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Identifying focus areas for online learning content for Community Learning Centres

[Full article](#)



Addressing the patterns of child marriage, early union, and teen pregnancy in Southeast Asia

[Full article](#)



Firming up plans and advocacy strategies for 2018 with education alliance in Tajikistan

[Full article](#)



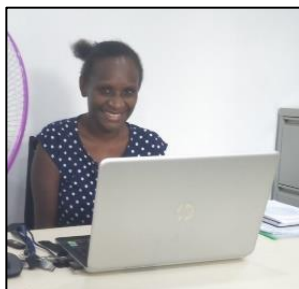
Adult education practitioners talk about inclusion and diversity at ICAE Virtual Seminar

[Full article](#)



Supporting Alternative Learning Systems in Pakistan

[Full article](#)



Coalition in Vanuatu becomes member of Local Education Group (LEG)

[Full article](#)

Global Action Week for Education - Accountability for SDG 4 through Citizen Participation

GAWE 2018, entitled, 'Accountability for SDG 4 through Citizen Participation', focussed on holding governments and the international community to account for implementing the full SDG 4 agenda – asking governments to "Keep Your Promises".

[Read more](#)

Assessing progress and identifying challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes

2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up

The aim of the 2018 Financing for Development (FfD) Forum was to assess progress and identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes

[Read more](#)

GCE responds to Education Commission on International Financing Facility for Education (IFFED) principles paper

The Education Commission has initiated a consultation on a draft set of principles that is to guide the development of a proposed International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd). The Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) offered its feedback to these principles.

[Read more](#)

Reviewing Human Rights Guiding Principles: Educationists strongly oppose privatisation and commercialisation of education in India

Regional Consultation on Human Rights Guiding Principles for Education

The regional consultation, held in Southern India, aimed to review the Human Rights Guiding Principles for Education and share feedback on improving the draft document.

[Read more](#)

WATCH: Interview of David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid

David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid, was interviewed at the Global Education and Skills Forum held in Dubai about key issues related to the financing of education globally.

[Read more](#)

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Promoting cultural heritage and fostering cultural diversity through community learning centres

National Review Seminar in Mongolia on Community Learning Centres

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Promoting knowledge, abilities, and skills in adult education processes

Fifth International Conference on Adult Education - CIEA 2018

[Full article](#)



Celebrating Change, Recognising Diversity

2nd Martha Farrell Award Ceremony

[Full article](#)



European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) produces advocacy toolkit for financing adult learning in Europe

[Full article](#)

The Ups and Downs of Tiers: Measuring SDG Progress

Global Policy Watch paper

A paper by Global Policy Watch, '*The Ups and Downs of Tiers: Measuring SDG Progress*', comments on the ups and downs of SDG indicators among the tiers with a focus on the substantial number of indicators lacking progress.

[Read more](#)

UNESCO Institute of Statistics releases Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education

A new report shows how countries can measure the education progress of the most marginalised populations to ensure no one is left behind. The new Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education provides practical guidance on the calculation and interpretation of indicators designed to target the most disadvantaged groups.

[Read more](#)

Addressing imbalances in education opportunity and bringing lifelong learning to centre stage in Australia

A National Lifelong Learning Summit was held in Melbourne, organised by ASPBAE member, Adult Learning Australia (ALA). Participants of the event recognised the reality in Australia of rising inequality, disadvantage, and poverty.

[Read more](#)

Education News and Views

Under-reported, under-served in education: Improving data for children with disabilities

[Read more](#)

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Member of the Month

Education for Life Foundation (ELF), Philippines

The Education for Life Foundation (ELF) was launched in 2002 with a focus on “grassroots leadership formation for grassroots community empowerment.” One of the main flagship programmes of ELF is the Grassroots Leadership Course (GLC) which has seen the participation of 2000 community leaders over the years. ELF also works with local partners to set up community-based alternative learning systems (ALS) for out-of-school youth and adults. ELF is a founding member of the national education coalition in the Philippines, E-Net Philippines (also an ASPBAE member). Visit the [ELF website](http://elf.org.ph) to know more.

Photo of the Month



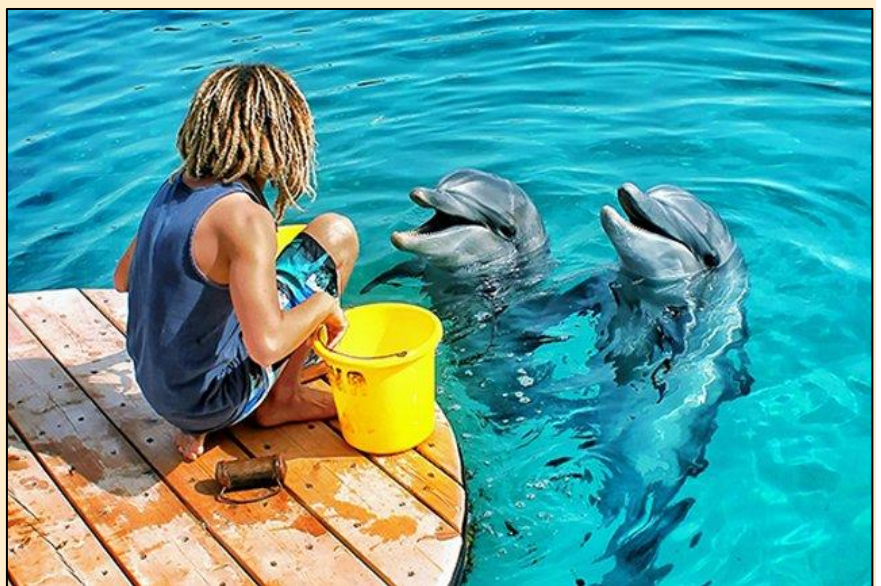
The Global Campaign for Education's (GCE) Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) was held from 22-28 April 2018. It was widely celebrated in the Asia Pacific and around the world.

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 Aveline Colaco, Database Maintenance and Networking Officer in the ASPBAE-Abhivyakti Media for Development project on Regional Networking for Transformative Education and Lifelong learning (RNET).

Aveline Colaco

Database Maintenance and Networking Officer in
the ASPBAE-Abhivyakti RNET project



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EDUCATION NEWS AND VIEWS

This section of the Bulletin is dedicated to highlighting news and events from the Asia Pacific and from around the world focusing on education and lifelong learning. For this edition, we highlight the recently launched collaboration between the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to support countries to improve administrative data on disabled populations and the extent to which they are excluded from education.

Under-reported, under-served in education: Improving data for children with disabilities

30 April 2018



“People with disabilities are vulnerable because of the many barriers we face”, wrote [Stephen Hawking](#), the renowned theoretical physicist who passed away earlier this year. “Addressing these barriers will unlock the potential of so many people with so much to contribute to the world.”

Indeed, disabled people comprise a tremendous pool of human potential – they form the world’s largest minority, one billion people, or 15% of the global population – and some of the most persistent and limiting barriers they face are in education. [Studies consistently show](#) that children with disabilities attend school less than their non-disabled peers and are more likely to drop out early if they do, with the situation particularly acute in developing countries.

However, the full severity of this challenge – exactly who is excluded and where interventions might be most effective – remains unclear because of a scarcity of reliable and internationally comparable data on disabilities in education. This is due in part to countries lacking an adequate means of collecting information on disabled populations in administrative data – the mass data garnered from instruments such as censuses and household surveys that governments use to identify needs and devise policy.

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Studies consistently show that children with disabilities attend school less than their non-disabled peers and are more likely to drop out early if they do, with the situation particularly acute in developing countries.

likewise contributes to their prevalence being under-reported, and context must also be taken into consideration. Poor eyesight, for example, might not be a disability in a country with easy access to eye care, but being unable to see the blackboard could cut a child's educational path short in the developing world.

Established in 2001, the Washington Group on Disability Statistics has produced a set of questions for household surveys that take these challenges into account and allow for internationally comparable data on persons with disabilities.

The questions focus on six types of disabilities: seeing, hearing, walking, concentration, self-care and communication. Those who indicate "a lot of difficulty" or "cannot do at all" in any one of these six categories are considered to have a disability.

The Washington Group questions don't require medical expertise and centre around simple, easily translatable questions. The short set of the questions was endorsed by the UN for data collection on disability characteristics in the 2015 round of population censuses and will be at the centre of the UIS-GPE collaboration.

Cambodia is one of a few countries in Asia-Pacific to have data on disabilities drawn from the Washington Group questions. And the benefit of having these statistics is clear from the stark picture they form of how disabilities lead to exclusion in education.

Of three countries (along with the Maldives and Uganda) that had datasets available based on the WG questions, Cambodia had the most striking gap when it came to the out-of-school rates of disabled versus non-disabled primary school age children. There was a 50-percentage point difference between the two, with 57% of disabled children out of school compared to 7% of those without disabilities. Overall, one in two Cambodian children with disabilities were not in school, compared to 1 in 14 children without them.

Reaching the unreachable – by first identifying them

The UIS-GPE collaboration will begin with an analysis of UIS' catalogue of existing school questionnaires to determine the extent to which data on learners' disabilities is being collected and how the Washington Group questions can be applied to available administrative data. Going forward, the ultimate goal would be to include the Washington Group questions in UIS's annual survey of formal education as well as to support member states' efforts to include them in national level school questionnaires.

A recently launched collaboration between the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) looks to improve this situation by supporting countries to improve administrative data on disabled populations and the extent to which they are excluded from education.

The aim is to improve our understanding of this critical challenge to inclusive and equitable quality education for all, as well as to advocate for greater recognition and inclusion of disabled populations throughout the world – not only in education, but in all areas of society.

A clearer picture, a pressing need

Divergent responses to the question of what constitutes a disability muddle countries' estimates of these populations and makes them impossible to compare between countries. Stigma around disabilities



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Better administrative data means an improved understanding of who remains excluded from education. For example, estimates suggest that around 10% of any given population has a moderate to severe disability. If we had a reliable figure for the number of children and young people with a moderate or severe disability in school, we could estimate the number of these children who are excluded from education.

Improving data collection also means countries will be able to more accurately report on their progress towards the internationally agreed upon Education 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 Agenda, specifically SDG targets [4.5](#) and [4a](#), which focus on ensuring equal access for disabled people and improving infrastructure for them, respectively.

Including the Washington Group questions in surveys distributed to every school and household could raise awareness around disabled populations and push back against stigmatizations, while at the same time making clear the importance of inclusion for children with disabilities.

The UIS-GPE initiative is timely as the UN Global Flagship Report on Disability and Development due to be released later this year, with education one of the key areas examined. Both represent positive momentum that can lay the foundation for truly inclusive education. As Hawking noted, “Governments everywhere can no longer overlook the hundreds of millions of people with disabilities, who are denied access to health, rehabilitation, support, education and employment – and never get the chance to shine.” [\[BACK\]](#)



Better administrative data means an improved understanding of who remains excluded from education. Improving data collection also means countries will be able to more accurately report on their progress towards the SDG 4 agenda.

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Global Action Week for Education - Accountability for SDG 4 through Citizen Participation

22-28 April 2018



Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) provides national and regional education campaigns with an opportunity to highlight salient issues on the right to education and the SDG 4 agenda.

The Global Campaign for Education's (GCE) Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) is one of the major focal points for the education movement. It provides every national and regional education campaign with an opportunity to highlight salient issues on the right to education and the SDG 4 agenda - making targeted efforts to achieve change on the ground, with the added support of education campaigners and millions of members of the public worldwide joining together for the same cause.

This year's GAWE followed up on last year's theme of accountability for SDG 4 and active citizen participation. GAWE 2018, entitled, '*Accountability for SDG 4 through Citizen Participation*', continued focusing on holding governments and the international community to account for implementing the full SDG 4 agenda – asking governments to "Keep Your Promises".

After the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Financing Conference at the start of 2018, where developing country governments, donor countries, and various partners pledged to increase funds to education, it is time for governments to prove they are actually working towards financing public, equitable, inclusive, and free education – it is time to act. Pledges made towards funding SDG 4 must be implemented effectively, ensuring that children and adults around the world can receive quality public education.

To ensure governments deliver on the SDG 4 promise, citizens must play their part in holding them to account for it. For this, citizen and civil society participation must be institutionalised in decision-making processes which impact on their lives. Yet, in too many countries, the voice of citizens is being stifled; across all regions of the world, certain national governments have taken aggressive actions to shrink civil society spaces, from restrictions on funding, repression of 'political activity' or protest, and even direct criminalisation of civil society activity.

In this year's GAWE therefore, the Global Campaign for Education and its partners world-wide called on governments to -

- Develop credible roadmaps for implementation of the full SDG4 agenda, with clear mechanisms for transparency, allowing for active meaningful participation of civil society.
- Halt the criminalisation and shrinking of civil society spaces, both nationally and internationally.
- Strengthen public systems and state capacities to ensure that education is free, of good quality, and equitable and reject turning towards low fee "affordable" private schooling as an answer to the education crisis.



GAWE focussed on holding governments and the international community to account for implementing the full SDG 4 agenda.

Bulletin continued on next page...

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Here is a photo collage of how GAWE 2018 was celebrated by ASPBAE's members in the region –

GAWE 2018 – AFGHANISTAN NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION (ANEC)



GAWE 2018 poster by the Afghanistan National Education Coalition (ANEC).



Members of the Afghanistan National Education Coalition (ANEC) releasing a GAWE 2018 poster at a press conference in Kabul.



Abdul Bashir Khaliqi of the Afghanistan National Education Coalition (ANEC) addressing a GAWE meeting in Kabul.

GAWE 2018 - EDUCATION COALITION IN KYRGYZSTAN (ECK)



Education Coalition in Kyrgyzstan (ECK) organised an interaction with young students on SDG 4 and the role of the youth advocating for the education agenda.



Education Coalition in Kyrgyzstan (ECK) commemorated GAWE 2018 with by organising a Fair on Skills for Work.



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Young people in India come together to commemorate GAW 2018 and to talk about quality education and transparent policies that are formed in consultation with civil society and the youth.



Young people display their depiction of gender equality in education and an event organised by NCE India.

GAW 2018 – NATIONAL COALITION FOR EDUCATION (NCE), INDIA



Civil society organisations, teachers, young people, academics, and children from 21 states of India celebrated GAW 2018. The activities were organised by NCE India in collaboration with UNESCO, World Vision, Teacher's Unions, and over 100 civil society organisations.

GAW 2018 – NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION (NCE), NEPAL



NCE Nepal organised a letter writing activity for young students to demand that the government “keeps its promise” to implement the full SDG 4 agenda.



NCE Nepal organised an education rally to commemorate GAW 2018.

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For GAWE 2018, NCE Nepal organised a dialogue with political parties and parliamentarians on accountability and citizen's participation in education.



NNER Myanmar organised a workshop for teachers to celebrate GAWE 2018.

GAWE 2018 – NATIONAL NETWORK FOR EDUCATION REFORM (NNER), MYANMAR



Teachers in Southern Shan State, Myanmar, came together to commemorate GAWE 2018. In an event organised by NNER Myanmar, teachers discussed and debated education policies and the role of qualified teachers in ensuring quality education to fulfil the SDG 4 agenda.

[\[BACK\]](#)

Assessing progress and identifying challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes

2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up
23-26 April 2018, New York, U.S.A



M. Chatardová, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the UN and President of the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC), opened the ministerial segment of the FfD Forum.

The Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum) is an intergovernmental process with universal participation mandated to review the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#) (Addis Agenda) and other financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the key features of the FfD follow-up process is its multi-stakeholder approach, including civil society. The annual FfD Forum results in inter-governmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations that are fed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF).

The 2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum) was held New York. The four-day event featured a Special High-level Meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), ministerial round tables, general debate, thematic discussions on the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other FfD outcomes, and a dialogue with stakeholders.

The aim of the 2018 FfD Forum was to assess progress and identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes. It also aimed to promote sharing of experiences, address new and emerging topics, and provide policy recommendations for action by the international community in

The aim of the 2018 FfD Forum was to assess progress and identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes.

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Civil society remained engaged in the FfD process. They reiterated the call for an inclusive intergovernmental UN tax commission to be established, with the mandate to ensure effective and fully inclusive international tax cooperation and domestic resource mobilisation.

the following areas of the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda (Addis Agenda) - (i) domestic public resources; (ii) domestic and international private business and finance; (iii) international development cooperation; (iv) international trade as an engine for development; (v) debt and debt sustainability; (vi) systemic issues; (vii) science, technology, innovation and capacity building; as well as (viii) data, monitoring and follow-up. Click [here](#) for the full programme.

Side events were held throughout the duration of the FfD related to topics such as investment to achieve the SDGs, financing for gender equality, and financing the 2030 Agenda.

Civil society remained engaged in the FfD process, largely through the Civil Society Financing for Development (FfD) Group. This broad platform of civil society organizations, networks and federations from around the world has facilitated civil society's contribution to the Third International Conference on FfD and continues to provide a facilitation mechanism for the collective expression of civil society in the FfD Follow-up process.

Civil society organisations reiterated the call for an “inclusive intergovernmental UN tax commission to be established, with the mandate and resources to ensure effective and fully inclusive international tax cooperation and domestic resource mobilisation, as well as address all issues related to illicit financial flows, including international tax avoidance and evasion.”

They drew attention to the looming debt crisis as well -

“We are also deeply concerned that the number of Low-Income Countries facing debt crisis has doubled since 2013, with only 1 in 5 countries considered to be at low risk of debt distress. The new wave of debt crises has emerged as the key risks for the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Irresponsible lending by private creditors – by private banks and even transnational corporations from the extractive industry sector – have forced some of the poorest crisis into default. Middle and High-Income countries also suffer from the highest debt burdens ever. High payments on debt crowd out spending on essential services, compete with development financing and hinder the progressive realization of human rights in all country groupings.”

The full statement of the Civil Society Financing for Development (FfD) Group on the 2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up is available [here](#).

The agreed conclusions and recommendations of the [outcome document](#) of the FfD Forum were adopted at the Forum and further transmitted to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) taking place in July in New York.

This write-up is based on information available on the [ECOSOC website](#) and the website of the [CSOs for Financing for Development](#). [[BACK](#)]



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GCE responds to Education Commission on International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd) principles paper

April 2018

The Education Commission has initiated a consultation on a [draft set of principles](#) that is to guide the development of a proposed International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd).

The Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) participated in the consultation and offered its [feedback](#) to these principles.

While the GCE welcomed the efforts made to address its previous concerns, it also further requested more clarity on 9 discussion points, including -

- Increasing indebtedness of lower-middle income countries, many of whom are already in moderate or high debt distress.
- The need for more balanced efforts on other aspects of financing, including clearer targets on domestic financing and tax justice.
- The risks of creating parallel criteria, indicators, and structures.
- The need for more clear commitments to the right to education, to public education systems, and to civil society engagement.

In conclusion, GCE urged the Education Commission to scale up its efforts in other areas of education financing such as supporting GPE, improving domestic resource mobilisation and promoting national/international mechanisms to advance tax justice linked to education financing. GCE further recommended that the Education Commission explore how to expand grant-based support for the existing mechanisms of GPE and ECW, how to harmonise IDA and ensure existing bilateral funding meets agreed targets and how to take maximum advantage of existing mechanisms within GPE such as the new Multiplier Fund and the proposed Education Sector Investment Cases.

GCE reiterated its commitment to pursue constructive dialogue with the Education Commission on its overall work and on this subject.

This write-up contains information appearing on the [GCE website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

Identifying focus areas for online learning content for Community Learning Centres

UNESCO Expert Meeting on Innovating Adult and Community Learning in Asia and the Pacific

23-24 April 2018, Bangkok, Thailand

Community Learning Centres (CLCs) play a vital role in the provision of quality and flexible opportunities for lifelong learning and adult learning and education (ALE). But with levels of financing for CLCs remaining low across the Asia Pacific, diverse needs to fulfil, and an ever-increasing demand for access, CLCs can face a formidable task. The ability to pool collective wisdom, harness evolving technologies, and make use of new innovative approaches to CLC design,

GCE, in its feedback to the draft set of principles to guide the development of the IFFEd, has asked for clarity on issues such as increasing indebtedness of lower-middle income countries and the need for clearer targets on domestic financing and tax justice.



GCE urged the Education Commission to scale up its efforts in areas of education financing such as supporting GPE and improving domestic resource mobilisation.



30 participants, mainly policy experts of adult and community learning, from 11 countries across the region participated in the meeting.

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Uwe Gartenschlaeger of DVV International participated in the UNESCO Expert Meeting in Bangkok. ASPBAE's Thea Soriano also facilitated a group discussion on innovative and public financing.

The meeting aimed to review and identify 10 core areas of focus for the development of online learning content for CLCs; share best practices; develop an outline of online content; and discuss effective methodologies to disseminating online content.



Experts shared their experiences on focus areas that need to be disseminated to promote CLCs and adult learning.

finance, and management will be critical to meeting this challenge as well as ensuring greater impacts for the region and its people.

With the support of the Government of Japan (JFIT), UNESCO Bangkok is implementing the Development of Online Learning Contents for CLCs with the aim to support lifelong learning and contribute to the achievement of SDG 4. This online content will be developed and disseminated widely to strengthen the capacities of CLC leaders, managers, and educators to deliver quality and inclusive education to adults and youth across Asia Pacific.

In line with this, the 2018 Expert Meeting on Innovating Adult and Community Learning in Asia and the Pacific was held at UNESCO Bangkok Office. The meeting was attended by 30 participants, which included experts in policy, implementation, and facilitation of adult and community learning from 11 countries across the region.

The meeting aimed to identify the focus areas which this online learning content would cover and discuss essential knowledge and best practices that should be included in each area, as well as effective methodologies and approaches for disseminating this content to target populations (which may include governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies, academics, and CLC directors, managers and facilitators).

The meeting provided a vital opportunity for ALE stakeholders in the Asia Pacific to identify - (1) core areas or themes of focus for the development of CLCs and this learning content, and to share and discuss, and (2) strategy, best practices, innovations, and opportunities in the region.

The main objectives of the meeting were –

1. To review and identify 10 core areas of focus for the development of online learning contents for CLCs towards achieving the SDGs and promoting lifelong learning in the Asia Pacific.
2. To share and discuss best practices, initiatives, and possible opportunities under these 10 areas for further innovating and revitalising community learning in the region.
3. To develop an outline of online content on the identified 10 core areas.
4. To discuss effective methodologies and approaches to disseminating online content to target populations (including governments, NGOs, UN, academics, CLC directors, managers, educators, and other stakeholders).

The meeting was conducted mainly through group discussions where experts shared their experiences and insights on focus areas that need to be disseminated to promote CLCs and adult learning. ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano facilitated the group discussions on '*Innovative and Public Financing*' and '*Preparing for the challenges for the future.*' Uwe Gartenschlaeger of DVV International facilitated the workshop on '*Concept on Lifelong learning and 21st century literacy and skills*'. [[BACK](#)]

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Addressing the patterns of child marriage, early union, and teen pregnancy in Southeast Asia

4-5 April 2018, Bangkok, Thailand



Civil society organisations are seeking to urgently address, in partnership with UN agencies, the challenges posed by child marriages, early unions, and teen pregnancy.

In Southeast Asia, child marriage, early unions and teen pregnancy continue to rise in some countries and are not falling rapidly enough in others. These represent significant challenges to young persons' rights and sustainable development that governments and civil society organisations are seeking to urgently address in partnership with UN agencies.

The regional offices of [UNICEF](#) and [UNFPA](#) organised a forum in Bangkok with the support of [UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Education](#) and the regional offices of the [International Planned Parenthood Federation](#) (IPPF) and [Plan International](#), bringing together government, UN and civil society representatives from 10 countries to discuss these issues, strategise on how to tackle them, and learn from best practices both within the region and beyond. ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, participated in the regional forum.

The forum aimed to -

- Promote a deeper understanding of the relationship between adolescent pregnancy, child marriage, and early union in South East and East Asia.
- Explore available research on the key drivers and different patterns of adolescent pregnancy, child marriage, and early union in the region.
- Identify and discuss promising practices and effective programmatic multi-sector responses to reduce and prevent adolescent pregnancy and child marriage/early union, including by promoting opportunities and choices and providing access to information and services.
- Test and refine a common understanding of successful strategies to respond to and address the underlying drivers of adolescent pregnancy, child marriage, and early union.

While adolescent birth rates have declined globally, they have remained generally stagnant or even increased in Southeast Asia, with wide-ranging variations between countries. The average adolescent birth rate in the region is 47 births per 1000 females aged 15-19, higher than the average of 35 in South Asia and close to the global average of 50. The highest adolescent birth rates at the country level are seen in Lao PDR (94), Cambodia (57), Thailand (50), Indonesia (48) and the Philippines (47). Despite declines in recent decades, the prevalence rates of child marriage and early union remain high in Southeast Asia. The percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in union before 18 ranges from 35.4% in Lao PDR to 11% in Vietnam.

The Bangkok forum posed three basic questions – (1) What are the key knowledge gaps and what additional research is needed to better understand what drives these patterns and interrelated factors? (2) What strategies and interventions are needed to create an enabling environment for adolescents both married and unmarried? (3) How can governments and UN agencies more effectively engage youth leadership, girls' networks, and adolescent advocacy groups in policy and programming?



The Bangkok forum posed 3 questions - What are the key knowledge gaps; What strategies and interventions are needed; and How can governments and UN agencies more effectively engage the youth in policy and programming?

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ASPBAE, represented by its President, Nani Zulminarni, was invited to speak in a session on education retention, re-entry, and discrimination of married girls in schools and/or pregnant and/or mothers.

ASPBAE was invited to speak in a session on education retention, re-entry, and discrimination of married girls in schools and/or pregnant and/or mothers. ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, was a speaker in this session where she stressed that the full participation of girls, young women, and boys is central to addressing issues such as reducing or eliminating unintended pregnancies and keeping or bringing young mothers and fathers back to education (formal, informal, or non-formal).

Nani cited the example of ASPBAE's youth action research initiative on 'Gender, Education, Skills and Empowerment' as a tool for girls and young women in India, Indonesia, and the Philippines. She elaborated on the initiative which focuses on young girls and women organising themselves to collect data in their communities, using the data to engage relevant stakeholders, and advocating for the changes required to give young people in their communities the opportunity to improve their lives.

Nani further underlined the importance of involving diverse stakeholders in the process of learning and education, including parents, teachers, government representatives, and formal and non-formal leaders. She highlighted that merely policy changes are insufficient to address adolescent pregnancy and child marriage and that the role of religious leaders and social norms is very significant. Nani gave the example PEKKA's (Indonesia) approach of engaging with religious and traditional leaders to work with communities and with the youth in preventing child marriage and encouraging girls to obtain an education. With this approach, instances of child marriages decreased by half in one year.

Nani spoke of the role of community learning centres in providing livelihood opportunities to out-of-school youth and to youth who have dropped out of school. She highlighted the importance of young people being able to access government services that provide second chance learning that enable girls and boys to complete their education and of equivalency programmes such as those in Indonesia and the Philippines (Alternative Learning Systems). Nani also mentioned long distance learning systems offered by several ASPBAE members across the region, and of the Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC), ASPBAE's flagship training programme, that builds the leadership skills of young people amongst its membership in the Asia Pacific.

Regarding research and data, Nora Murat, Regional Director, IPPF-ESEAOR (International Planned Parenthood Federation- East & South East Asia and Oceania Region), stated that, *"When it comes to research on early unions and teen pregnancy, we must understand what the data are telling us, accepting the facts as they are without shying away from the findings for sociocultural or political reasons. Adolescent sexuality is a reality that makes many governments and other stakeholders uncomfortable. But unless we understand the complexities, we will fail to make genuine progress in filling gaps in our knowledge, especially for 10 to 14-year-olds and unmarried girls and boys, and in addressing these challenges."*

A key example of how improved research and data on adolescent sexuality are informing policy change came from Vietnam where studies over the past decade



Nani highlighted the importance of young people being able to access government services that provide second chance learning that enable girls and boys to complete their education and of equivalency programmes such as those in Indonesia and the Philippines (Alternative Learning Systems).

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Maki Hayashikawa, Director, UNESCO Bangkok, stressed that providing comprehensive sexuality education “does not increase sexual activity, but rather empowers young persons to take charge of their own lives with healthier and happier outcomes.”

have clearly revealed that while adolescents are increasingly engaging in sexual activity, with corresponding levels of unintended pregnancy, there remain significant knowledge gaps about sex and sexuality that are impacting young persons’ abilities to make informed and responsible choices.

The Vietnam data, along with evidence from other countries, underscore how crucial good quality comprehensive sexuality education is, a top recommendation that emerged from the forum. Age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education should commence in early primary school (at age 5), providing skills in communication, decision making, negotiation, gender equality, and respect.

“Comprehensive sexuality education [CSE] that goes well beyond biological reproduction is essential at an early age for girls and boys, both in and out of school, to ensure that young people are equipped with a solid foundation for life and love,” emphasized Maki Hayashikawa, Director, UNESCO Bangkok. “Evidence globally clearly shows that providing CSE does not increase sexual activity, but rather empowers young persons to take charge of their own lives with healthier and happier outcomes. Abstinence-only approaches are not effective in delaying sexual initiation, reducing frequency of sex, or reducing the number of sexual partners. CSE is core to addressing early unions and teen pregnancy.”

“Through training on life skills, self-defence, and information on child protection and gender equality, young people have formed grassroots coalitions against child marriage,” said Senait Gebregziabher, Regional Director, Plan International. “To continue our progress towards making child marriage history, investment and commitment is required from all stakeholders.”

Dina Chaerani, President, Youth Coalition for Girls in Indonesia and a panellist at the forum, further emphasized the importance of including youth at all levels of the decision-making process. *“At the end of the day, young people themselves must be at the heart of the solution. Work with us to mobilise movements for change. Only young people really know what information we ourselves need, and how to reach one another, including the best social media platforms. Governments must give us the chance to do all of this, not only in the planning and designing phase, but also in monitoring and evaluation. It sounds like a cliché but really, ‘Nothing for us without us’. If that happens, we will collectively succeed.”*

Over 100 participants took part in the forum, including government representatives (Ministries of Education, Health, Youth, and/or Gender Equality) from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam; Regional and Country Offices and other relevant UN agencies; civil society organisations, adolescent girls’ networks and youth organisations; and academic institutions and experts. Select countries from South Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia also participated to share their experiences.

This write-up is based on a report by ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and on an article appearing on the [UNICEF website](http://www.unicef.org). [\[BACK\]](#)

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NCE India, in collaboration with the Karnataka State Primary Teachers Association, organised a regional consultation in Southern India on the 'Human Rights Guiding Principles on the obligation of States' with regard to private involvement in education.

Reviewing Human Rights Guiding Principles: Educationists strongly oppose privatisation and commercialisation of education in India

Regional Consultation on Human Rights Guiding Principles for Education
6 April 2018, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

The Southern India Regional Consultation on 'Human Rights Guiding Principles on the obligation of States' with regards to private involvement in education was held in Bangalore, India. The event was organised in collaboration with NCE India (an ASPBAE member) and the Karnataka State Primary Teachers Association (KSPTA).

In the past two decades, there has been an increase in scale and scope of private sectors in education, particularly in developing countries. The privatization in education includes increase in traditional private schools catering to the elite and also low-cost profit-making schools targeting the poor. Referring to the International Human Rights law (UNCRC) which protects the right to education, it is critical to clarify the existing legal human rights framework that applies to the role of private actors in education and provide normative guiding principles against which to analyse reality from a human rights perspective. The Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in collaboration with Right to Education and Open Society Foundations have thus undertaken a process to develop such Guiding Principles, based on customary and conventional human rights law.

As part of the development of these Guiding Principles, several regional and national consultations have been organised to stimulate an informed debate on the role and limitations of private actors in education based on human rights law. The Southern India Regional Consultation was organised as part of this effort. The main aim of the consultation was to review the draft 'Human Rights Guiding Principles on the obligations of States with regards to the delivery of education by public and private schools' and share feedback on improving the draft document. Approximately 80 participants attended from 12 Indian states.

The consultation began with participants debating the status of education in India, especially emphasising the state of quality education in Karnataka. Dr. Niranjana Radhaya, Fellow and Programme Head, Centre for Child and the Law, highlighted the appalling condition of the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act in Karnataka, citing that only 8.1% of the schools in the state are RTE complaint. He highlighted low education budgets, increasing privatisation of education, and shortage of teachers as major constraints in the proper implementation of the RTE Act.

In his presentation, Victor Paul, Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Christ University (Bangalore), defined systems that assess education and elaborated on the misconceptions regarding assessments and grading. He clarified that assessments are more than just assigning grades and that through proper assessments, both teachers and learners can work together to set



The main aim of the consultation was to review the draft 'Human Rights Guiding Principles' and share feedback on improving the draft document.

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Participants reflected on the 'Human Rights Guiding Principles' based on the education context and the status of privatisation of education in India.

appropriate learning goals. Pointing to the flaws in RTE implementation, he stressed that poor learning outcomes and dropout rates are alarming in India.

Participating in the consultation, ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury introduced the Human Rights Guiding Principles document highlighting the main features of the paper.

Participants reflected on the document based on the education context and the status of privatisation of education in India.

Some of the main assertions emerging from the consultation were -

- 1) Education is a fundamental inalienable human right.
- 2) As a fundamental right, education cannot be achieved through privatisation or through the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. There was strong opposition to all forms of privatisation or any other attempts to commercialise education.
- 3) It is the obligation of the state to build a national system of education funded by state parties, ensuring equitable and quality education to all children without any discrimination.
- 4) In India, education privatisation violates the basic ethos of culture and understanding of education as a social good and a tool for socialisation. A Supreme Court judgment in 1993 treats education as an integral part of right to life. Therefore, right to education and right to life are inseparable. The constitution places the onus on the state to provide for a state-funded education, enabling institutional structure for realising child rights.
- 5) Public schools must be strengthened by providing trained teachers, teaching-learning materials, and community engagement.
- 6) Privatisation of education adversely affects marginalised communities and increases discrimination.
- 7) It was noted that the section on the vision and objectives of education, forming part of the Preamble of the document, is not yet written up – this is an essential section which is critical for a full understanding of the intentions and framework of the document. It should also define the responsibilities and accountability of the government in providing education.

Participants also emphasised that in the Indian context, there are already existing norms for regulating private schools, especially under the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. The issue has been the uneven implementation of these regulatory provisions. Further, the participants observed the rise in the number of private religious and minority schools. As these schools do not fall under the RTE Act, no regulation and monitoring are possible from the government. In conclusion, participants offered some caution: that in promoting and advancing the proposed Guiding Principles, care should be taken so that this instrument is not used to justify and further advance privatisation and commercialisation of education. [[BACK](#)]

Some of the main assertions emerging from the consultation were that education cannot be achieved through privatisation or through the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model and that it is the obligation of the state to build a national system of education funded by state parties, ensuring equitable and quality education to all.



ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury introduced the Human Rights Guiding Principles document highlighting the main features of the paper.

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Promoting cultural heritage and fostering cultural diversity through community learning centres

National Review Seminar on Community Learning Centres

6 April 2018, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

By Batjargal Batkhuyag, Mongolian Education Alliance (MEA), and ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing East Asia



Batjargal Batkhuyag (L), ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia, participated in a UNESCO National Review Seminar on Community Learning Centres. The event was held in partnership with ASPBAE.

The seminar served as a platform to discuss strategies, sustainability, policy frameworks, institutional capacities, and structural issues to strengthen the delivery of quality non-formal education programmes.

The UNESCO Beijing office, through its culture and education units, and partnering with ASPBAE, organised a National Review Seminar on Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in collaboration with the UNESCO National Commission of Mongolia. Batjargal Batkhuyag, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia, participated in the event along with ASPBAE's members who shared their experiences in youth and adult education and learning and lessons on non-formal education linked to CLCs.

CLCs are effective delivery mechanisms for lifelong learning and skills training in urban and rural areas and are common and accessible for people in local communities. The vision of lifelong learning is clearly stated in Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Agenda, which aims to, “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Non-formal education programmes delivered in CLCs have also been highlighted in the 2010 Belem Framework for Action as innovative models of education delivery.

Local communities play a crucial role in protecting cultural heritage and fostering creativity through conservation and management of world heritage sites, safeguarding the heritage of communities, and supporting creativity, innovation, and the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors. In many CLCs in Asia Pacific countries, culture programmes offered at the CLCs are a major component of the centres. This seminar held in Ulaanbaatar assessed how cultural programmes can be incorporated and sustained in training and awareness programmes delivered by the CLCs.

The meeting brought together stakeholders to review the current status of CLCs to identify and review challenges, achievements and lessons learnt, the role of stakeholders, coordination, structure, management, ongoing programmes and training courses, and major target groups, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. The seminar served as a platform to discuss strategies, the sustainability of CLCs in the long run, policy frameworks, institutional capacities, and structural issues to further strengthen the delivery of quality non-formal education programmes. The seminar also addressed issues such as meeting requirements of learner's needs, identifying resource materials used in the CLCs, review for teachers and master trainers in needed in CLCs, financial resources to sustain delivery of quality training at the centres, and the operation and sustainability of existing CLCs.

The meeting served as an important opportunity for CLC representatives, officials from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sports, and researchers, non-formal educators, and cultural heritage experts to review and discuss how



Batjargal Batkhuyag made a presentation at the meeting where participants recognised the need to promote the concept of culture and development and link CLC training programmes to income generation and poverty alleviation in rural communities.

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ASPBAE's members shared their experiences in youth and adult education and learning and lessons on non-formal education linked to CLCs.

CLCs can play a significant role in promoting and protecting cultural heritage and fostering cultural diversity. Participants at the meeting recognised the need to promote the concept of culture and development and link CLC training programmes to income generation and poverty alleviation in rural communities. [\[BACK\]](#)

Addressing imbalances in education opportunity and bringing lifelong learning to centre stage in Australia

National Lifelong Learning Summit

17 April 2018, Melbourne, Australia



L-R: Jose Roberto Guevara; RMIT University (Australia) and Immediate Past President of ASPBAE; Bernie Lovegrove, Executive Director, ASPBAE Australia; Sandy Morrison, Waikato University (New Zealand) and President of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE); Kazi Rafikul Alam, President, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Bangladesh) - at the National Lifelong Learning Summit in Melbourne.

A National Lifelong Learning Summit was held in Melbourne, organised by ASPBAE member, Adult Learning Australia (ALA).

Jenny Macaffer, CEO of ALA, introduced the Summit, indicating that the purpose of the event was to draw attention to the current national imbalances in education opportunity and to bring lifelong learning into centre stage. Key starting points were that people have a right to accessible and affordable education throughout their lives and that there needs to be equality of learning opportunity. Yet the reality in Australia is that inequality, disadvantage, and poverty are on the rise.

Sandra Morrison, President of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), Associate Professor, University of Waikato, and former ASPBAE President, provided an international perspective on lifelong learning. She drew on the characteristics of the chameleon, the symbol of the event, to highlight key qualities required of governments and institutions, such as the capacity to change according to circumstances and context, the capacity to renew and grow, and the capacity to hold onto what is truly important.

A national perspective was provided by Tony Dreise, Indigenous scholar from the Australian National University. He highlighted a '*gaping hole in the nation's heart*' that Australia needs a national lifelong learning policy now, as a key means of addressing inequality.



Sandy Morrison, ICAE President, addressing the national summit where she provided an international perspective on lifelong learning.

The multi-stakeholder Summit consisted of some 60 participants including many CEOs and Board members of key Australian social sector organisations such as the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), charities, the private sector Australian Industry Group, academics, and the Australian Local Government Association. Immediate Past ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, and Bruce Wilson from RMIT University participated, along with ASPBAE's Bernie Lovegrove.

Summit participants wrestled with questions such as -

- How to get lifelong learning into the public's awareness and consciousness of senior policymakers and other influential opinion leaders?
- How can lifelong learning be put on the agenda when the political debate is dominated by formal education and training?

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The purpose of the summit was to draw attention to the current national imbalances in education opportunity and to bring lifelong learning into centre stage in Australia.

- How can we build stronger lifelong learning partnerships across government, business, and community?

Another welcome visitor to the event was Kazi Rafiqul Alam, former ASPBAE Executive Council Member and President of the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Bangladesh, also an ASPBAE member.

ALA intends to draw on the outcomes of the Summit which will feed into a paper that it will present to the Federal Government later in 2018. [\[BACK\]](#)

Supporting Alternative Learning Systems in Pakistan

24 April 2018, Lahore, Pakistan



A regional conference on Alternate Learning Systems (ALS) was held in Lahore to review the Alternative Learning Programme in Punjab.

25 million children are out of school in Pakistan and 60 million adults remain illiterate. Education must be given priority to ensure girls and boys, especially marginalised girls, are in school and that education caters to the learning needs of all people.

Alternate Learning Systems (ALS) are an effective way of reaching out to large sections of society. In this regard, a regional conference on ALS was held in Lahore to review the Alternative Learning Programme in Punjab. UNESCO, UNICEF, civil society organisations, representatives of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and educationalists representing Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Pakistan participated in the meeting.

The main discussions at the meeting focused on the importance of ALS and how Pakistan can provide such learning systems to those most in need. Other discussions were centered around how ALS provides a flexible route to education for those to whom access to formal education is denied.



Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman (L), Chairperson, Bunyad Foundation (and former ASPBAE Executive Council member), elaborated on ALS to include flexible methodologies, intensive learning of literacy and numeracy, and relevant learning content.

Addressing the regional conference, Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman, Chairperson, Bunyad Foundation (and former ASPBAE Executive Council member) elaborated on ALS to include flexible methodologies, intensive learning of literacy and numeracy, relevant learning content, learning to learn, civic education, problem solving, and equivalence to existing formal schooling. She highlighted that the unreached included children in poverty, girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, refugees, children living in post-conflict settings, and immigrants/internally displaced children. Shaheen further addressed the issue of responding to the diverse interests and needs of children and stressed that flexible methodologies relate to pedagogies developed for ALS schools and centres, learning environments, languages, and working hours. She stressed that appropriate approaches to ALS (schooling, tutoring, and community learning centres) include distance learning and learning on weekends and evenings. Shaheen also spoke of the advantages of small intensive classes and individual learning programmes that are available in non-formal centres.

Bunyad Foundation, an ASPBAE member based in Lahore, provides technical support to the Non-Formal Basic Education and Literacy Department of the Government of Punjab (Pakistan) for implementing ALS initiatives in the province.

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Bunyard Foundation provides technical support to the Government of Punjab for implementing ALS initiatives.

Some of the programme initiatives include - Enrollment and Retention of Out-of-School children in Public Schools; Adult Education and Vocational Skills; Encouraging Lifelong Learning; Post-Literacy through Mobile Phones; and Digital Hub for Rural Connectivity, Post Literacy & Lifelong learning. [\[BACK\]](#)



ASPBAE's Peter King (R) with KOBLE Coordinator, Shirley Abraham, in Port Vila.

Coalition in Vanuatu becomes a member of Local Education Group (LEG)

16-20 April 2018, Port Vila, Vanuatu

The national education coalition in Vanuatu, Kolisen Blong Leftemap Edukesen (KOBLE), has been officially invited by the Government to be a member of the LEG (Local Education Group, formerly the Education Partners Group). This invitation was extended during a visit by ASPBAE's Peter King in Port Vila.

During the visit, Peter met with the KOBLE Coordinator, Shirley Abraham, Finance Officer, Jack Joseph, and with the KOBLE Board. He and Shirley met with senior officials in the Ministry of Education and Training - Jesse Dick, Director-General, and Serge Lewawa, Director of the Policy and Planning Division. The meetings were fruitful, since apart from being invited to participate in the LEG, Shirley and staff were also promised cooperation from the Research and Statistics Department and an open door to Ministry staff.

An area of contention amongst many issues in Vanuatu is Education Language Policy, and the use of Bislama (a Pijin English) and vernacular languages (mother tongue). The use of mother tongue in early years and primary up to Year 4 has been supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Vanuatu's major education aid donor and main funder of the Vanuatu Education Support Program (VESP), also supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), New Zealand.

Whilst anecdotal evidence shows the introduction of mother tongue has sparked a huge improvement in student participation in the classroom, it is too early to tell of its impact on international language learning. The issues are further complicated by Vanuatu having three official languages - French, English, and Bislama.

Another major education issue is overcrowding in primary schools, and the unwillingness of schools to consider alternatives for managing the numbers. Furthermore, DFAT were also considering the donation of iPads to schools to increase teacher resources. However, there is some concern that this measure needs to be carefully evaluated as a tool in the Vanuatu context, including issues such as the cost of maintenance, replacement, access to the internet, and even power supplies.

In 2018 KOBLE will carry out research into current issues in schools in Vanuatu, looking at the level and use of school grants, and highlighting good approaches to inclusion of children living with disabilities. At the same time, it will take the opportunity to learn more about the impact of mother tongue teaching and the involvement and opinion of school communities.



In 2018, KOBLE will assess the impact of mother tongue teaching and the involvement and opinion of school communities.

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Another major education issue in Vanuatu is overcrowding in primary schools, and the unwillingness of schools to consider alternatives for managing the numbers.

KOBLE is keen to involve youth in education issues, and to provide training opportunities for emerging youth leaders.

Peter and Shirley also met with staff of the two major youth civil society organisations in Vanuatu, Wan Smolbag and Youth Challenge Vanuatu (YCV), to discuss their involvement in Youth Action Research in Vanuatu, and a training organised by ASPBAE which is scheduled for mid-June. Nelly Willie, Director of YCV, was enthusiastic, promising involvement.

Fifteen young participants from three communities in Vanuatu and staff representatives of KOBLE and participating member CSOs will receive training in the processes of youth-led action research in Vanuatu, and training to enhance their skills to lead the research. [\[BACK\]](#)

Firming up plans and advocacy strategies for 2018 with the education alliance in Tajikistan

24-25 April 2018, Dushanbe, Tajikistan



The purpose of the ASPBAE-organised advocacy workshop in Dushanbe was to deepen knowledge and understanding of civil society engagement in education policy processes and to agree strategies and formulate an advocacy plan for 2018.

ASPBAE organised a capacity support visit and an advocacy workshop in Dushanbe with members of the Alliance of CSOs in Tajikistan for Education. The objectives of the workshop were to deepen knowledge and understanding of civil society engagement in education policy processes and to agree strategies and formulate an advocacy plan for 2018. The workshop assessed the experience of members of the Alliance in implementing activities over the last several months.

Alliance members shared their strategies, key advocacy outcomes, and challenges in delivering recent programmes. This was followed by discussions on the institutionalisation and formalisation of the Alliance. ASPBAE's Helen Dabu facilitated the conversation and emphasised the basic principles for the formation of an Alliance. She explained that the success of an Alliance depends on mutual trust, cooperation, and commitment towards larger goals. Participants shared their experiences and challenges in engaging with other national networks. Members agreed that the Adult Education Association of Tajikistan (AEAT) would be the lead agency of the Alliance for 2018 and will be responsible for coordination and ensuring quality and timely implementation of programmes.

ASPBAE's Helen Dabu facilitated discussions on the institutionalisation and formalisation of the Alliance and emphasised the basic principles for such an initiative. ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury facilitated a session on reviewing plans and strategies of the alliance.

ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury facilitated a session where each of the policy targets was discussed and activities were revisited. It was agreed that members will learn from other coalitions through exposure visits and expand awareness building programmes on inclusive education at the provincial level.

The other significant aspect of interacting with education civil society organisations in Tajikistan was the opportunity to explore membership expansion for ASPBAE in Central Asia. Helen and Susmita met NGOs working in different sectors such as gender equality and women's empowerment, people with difficult circumstances, and young people and shared information about ASPBAE and what it means to be an ASPBAE member. Susmita visited Khujand province where she met with two Alliance members, ASTI and Microinvest, and further discussed Alliance activities in the province. [\[BACK\]](#)

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Adult education practitioners and advocates talk about inclusion and diversity at ICAE Virtual Seminar

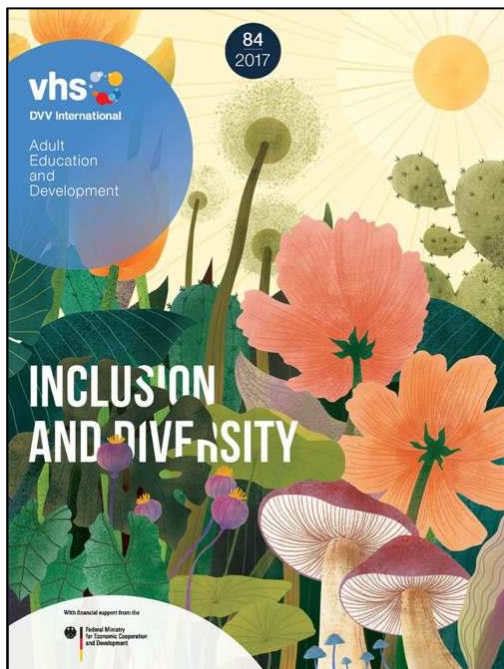


Through virtual seminars, ICAE, in cooperation with DVV International, aims to promote a debate and dialogue on selected articles from DVV International's journal *Adult Education and Development* (AED).

The [International Council for Adult Education](http://www.icae2.org) (ICAE) continues to inspire dialog, exchange of ideas and critical reflection on highly relevant topics in adult education. Through [virtual seminars](#), ICAE, in cooperation with DVV International, aims to promote a debate and dialogue on selected articles from DVV International's journal *Adult Education and Development*. This offers the chance to discuss the topics raised in the print issue in a virtual seminar and to go deeper and broaden the analysis. It creates a virtual space as an opportunity to share experiences from different regions and contexts, and to inspire new initiatives.

In the latest issue of *Adult Education and Development* (AED), authors from all over the world discussed the many facets of "inclusion and diversity". They wrote about their own identity, discussed the changes needed to create inclusive societies and adult education systems, and presented concrete "inclusive" methods of adult education.

Inclusion and diversity are two sides of the same coin. Inclusion can only succeed if we recognise our differences – our diversity – and use them constructively. But how can we prevent social exclusion and enable all people to participate in society? What contribution can adult education make? Which learning approaches, programmes, and institutions are needed to create an inclusive (adult) education system? And what does "inclusive" teaching actually mean? These were some of the questions raised in this year's issue of AED.



Meenu Vadera, ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing South and Central Asia, urged that a stronger inclusion of the understanding of what power is and how it operates should be at the centre of any discussion on diversity and inclusion.

Participating in the seminar, ASPBAE Past President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, [commented on the article](#), "Inclusion on stage: A Zambian theatre case". Robbie noted that the stories contained in the article established a "strong argument regarding the dangers of *Theatre for Development* (TfD) becoming too narrowly focused on the form – where the emphasis becomes only about the performance, and the educational purpose is overshadowed by the perceived need for entertainment and spectacle." He suggested that TfD practitioners need to engage with sponsors (not just their resources) and the audience (not just to entertain), to bring about empowerment.

Meenu Vadera of Azad Foundation (India), and ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing South and Central Asia, [commented on the article](#), "A small word of caution... that the discourse on diversity and inclusion could easily be taken out of its political context by focusing far too much on individual differences. It is important, to remember that the diversity issues that need most addressing are those that are structural. That it's not just that people are different, but that there exist definite power relations that ensures the difference is preserved and maintained to the benefit of few. That many of these differences overlap and the those who live on multiple inter-sectionality of these differences are much more vulnerable than others. A stronger inclusion of the understanding of what power is and how it operates should really be at the centre of any discussion on diversity and inclusion."

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Sandy Morrison, ICAE President and former ASPBAE President, stressed that inclusion and diversity are two sides of the same coin and that inclusion can only succeed if we recognise our differences or our diversities.

In her [closing remarks](#) at the virtual seminar, Sandy Morrison, ICAE President and former ASPBAE President, stressed that inclusion and diversity are two sides of the same coin and that inclusion can only succeed if we recognise our differences or our diversities. She highlighted some assertions emerging from the articles in the AED Journal –

1. That our interactions and relationships take place in a climate of mutual respect for others, including culture, religion, life choices, sexual orientation, life directing values, and ethnicity.
2. That we have respect for the individual and also the collective grouping to which they belong in the community and the knowledge and expertise that emerges from that community's efforts.
3. That our work as adult educators is to create space so that equitable outcomes can be achieved which will uphold the cohesiveness of society.

You can find the articles in this issue of the AED journal on 'Inclusion and Diversity' by clicking [here](#). [\[BACK\]](#)



Former head of DVV International, Heribert Hinzen, participated in the Conference.

Promoting knowledge, abilities, and skills in adult education processes

Fifth International Conference on Adult Education - CIEA 2018

25-28 April 2018, Iasi, Romania; Chisinau, Moldova

The International Conference on Adult Education, organised every four years, is a forum for exchanging information in the scientific, practical, and legislative areas of education, and presenting results of research in the field of continuing and adult education.

This year, the [Fifth International Conference on Adult Education](#) was held in Romania and Moldova with the theme, '*Education for values – continuity and context*'. More than 100 representatives from Academia, the political arena, and civil society from roughly 13 European countries – from the EU and Eastern neighbours – discussed questions related to both tried-and-tested as well as innovative strategies and policies for value-based adult education, and its practical implementation, in a variety of contexts.

The international debate on values in education has become stronger since priority was allotted in decision making, legislation, and educational funding to promoting knowledge, abilities, and skills, as against forming attitudes and values. Participants of the Conference agreed that this shortcoming needed to be countered.

A keynote speech at the opening event entitled "Skills and values in international commitments" revealed how differently the two components are also entrenched in important global adult education processes and concepts such as the CONFINTEA process or the global sustainability goals.

DVV International organised three workshops in Chisinau on the following topics as part of the conference - (1) Adult Education Centres: their role and function for



ASPBAE President from 1974-1985, Chris Duke, participated in the International Conference in Moldova.

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The State University of Moldova presented an Honorary Doctorate to Heribert Hinzen for his service over several decades to adult education and lifelong learning.

development and innovation; (2) The Sustainability Goals of the Agenda 2030 for strengthening values and skills; (3) Learning cities and creative economies.

Honorary Doctorate presented to former head of DVV International, Heribert Hinzen

The State University of Moldova presented an Honorary Doctorate to the former head of DVV International's Institute, Heribert Hinzen, before the conference on 24 April 2018. The Dean of the Faculty of Educational Science pointed to the special service rendered by Heribert over several decades for international adult education and lifelong learning.

In a subsequent open lecture on '100 years of Adult Education Centres – 50 years of DVV International', attended by students and teachers at the State University of Moldova, Heribert presented a timeline of the history, present, and future, as well as global goals and activities in adult education and development.

Click [here](#) for Heribert Hinzen's speech in the Senate. [\[BACK\]](#)

Celebrating Change, Recognising Diversity

2nd Martha Farrell Award Ceremony

25 April 2018, New Delhi, India



Two winners of the second Martha Farrell Award for Excellence in Women's Empowerment were felicitated for their courage and commitment in their work.

Martha Farrell was a passionate civil society leader, renowned and respected for her work on women's rights, gender equality, and adult education. Martha was an integral part of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia ([PRIA](#)), an ASPBAE member. She was among 14 people killed in a terrorist attack on a guest house in Kabul, Afghanistan, on 13 May 2015.

The [Martha Farrell Foundation](#) (MFF), [The Martha Farrell Memorial Fellowship](#), and [Martha Farrell Award for Excellence in Women's Empowerment](#) have been set up to carry forward her pioneering work on gender mainstreaming and adult education, with the overall goal of achieving gender equality in India and around the world. The Foundation supports targeted and practical interventions in areas relevant to her work. This includes gender mainstreaming, gender equality, preventing sexual harassment and violence against women, and continuing education.

Two winners of the second Martha Farrell Award for Excellence in Women's Empowerment were felicitated for their courage and commitment at Nehru Memorial Auditorium in Teen Murti Bhawan, New Delhi. The ceremony was organised by PRIA.

The 2nd Martha Farrell Award Ceremony began with a short film on the [Martha Farrell Foundation](#) (MFF), which has been carrying forward Martha Farrell's spirit and legacy by advancing her pioneering work on gender mainstreaming.

"Being a Kashmiri woman, my work has often been subjected to ridicule, censorship, and indifference. This award will further help me in amplifying the voices of marginalised Kashmiri women", said Nadiya Shafi, the winner in the category of 'Most Promising Individual'. Nadiya is a video correspondent from

Martha Farrell was a passionate civil society leader, renowned and respected for her work on women's rights, gender equality, and adult education. She was an integral part of PRIA, an ASPBAE member in India.

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The Martha Farrell Foundation supports targeted and practical interventions in issues such as gender mainstreaming, gender equality, preventing sexual harassment and violence against women, and continuing education.



The Martha Farrell Foundation has been carrying forward Martha's commitment to work with men and boys to change gendered power relationships.

Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, who was selected by the jury from a pool of 82 nominations.

"Since 1994, we have been facilitating women-led organised action, so that these women become leaders and also empower other women in their communities. We thank Martha Farrell Award for recognising our efforts and we will continue to work towards Martha's dream of a gender-just society", said Malti Sagne from Resource and Support Centre for Development (RSCD) in Maharashtra, the winner in the category of 'Best Organisation for Gender Equality'. Chosen as the winner from 65 nominations, RSCD is a 17-year-old network campaign organisation that promotes women's political participation at the grassroots level, while also ensuring women have an equal voice within the organisation.

The Foundation has been carrying forward Martha's commitment to work with men and boys to change gendered power relationships. This was highlighted in these Awards function through a conversation between Suheil Farrell Tandon, Executive Director, MFF, Rizwan Adatia, Founder and Chairperson, Rizwan Adatia Foundation, and Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India.

"We cannot just limit our activism to protest marches. We have to practice what we preach. If men really stand for gender equality, then they have to practice it in their everyday lives, through simple everyday actions. This might also mean that we will have to challenge what our families and friends believe and practice", said Suheil Farrell Tandon.

The ceremony concluded with a soulful performance from [Trippy Sama](#), World Music Project, which celebrated the spirit and passion of PRIA's gender champions.

This write-up is drawn from an article appearing on the [PRIA website](#). [BACK]

The Ups and Downs of Tiers: Measuring SDG Progress

Global Policy Watch paper

April 2018

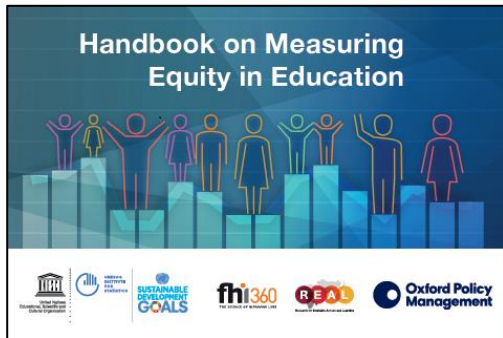


A paper by Global Policy Watch, '[The Ups and Downs of Tiers: Measuring SDG Progress](#)', comments on the ups and downs of SDG indicators among the tiers with a focus on the substantial number of indicators lacking progress, including some that concern the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be reviewed in 2018 and 2019. It also introduces some of the possible new indicators being considered. In addition to observations on the progress regarding the tiers and indicators, it looks briefly at some challenges for national statistical offices (NSOs) going forward, notably with regard to capacity building, engaging with the private sector, and big data and linking indicators to policy making. [BACK]

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

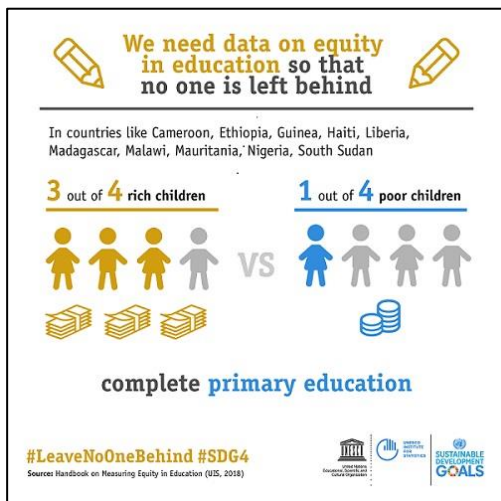
April 2018

www.aspbae.org



The Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education provides practical guidance on the calculation and interpretation of indicators designed to target the most disadvantaged groups.

The new handbook has been inspired by the urgent need to position educational equity at the heart of global, national, and local agendas to promote access and learning for all children, young people, and adults.



The handbook examines government spending on education to reveal who benefits, who misses out, and how resources could be redistributed to promote equity.

UNESCO Institute of Statistics releases Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education

3 April 2018

A new report shows how countries can measure the education progress of the most marginalised populations to ensure no one is left behind. Sustainable Development Goal 4 ([SDG 4](#)) calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all, spanning not only gender parity in learning but also equitable educational opportunities for persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, disadvantaged children and others who are at risk of exclusion from education. Yet today, these groups are extremely difficult to track because they are often invisible in education data.

The new [Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education](#), produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics ([UIS](#)), the [FHI 360 Education Policy Data Centre](#), [Oxford Policy Management](#), and the Research for Equitable Access and Learning ([REAL](#)) Centre at the University of Cambridge, provides practical guidance on the calculation and interpretation of indicators designed to target the most disadvantaged groups. It is intended for anyone involved in the measurement and monitoring of equity in education, especially those concerned with national policymaking. It addresses the current knowledge gaps and provides a conceptual framework to measure equity in learning, drawing on examples of equity measurement across 75 national education systems.

The handbook explains what it means to measure equity in learning, recognising that equity itself is a political issue and cannot be isolated from political choices. It focuses on two key principles – impartiality and equality of condition.

The handbook also examines government spending on education to reveal who benefits, who misses out, and how resources could be redistributed to promote equity. It points out that in many countries, the children and young people who are the hardest to reach are often the last to benefit from government spending. It is simply more expensive to ensure their quality education, given the cost of measures to tackle the root causes of their disadvantage, from poverty to discrimination – and this should inform the distribution of resources.

While equal funding means the same amount of money for each student or school, equitable funding means additional resources for the most disadvantaged children to ensure that every child can enjoy the same educational opportunities. As the handbook argues, progress towards SDG 4 demands the equitable distribution of resources within education systems, with the most disadvantaged receiving the largest share of government resources and paying the smallest share from their own pockets.

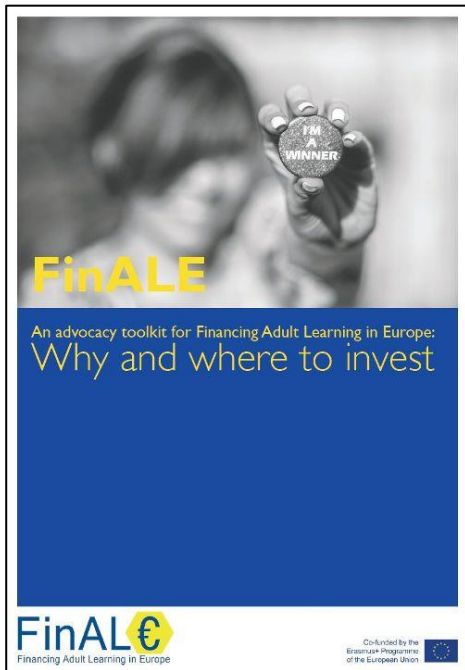
The new handbook has been inspired by the urgent need to position educational equity at the heart of global, national, and local agendas to promote access and learning for all children, young people, and adults.

This write-up is a reproduction of an article appearing on the [UIS website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

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European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) produces advocacy toolkit for financing adult learning in Europe

FinALE is a project of the [European Association for the Education of Adults](http://www.eaea.eu) that aims at analysing the financing of adult education. The main objective is to monitor, analyse, and improve adult education policies and mechanisms in funding adult education.

The Finale project brought together nine partners from eight European countries. Over a period of two years, they analysed existing funding opportunities and developed indicators for the financing of adult education and made recommendations for ensuring sustainable funding in the future. The [FinALE Advocacy Toolkit](#) brings together all research and papers that were produced by the project partners, and the [Executive Summary](#) presents the main outcomes in a compact way to anyone who is interested in the issue of financing adult education.

This article is based on information available on the [EAEA website](http://www.eaea.eu). [\[BACK\]](#)

WATCH: Interview of David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid



David Archer (R), Head of Education, ActionAid.

David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid, was interviewed at the [Global Education and Skills Forum](#) held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, by President and Editor-in-Chief of Devex, Raj Kumar. The interview was about key issues related to the financing of education globally. Where are we following the GPE replenishment? Should the education sector feel envious of the health sector? How can we secure more sustainable financing for education? What is the role of domestic resource mobilisation? What issues do we not talk about enough? Click [here](#) to view the 10-minute interview on YouTube. [\[BACK\]](#)

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