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COMMUNITY EDUCATION: BEST WORLD PRACTICES

EDUKACJA W SPÓLNOTY: NAJLEPSZE ŚWIATOWE PRAKTYKI

ОСВІТА У ГРОМАДАХ: КРАЩИЙ СВІТОВИЙ ДОСВІД

1. Introduction

Continuing education as a social need for the constant development of each person's personality has long been a global trend in education. Moreover, the decisive role in this trend is played by adult education outside educational institutions, in particular by non-formal and informal education. Their educational potential is inexhaustible, as each member of society can improve their professional skills; to change the profession they can undergo retraining; they can gain additional qualifications or acquire new skills and abilities, adapting to changing social and industrial conditions; gain new knowledge, constantly update them and develop personally during their leisure time, etc.

According to experts from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, continuing learning is based on the integration of learning and life and covers learning activities for people of all ages (children, youth, adults, the elderly, regardless of gender), in any living environment (family, school, community, workplace, etc.) and through a variety of ways (formal, non-informal and informal) that together meet a wide range of educational needs (Belém Framework, 2010).

It is now generally accepted that non-formal and informal education play a key role in continuing education, which promotes the development of the human ability to live and work to their interests, the community's interests, and society. One of the important components of non-formal and informal education, which is becoming increasingly popular, is education in communities.

Taking into account the role of continuing education for the development of the economy, sustainability, society, and individual personality, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning describes best practices in continuous learning. This information is open and available on the official website of the Institute (Effective Literacy, 2021). Such a systematization and review of the world's best practices will certainly help to study, critically analyze, and highlight those positive ideas that could be used in other countries.

Given the above, the goal of the publication is to select and analyze the described practices related to continuing education, and to outline progressive ideas for providers and practitioners of national non-formal education. As non-formal education covers different subject areas, in our analysis we will limit ourselves to education in communities.

2. Research methodology

To achieve the established goal we use general scientific research methods: analysis, synthesis, induction, and deduction to review, determine the criteria, and select appropriate cases for study; method of comparative analysis to highlight the features of the experience of community education in different countries, finding their common features; structural and functional method for classifying educational programs according to identified criteria; prognostic methods for identifying progressive ideas for their critical thinking and possible implementation in Ukraine's practice of non-formal adult education.

To find the community education programs necessary for our analysis, we used the following keywords: community, community education, and community learning. As a result, out of the materials of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning presented on the site, we selected 31 programs that contained one of the search words in its title.

To carry out the analysis, it is also important to indicate the target category of students on which the described programs are focused. Therefore, the indication of the target category also became a criterion in our analysis. The name of the educational program and its brief description will help to clarify its essence, purpose, and features. Therefore, this criterion is the most important, because it allows us to classify community education programs. An additional criterion of our analysis is the definition of the developer and provider of the selected programs under analysis.

According to the analysis results, among the 244 proposed cases of non-formal education from 97 countries, no one described the best practices of Ukraine. Moreover, it is rather regretful because the list of cases includes not only the leading countries with highly developed economies and high levels of welfare. The list includes several third-world countries

– Honduras, Uruguay, Iraq, Bangladesh, South Africa, Gambia, Philippines, Mali, Tanzania, Peru, and others. This does not mean that there is no non-formal adult education in Ukraine. Rather, no organization would systematize the existing experience and present the best domestic practices at the international level.

3. Conceptual foundations of education in communities

As the materials of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning are presented in English, it is advisable to first find out the basic terms that we will use in our analysis. The subject of our analysis is "community education", as it is called in English texts. This term refers to learning and development in the community through educational programs of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for individuals or groups that contribute to their personal social development and the development of their communities. A common determining feature is that educational programs and activities are developed in a joint dialogue between communities and participants within educational programs. In addition, both formal, non-formal, and informal teaching and learning methods are used in this process (Working and Learning, 2004). The term "community education" also refers to adult education that takes place in a local community and meets the needs of that community (AONTAS, 2021). In a narrower sense, "community education" means education within a particular community or community as opposed to education and training in educational institutions – schools, colleges, universities. In this sense, it is often synonymously called "non-formal education" (Khasnabis et al, 2010). Hence, the diversity of interpretation of the term in English-language literature is obvious.

According to the dictionary and reference literature analysis, there is no direct equivalent term in the Ukrainian language. The Russian-language term, proposed in the scientific and pedagogical literature, is a literal translation of "community education" (Russian – общинное обучение) and is used most often. However, in the Russian language there are also the terms "просвещение общин" (when translated it means "community learning"), "образование на уровне общин (it is translated as "education at the community level"), "образование в общинах" (the translation is "education in communities"), "общественное образование" ("public education"), and "общинное образование" ("community education").

Ukrainian scholars and practitioners use the terms "community education", "OTG education" (where OTG means "united territorial community") and mostly understand it as community education management. In other words, in Ukraine, the responsibility for the implementation of state policy in the field of education and ensuring the quality and

accessibility of education in the relevant territory is called education in communities. It is noteworthy that the emphasis is put on the development of the network of educational institutions, that is the formal system (Grekova, et al, 2020). The absence of theoretical scientific developments on community education as a direction of continuing education, adult education, and non-formal education becomes obvious in the Ukrainian-language discourse.

4. Classification of community education programs

Among the best practices of continuing education offered by the Institute, there are 31 programs dedicated to community education, which is 12.7% of the total number of cases on the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning website. Programs related to non-formal education in communities can be classified as those that describe:

- education in the community as its members receiving basic education – 14;

- educational centers and their activities aimed at professional and personal development of a community member – 9;

- participation of community members in its life for its prosperity – 8.

The first group of best practices describes the experience of conducting community education in countries such as Senegal, India, Thailand, Iraq, Ghana, Afghanistan, Egypt, etc., in a total of 14 countries. Analysis of community education programs shows that the thematic focus of all community education programs can be divided into those that:

- develop functional literacy;

- offer some basic professional skills, in addition to functional literacy.

It should be noted that mostly the experience of community education relates to the acquisition of the basics of fundamental literacy (ability to read, write, and simple mathematical skills). Women are a vulnerable category in third-world countries. Therefore, these programs are often aimed at women. In Turkey, for example, there are now 3 million people over the age of 15, most of whom are women who cannot read or write their names. According to statistics from the Turkish Institute of Statistics, the level of education among men in this category is 98.3%, and among women – only 91%. In addition, 3.8 million adults have no primary education at all, 70% of whom are women (Functional Adult, 2017). The functional literacy program, developed and implemented by the Mother and Child Education Foundation, is implemented in adult education centers and includes 2 levels. At the first level, there are studying those who do not know how to read and write at all. At the second level, the participants in the program may be considered "semi-literate" people. At both levels, each of which is designed for 120 hours, reading, writing, and basic math skills are taught.

Table 1 presents examples of standard community education programs related to the development of basic literacy of its members.

Community Education Programs (Functional Literacy)

Country	Name of the program, its characteristics, and features	Target audience	Developer and provider of the program
Turkey	Functional Adult Education and Women's Support Program, two-level program, 120 hours each level	Adults over 15 years and other adults; women	Women's Mother and Child Education Foundation
Uganda	Functional adult literacy; Teachers-instructors with 2 years of primary education; 2 million participants, 75% of whom are women	Persons living below the poverty line (15 years and older)	Government of Uganda (Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development)
Afghanistan	Learning for Life: 9-month program – preparation for the provision of basic pre-medical care (obstetrics) in communities; 6-month program – for women with education, at least 6 classes – Obstetric Care in the field	Women	Management Science in Health Care, University of Massachusetts, International Rescue Committee
Iraq	Literacy for Women: Every year 2000 female participants, in 7 regions of the country, 30 educational centers in the country. Orientation: Family Relations, Iraqi Constitution, Health, Human Rights, Peaceful Coexistence of Religions	Women	Iraqi Al-Firdavs Public Association (Basra Province) Source: systematized by the authors on the website of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Source: systemized by the authors on the website of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

The second group of community education programs is directly related to the activities of educational centers, which aim is to promote the professional and personal development of

community members. The target audience is adults (persons over 15 years old), ethnic minorities, rural populations, and vulnerable categories of youth. A brief description of typical programs is given in Table 2.

<div align="right">*Table 2*</div>

Community Education Programs (Professional and Personal Development)

Country	Name of the program, its characteristics, and features	Target audience	Developer and provider of the program
China	Community Learning Centers: non-formal education aimed at enhancing the functional literacy of the population in the socio-economically underdeveloped province of Hansa and developing life skills	Vulnerable groups of young people; adults (15 years and older)	Hansa Institute of Educational Sciences
Mexico	Education for life and work: 80,000 volunteer trainers, a wide range of topics and levels; more than 60 modules; at the basic level – 7-10 months; the other two levels – according to the personal needs of students; bilingual courses in Spanish and local languages, monolingual courses in which Spanish is studied as a foreign language	Youth (15 to 24 years), adults; In some regions - adults with special educational needs (visually impaired and blind, prisoners, migrants)	National Institute of Adult Education, NGOs, and private companies
Indonesia	Microfinance for Community Education Center "Harmony": Teaching the rural population the basics of financial literacy to help them to manage their finances (loans, bank accounts, savings), to increase opportunities for local business, and to improve the living standards of rural people	Adults (over 15), rural people	Regional Center for the Development of Non-Formal, Informal and Primary Education

Source: systematized by the authors on the website of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Unlike the first, the purpose of the programs of the second group of educational programs is not just to teach residents to read and write, but to form practical skills for life in various fields (agriculture, cattle breeding, crop production, beekeeping, etc.). which will help them to improve their living standards, as well as to become able to provide for themselves and their families. Among the issues included in such programs there are:

- gender awareness and health awareness, for example, HIV / AIDS and its prevention, maternal and child health, infant mortality, family planning, personal hygiene, sanitation, reproductive health, and family nutrition);

- preservation of ecology and ecological management;

- socio-economic development of rural areas, for example, the technology of grain growing, cattle breeding;

- employment issues, in particular job search, moving to another place of residence and placement there;

- citizens' rights, social inclusion, peaceful coexistence, preservation of local cultural traditions, etc.

The third group of community education programs is aimed at the adult population, mostly those living in rural areas. The identification of this group into a separate category is explained by the fact that participants in such programs have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and abilities to autonomously solve problems and challenges they face in everyday life; to successfully socialize in the community and make a positive and significant contribution to the development of their communities.

The examples of some programs and their brief characteristics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Community Education Programs (Community Development)

Country	Name of the program, its characteristics, and features	Target audience	Developer and provider of the program
Yemen	Poetry Education Project: lifelong learning and development through cultural heritage; acquisition of reading and writing skills through the creation of their own stories, poetry, and proverbs	Women, migrants, rural population, adults (over 15 years)	Social Fund for the Development of Yemen

Brazil	Alphabetization (learning to read and write) in good health: basic literacy and the development of health knowledge; strategic goals – meeting the health needs of the local population; directing the energy of young people to productive social activity; 300 teachers from communities have been trained	Adults (over 15 years old)	Social Activities Foundation, Curitiba Volunteer Center
Vietnam	The Community Education and Development Program enrolls between 2,500 and 3,000 people each year; 3-phase model: the first stage – basic literacy; the second – advanced level; third – community development	Rural population, youth (aged 15 to 24); ethnic minorities; adults (over 15 years old)	Help to Vietnam

Source: systematized by the authors on the website of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

The tasks of this group of programs are:

- to teach the necessary skills of life in the community, the need for personal development and community development;

- to teach health skills, prevention of various diseases, support of a healthy lifestyle, in particular, the rules of healthy eating;

- to teach adults to perform basic tasks on their own, such as taking medication correctly, using pesticides safely, using a mobile phone, navigating in an urban environment, reading letters from migrant relatives, reading and understanding newspapers and/or religious literature;

- to take care of the environment, maintain ecological balance;

- to promote and inspire community members for lifelong learning.

5. Opportunities to use progressive ideas of the world experience of community education in national realities

Analyzing the focus of community education programs (basic literacy, professional and personal development of community members, community development) and considering the

possibility of using progressive ideas of world experience in Ukraine, it should be noted that the latter two groups are the most suitable for a more thorough study.

According to paragraph 22 of Article 25 of the Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" (2021), local governments in Ukraine have the authority to approve programs of socio-economic and cultural development of the relevant administrative-territorial units, as well as targeted programs on other issues of local government, including education sphere. But, unlike community education, in national practice, the community is primarily responsible for the functioning of state educational institutions that are in communal ownership. In other words, the community has certain responsibilities in the formal education system. As a rule, its task is to ensure sustainable development of the education system in the community, improve its efficiency through updating and accelerating the introduction of new forms and technologies of the educational process, support gifted youth and develop their creative potential, provide support for teachers (Grekova et al, 2021).

At the same time, newly formed and reorganized communities in Ukraine are learning activities to manage community education. Within the framework of the Swiss-Ukrainian project DECIDE together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Ministry of Development of Community and Territories of Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian OTG Association initiated a broad consultation campaign for community heads and managers of education under the motto "Education in new communities from A to Z". In the future, community education chairpersons and managers will also be responsible for conducting non-formal education in their communities. Therefore, the world experience can be extremely useful.

Positive ideas for non-formal education in communities in Ukraine can be:

- availability of educational programs for all members of the community;

- relevance of educational programs and their social significance;

- the focus of programs to meet the educational needs of vulnerable groups;

- the focus of educational programs on results (professional and personal development of community members; development of the community as a whole and its successful functioning).

6. Conclusions

The above mentioned gives grounds for the conclusion that community education can be an effective tool not only for the personal and professional development of any member of the community, including those who belong to vulnerable groups but also for the development of the whole community. An analysis of the experience of the world's best practices shows that

the main thing in community education is not only to teach reading and writing but, more broadly, to provide an appropriate education. And not even the acquisition of additional professional skills or personal development. The priority in community education should be the formation of social responsibility: to care for their community, to care for each member, to promote social inclusion, socio-economic development, and prosperity of the community, resulting in improving the living standards of every member.

Perspective directions of further research include the study of community education programs in highly developed industrial countries in Europe, the United States, Canada, their thematic focus, peculiarities, and target audience.

Abstract: Community education, as a component of continuing and non-formal education, has a strong educational potential. The article analyzes the best world practices in community education, presented on the website of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. The term "community education" became a keyword in the research. 31 community education programs were found. According to their thematic orientation, they were classified into 3 groups: education in the community as receiving basic education by its members; educational centers and their activities aimed at professional and personal development of a community member; community participation for the sake of its prosperous life. The main thematic areas of such educational programs and their brief characteristics, target audience, developer, and provider were highlighted. Possibilities of using progressive ideas of the world experience of education in communities in domestic realities were determined.

Keywords: continuing education, non-formal education, community education, world best practices.

Анотація: Освіта у громадах, як складова неперервної та неформальної освіти, має потужний освітній потенціал. У статті здійснено аналіз кращих світових практик з освіти у громадах, представлених на сайті Інституту ЮНЕСКО з освіти упродовж життя. Ключовим у їх пошуку став термін «community education». Було знайдено 31 програму з освіти у громадах. За тематичною спрямованістю їх класифіковано на 3 групи: освіту у громаді як отримання її членами базової освіти; освітні центри та їхню діяльність, спрямовану на професійний та особистісний розвиток члена громади; участь членів громади у її житті задля її процвітання. Висвітлено основні тематичні напрями таких освітніх програм та їх коротку характеристику, цільову аудиторію, розробника та

реалізатора. Визначено можливості використання прогресивних ідей світового досвіду освіти у громадах у вітчизняних реаліях.

Ключові слова: неперервна освіта, неформальна освіта, освіта у громадах, кращі світові практики.

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