

Rising to education challenges world-wide

Global Campaign for Education (GCE) 6th World Assembly 16-18 November 2018, Kathmandu, Nepal

Under the theme, ‘Transforming public education systems for equality, inclusion and justice’, the [Global Campaign for Education](#) (GCE) and education civil society gathered to emboldened efforts and unify around common values and beliefs. Every four years, the GCE World Assembly creates a space to reflect on progress made, exchange learnings and ways of working together to scale up global impact in achieving public, quality inclusive education for all. ASPBAE member, NCE Nepal, hosted this global civil society event in Kathmandu.



The GCE World Assembly, held in Kathmandu and hosted by NCE Nepal, was themed on, ‘Transforming public education systems for equality, inclusion, and justice’.

ASPBAE delegates consisted of the ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, Immediate Past President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara (also ICAE representative), Secretary-General, Maria Khan (also participating as GCE Board Member), Bernie Lovegrove, and Helen Dabu. Other Executive Council members who participated as representatives of their coalitions were Kim Anh Nguyen (VAEFA Vietnam), Batjargal Batkhuyag (AFE Mongolia), and Thein Lwin (NNER Myanmar).

Amongst the esteemed guests was Amina J. Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary General, who, in her [keynote address](#), stressed that, “Education is not in a bad place, it is in crisis. To achieve transformative education, education must be transformed. Coalitions such as the GCE and individual local NGOs can help lift the agenda to the country level”, encouraged the UN Deputy Secretary General.



The ASPBAE team – Jose Roberto Guevara (L), Helen Dabu (2nd from left), Maria Khan (centre), and Bernie Lovegrove (R) - with Amina J. Mohammed (centre), United Nations Deputy Secretary General.

The 6th World Assembly acknowledged and celebrated the more than 300 representatives of teachers’ unions, student organisations, human rights activists, social movements, and national and international non-governmental organisations acting together for the right to a free inclusive public education for all.

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, contextualised the relevance of this meeting in Nepal and welcomed the high-level guests to the country in his [inaugural address](#). “Hosting this 6th World Assembly in this sacred land is an honour. Without education, there is no emancipation. In Nepal, school enrolment has increased, but education has not brought peace to our society. We hope this three-day global conference will address these issues and provide recommendations to the Nepal government.”

Civil society has a distinct and crucial role to play in holding governments and donors accountable, to ensure relevance and equity within education plans, programmes, and budgets. Governments are accountable to ensure that the gap is bridged between those with access and the 263 million children, adolescents, and youth out of school, representing nearly one-fifth of the global population of this age group.



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ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni (L), seen here with Jose Roberto Guevara (R), former ASPBAE President, welcomed the delegates and stated that transformative education means committing to advance and defend the right of all people to learn and have equitable access to relevant and quality education and learning opportunities throughout their lives.

contexts, the work that we in civil society do in pushing for transformative and empowering education and development is needed and urgent, now more than ever."

While massive gains and significant achievements have been made in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), there is collectively a long way to go. More needs to be done to solve education problems, such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequately trained teachers, and school dropouts.

President of [NCE Nepal](#) (host coalition), Kumar Bhattarai, delivered the [opening remarks](#) and welcomed the international civil society movement, drawing the attention of leaders and policy makers towards the need for a significant increase for financing through domestic resource mobilisation. *"NCE Nepal believes that without strong public education, democracy in the real sense is not possible, thus we stand for transforming public education systems for equality, inclusion, and justice which this world assembly has envisioned"*.



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, being interviewed during the GCE World Assembly.

A CSEF Global Learning Event and a GCE Youth Caucus were held at the front end of the World Assembly. The CSEF Global Learning Event combined an interactive and a participative environment for experiential learning and sharing on a range of common topics and learnings identified within the GCE network.

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Ram Gaire of NCE Nepal (L), who was elected to the GCE Board from the Asia Pacific along with former ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto Guevara, with the newly-elected GCE President, Refaat Sabbah (R) of the Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEFA).

For the first time, a Youth Caucus was organised preceding the GCE World Assembly to catalyse greater youth engagement and agency within the GCE movement, and specifically the World Assembly. The Youth Caucus gathered representatives of youth organisations who are members of GCE. From the Asia Pacific, at least six national coalitions were represented by their youth members - NNER Myanmar, VAEFA Vietnam, AFE Mongolia, E-Net Philippines, CAMPE Bangladesh, and NCE Nepal.

A new GCE Board was elected at the World Assembly. Refaat Sabbah of the Palestine Education Coalition and the Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEA) was elected GCE President. Samuel Dembele of the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) was elected GCE Chair. Madeleine Zuniga of the Peru coalition was elected Vice President and Mugwena Malukela of Education International as Vice Chair.

From the Asia Pacific, ASPBAE, represented by Robbie Guevara, and NCE Nepal, represented by Ram Gaire, were elected as Board members. ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and CAMPE's Rasheda Choudhury (Bangladesh) rotated out of the GCE Board after years of dedicated service to the campaign and to members in the region.

The Assembly also approved the strategic directions of GCE to guide its work in the coming period.

This write-up was derived from an article appearing on the [GCE website](#) and from a report prepared by ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan.

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