

# Sixth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 6)

---

## Concept Note

15 October 2024

*GRALE 6 Working Paper 1*

# Concept Note

## ALE in times of rapid change: Weathering the storm or changing the weather?

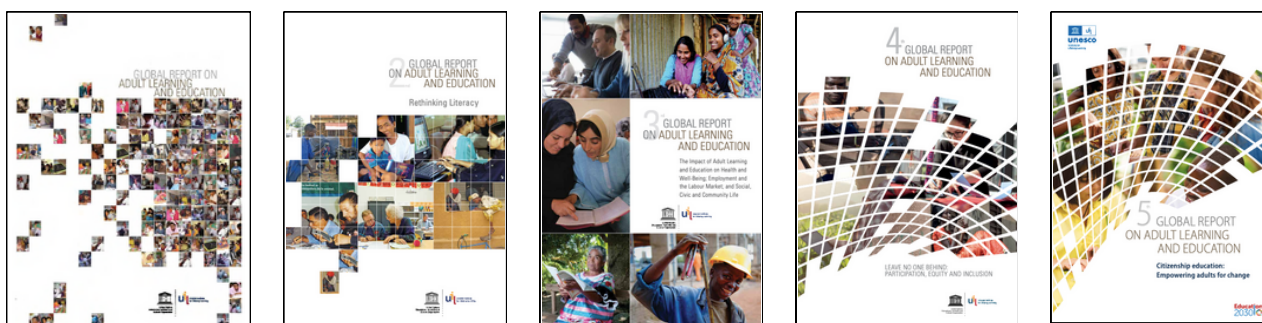
### Monitoring Cluster

Since its inception in 1945, UNESCO has been a driving force in promoting global dialogue and action in adult learning and education (ALE). Central to this mission is the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA), which UNESCO organizes every 12 years. This conference provides a platform for Member States to exchange ideas, compare strategies and advance their approaches to ALE.

To monitor the implementation of international ALE commitments by Member States, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) publishes the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE). These reports assess progress on key frameworks, including the Belém Framework for Action (GRALE 2 – 5), adopted at CONFINTEA VI in Brazil in 2009, and the Marrakech Framework for Action (GRALE 6 and onwards), adopted at CONFINTEA VII in Morocco in 2022.

Since its fourth edition, GRALE has also tracked the implementation of the Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE), which was adopted by Member States in 2015.





Each GRALE report blends survey data, policy analysis, and case studies to offer policy-makers and practitioners actionable recommendations and best practices. The reports provide robust evidence on how ALE can support countries in addressing both current and future challenges, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They offer a comprehensive overview of the global state of ALE.

Five GRALE reports have been published since 2009, each focusing on a specific theme:

- GRALE 1 (2009): No specific theme.
- GRALE 2 (2013): Rethinking literacy.
- GRALE 3 (2016): The impact of adult learning and education on health and well-being, employment and the labor market, and social, civic, and community life.
- GRALE 4 (2019): Leave no one behind: Participation, equity, and inclusion.
- GRALE 5 (2022): Citizenship education: Empowering adults for change.

## Background and rationale

Faced with a world characterized by rapid, sustained and pervasive change, from technological advancement and economic disruption to environmental disaster, health emergencies and conflict (Giddens, 1991; Schwab, 2017), people are experiencing an overwhelming sense of uncertainty and helplessness, as though the challenges they face are too vast and complex to be addressed or influenced by any single person. However, these issues are not new – many have persisted

for decades – and it is precisely in these times of crisis that adult learning and education (ALE) becomes essential. Rather than merely helping individuals to cope with and adapt to the pressures of such a volatile environment, ALE can empower adults to actively transform their circumstances (Mezirow, 2000). By providing the knowledge, skills and tools needed to understand and address these multifaceted challenges, ALE enables individuals to take decisive action. It offers a pathway not just for resilience, but for positive change, helping adults to harness their potential to influence and reshape their lives and communities for the better (Freire and Freire, 1994). In this way, ALE represents a vital force in fostering hope, agency and the possibility of a more stable and sustainable future (Brookfield, 2013).

The pervasive nature and rapid pace of change has profound implications for adult learners, who must continuously update their skills and knowledge to remain relevant in the workforce, participate in civic life, and engage with global challenges (Biesta, 2016). Traditional education systems are often slow to adapt to these new realities, making ALE an essential component of lifelong learning (Field, 2006). ALE provides flexible, accessible and responsive learning opportunities that enable adults to build the competencies needed to thrive in an era of constant change (Cervero and Wilson, 2001).

The 6th Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 6) aims to explore how ALE can respond to and shape the rapid transformations occurring globally.

By focusing on the key drivers of change – such as digitalization, economic crises, environmental sustainability, conflict, and health crises – this report will provide a comprehensive understanding of how ALE acts as a catalyst for empowerment, adaptability and positive social transformation (Harari, 2017). It will consider the agility and flexibility of adult education systems in responding to the urgent challenges of the modern world and ensuring that learners are prepared for both ongoing and future disruptions. Additionally, it will examine whether a tension exists between the two roles attributed to ALE in this context: fostering the resilience and adaptability of adult learners, on the one hand, and supporting their empowerment and agency within their environment and community, on the other.

## Objectives

GRALE 6 will address the following objectives:

1. To analyse the impact of rapid change on adult learners and educators: Understanding how sudden and significant shifts – technological, economic, social, environmental and health-related – affect adult learning needs and opportunities.
2. To assess the adaptability of ALE systems: Evaluating how current ALE systems are responding to these rapid changes and to the challenges and opportunities they present.
3. To identify best practice and innovative approaches: Highlighting successful policies, strategies and programmes that have effectively addressed the challenges posed and the opportunities created through rapid change.
4. To provide policy recommendations: Offering actionable insights and guidelines for policy-makers, educators and stakeholders to enhance the resilience and responsiveness of ALE systems in the face of rapid change, and to ensure ALE not only fosters adaptability to change but also supports people in leading and, where appropriate, resisting it.

## Crisis vs rapid change

The term ‘crisis’ has become a defining characteristic of modern social, cultural and political realities, including education. However, its meaning is often ambiguous (Milstein, 2015). Originating from the ancient Greek word κρίσις (krisis), ‘crisis’ initially described a critical point in an illness, a moment where the outcome could lead either to recovery or death. The doctor had a crucial role in observing the symptoms and making a decisive judgment (krinein) regarding the patient’s treatment. This concept soon extended beyond medicine. For example, in The Peloponnesian War, the historian Thucydides noted that conflict generated a ‘crisis’, meaning a decision that would resolve the struggle between the Persians and the Greeks (Starn, 1971). Over time, the term’s usage expanded, and its meaning evolved. Where once it included the ideas of examination, judgment and decision, ‘crisis’ now mainly signifies moments of rupture and hardship. By the nineteenth century, it had come to describe the dysfunctionality of a system that could no longer perform its intended functions (Ordioni, 2011; Cordero, 2016).

In the context of education, while some research has explored the connection between education and crisis – particularly education’s role in preventing or responding to crises – there has been little in-depth analysis of what constitutes an ‘education crisis’ and how education might contribute to or mitigate such a crisis (Rikowski, 2015). Despite this, the association between crisis and education has gained significant traction, even within international organizations. In the absence of a concrete definition, a ‘spontaneous sociology of crisis’ (Wieviorka, 2009) in education has developed, which focuses on the dysfunctional aspects of crises and promotes a utilitarian, Western-centric view of education.



A recent article (Van Dermijnsbrugge and Chatelier, 2022) highlights the persistence of crisis narratives in education, which often stifle critical analysis and theorization of social and educational issues. The authors specifically critique the ‘learning crisis’ reported by UNESCO and the World Bank, which relies heavily on test scores and other metrics to drive market-oriented, managerial approaches that prioritize economic growth, human capital development, and technocratic solutions to educational challenges (UNESCO, World Bank, and United Nations Children’s Fund, 2021). This evidence-based ‘what works’ framework offers the illusion that a return to normalcy is possible, rather than acknowledging the constantly evolving realities that require new ways of thinking. Rooted in an economic vision that views change as a disruption of market stability, these crisis discourses push education systems to ‘resist’ and ‘adapt’ in order to avoid or recover from ‘learning losses’, rather than questioning the fundamental purpose of learning itself.

This approach assumes certain principles, such as the belief that economic growth is the ultimate goal of all societies. In this view, crises and the policies they inspire become tools for market regulation (Ordioni, 2011). As a result, ‘crisis’ has come to carry primarily negative connotations, losing its potential to spark critical reflection, disrupt the status quo, and initiate new ways of thinking in education (Biesta, 2022).

Moreover, when everything is perceived as being in a state of perpetual crisis, we lose our ability to distinguish between social dysfunction and social normality (Holton, 1987). In this way, crisis loses its sense of urgency for change, becoming a normalized aspect of capitalist development (Rikowski, 2015). This raises the question of whether it is legitimate to continue using the term ‘crisis’ if it no longer represents a temporary state but rather has become a permanent condition. To view a period as a crisis is to ‘believe in a fictitious identity that never existed’ (Durand, 2007). The challenge for contemporary thought, therefore, is to understand changes as changes, rather than crises, and to recognize them as neither the beginning nor the end of something.

## The concept of ‘rapid change’

Rather than using the contested language of ‘crisis’, GRALE 6 will focus on ‘rapid change’, which refers to swift and sometimes unexpected shifts that disrupt established systems, processes and societal norms, though, for the most part, they leave underlying structures of power untouched. As with each of the four main thematic areas of the report (described below), they are usually also widespread, sustained and intensifying. These changes, which offer both challenges and opportunities, can arise from various drivers, including technological advancements, economic fluctuations, environmental events, conflicts and public-health issues. However, ‘rapid change’ is not a recognized concept in academic literature. Without a formal definition, we risk losing focus and introducing subjective judgments into the analysis. To mitigate these risks, we propose defining the concept in terms of the following dimensions, for which our term should be understood as a convenient shorthand:

1. **Speed and urgency:** Rapid change occurs with such speed that it often outpaces existing systems’ ability to respond effectively. This urgency creates a need for quick adaptation and response to mitigate adverse impacts and seize emerging opportunities (Ghomi and Redecker, 2019).
2. **Disruption:** These changes can disrupt established norms, practices and infrastructures. For example, the sudden onset of a pandemic can disrupt education systems and labour markets, requiring immediate shifts to remote learning and work. However, they also present opportunities to rethink education and the ways in which it is delivered.

3. **Uncertainty and complexity:** Rapid change often introduces a high degree of uncertainty and complexity, making it challenging to predict outcomes and plan long-term. This uncertainty necessitates flexible and adaptive strategies in ALE to address evolving needs (Edwards, 2010).
4. **Interconnectedness:** The drivers of rapid change are often interconnected. For example, technological advancements can lead to economic shifts, which in turn may exacerbate social inequalities or impact environmental sustainability. Understanding these connections is crucial for developing comprehensive ALE strategies.

## Scope of GRALE 6

The report will examine ALE in times of rapid change at four levels:

- At the learner level, to understand learning needs, aspirations and opportunities in times of rapid change.
- At the educator level, to understand the implications of rapid change on the role of teachers in ALE, their teaching practices, the support they need and their training.
- At the organizational level, to explore how learning communities, adult education organizations and community learning centres operate within the broader ALE system, offering insights into the operational challenges and opportunities they face.
- At the system level, to analyse how programmes, stakeholders and governments can cope with rapid change to make ALE the key component of lifelong learning for all.

## Key themes of GRALE 6

In 2023, UIL organized 10 regional and sub-regional conferences to identify the priorities of Member States regarding ALE, with a view to implementing the Marrakech Framework for Action. These consultations revealed that, despite regional specificities, four particularly rapid and widespread contemporary changes were seen as key challenges and/or opportunities for adult education: digitalization (notably the emergence of generative artificial intelligence), economic transitions (particularly the green transition), climate change, and conflict and post-conflict situations. These four key themes, detailed below, will form the core of the thematic section of GRALE 6.



## Digitalization and the state of adult learning and education

The 2015 UNESCO Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE) (UNESCO, 2016) acknowledges that we are living in rapidly changing environments and implies the need to review, on an ongoing basis, the impact of technological trends on ALE systems. The United Nations' pledge to 'leave no one behind' (UNSDG, 2022) necessitates the examination of changes at all levels of ALE systems to ensure that the changes do not create or exacerbate inequalities. Therefore, it is important to examine the impact of rapid technological change on ALE and to explore how ALE may act as a driver of change by equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to engage critically and responsibly with the evolving digital environment.

The ALE landscape is undergoing rapid transformation, with technological changes affecting three main areas of adult education: delivery of content and education, digital literacy courses and the use of learning tools (Julia Rott and Schmidt-Hertha, 2024). The advent of online learning platforms, mobile internet, education apps, educational materials in alternative formats (text, audio, video, etc.) and interactive technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), have presented the opportunity for education to be more flexible, interactive and accessible (Julia Rott and Schmidt-Hertha, 2024). Thus, digitalization of ALE provides impetus for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to make inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities accessible to all (UNSDA, 2022). That, however, requires enhancing the digital competence of adult learners, bridging the gender digital divide, improving accessibility of educational resources for persons with disabilities, and improving access to technology in underserved areas such as in Africa and other developing countries (Mathrani, Sarvesh and Umer, 2022; Motorga, 2023).

The world outside ALE is also changing, with digital technologies playing an increasing role in people's everyday life, including in work, access to health and government services and participation in their communities. ALE must help individuals navigate these technological shifts by fostering critical skills such as media literacy, understanding misinformation, and engaging with digital tools responsibly. One of the objectives of ALE is 'to reinforce the capacity [of individuals] to deal with and shape the developments taking place in the economy and the world of work' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 8). In this context, ALE can act as a driver of change by preparing individuals to critically engage with technological advances and address the societal challenges that arise from these changes, such as the ethical use of AI, data privacy concerns, and the regulation of digital platforms.

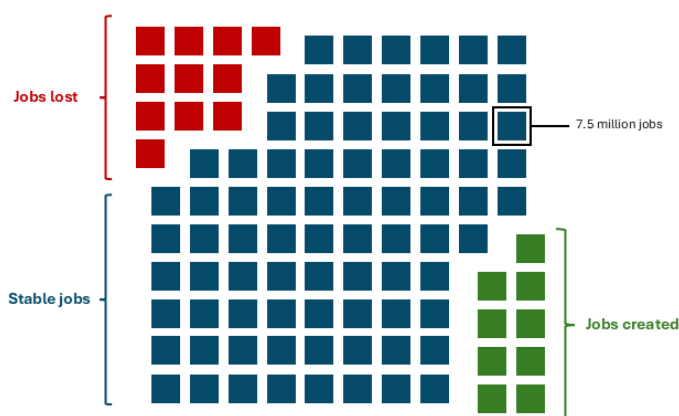
Therefore, to strengthen ALE and make it capable of effecting change, it is important to analyse the overall ALE system at the learner, educator, organization and system levels. A learner-level analysis helps to tailor training to learners' unique needs and real-world technology experience. An educator-level analysis helps to address the implications of rapid change on their role in ALE. For instance, studies are exploring the use of AI as a tutor in self-directed learning in adult education (Hassanien, 2022; Lin, 2024). In such cases, what would be the role of the teacher? At an organizational level, the analysis would help identify the challenges faced by learning communities, adult learning organizations, and community learning centres in the midst of rapid technological change. A systems-level analysis provides insights on how programmes, government organizations and other stakeholders adapt technological changes to foster inclusive adult education.



## Adult learning and education and economic shifts: Towards a just green transition

Economic change driven by technological advancement, demographic shifts, supply-chain transformations and the global push for a green economy are reshaping the labour market. The COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions and other disruptions have further accelerated these changes, resulting in rapid transformations across various industries and workplaces. Automation, artificial intelligence and digitization are increasingly replacing traditional job roles, while new positions are emerging in green technologies and digital economies. By 2027, it is projected that 23 per cent of jobs worldwide will have undergone significant transformation, with 69 million new positions created and 83 million existing roles displaced (World Economic Forum, 2023). This upheaval underscores the urgent need for comprehensive lifelong learning systems that equip workers with the necessary skills for the future (Milovanovitch et al., 2022).

**Projected job creation and displacement, 2023-2027**



(c) UIL 2024

Source World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Survey 2023;  
International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT.

The transition to a sustainable economy presents both opportunities and challenges. Climate change and environmental degradation have led economies to adopt greener practices, though progress remains insufficient (Sachs, 2015). Sectors such as renewable energy, waste management and sustainable agriculture are growing, while carbon-intensive industries are declining. In other words, the green transition is a major driver in reshaping labour markets, with the International Energy Agency (IEA) projecting 30 million new green jobs by 2030 (IEA, 2023).

This shift requires not just technology but also human capacity development. ALE plays a key role in reskilling workers, especially those in carbon-intensive sectors, enabling them to transition into greener industries. From renewable energy to sustainable agriculture, ALE fosters innovation and green entrepreneurship, empowering individuals to actively participate in the green economy (OECD, 2023).

More broadly, ALE, integral to non-formal education, helps workers – especially those from marginalized groups and those who could not access formal education due to economic or social barriers – to navigate economic transitions and an unpredictable employment landscape (Hafid et al., 2024). As part of national strategies, ALE strengthens upskilling, reskilling and flexible learning pathways, promoting equal access to lifelong learning (SDG 4). This allows individuals to build essential skills continuously and meet the demands of a skills-driven economy. With 44 per cent of workers' skills expected to be disrupted in the next five years due to rising demands for cognitive and technological skills – such as complex problem-solving, creative thinking, and technology literacy (World Economic Forum, 2023) – ALE provides practical, experiential learning to various target groups, regardless of age or educational background.



As economies shift toward greener and more sustainable practices, the demand for green and STEM skills, especially in renewable energy and sustainable development, is growing. Developing these skills is critical for economic growth and for helping workers affected by climate transition find new opportunities (ILO, 2023). However, the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields exacerbates gender inequalities in the labour market.

An additional issue worthy of attention is the anticipated influx of climate migrants and refugees. According to the World Bank, there could be more than 216 million internal climate migrants by 2050 across six regions (Clement, Viviane et al., 2021). As climate change increasingly forces populations to relocate, countries must consider how their labour markets will accommodate these individuals. While this could be seen as a challenge, it also presents an opportunity to integrate climate migrants into the workforce, contributing to economic growth and the green transition, if properly managed. Recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) can play a crucial role in this process by recognizing migrants' skills gained outside formal education and supporting them in their labour market transitions (UIL, 2024).

Ensuring inclusivity and justice, in economic transition in general, and in the green transition more specifically, is a key challenge. Marginalized groups, such as women, older adults and people in disadvantaged areas, often face barriers in accessing green jobs. ALE can address these disparities through flexible learning opportunities that cater to diverse needs. Green skills programmes must adopt gender-sensitive approaches to ensure vulnerable groups benefit equitably from economic changes and contribute to inclusive, sustainable growth, aligning with SDG 8.

However, ensuring the transformative power of ALE to address economic shifts requires greater investment from both the public and private sectors in formal and non-formal education. Companies are increasingly recognizing the need to invest in workforce training and development to ensure employees can adapt to new technologies and market shifts. Collaboration between businesses, governments and educational institutions is now essential in designing skills-based pathways aligned with industry needs (Hancock, B. et al., 2022), particularly in green technologies.





## Combating climate change through adult education

Climate change is an urgent and growing global crisis, with rising temperatures, extreme weather events and environmental degradation threatening communities worldwide. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that immediate, drastic action is needed to prevent irreversible climate damage, urging a rapid reduction in fossil fuel use and greater investment in sustainable solutions (Shukla et al., 2022). Adult learning and education plays a critical role in this response by empowering individuals and communities to take meaningful climate action and build resilience to environmental challenges.

As climate-related disasters such as floods, droughts and wildfires become more frequent and intense, ALE equips communities with the knowledge and skills to cope with these impacts (Formosa, 2023). Programmes in disaster preparedness, water conservation and sustainable agriculture help individuals adapt to changing environmental conditions and manage the social and economic fallout of climate disasters (Harari, 2017). Additionally, ALE fosters a deeper understanding of climate science and encourages proactive steps to reduce ecological footprints and adopt sustainable lifestyles (Charatsari et al., 2022).

A key strength of ALE is its ability to facilitate behavioural changes needed to combat climate change. Participation in sustainability-related adult education programmes enhances environmental awareness, helping individuals internalize ecological values. This, in turn, encourages practices that contribute to climate mitigation, such as reducing energy consumption and embracing recycling (Walters, 2018). ALE provides a platform for lifelong learning that reinforces these behaviours, ensuring individuals remain engaged in climate action as technologies and policies evolve. By promoting behavioral shifts, ALE supports the collective efforts necessary to reduce emissions and combat global warming.



A significant barrier to effective climate action is the lack of literacy and basic education, particularly in developing regions. This lack restricts access to critical information about climate change and hinders participation in sustainable practices (Yasukawa, 2023). Enhancing literacy rates through ALE is vital for ensuring individuals can engage with climate education, understand its urgency, and make informed decisions about their environmental impact (Walters, 2018). Improving literacy enables individuals to read climate-related materials, access digital learning platforms, and participate in discussions on sustainability, particularly in rural or marginalized areas.

ALE is not just about skills development; it also empowers individuals and communities to advocate for change (Sichula, Luchembe and Chakanika, 2016). Climate action requires both personal behavior shifts and collective political engagement. ALE helps build the grassroots movements necessary to hold leaders accountable and ensure the implementation of effective climate policies. By fostering critical thinking and civic engagement, ALE equips communities to challenge ineffective policies and demand stronger commitments to sustainability, ensuring that the voices of marginalized populations are heard.

The rise of digital technologies offers new opportunities for ALE to deliver climate education. Online platforms provide accessible information on climate science, enabling learners to engage with global initiatives and collaborate on local actions. However, to maximize these tools, ALE must address digital literacy gaps, especially in underserved areas. Integrating digital literacy into climate education can expand reach and impact.

Aligning with SDG 13 on climate action, ALE promotes climate justice by ensuring marginalized communities have access to the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt and thrive.

By focusing on inclusivity and community empowerment, ALE ensures that climate action is effective, fair and just, addressing social and environmental inequalities that exacerbate the climate crisis.

## **Living together: Adult learning and education in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction**

Globally, the number of war-related deaths has been decreasing since 1946, yet conflict and violence are on the rise. Currently, 56 conflicts are ongoing, driven not only by countries but also by non-state actors such as militias, criminal organizations and international terrorist groups. These conflicts are becoming increasingly fragmented and international, with 92 countries involved in conflicts beyond their borders (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2024). Key drivers of conflict include unresolved regional tensions, a breakdown in the rule of law, weakened state institutions, illicit economic activities, and resource scarcity exacerbated by climate change.





The cost of violence is staggering, with an estimated global economic impact of \$19.1 trillion in 2023, equivalent to 13.5 per cent of global GDP (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2024).

In this context, ALE plays a crucial role in fostering peace, reconciliation and social cohesion. In alignment with SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, ALE addresses the educational needs of displaced populations, minorities, and communities recovering from conflict. ALE is vital in rebuilding lives and social structures, providing access to education as a tool for recovery and social integration (Buckland, 2005).

A key component of ALE is enhancing social and emotional competence in adults, especially in post-conflict environments (Thompson and Carello, 2022). ALE provides trauma-informed education to support conflict resolution and equip learners with the emotional resilience necessary for recovery (Johnstone, 2014). This training enables adults to manage their emotions and stress, creating safe learning environments that foster emotional healing and personal development.

For ALE to be effective, educators require contextually and culturally relevant training to deliver social-emotional learning and psychosocial support aligned with community values (Sijbrandij et al., 2017; Kaiser et al., 2020; Kolade et al., 2022). This is particularly important when working with adults affected by violence, trauma and stress.

Community learning centres are instrumental in post-conflict recovery, providing safe spaces for rebuilding trust and social integration (Vervisch et al., 2013). These centres offer more than education; they restore dignity, improve employability and support reintegration for displaced populations, migrants and marginalized groups. For communities facing ethnic or social barriers, these centres are critical to fostering stability and recovery.

Reconstruction goes beyond infrastructure; it involves rebuilding inclusive communities. ALE promotes social cohesion by providing education to those disproportionately affected by conflict, such as women, ethnic minorities and displaced populations (Hanemann, 2005). Women, in particular, face unique challenges during recovery, making access to education essential for their empowerment and broader community healing.

ALE also fosters active citizenship, enabling individuals to engage in democratic processes and rebuild their communities. In regions where conflict has eroded civic structures, education restores trust in governance and promotes participation in local decision-making, crucial for long-term peace (Schweighöfer, 2022).

By mid-2023, 110 million people were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict or violence (World Bank, 2023). This humanitarian crisis raises questions about the responsibility of host countries to provide refugees with quality education (Liboon, 2023). ALE plays a vital role in integrating refugees through basic literacy and TVET programmes, while also dismantling stereotypes and promoting inclusive social structures.

Aligned with the Marrakech Framework for Action and SDG 16, ALE is a transformative force for both immediate recovery and long-term peacebuilding.

## Conclusion

GRALE 6 will offer a strategic framework for advancing and actively shaping ALE systems in response to these rapid changes. By concentrating on these key themes, GRALE 6 aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations for policy-makers, educators and stakeholders, ensuring that adult learners are empowered to engage with and drive the transformative forces shaping our world, as recommended in the Marrakech Framework for Action (MFA) (UIL, 2022), adopted by UNESCO Member States during the 7th International Conference on Adult Learning and Education (CONFINTEA VII) in June 2022.



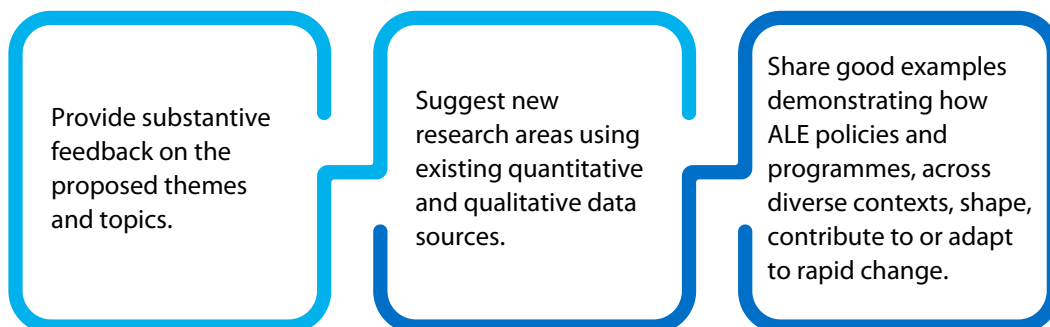
## Outline of GRALE 6

GRALE 6 will be divided into two main sections: the Thematic Part and the Monitoring Part. The Thematic Part, which will be the most comprehensive, will explore the role of ALE in times of rapid change. It will consist of five chapters: an introductory chapter followed by four chapters, each focusing on one of the themes outlined in the concept note. This section will conclude with key findings and recommendations.

The Monitoring Part will concentrate on the quantitative monitoring of RALE and the MFA. It will be structured into three chapters. The first will present the monitoring framework and outline the data collection process. The second chapter will assess the progress of Member States on selected action points from the MFA. The final chapter will focus on monitoring the implementation of RALE.

## Next steps for GRALE 6

This concept note outlines the initial ideas for GRALE 6 and serves as an open invitation for readers to:



The concept note initiates four key processes:

- 1 A call for expressions of interest for background papers on the four selected key topics of GRALE 6.
- 2 An open online consultation to gather inputs and case studies.
- 3 A series of consultation events to contextualize and highlight the themes of GRALE 6.
- 4 A global data collection effort, through questionnaires submitted by national teams designated by UNESCO National Commissions, to inform the report.

The 6th Global Report on Adult Learning and Education will be published in the second half of 2026.

## References

- Biesta, G. (2016) *Good education in an age of measurement: ethics, politics, democracy*. London: Routledge (Interventions: education, philosophy & culture).
- Biesta, G. (2022) 'Have we been paying attention? Educational anaesthetics in a time of crises', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 54(3), pp. 221–223. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1792612>.
- Brookfield, S. (2013) *Powerful techniques for teaching adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (The Jossey-Bass higher and adult education series).
- Buckland, F.P. (2005) *Reshaping the future: education and postconflict reconstruction*. Washington: World Bank.
- Cervero, R.M. and Wilson, A.L. (eds) (2001) *Power in practice: adult education and the struggle for knowledge and power in society*. 1st ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (Jossey-Bass higher and adult education series).
- Charatsari, C. et al. (2022) 'Can Adult Education Boost Sustainability Transitions? Some Evidence from Farmers and Teachers', *Sustainability*, 14(16), p. 9859. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14169859>.
- Clement, V. et al. (2021) *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/36248>.
- Cordero, R. (2016) *Crisis and critique: on the fragile foundations of social life*. New York: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315753904>.
- Durand, G. (2007) 'Devenir', in *Penser la crise*. M-Editer. Nantes, pp. 45–56. Available at: <https://m-editer.izibookstore.com/produit/3/9782362871436/penser-la-crise>.
- Edwards, R. (2010) 'The end of lifelong learning: a post-human condition?', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 42(1), pp. 5–17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02660830.2010.11661585>
- Field, J. (2006) *Lifelong learning and the new educational order*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.
- Formosa, M. (2023) 'Five decades of older adult learning: achievements and challenges', *International Journal of Education and Ageing*, 5(3), pp. 91–104.
- Freire, P. and Freire, A.M.A. (1994) *Pedagogy of hope: reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Ghomi, M. and Redecker, C. (2019) 'Digital competence of educators (DigCompEdu): development and evaluation of a self-assessment instrument for teachers' digital competence', in Volume 1: CSEDU, 5. International Conference on Computer Supported Education, Heraklion, pp. 541–548. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5220/0007679005410548>.
- Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hafid, A. et al. (2024) 'The role of non-formal education in building socio-economic independence in Indonesia', *International Journal of Management Studies and Social Science Research*, 06(03), pp. 205–215. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJMSSSR.2024.5024>.
- Hancock, B. et al. (2022) *Taking a skills-based approach to building the future workforce*, McKinsey & Company. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/taking-a-skills-based-approach-to-building-the-future-workforce/> (Accessed: 2 October 2024).

Hanemann, U. (2005) 'Literacy in conflict situations'. UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000146003>.

Harari, Y.N. (2017) *Homo deus: a brief history of tomorrow*. New York: Harper.

Hassanien, A.E. (2022) 'How does AI play to its strengths in adult education?' CONFINTEA VII, Marrakesh. Available at: [https://www.uil.unesco.org/sites/default/files/mdias/fichiers/2022/06/How-does-AI-play-to-its-strengths-in-adult-education.pptx\\_.pdf?hub=39](https://www.uil.unesco.org/sites/default/files/mdias/fichiers/2022/06/How-does-AI-play-to-its-strengths-in-adult-education.pptx_.pdf?hub=39).

Holton, R.J. (1987) 'The idea of crisis in modern society', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 38(4), p. 502. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/590914>.

IEA (2023) *Energy Technology Perspectives 2023*. Paris: IEA. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/energy-technology-perspectives-2023>.

ILO (2023) *World employment and social outlook: Trends 2023*. 1st ed. Geneva: ILO. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.54394/SNCP1637>.

ILO (2024) *Gender, equality and inclusion for a just transition in climate action: A policy Guide*. Geneva: ILO. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/media/578721/download> (Accessed: 2 October 2024).

Institute for Economics & Peace (2024) *Global peace index 2024:: measuring peace in a complex world*. Sydney. Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/resources>.

Johnstone, C. (2014) *Adult education as a stabilizing response to conflict*. Thesis (Doctoral). Institute of Education, University of London. Available at: <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10018297>.

Julia Rott, K. and Schmidt-Hertha, B. (2024) 'Transforming adult learning in the digital age: exploring environmental, content, and technological changes', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 43(4), pp. 319–323. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2024.2367395>.

Kaiser, B.N. et al. (2020) 'Mental health and psychosocial support needs among people displaced by Boko Haram in Nigeria', *Global Public Health*, 15(3), pp. 358–371. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2019.1665082>.

Kolade, O. et al. (2022) 'Picking up the pieces: social capital, psycho-social support and livelihood recovery of displaced populations in Northeast Nigeria', *The Journal of Development Studies*, 58(6), pp. 1280–1299. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2022.2032669>.

Liboon, C.A. (2023) 'A review of program inquiry for refugee adult education in the United States', *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*, 18(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5070/D418146591>.

Lin, X. (2024) 'Exploring the role of ChatGPT as a facilitator for motivating self-directed learning among adult learners', *Adult Learning*, 35(3), pp. 156–166. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/10451595231184928>.

Mathrani, A., Sarvesh, T. and Umer, R. (2022) 'Digital divide framework: online learning in developing countries during the COVID-19 lockdown', *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 20(5), pp. 625–640. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1981253>.

Mezirow, J. (2000) *Learning as transformation: critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (The Jossey-Bass higher and adult education series).

Milovanovitch, M. et al. (2022) *Policies for system change and lifelong learning: A Torino Process cross-country digest (2018–21)*. Turin: ETF (European Training Foundation). Available at: [https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-03/torino\\_process\\_cross-country\\_digest\\_2018-21.pdf](https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-03/torino_process_cross-country_digest_2018-21.pdf).

Milstein, B. (2015) 'Thinking politically about crisis: a pragmatist perspective', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 14(2), pp. 141–160. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885114546138>.

Motorga, M.E. (2023) 'Digital transformation in adult education: empowering global understanding and sustainable development', *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 48(2), pp. 46–63. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.35923/JES.2023.2.04>.

OECD (2023) *OECD Skills Outlook 2023: skills for a resilient green and digital transition*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Available at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/oecd-skills-outlook-2023\\_27452f29-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/oecd-skills-outlook-2023_27452f29-en) (Accessed: 30 August 2024).

Ordioni, N. (2011) 'Le concept de crise: un paradigme explicatif obsolète? Une approche sexospécifique.', *Mondes en développement*, n°154(2), pp. 137–150. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3917/med.154.0137>.

Rikowski, G. (2015) 'Crises, commodities and education: disruptions, eruptions, interruptions and ruptions'. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/18511424/Crises\\_Co\\_mmodities\\_and\\_Education\\_Disruptions\\_Eruptio\\_ns\\_Interruptions\\_and\\_Ruptions](https://www.academia.edu/18511424/Crises_Co_mmodities_and_Education_Disruptions_Eruptio_ns_Interruptions_and_Ruptions) (Accessed: 1 September 2024).

Sachs, J. (2015) *The age of sustainable development*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Schwab, K. (2017) *The fourth industrial revolution*. London: Portfolio.

Schweighöfer, B. (2022) *Citizenship education and ALE*. Edited by U. Gartenschlaeger and A. Thöne. Bonn: DVV International (International Perspectives in Adult Education, 80). Available at: [https://www.dvv-international.de/fileadmin/files/Inhalte\\_Bilder\\_und\\_Dokumente/Materialien/IPE/IPE\\_80\\_CE\\_and\\_ALE\\_05-2022\\_web.pdf](https://www.dvv-international.de/fileadmin/files/Inhalte_Bilder_und_Dokumente/Materialien/IPE/IPE_80_CE_and_ALE_05-2022_web.pdf).

Shukla, P.R. et al. (eds) (2022) *Climate change 2022: mitigation of climate change*. Geneva: IPCC.

Sijbrandij, M. et al. (2017) 'Strengthening mental health care systems for Syrian refugees in Europe and the Middle East: integrating scalable psychological interventions in eight countries', *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 8(sup2), p. 1388102. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2017.1388102>.

Starn, R. (1971) 'Historians and "crisis"', *Past and Present*, 52(1), pp. 3–22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/past/52.1.3>.

Thompson, P. and Carello, J. (eds) (2022) *Trauma-informed pedagogies: a guide for responding to crisis and inequality in higher education*. Cham: Springer. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-92705-9>.

UIL (2016) 'Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education, 2015'. UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245179> (Accessed: 2 October 2024).

UIL (2022) 'CONFITEA VII Marrakech Framework for Action: harnessing the transformational power of adult learning and education'. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382306>.

UIL (2024) *Skillsets in Transit: Understanding recognition, validation and accreditation of learning outcomes for migrants and refugees*. Hamburg: UIL.

UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) (2024) 'Inclusion beyond borders: what is needed to recognize, validate and accredit the prior learning of migrants and refugees?' UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390651/PDF/390651eng.pdf.multi>.

UNESCO, World Bank, and UNICEF (2021) *The state of the global education crisis: a path to recovery*. UNESCO. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.54675/JLUG7649>.



UNSDG (2022) Operationalizing leaving no one behind. Good practice note for UN country teams, p. 94. Available at: <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Operationalizing%20LNOB%20-%20final%20with%20Annexes%20090422.pdf>.

Van Dermijnsbrugge, E. and Chatelier, S. (2022) 'Utopia as method: a response to education in crisis?', *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 42(1), pp. 6–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2022.2031870>.

Vervisch, T. et al. (2013) 'Social capital and post-conflict reconstruction in burundi: the limits of community-based reconstruction', *Development and Change*, 44, pp. 147–174. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12008>.

Walters, S. (2018) 'The drought is my teacher': adult learning and education in times of climate crisis. *Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training*, 1(1), pp.146–162. <https://doi.org/10.14426/jovacet.v1i1.308>.

Wieviorka, M. (2009) 'La sociologie et la crise: quelle crise, et quelle sociologie?', *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, n° 127(2), pp. 181–198. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3917/cis.127.0181>.

World Bank (2023) World development report 2023: migrants, refugees, and societies. Washington, DC: The World Bank. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1941-4>.

World Economic Forum (2023) Future of Jobs 2023: Insight report May 2023. Geneva. Available at: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2023.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2023.pdf) (Accessed: 2 October 2024).

Yasukawa, K. (2023) 'Teaching about climate change: possibilities and challenges in australian adult literacy programs', *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 66(4), pp. 218–228. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1267>.

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning  
Feldbrunnenstrasse  
20148 Hamburg  
GERMANY  
Phone: +49 40 4480410  
Email: [uil@unesco.org](mailto:uil@unesco.org)  
<https://www.uil.unesco.org/en>



**unesco**

Institute for  
Lifelong Learning