



Declaration of Alexandria

“For Lifelong Education in Health”

On March 9, 2023, in this city of Alexandria, Egypt, one of the cradles of Western culture and a place where political attention has been focused on the importance of culture which has made the city a timeless reference for the phenomenon of learning, was held the VIIIth Forum for Lifelong Learning, centered on Health Education, it was promoted by CMA tlv and Senghor University, under the aegis of UNESCO and the Council of Europe, which has been held over the last 3 days, of the conclusions which are presented here.

At the end of this Forum, seven main axes of ideas were retained:

1. **1. It was recognized that** the poor health status of populations across the planet and the burden of disease on patients, families and caregivers, the increasing costs to health care delivery systems and the degradation acceleration of the planet's ecosystem due to inconsequential economic activity, **require a paradigm shift to address health and disease through education.**
2. **It was agreed that the paradigm shift needed to be** to move from the current predominantly reactive, healing-focused approach to a very different, proactive, **prevention-focused** approach that would not only continue to increase the life expectancy, **but above all to increase the number of years of life in good health and the quality of life.**
3. For this to be achievable, **it is necessary to promote an infrastructural change in health education**, that it becomes something natural, **which continues throughout life**, from birth to moment of death, **transmitting content adapted to each moment in the life cycle phase**, in which everyone finds the knowledge made available by science and technology;

4. 4. It was agreed that **only lifelong health education is able to provide content capable of transforming current lifestyles** into healthier lifestyles, improving the culture of risk and disseminate essential knowledge so that each citizen can make full use of their individual and collective capacities and potential.
5. There was unanimous awareness that **a better world is needed!** This is only possible thanks to the improvement of the ecosystems of human relations, **with all the impacts that this has on mental and physical health**; improvement of the ecosystemic relationships of the Human Subject with the living beings that surround him, with the physical environment and with Nature as a set of processes that make possible the balanced existence of the Human Being on planet Earth.
6. **It is here declared that the Human Being** has in himself, from his birth, the capacity to acquire and diffuse knowledge, that all people **must be full Citizens, responsible for their own health, but also co-responsible for the health of those who depend on them**, of those with whom they live and, more broadly, of all the other living beings with which they cohabit or on which they have an impact. The Human Being must therefore be a permanent source of citizenship for health through the dissemination of health knowledge and a receptacle for progress in a perpetual movement of appreciation of Knowledge, Learning, Diffusion and Co-creation. aimed at building a Universal Humanist culture.
7. **Improving the general health** status of populations favors the improvement of their economic situation, **contributes to the reduction of inequalities, increases social justice, contributes to the fight against climate change and reduces social tensions** between people and other social groups.

From all the reflections made during the three days of work presented in the 7 previous points, the following 10 recommendations for action were made:

- 1. Health education should be systemic and complementary integrated into formal, non-formal and informal education, providing content suitable for each phase of life from birth to death.**
- 2. The new health paradigm in which we move from curative priority to prevention priority must be based on lifelong health education and have this objective as one of the main pillars.**
- 3. Health must be a source of citizenship founded and managed by specific public policies, which promote it in all dimensions of individual and collective life in a matrix structure of human relations.**
- 4. Lifelong health education should be a first protective barrier to humanity against collective risks such as epidemics and pandemics, natural disasters and climate change. This can be achieved by improving lifestyles that make it difficult for disease to spread, make it more resilient to fake news, and increase the resilience of health and aid systems.**
- 5. Lifelong health education must be based, as evidenced by each of the six themes worked on in this Forum, on four axes: inform, understand, communicate and share.**
- 6. It is essential to convince political decision-makers for Lifelong Health Education, so that they become aware of the potential of this tool for political action in the lives and quality of life of populations, budgets allocated to health.**
- 7. Lifelong health education is central to reducing the burden of chronic disease for patients, their families and caregivers. It is also important for balancing health system budgets and reducing demand for health care.**

8. **It has been demonstrated through specific discussions on issues related to lifelong health education in three continents that it has the potential to be applied anywhere on the planet, adapting simply to the existing conditions, material and cultural, in each place.**

9. **It is only possible to apply lifelong health education successfully if it is oriented towards specific groups, each with its own form of message, content, motivations, language and underlying technology. In particular, emphasis should be placed on the most vulnerable social groups, most affected by disease and least protected by health care delivery systems.**

10. **It emerged from this Forum that the application of public policies that can embody Health Education throughout life must be done at different levels of coverage and geographical dimension. The global, national, regional and local levels are distinguished, each having advantages in specific types of policies. In particular, the regional and local levels have shown great promise given the degree of greater proximity to populations and in particular to the most vulnerable groups.**

This Declaration is intended to be a call to entities related to education and health to embody the ideas, conclusions and recommendations set out therein.

Let us transform lifelong learning into something of critical importance, with the same social and institutional recognition as formal learning, because it may be the missing social tool to reverse the evolution of a planet that is languishing and getting worse every day.

So, let's fight for Lifelong Health Education!!

Pr Henrique LOPES, Alexandria, March 9, 2023