

Education partners and stakeholders meet to prepare for the 6th APFSD

18 January 2019, Bangkok, Thailand



The SDG 4 Reference Group meeting discussed the draft SDG 4 goal profile as a key input to the forthcoming 6th Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD).

An SDG 4 Reference Group meeting was held to discuss the draft SDG 4 goal profile as a key input to the forthcoming 6th Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD). The meeting saw the participation of representatives of leading UN Agencies in the field of education, as well as representatives of sub-regional organisations, and civil society involved in the implementation of SDG 4 on 'Quality Education'. The meeting, jointly organised by UNESCO, UNICEF, and UNESCAP, saw the participation of ASPBAE as one of two civil society regional organisations that was invited to attend the meeting.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya provided several suggestions to the SDG 4 profile document, highlighting the urgency of addressing equity, inclusion, financing, quality, and governance. He noted specifically the following -

- The region is off-track in meeting SDG 4 targets, thus, the need to accelerate efforts to get back on track.
- Even worse, inequities in education have actually widened in some countries in the region.
- Gender disparity still persists while disparities by location and wealth, disability, and ethnicity, and education for migrants, must be given attention.
- Education spending levels in relation to GDP and total expenditure have gone down since 2000.
- On quality education, there is a need to go beyond the core learning competencies to the broader meaning of quality education that includes Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), including issues such as social awareness, gender sensitivity, and peace and human rights, amongst others.
- On adult education, literacy, non-formal education, and lifelong learning systems, affirmative action is needed to ensure that "no one is left behind" in SDG 4.4 (skills), 4.5 (gender disparities), and 4.6 (youth and adult literacy and numeracy). Marginalised youth and adults will benefit from programmes that are targeted towards their needs and where governments invest in support systems (e.g. day care, scholarships).

The SDG 4 Goal profile is envisaged to be presented and finalised in a multi-stakeholder roundtable discussion to be held during the 6th APFSD from 27-29 March 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. The main outcome of the said roundtable is to develop policy recommendations on regional priority for action and will be included in the Chair's summary of the 6th APFSD to be relayed to 2019 High-level Political Forum (HLPF).



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