Mongolian coalition organises youth-led action-oriented research training
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The national education coalition of Mongolia, ‘All for Education’ (AFE), conducted a training on youth-led action-oriented research for youth empowerment for young representatives from its member and partner organisations, including Wind of Change NGO and Good Neighbours Mongolia. ASPBAE’s Anita Borkar and Cecilia “Thea” Soriano collaborated with AFE to plan and facilitate the workshop.

The workshop began with an introduction to ASPBAE and its programmes. Participants then mapped out, through illustrations, issues related to youth education and skills for work in the Asia Pacific. During the mapping exercise, they also did an exercise to link issues at the community level to youth issues at the national in Mongolia. The framework and characteristics of horizontal leadership concepts shared with the young participants deepened their knowledge on leadership and social engagement.

Facilitators from ASPBAE shared experiences and practices of youth action research in India and the Philippines, and presented an overview of action research and a listing of tools for data generation, data collection, and creative thinking. Through group work, participants identified youth issues and research questions for action research. Facilitators provided an input on research methods in detail with examples, research ethics, tools of action research, guiding principles for action research, tools for data generation, data collection, and data analysis. Based on their learning process, participants developed their research questions, a draft action plan taking into account their expertise, constituency, and needs, and made recommendations to each other.

Participants expressed that the approach towards marginalised groups as constituencies of community researchers and advocacy activities while conducting action research was new. A highlight for them was the empowering process of constituencies when they are engaged in action research and the change it brings to their lives and communities.

Participants formulated their draft action research plans and shared opportunities at the organisational level. Several organisations committed to promoting action research within their constituencies - ‘Child Participation in Education Settings and other Civil Society Space’ by AFE coalition, ‘Health Rights Issues Among LGBTI Communities’ by LGBT Centre, ‘Citizen
Participation Promotion through Empowerment’ by Good Neighbours Mongolia all agreed to begin their initiatives in 2017.

Tungalag Dondogdulam, national coordinator of AFE Mongolia, inaugurated the training. Board members of AFE, including Batjargal Batkhuyag, ASPBAE Executive Council Member (East Asia), met and interacted with the participants at a dinner organised during the 3-day event.