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Unpacking SDG 4.7 in the Asia Pacific

UNESCO-Bangkok organised the 3rd Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED) to clarify key elements of SDG 4.7 for Member States.

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ASPBAE joins Education and Academia Stakeholder Group delegation to UN High-Level Political Forum

ASPBAE participated in the latest High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development held in New York. The HLPF is the main UN platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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Making SDG4’s commitment to universal, free education, vital

On the occasion of the 2017 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) organised an event to discuss how to ensure equal access to quality education and lifelong learning for all.

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Inspiring action research in Indonesia

Youth action research in Indonesia called for the need to reach out to out-of-school youth and adults by setting up the non-formal education programme of the government.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Mid-Term Review of CONFINTEA VI

The Power of Adult Learning: Vision 2030

25-27 October 2017, Suwon, Republic of Korea

Sub-Regional News and Views

Helping improve the lives of out-of-school girls in the Philippines

Read more
Member of the Month

Equality Myanmar (EQMM)
Equality Myanmar is a non-governmental organisation which facilitates human rights education and advocacy programmes. EQMM was founded in 2000 with the goal of empowering the people of Myanmar through human rights education to engage in social transformation and promote a culture of human rights. Over the last 15 years, EQMM has trained women, university students, monks and pastors, activists, school teachers, and community leaders, building a strong network of human rights trainers and advocates across the country as well as along its border regions. Visit the EQMM website to know more.

Photo of the Month

World Youth Skills Day was observed on 15 July. SDG 4.4 calls for an increase in the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills.

ASPBAE Lens

ASPBAE would like to dedicate a space in the Bulletin to showcase photos its staff have taken. We want to feature their perception of life around them, the interesting things they see, inspiring moments they observe, and beautiful imagery they capture that reflect education and lifelong learning in a myriad different ways and forms, all left to be interpreted in our own unique ways. In this edition of the Bulletin, we feature a photo taken by Bernie Lovegrove, ASPBAE’s Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Regional Coordinator.

Bernie Lovegrove
CSEF Regional Coordinator
This section of the Bulletin is dedicated to highlighting news and events from each of ASPBAE's sub-regions – South and Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific. A different sub-region will be featured in each issue. For this edition, we highlight an initiative by UNESCO, along with the government of the Philippines and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), to help improve the quality of life for girls living in poverty through the creation of a Girls Education Centre.

Helping improve the lives of out-of-school girls in the Philippines
14 July 2017, Quezon City, Philippines

More young Filipinas now have a better chance at quality education and improved opportunities as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Department of Education (DepEd), and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) launch the ‘Better Life for Out-of-School Girls to Fight Against Poverty and Injustice in the Philippines’ project on July 14 at the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO INNOTECH) in Quezon City.

The project aims to help improve the quality of life for girls living in poverty through the establishment and operation of a Girls Education Centre. Furthermore, it endeavours to increase the passing rate among out-of-school girls who took the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Test after completing the DepEd’s Alternative Learning System (ALS). The project also seeks to improve the quality of instructional knowledge and skills of ALS mobile teachers and implement the use of K to 12 ALS teaching and learning materials for out-of-school girls.

“Education is a basic human right enshrined, protected, and promoted by the Philippine Constitution, but gender-based disadvantage is a reality that Filipinas, especially the youth, still encounter. As we continue expanding and intensifying the delivery of education for all through K to 12 and ALS, we are thankful to partner organisations in helping us reach learners who are isolated by their varying personal circumstances,” Education Secretary, Leonor Magtolis Briones, emphasised.

The project is anchored on a study that identified a multitude of challenges faced by learners, especially girls, resulting in dropping out of schools. These setbacks include economic, health, and social factors, among others. The support of the Government of the Republic of Korea, through KOICA, made the $6 million-dollar project possible.

UNESCO Jakarta Office Director and Representative, Shahbaz Khan, in his remarks, expressed his appreciation and recognition to DepEd and KOICA for the continued cooperation and partnership, “UNESCO is committed in supporting the Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Education, in its efforts towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4-Quality Education. And most especially in its efforts to bring quality, accessible, relevant, and liberating basic education for all with focus for those children who are the lost, last, and least.”

This write-up is a reproduction of an article appearing in the UNESCO website. [BACK]
Unpacking SDG 4.7 in the Asia Pacific
3rd Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 Mainstreaming SDG 4.7
4-7 July 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 reflects a transformative vision of education, calling for concepts such as sustainable development, global citizenship, gender equality, and health and wellbeing to be mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula content, teacher education, and student assessment. For many countries in the Asia Pacific, the breadth of SDG 4.7 has made it challenging to understand and implement.

It is in this context that UNESCO-Bangkok organised the 3rd Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED), convened by the Thematic Working Group (TWG) on Education 2030+, to clarify key elements of SDG 4.7 for Member States. The event was organised in collaboration with the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) and UNICEF.

Thein Lwein, ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing Southeast Asia, represented ASPBAE in the meeting along with Cecilia Soriano and Susmita Choudhury. He also represented the national education coalition from Myanmar, NNER where he serves as Chair. Coalitions from 12 other countries attended: seven coalitions were part of government delegations, namely NEP-Cambodia, E-Net Philippines, CAMPE-Bangladesh, AFE-Mongolia, CIATE-Korea, KAOB-Kyrgyzstan, and SEN-Samoa; and additionally, NCE Nepal, CED Sri Lanka, NCE India, PCE Pakistan, and VAEFA Vietnam were directly invited by UNESCO in discussion with ASPBAE as Asia Pacific focal point for the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CC NGO/Ed 2030).

ASPBAE organised a one-day preparatory meeting with participating coalitions to outline country specific issues related to SDG 4.7 and key messages to advocate with respective governments. The key positions included:

- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as the overarching framework for SDG 4.7.
- SDG 4.7 is transformative education and learning provided through formal, non-formal, and informal education accessible to all children, youth, and adults.
- Civil society organisations (CSOs) have a vast knowledge base, good practices, and innovative community-based approaches which governments must scale up to benefit more communities.
- Governments should finance and support community learning centers that can serve as hubs to implement SDG 4.7 based on contexts of the community.

The sessions in APMED were a combination of discussions around technical aspects of SDG 4.7 and sharing of best practices from different countries in the region. Parallel sessions were held on mainstreaming SDG 4.7 in the curricula and textbooks, learning assessments, and support structures. Countries shared their views, presented best practices and areas of improvements with recommendations. There were also discussions on monitoring SDG 4.7 under
five main aspects of education for sustainable development: global citizenship education; lifestyle, wellbeing and health; and culture and gender equality.

The discussions were however mainly restricted to the context of formal education. ASPBAE members strongly reiterated the links between SDG 4.7 and non-formal and informal education. The limited approach in measuring SDG 4.7 outcomes through learning assessments (testing) was also challenged and a case was made for other community-based data collection on the wider social, community impact of SDG 4.7-related interventions, with active participation from civil society.

Civil society faced several challenges at the meeting, one of them being that CSOs were not given a platform to share their best practices and engagements with governments in SDG4. CSOs were not given a substantive speaking role in the plenary sessions. However, CSO representatives were encouraged to speak at open discussions during the plenary and parallel sessions. ASPBAE reiterated the need to ensure civil society spaces in APMED processes and specific for SDG 4.7, the value in bringing CSO best practices to bear in implementing and monitoring SDG 4.7.

Regional recommendations were developed on mainstreaming elements of SDG 4.7 at all levels; monitoring of and reporting on the target; regional level support to member states; and strategic partnership development around 4.7. ASPBAE included the following to the recommendations -

- Ensure curriculum development is inclusive, participatory, and based on local knowledge.
- Extending SDG 4.7 from school to community, including flexible learning strategies, co-curricular and community-based activities.
- Ensure learning assessments are designed and administered in a way that they also capture the learning opportunities that contribute to the progress of the community and society at large towards sustainability, resiliency, peace building, respect of diversity, and fulfillment of human rights that reflect changes in behavior and actions of children, youth, and adults.
- Explore linkages of SDG 4.7 with other SDGs targets.
- Greater efforts to ensure that communities, parents, and teachers are involved and provided with opportunities to learn about SDG 4.7 and apply what is learned throughout their daily lives.

Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, from the Vietnam Association for Education For All (VAEFA), and ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing Southeast Asia, offered a Vote of Thanks on behalf of civil society at the closing of the meeting.

Click here to know more about APMED 3. [BACK]
ASPBAE joins Education and Academia Stakeholder Group delegation to UN High-Level Political Forum

10-20 July 2017, New York, U.S.A.

ASPBAE participated in the latest High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development held in New York. The HLPF is the main UN platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which highlights the commitments made by member states on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The HLPF meets every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of General Assembly; and every year under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the latest of which convened in July 2017 with the theme “Eradicating Poverty in All its Forms and Dimension Through Promoting Sustainable Development, Expanding Opportunities and Addressing Related Challenges”. For 2017, the Forum conducted in-depth analysis of new and emerging challenges focusing on selected goals – SDG 1 on poverty, hunger (2), health (3), gender (5), industrialisation (9), marine resources (14), and partnerships (17). The sessions and side events on SDG 17 debated on investing in and financing for the SDGs.

The two-week Forum was highlighted by the Ministerial level meeting held from 17-19 July 2017 where 44 countries presented their respective Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) on the SDG implementation. Over a hundred side events were, likewise, organised by civil society groups and networks, member states, UN agencies, development partners and the private sector during the week before and the week of the Ministerial meeting. One such side event was on the topic of ’Making SDG4’s Commitment to Universal, Free Education Vital’ which was organised by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), under the umbrella of the Education and Academia Stakeholder Group (EASG).

ASPBAE’s Rene Raya participated in the HLPF events and spoke as one of the panelists in the EASG sponsored side event on SDG4 where he expressed concern that the ambitious SDG targets are not matched by equally ambitious financing commitments. The side event, moderated by ICAE’s Katarina Popović, was keynoted by Serbian Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Milan Milanovic, who emphasised the crucial importance of education to the comprehensive attainment of all SDGs. For his part, Chikezie Anyanwu, GCE Global Coordinator, underscored the importance of having qualified teachers, adequate financing, and participation to ensure inclusive, equitable, quality education for all. A lively discussion on privatisation and commercialisation of education followed the panel presentations.

The three-day Ministerial level meeting was formally opened by ECOSOC President, Frederick Musiwa Makumure Shava on 17 July 2017. He called for solidarity and cooperation to address key global challenges, specifically, extreme poverty, inequality, conflict and terrorism, and climate change. He also mentioned that the key solution to assure that no one is left behind is social inclusion through, “access to universal health coverage, free, primary and secondary education,
enhanced water supply systems, stable and reliable energy, and resilient and safe infrastructure that support national development…”

**UN General Assembly** President, Peter Thomson, noted the importance and contribution of all actors actively participating in the implementation of sustainable financing, technology innovation, and education. Among those he cited were women's group, grassroots organisations, students, and the youth who raise awareness and are eager to promote global transformation to achieve the sustainable agenda.

**UN Secretary-General**, António Guterres, underscored the need to address inequality amidst increasing global wealth and technological progress, and stressed the importance of investing in education, in training, in new skills to be able to cope with the challenges of the future. He also called on developed countries to make good on their aid commitments and help developing states to mobilise their own resources through tax reforms while fighting together tax evasion, money-laundering, and illicit capital flows that drain the resources of poor countries.

Echoing this call, American economist and director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University (U.S.A), Jeffrey Sachs, said that the estimated world output for 2017 is, "enough to end all poverty, to ensure universal access to healthcare, to quality education, and to provide investments needed for the transformation to environmental sustainability." However, there is too much disparity, too much tax evasions, and plenty of tax heavens that are tolerated, even sanctioned, by the richest and most powerful governments. Jeffrey Sachs outlined the tasks ahead, the first of which is to ensure, “universal health coverage and universal quality education at least through secondary level…, (noting that) in the least developed countries only 20% of boys and girls complete secondary education.”

During the **Ministerial Meeting** segment of the HLFP, a total of 44 member states participated in the SDG review process and presented their respective Voluntary National Reviews (VNR). Nine countries from the Asia Pacific undertook VNRs. They were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, and Tajikistan. Civil society participants, through the major groups, were given the opportunity to raise their questions to the reporting states, although the number of interventions and time allotted were far too limited. Government delegations also chose the topic and particular questions they like to respond to and some country representatives warned against raising specific questions during the open forum. Nonetheless, ASPBAE and other members of the EASG were able to have their questions included in the open forum sessions following the presentation of the official reports. Reacting to Nepal's VNR, the NGO major group representative raised the issue of cuts on public spending for social programmes and asked for stronger policy to promote gender equality and inclusion.

The HLFP concluding session adopted a **Ministerial Declaration** which aimed to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs, stressing that achieving the 17 goals will require strong partnerships and urgent action. A number of speakers from
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The HLPF adopted a Ministerial Declaration which aimed to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs, stressing that achieving the 17 goals will require strong partnerships and urgent action.

ASPBAE and other education stakeholders expressed dismay on the extremely weak reference to education in the Ministerial Declaration, even as education was highlighted strongly during the opening of the meeting.

Developing member states, however, expressed regret on the omission or weak articulation of key issues in the Declaration, such as issues on sexual and reproductive health rights, migration, wealth distribution, and the right to self-determination, amongst others.

For its part, ASPBAE and other education stakeholders expressed dismay on the extremely weak reference to education in the Declaration, even as education was highlighted strongly during the opening of the Ministerial level meeting. Other civil society networks criticized the Voluntary National Review, referring to them as sugar-coated reports because they talk only of achievements, no matter how inconsequential, and glossed over the gaps and the failures of governments to address key development issues. A report from Together 2030 expressed concern over the limited scope of the government reports, saying it had cherry-picked the set of goals with favorable results. Apart from their limited scope, the report presented only snapshots when these could have been the spaces for thorough and deeper analysis of the situation. Indeed, the selective process of addressing the goals has created unequal opportunity for dialogues among other stakeholders. In this regard, an open letter from the Together 2030 participants was drafted and circulated.

During the informal Government-Civil Society-UN DESA interaction meeting to assess the conduct and outcome of the HLPF, Global Campaign for Education (GCE) President, Camilla Croso, strongly suggested to present and discuss the Voluntary National Reviews nationally in public forums and in parliament to encourage debates and participation of parliamentarians and other stakeholders, particularly the youth, so that there can be broader ownership of the reports.

Overall, ASPBAE’s participation in the HLPF facilitated better cooperation and solidarity with civil society networks and other organisations engaging the SDGs whose support to education issues will be important for future engagements within and outside the UN system. It is likewise important to develop links with official government delegations and representatives of permanent missions who can support and articulate our education agenda in official UN SDG processes. It is also important for ASPBAE to actively contribute to civil society official submissions, statements, and position papers to ensure that our key issues and policy agenda are included and carried in these interventions. Organising our own events, in cooperation with other education stakeholders and with support from high-level UN and government representatives, is a good strategy to mainstream our priority policy agenda in UN SDG processes. Finally, long-term preparations will be needed to ensure our strong presence and impact in future SDG processes, particularly the High-Level Political Forum for 2019 which will be attended by Heads of State and Governments and where SDG4 will be one of the goals to be taken up. [BACK]

Bulletin continued on next page…
Participants met to discuss how to ensure equal access to quality education and lifelong learning for all. The event was moderated by Katarina Popović, Secretary General of ICAE.

H.E. Milan Milanović, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the United Nations, opened the session, underlining that, “the best way to meet the challenge of rapid development and constant changes is to make people lifelong learners – to help them to learn how to learn, to motivate and inspire them, and to offer them possibilities for continuous improvement and to promote lifelong opportunities for all groups and all ages.” Mr. Milanovic emphasised that Serbia is strongly committed to seeing education as crucial to the comprehensive attainment of all SDGs, which are interconnected and mutually dependent.

Chikezie Anyanwu, Global Coordinator, GCE, emphasised three main cross-cutting points to ensure inclusive, equitable, quality education for all - qualified and valued teachers, appropriate financing and participation, and open dialogue space with civil society. He pointed out that, “A better education system is the answer to most of the world’s problems.” Similarly, poverty, hunger, poor health, gender discrimination, and climate-related disasters are detrimental to the realisation of SDG4.

Addressing the challenges of financing and privatisation in education from a regional point of view, ASPBAE’s Rene Raya warned about ambitious targets that are not matched by equally ambitious financing commitments and strategies and highlighted the need for stronger and wider alliances for higher investment and ODA for education.
Katarina Popović concluded that education is essential for sustainable growth, for building social cohesion and boosting shared prosperity, and promoting human rights and equality. “Education is the most sustainable, long-term driver to increase prosperity and end poverty for good,” she said.

The event was a platform for participants to intensively discuss challenges, practices, and discourses which threaten the realisation of SDG4, giving national examples and looking at the need to focus on learning opportunities for diverse social groups, ensuring that so no one will be left behind. It was agreed that education needs to be a policy and financial priority at all levels and a part of inter-sectorial strategies and coordination among different actors to ensure free and universal education.

This write-up is based on an article by Katarina Popović, ICAE Secretary General.

UNESCO promotes ‘green TVET’ at international conference
4-6 July 2017, Tangshan, China

More than 500 participants from over 80 countries participated in International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, held with the theme - ‘Skills on the move: global trends, local resonances’ – in Tangshan. The majority of the participants were from the various TVET or related departments of government, UNESCO, and very few civil society members. The purpose of the occasion was to take stock of progress and challenges since the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Shanghai in 2012 (where the global TVET community met to debate current trends and future drivers of development) and identify promising policies and practices to enhance TVET’s contribution to SDG4 and, more broadly, to sustainable development.

The 2012 global dialogue resulted in the Shanghai consensus, The Shanghai consensus (which provides a vision to connect TVET system analysis with intended development outcomes, and recommendations for TVET systems’ reform as well as policy development) spells out that TVET needs significant transformation and revitalisation if it were to realise its potential as a contributor to employment and sustainable development. The inclusion of education for green economies and green societies in TVET qualifications and programmes and greening TVET are both seen as significant aspects of enhancing the relevance of TVET, and ‘green TVET’ was high on the agenda at the Tangshan conference.

The conference focused on the quality and promotion of skills mobility in the context of the fast-changing labour market. It also devoted time to several contextual factors that are shaping the future of the TVET landscape. These factors included a shift in the development paradigm towards sustainable development, and changes in demography, economic trends, the labour market, and migration patterns. The timeliness with which TVET systems transform and
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ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing South and Central Asia, Meenu Vadera (Azad Foundation, India), was a speaker on the plenary on ‘Skills for equity and gender equality’. In her presentation, Meenu posed the question, ‘What should be the key elements of skills development policies or programmes that can successfully address inequalities?’ Based on the experience of Azad Foundation and on the work of ASPBAE, Meenu argued for a more holistic agenda for addressing gender inequalities through TVET. She stressed that for women to be able to have information about, access to, and ability to practice skills that can enable them to transform gender relations, simply providing technical trainings was not enough. Special efforts need to be made by governments, civil society, and all development actors to first ensure that adequate information reaches resource poor and marginalised women in a usable manner.

Meenu highlighted that the raining pedagogy and content needs to ensure that women learn about their rights, are able to relate these to their lived experiences, and exercise them to negotiate for opportunities to learn as well as earn. Specially, women need to be supported to know how to prevent themselves from violence – both at home and in public spaces. Supportive infrastructure such as shelter homes, working women hostels, crèche facilities, safe and hygienic public toilets, and much more needs to be in place to sustain women who, through TVET, take on livelihoods. She also said that re-distribution of work at home needs to become an important part of efforts around TVET as women move out of the formal work force due to care and reproductive work responsibilities at home. Most of the work and discourse around TVET does not recognise these realities and, in fact, invariably exacerbates gender inequalities by pushing women into skills that reinforce gendered stereotypes, and that involve more work with inadequate and remunerative incomes. Meenu argued that the TVET discourse must re-focus on non-traditional livelihoods for women which offer remunerative incomes and an opportunity to disrupt the status quo around existing gender relations.
The Tangshan Conference closed with a statement updating the skills agenda and defining four key areas for action: anticipating and assessing skill needs; developing skills for all; making skills and qualifications more transparent; and better recognised and contributing to better use of skills in the world of work.

The conference was co-organised by UNESCO, the Government of the People’s Republic of China, and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

Click here to access all materials related to the Conference.

This write-up draws from a report submitted by ASPBAE Executive Council Member Representing South and Central Asia, Meenu Vadera, and from a UNESCO report about the Tangshan conference. [BACK]

Inspiring action research in Indonesia
19-20 July 2017, West Sumatra, Indonesia

The energies of young women engaged in action research in remote areas in Indonesia are remarkable. A team of 15 volunteers started work in December 2016. In 8 months, the team collected views of marginalised youth on the challenges, needs, and vision for education that will transform their lives and their communities. The young women were mentored by the Community Empowerment Assessment Institute (LP2M) and Association for Women in Small Business Assistance (ASPPUK), an ASPBAE member.

The youth-led action research is being conducted in three communities in Tanah Datar district in West Sumatra, namely Pamasihan, Mawar II, and Aur Duri. ASPBAE participated in a Validation/Analysis Workshop and visited Mawar II to participate in a reflection session and have a dialogue with all the young women researchers.

Youth action research in Indonesia points to discrimination against women in education and community participation
19 July 2017

The summary of the findings from the action research were presented by young women in a workshop in Batusangkar, the capital of Tanah Datar District. Government representatives from the District Education Office, Tourism Office, Health, as well as elected village leaders joined in the discussions. The analysis of the findings was done through group discussions on the root causes of the problems and issues identified. Using the categories – economic, social, infrastructure, and education - the participants unraveled the connections and multiple dimensions of marginalisation of women in education and community participation. The analysis aimed to strategically address the problems faced by young women in accessing quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.

The workshop also presented the recommendations proposed by the youth in the three communities. Being remote communities, Pamasihan and Mawar II have a
At the meeting, ASPBAE’s Cecilia Soriano and Anita Borkar presented the progress of the action research being done in India and the Philippines. The youth stressed that the government should provide opportunities for education, health, decent work, and participation for girls and young women so that families will see the benefit of postponing early marriage.

Limited number of schools. Thus, the action research called attention to the need to reach out to out-of-school youth and adults by setting up the non-formal education programme of the government.

In the three communities, the youth also stressed that early marriage should be discussed with families and communities and as it deters the development of the full potential of girls and young women. However, it was pointed out that the government should provide opportunities for education, health, decent work, and participation for girls and young women so that families will see the benefit of postponing marriage. Sexual harassment in schools and communities was also one of the many issues highlighted in the action research.

The meeting allowed a dialogue between the researchers and government officials. Although there were no specific commitments made by the government representatives, they agreed to listen and cooperate on specific actions with the young women after the action researches have been finalised and disseminated.

At the workshop, ASPBAE’s Anita Borkar and Thea Soriano presented the overall objectives and progress of the action research. They shared local actions and the attention given by local governments to the recommendations put forward by youth researchers in India and the Philippines.

Young researchers remain steadfast in their efforts to bring change in their communities
20 July 2017

ASPBAE, together with LP2M and ASPPUK, travelled with young women researchers from Batusangkar to Jorong Mawar II to visit a community where the action research was conducted. Many participants, along with children and community members, gathered in a mosque for the activity.

The young women reflected on their experiences, challenges, and advocacies while doing the action research. The researchers also showed their community maps, journals, and data collated. Being mostly young mothers, the researchers narrated how they had to balance their time for the research and for their families. They also said that since the research required them to go house to house, do field interviews, and meet with different people, they had to explain to their families and communities the need to reach out to others as part of the research.

The young women remained steadfast in their work, hoping that with the evidences they have collected, they will be able to persuade the government to address the needs in education, decent work, and other issues faced by girls and young women.

ASPBAE presented the progress of the action research being done in India and the Philippines. The young women in Indonesia were enthusiastic to know that they share the same work and vision with the young women in the other two countries. [BACK]
Establishing community participation through action research
22-23 July 2017, Bogor, Indonesia

By Anggraeni Dewirini, Programme Coordinator, NEW Indonesia

Young people from Network for Education Watch (NEW) Indonesia enthusiastically participated in a research training using Participatory Action Research (PAR). The aim of the training was to enhance the capacity of NEW Indonesia members to overcome challenges related to education faced by communities.

Unlike conventional research methods, PAR is a study that involves all relevant parties in active research and enhances their skills. It is a research by, with, and for the community, rather than a research on the community.

The training was facilitated by ASPBAE’s Cecilia (Thea) Soriano and Anita Borkar. At the opening ceremony, National Coordinator of NEW Indonesia, Abdullah Ubaid, stressed that, “This training will give birth to a resilient researcher based on the needs of the community. This not only goes beyond data collection, but it must have an impact on changing social conditions that prevent communities from living their lives to their fullest potential”.

Thea highlighted that participatory action research is beneficial to addressing and finding solutions to the various challenges that people, especially young people, face in accessing education, amongst other issues that arise in the social fabric of communities, “PAR is a tool ‘from’ and ‘to’ the community in overcoming the various social inequalities they experience.” Thea reiterated.

Anita spoke of PAR activities being implemented in India. "Low-income communities, including girls and their families, are directly involved in using PAR methods to address issues of education, health, early marriage, and economic disparities," she said.

Participants learnt about the concept of PAR, research topics and targets, research stages, data mining techniques, and the making of PAR instruments. "This training is very useful for me, especially in providing alternative methods of raising awareness and public participation on educational issues. I will also use this method in implementing projects in my institution," said Udin, a participant from the Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education and Information Jakarta (LP3ES).

Participants of the training were committed to implementing PAR methods in the communities they work in. They also saw the initiative as an important tool to increase awareness and create a movement among young people to learn not only about their right to education, but also their rights as citizens.
Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) welcomes new director, Manos Antoninis

UNESCO has announced that Manos Antoninis, who has been working for the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) for six years as Senior Policy Analyst, has been appointed Director of the Report and will formally take up his functions on 1 August 2017.

Since joining the team in 2011, he has led the work on the monitoring of the Education for All (EFA) and now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. In recent years, he has been closely involved in the development and refinement of ways to measure progress towards the new targets in the education goal, SDG4, notably by representing the team in the technical advisory group on post-2015 education indicators. During his time at the Report, he has managed the development of a crucial tool, the Worldwide Inequality Database on Education, WIDE, which brings together data from multiple surveys from over 160 countries to compare education outcomes between and within countries, according to multiple factors, including wealth, gender, ethnicity and location. He has also coordinated the financing gap estimates for the 2030 education targets and the projections for the achievement of universal primary and secondary education completion.

Manos joined the team from Oxford Policy Management, a development policy consultancy. Where his experience and expertise in monitoring and evaluation saw him lead education and public finance projects in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria and Albania.

Manos takes up the mantle as Director at an exciting time, with the imminent launch of the 2017/8 GEM Report on Accountability and Education, and the team now starting to research the 2019 Report on migration and displacement. As he takes on these tasks, he welcomes any comments, or messages readers may have and can be reached on m.antoninis@unesco.org or twitter: @ManosAntoninis.

This write-up contains excerpts from an article appearing on the GEMR website.

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**ASPBae THIS MONTH**

**July 2017**

**Education International and ActionAid release new report on ‘Partnership Schools for Liberia’**

29 July 2017, Monrovia, Liberia


The announcement by the government of Liberia to outsource its entire primary and pre-primary is unprecedented. This report reviews and analyses documents related to the Partnership Schools for Liberia (PSL) pilot. The analysis focuses on three key areas: transparency and accountability, students and teachers, and scalability and sustainability. The analysis identifies issues related to the Ministry of Education's capacity to hold providers accountable, transparency in the commissioning and implementation of the pilot, and potential concerns regarding enrolment, teacher policies, school infrastructure, and funding, particularly between local and international providers. [BACK]

**New report sounds warning on increasing commercialisation in Australia’s public schools**

4 July 2017

A new report, *Commercialisation in Public Schooling*, reveals teachers are concerned about the influence commercialisation is having in schools in Australia, on everything from the provision of tests through to private providers offering classes in physical education, music, drama, and even professional development courses for teachers.

The report reveals schools are now forced to buy-in a substantial volume of educational products and services that were once provided by education departments (such as lesson plans, reading programmes, and curriculum content, amongst others).

Globally, the provision of education services is a massive business, worth an estimated $4.3 trillion annually. One of the largest global private educational providers, Pearson, has a firm foothold in Australia’s public education system, with Australian schools contributing to its mega-profits. It is one of a number of multi-national corporations engaged in the creation, marketing, and sale of education goods and services to schools by for-profit providers.

The Commercialisation in Public Schooling report was commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation and conducted by Professor Bob Lingard of the University of Queensland’s School of Education and a team which included Sam Sellar (Manchester Metropolitan University), Anna Hogan (University of Queensland), and Associate Professor Greg Thompson (Queensland University of Technology).

*The write-up contains excerpts from a press release by the New South Wales Teachers Federation.* [BACK]
ANNOUNCEMENT

Mid-Term Review of CONFINTEA VI
The Power of Adult Learning: Vision 2030
25-27 October 2017, Suwon, Republic of Korea

In 2009, representatives of 144 countries met at CONFINTEA VI in Brazil. They agreed that adult learning and education (ALE) can transform the lives of individuals, strengthen societies, and promote sustainable development. They committed to improving their ALE policies and practices through the adoption of the landmark Belém Framework for Action.

At the Mid-Term Review (MTR) coming up in October, participants will take stock of progress made since 2009, identify achievements and challenges, and consider trends and policies that will shape the future of ALE. The expected outcome is to build a shared Vision for Adult Learning and Education, in accordance with SDG4-Education 2030, and prepare for CONFINTEA VII.

Find out more about the MTR’s goals in the concept note.

Learn about achievements and challenges since 2009 in the 3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (2016).

This event will be co-organised by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the cities of Suwon and Osan in the Republic of Korea.

Prior to the Mid-Term Review, a civil society forum, organised by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), will be held to bring together members, friends, and allies to jointly strategise for the CONFINTEA main event and beyond. The civil society pre-event will take place on 24 October 2017 in Suwon, Korea.

This article draws from information on the UNESCO website. [BACK]