

Celita Eccher

Paul Bélanger

Celita Eccher played during twelve years, from 2002 to June 2014, a key role in the revitalization of the *International Council for Adult Education*. Inspired by her long experience in the feminist movement, she introduced new approaches in the ICEA practices and organization. With her, we learn to relate more individual and collective empowerment; we understand more how to generate horizontal dialogue within our organization; we experience how to link local and global action particularly within UN and UNESCO as well as within the global civil society. Her prior involvement in new social movements helped us also greatly to develop active links between ICAE and the World Social Forum in order to broaden our advocacy space and hence our fight for the right to education.

Her initiative to create and develop IALLA along the last ten years has contributed greatly to rejuvenate and enlarge the membership rebuilding also networks in regions underrepresented.

As a feminist educator, she helped us understand the crucial complementarity and dynamic between the two often opposite goals: search of equality and celebration of difference. ICAE benefited also from her enlarged vision of adult education and learning, encompassing popular education and access of youth out of school and adults to formal education and work-related education and popular education.

Beyond ICAE, we need also to salute the long engagement of Celita during the last five decades both in her country at grassroots level, in Latin America and internationally in the larger field of social justice, education and gender. Her current role as member of the *Board of Trustees of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era* (DAWN) and her past role as General Coordinator of REPEM () in 1994 and led this organization for 10 years, advocating for women's rights. She was also Regional Coordinator of DAWN for the Latin American Region from 1998 to 2008.

We have also to remember that before becoming the Secretary General of ICAE, she was the Treasurer of ICAE from 1999 to 2002 and after that, while becoming General Secretary, remained coordinator of the Gender and Education Office (GEO) of ICAE in close relation to REPEM, the popular education network among women from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Celita, we need also to thank you for your daily efficient involvement in ICAE, not to forget your management organizationally and financially in a difficult period for international NGOs.

Celita, thanks for increasing our understanding and belief that “another world is possible”.

Many thanks not only for what you have done but also for what you are.