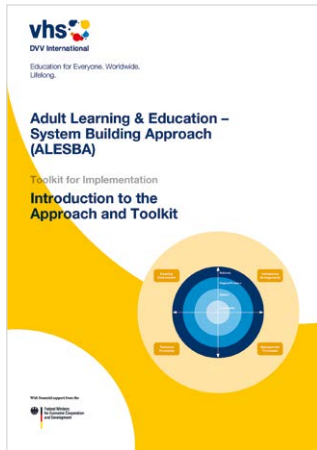
Languages: English, French, Russian, Arabic, Georgian



The **Curriculum managerALE** is a modular, competence-based curriculum for managers of adult learning and education institutions. It ensures close integration with the Curriculum globALE and the Curriculum institutionALE.

Languages: English, Spanish, Arabic



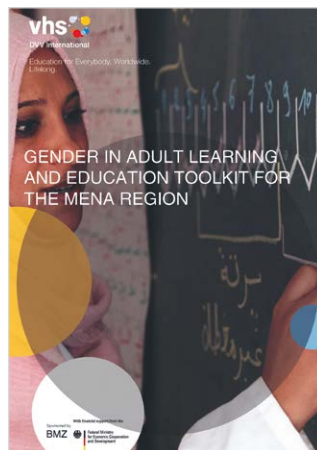


Selected additional tools

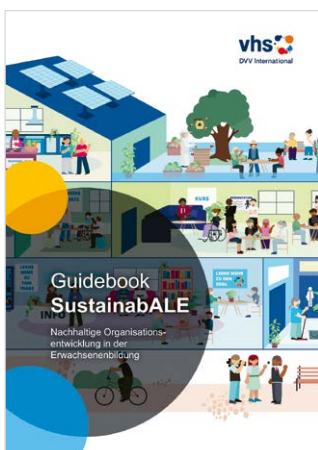
The **Adult Learning and Education System Building Approach (ALESBA)** is a tool that supports govern-

ments, civil society, universities, and other stakeholders (e.g. from the private sector) in the complex task of building adult learning and education systems. Participation, partnership, ownership, capacity building, and sustainability are fundamental principles for its implementation. *Languages: English, French*

The **Gender in ALE Toolkit** is an easy-to-use, practical guide for addressing gender and women-specific issues in adult learning and education. The concrete tools presented are based on the experiences of nearly 50 stakeholders working in ALE in Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia. *Languages: English, French, Arabic*



The **Guidebook sustainabALE** supports continuing education organisations in implementing the Whole Institution Approach (WIA), a holistic, sustainable development process for organisations. The guidebook promotes the integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a cross-cutting theme within an educational organisation. *Languages: English, German*



NEW!



Wegweiser interkommunALE –

International Cooperation between Adult Learning and Education Centres

The Wegweiser interkommunALE was published by DVV International in 2025 and offers a practical handbook on international municipal cooperation in adult learning and education. The guide was developed as part of the Urban X-Change Network II project and is based on the partnership experiences of German ALE centres (Volkshochschulen – vhs) with institutions in Poland, Ukraine, the UK and the USA. The aim of the guide is to support adult learning and education centres in the strategic development and sustainable establishment of international cooperation.

The Urban X-Change Network II project, funded by the Federal Foreign Office, ran until the end of 2025. Both Urban X-Change Network projects (2021–2023 and 2024–2025) brought German ALE centres together with international partner institutions to strengthen citizen diplomacy based on town twinning and to promote civil society dialogue on foreign cultural and education policy issues.

Language: German

WEB

All the tools presented here and more can be found at:
www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox

Adult learning and education in the age of artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence is the defining issue of our time. It is transforming the way we live, work – and learn. But what exactly does this mean for global adult learning and education (ALE)? This question was at the heart of a conference organised by DVV International and its partners in Laos in November 2025. One of the keynote speakers was Martin Dougiamas, founder of the learning management system Moodle and its head of research. In this interview, he reflects on the opportunities and risks of AI, and on the future role of ALE in this new era.

In Laos, you discussed ALE in times of AI. What were your most important takeaways?

The meeting reinforced something I've been thinking about for a long time: There are two currents shaping education technology right now – a commercial current driven by speed and profit, and a human current focused on connection, critical thinking, equity and the Sustainable Development Goals. AI is accelerating both. If adult learning and education defines itself only as “training workers for jobs”, we are fighting a losing battle against machines that don't sleep. The conversations in Laos helped crystallise that ALE must focus on developing human beings in all facets, not just on equipping them with skills. Many countries face a perfect storm of AI arriving while their education systems still rely heavily on memorisation.

What key opportunities does AI offer for ALE?

AI can dramatically improve access to quality learning, especially for adults who face barriers in terms of time, location, or language. It can personalise learning pathways, generate content in local languages, summarise complex material, and create realistic simulations and instructions for practical skills. For educators, AI can assist with learning design, assessment and feedback – especially the more tedious administrative tasks – freeing them to focus on the human elements of teaching that matter most. Perhaps most exciting is the potential for AI to help adult learners develop metacognitive skills, namely learning how to learn, which is the foundation for lifelong growth. Personally, I find working heavily with AI is immensely accelerating my own learning: I'm learning so much every day!



Martin Dougiamas

What are the main challenges for ALE in this new era, and how can we address them?

I see three great risks. First, sovereignty: data and control are being concentrated in a handful of large technology companies who do not have our interests first. We must invest in local AI infrastructure and open-source solutions that use green power like solar. Second, cognitive decline: If people outsource all their thinking to AI, we risk weakening the very capacities education aims to build. We need intentional, thoughtful integration of AI that teaches people when and how to use it. An AI used for learning needs to care about the learning of the individual as a teacher would. Third, social fragmentation: Technology can push people apart as easily as it brings them together. Adult learning and education has a vital role in guiding AI deployment responsibly to strengthen and build communities and infrastructure rather than isolate individuals. ●

Vibrant and inclusive learning environments – a North African delegation visits Armenia

In December 2025, DVV International invited a delegation from Tunisia and Algeria on a study visit to its partner country, Armenia. Participants exchanged experiences, discovered innovative practices in adult learning and education, and explored models adaptable to their regional contexts. Hajer Chehbi Habchi, Executive Director of the Arab Institute for Human Rights, shares her impressions and key takeaways from the visit.

What impressed you most during the study trip, and what key insights did you take away?

What particularly impressed me during this trip to Armenia was how closely culture, heritage, and lifelong learning are intertwined. Museums and cultural spaces are not merely places of preservation, but also genuine educational environments where adults can explore history, art, and collective identity through participatory activities. This approach aligns closely with the principles we champion at the Arab Institute for Human Rights, where education is viewed as a living process rooted in social and cultural realities. The trip inspired me to further strengthen the links between cultural institutions, civil society, and adult education programmes in order to promote active citizenship and broader intercultural dialogue.

Did your exchanges with Armenian partners influence your perspective on adult learning and education and lifelong learning?

Exchanges with Armenian partners enriched my perspective by showing me once again that adult learning and education can extend far beyond traditional frameworks. I saw learning programmes which were designed in a flexible and participatory way, integrating local cultural resources, participants' experiences, and community dynamics. This approach highlighted the importance of an open and contextualised curriculum, allowing classroom learning to connect with broader issues such as civic engagement, sustainable development, and social cohesion. It also confirms that cultural and community spaces can play a central role in sharing knowledge and fostering new forms of learning.

Was there a particularly inspiring example in Armenia that you could adapt to your work?

I was particularly impressed by the visit to the Green Training Centre, developed by the Green Lane NGO. This centre transforms nature into a genuine learning space: plants, crops, and ecological techniques serve as teaching tools in an open environment that also hosts educational and cultural events. Initiatives such as the Harvest Festival bring together producers, artists, and citizens to celebrate rural heritage and agricultural innovation. This approach demonstrates how educational curricula, nature, culture, and community engagement can be meaningfully connected to create vibrant and inclusive learning spaces. Such a model could inspire similar initiatives in our region, helping to mobilise cultural, environmental, and community resources to strengthen lifelong learning programmes. ●



Hajer Chehbi Habchi



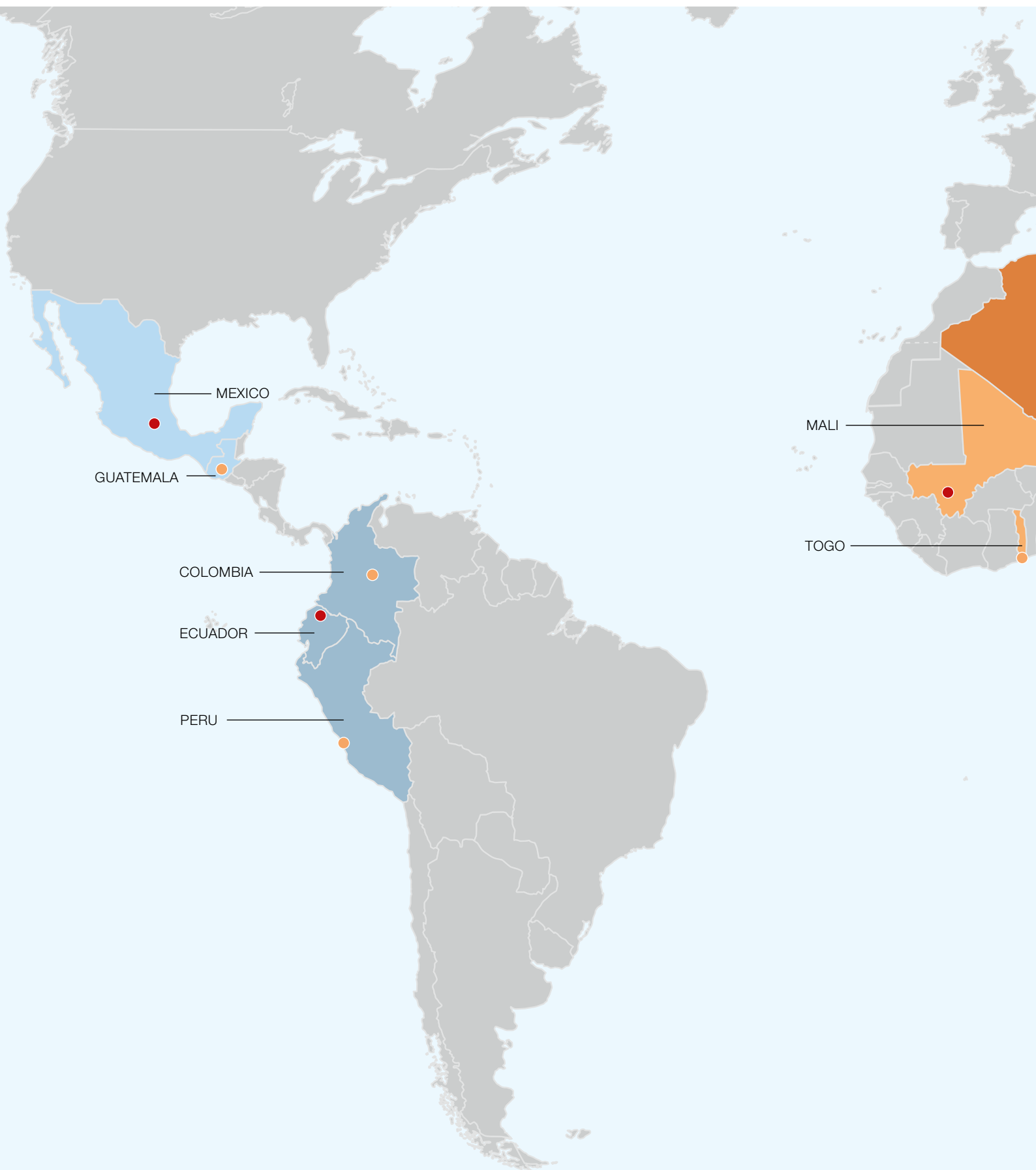
In August 2025, around 40 national and international staff members from DVV International met for the biennial Regional Directors' Meeting, which took place at the Nuremberg Education Centre at the invitation of Arne Zielinski, Member of the DVV Board and Chair of the Board of Trustees. The meeting served as a platform for exchanging regional experiences, reflecting on shared challenges, and defining the strategic priorities for the years ahead.

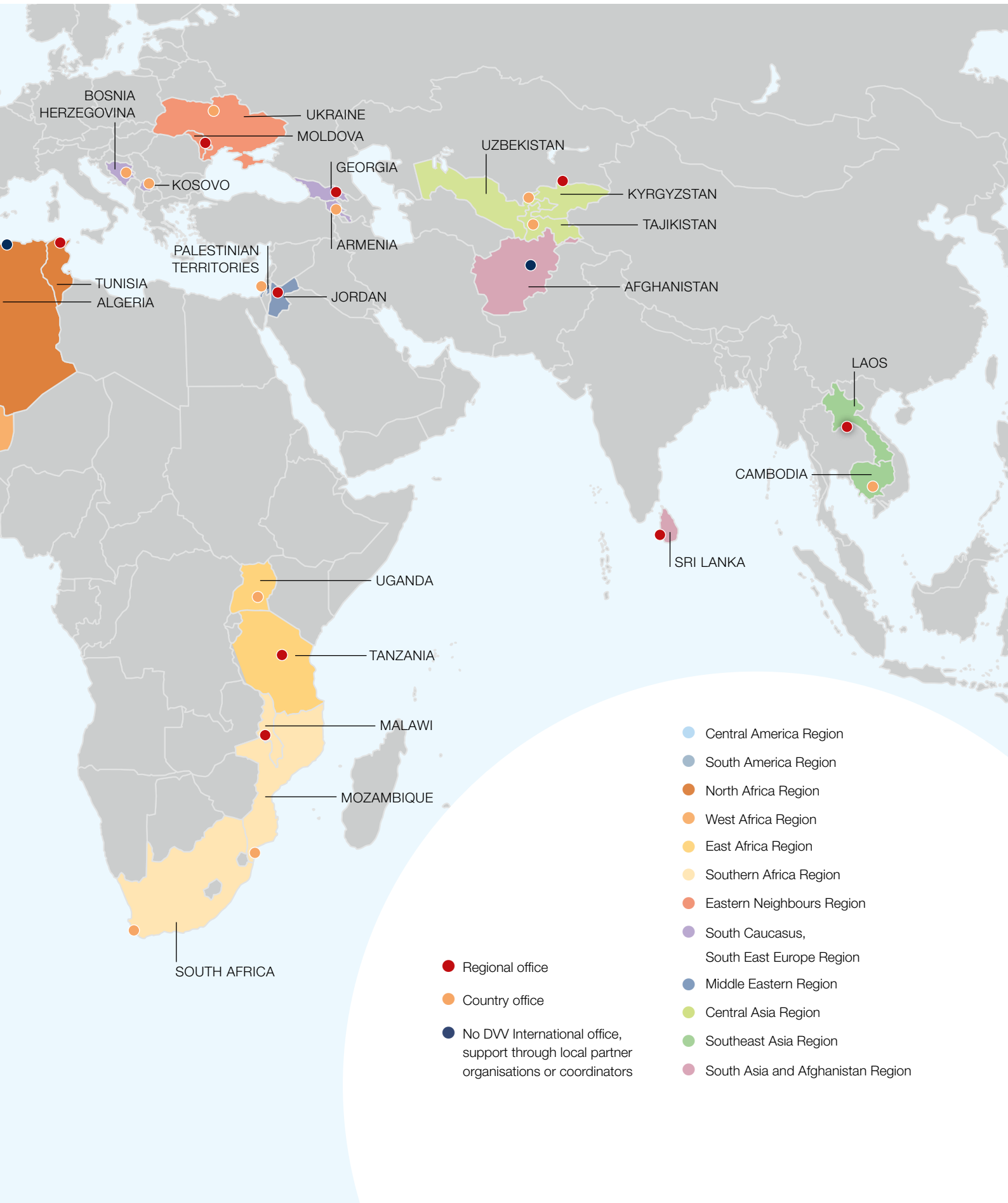
DVV International at a glance



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

Our partner countries (as of December 2025)





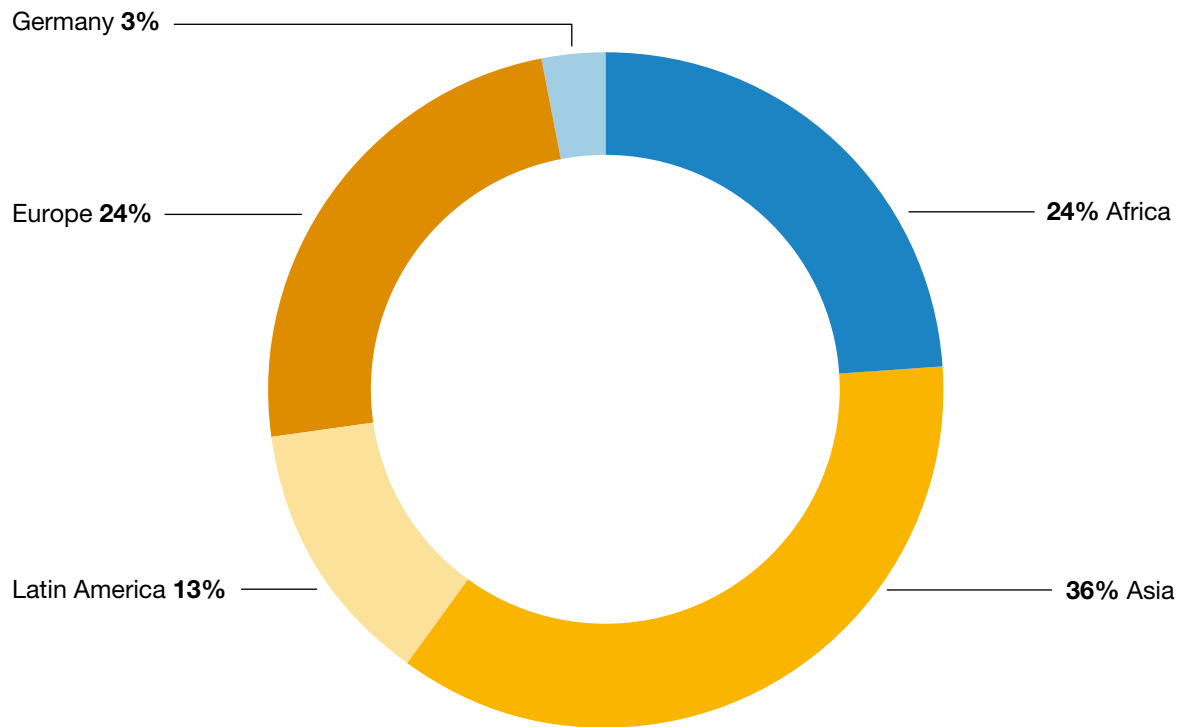
Profit and loss account

for the period 1 Jan. 2025 to 31 Dec. 2025

Income	2025	2024
A. Income at headquarters	2,377,276	2,297,873
1. Administrative costs	2,376,436	2,293,360
2. Income from EU project cooperation	–	3,673
3. Other income	840	840
4. Liquidation of provisions	–	–
B. Project grants	21,531,840	20,313,451
1. AA	1,647,410	1,554,030
2. BMBF	–	81,888
3. BMZ	16,735,367	16,436,870
<i>International projects</i>	<i>16,434,252</i>	<i>16,174,000</i>
<i>Global Learning</i>	<i>301,115</i>	<i>262,870</i>
4. EU	1,997,713	1,270,050
5. GIZ	922,149	717,484
7. Other projects	229,202	253,129
Total income	23,909,116	22,611,324
Expenditure	2025	2024
A. Expenditure at headquarters	2,377,276	2,297,873
1. Staff costs for central services	1,794,119	1,808,562
2. Buildings	241,358	176,313
3. Operating expenses	91,514	98,470
4. Communications/information/technology	11,066	61,081
5. Travel costs	29,267	31,740
6. Other administrative expenditure	131,960	53,214
7. Membership to organisations	20,793	20,465
8. Public relations and events	57,199	48,029
B. Project expenditure	21,531,840	20,313,451
1. International projects	21,230,725	19,968,693
2. Global Learning in the vhs	301,115	262,870
3. BMBF project	–	81,888
Total expenditure	23,909,116	22,611,324
Annual result	0	0

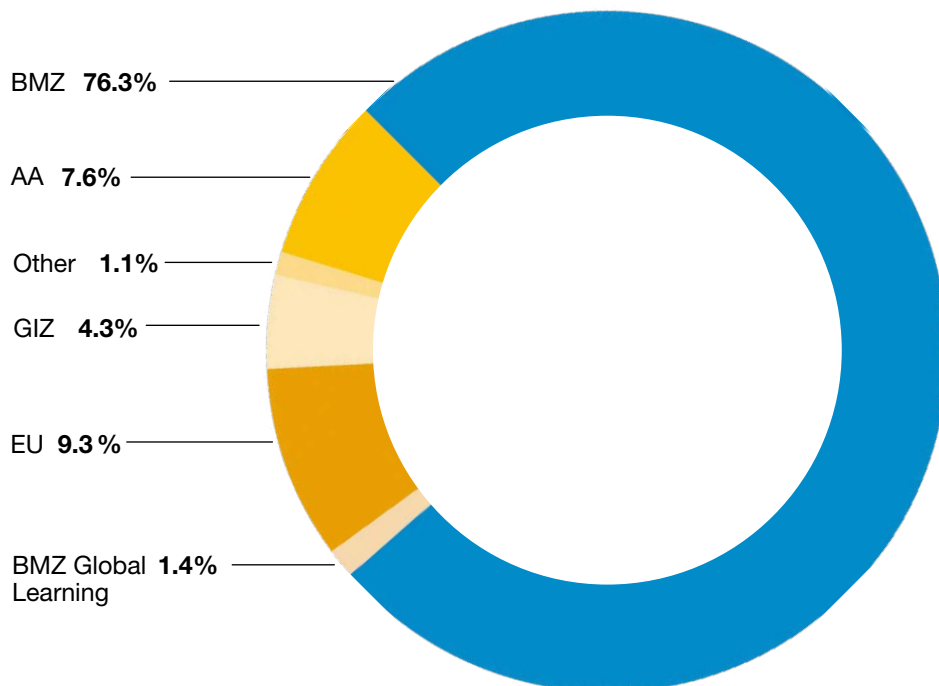
Regional distribution of project funds in 2025

(21,531,840 euros)



Origin of project funds in 2025

(21,531,840 euros)



List of abbreviations

AA: Federal Foreign Office; BMZ: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; EU: European Union; GIZ: German Agency 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 European countries, 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 draw attention to the education of women and girls 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.

Project topics in 2025

DVV International operated projects in more than 30 countries in 2025. The association 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 2025 with the support of our donors.

AA

– Federal Foreign Office

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

EU

– European Union

- vocational education
- youth education
- inclusion
- democratisation
- peace building
- gender equality
- citizenship education
- local development

GIZ

– German Society for International Cooperation

- vocational education and entrepreneurship
- agricultural education
- gender equality

BMZ

– Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

- boosting adult learning and education structures:
 - establishing, strengthening, and further developing adult learning and education systems
 - government advice in legislative procedures and policy development
 - promoting multisectoral approaches and structures in adult learning and education
 - establishing and professionalising adult learning and education centres
- supra-regional exchange of expertise, policy dialogue, and networking in adult learning and 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

Sternsinger

- youth education
- life skills for children and youth
- education for indigenous populations
- supporting youth and adult learning and education centres
- vocational education and entrepreneurship
- literacy and basic education
- health education
- environmental education

Other

– AMIF, Federal Employment Agency (Schwandorf), telc/DVV

- migration and integration
- language skills
- career guidance
- teacher qualification

Board of Trustees of DVV International (2023–2027)

The Board of Trustees supports and advises DVV International in its international work.
Board members are elected for a term of four years.

Chair

Arne Zielinski

Members

Prof Dr Rita Süßmuth († 2026)

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Mechthild Jorgol

Dr Isabell Kempf

Dagmar Mikasch-Köthner

Prof Dr Steffi Robak

Prof Dr Michael Schemmann

Celia Sokolowsky

Michael Wiechert

Employee statistics (as of December 2025)

	Number of employees	Edu./Acad. staff	Admin./techn. staff
Regional and country offices	208	101	107
Seconded employees	14	14	–
DVV International Bonn	29	15	14
DVV International total	251	130	121

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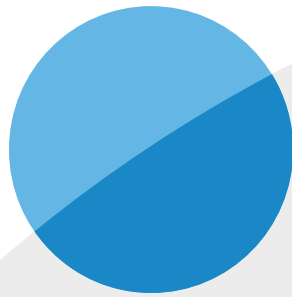
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