

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

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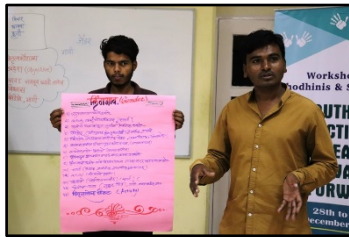


**Ensuring sustainability of Youth-led Action Research (YAR) in the Philippines through continuous training and innovate research**

[Full article](#)



**ASPBAE conducts first on-line Youth-led Action Research (YAR) training with its member, CED Sri Lanka - [Full article](#)**



**Young researchers in India identify training materials for Youth-led Action Research (YAR) e-manual**

[Full article](#)



**Family Literacy Team of the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines, holds Third Postgraduate e-Forum on Adult Education - [Full article](#)**



**EDUCATION NEWS AND VIEWS**

**16 days of activism against gender-based violence: Schools are part of the solution - [Full article](#)**

## Shaping ASPBAE's vision for the future

### Regional Strategic Planning Workshop

ASPBAE's Regional Strategic Planning Workshop was the first to be organised virtually in ASPBAE's history of strategic planning processes. The discussions were aimed at informing and shaping ASPBAE's strategic directions for 2021-2024, as part of ASPBAE's 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. - [Read more](#)

## GPE Board approves new Strategic Plan, Operating Model, and Financing and Funding Framework for 2021-2025

The Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) held its regular meeting where it approved the GPE Strategic Plan Narrative, the new GPE Operating Model, and its Financing and Funding Framework (FFF). - [Read more](#)

## DVV virtual conference on professionalisation of Adult Learning and Education (ALE): The role of online resources

This virtual conference by DVV International presented some of the best practices of online learning products from Europe and Asia aimed at reaching out to various communities. - [Read more](#)

## ASPBAE participates in strategising meetings of the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC) to build synergies and forge new collaborations

A series of five virtual meetings was organised by the PEHRC to gather members and take stock of the progress as a Consortium since the last global meeting in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in 2019.

[Read more](#)

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

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## Member of the Month

### **Educo, Philippines**

Educo is a global development NGO with over 25 years' experience acting in favour of children and in defence of their rights, especially the right to equitable, quality education.

Educo develops social projects in Spain, Africa, America and Asia through which children and adults participate in promoting just and equitable societies that guarantee their rights and wellbeing.

Educo works in partnership with schools, communities and local governments.

## Photo of the Month



This year's Human Rights Day (10 Dec.) theme - *Recover Better: Stand Up for Human Rights* - related to the COVID-19 pandemic and focussed on the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts.

## ASPBAE Lens

ASPBAE dedicates this space in the Bulletin to showcase photos its staff have taken to feature their perception of life around them, the interesting and inspiring moments they observe, and imagery they capture that reflect education and lifelong learning in different ways. In this edition of the Bulletin, we feature a photo taken by Bernie Lovegrove, ASPBAE's Asia Pacific Education Out Loud (EOL) Regional Coordinator.

### **Bernie Lovegrove**

ASPBAE's Asia Pacific Education Out Loud (EOL) Regional Coordinator





# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

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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 UNESCO's efforts in shining a spotlight on the role of education in ending gender-based violence.

### **16 days of activism against gender-based violence: Schools are part of the solution**



*By Stefania Giannini, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education*

The average student spends more than 1,000 hours at school every year. For most, these years are spent in a safe environment, surrounded by supportive teachers and peers. But many aren't so lucky. According to UNESCO's research, one in three students has been bullied by their peers at school at least once in the last month and a similar proportion are affected by physical violence.

While there are many types of school violence, and an equal number of reasons inciting it, gender plays a key role in why, and how, it unfolds. The latest figures from the World Bank show that each year, more than 700 million women are victims of physical and/or sexual violence. Analysis by [Together for Girls](#) found that violence in schools is more common in countries where a larger proportion of young people condone harmful gender norms and attitudes.

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



As this year's 16 days of activism against gender-based violence draws to a close, we reflect on how the gender-based violence that plays out in the broader community is mirrored in schools. And, we ask ourselves, how can we shift the gender and social norms so firmly entrenched in our lives as a means of addressing school-related gender-based violence?

## Positive social change through transformative education

Just as schools can be places where patterns of gender-based violence in broader society play out, they can also be a site in which norms can be challenged.

Increasingly we hear about the importance of transformative learning, 21st century skills and fostering a sense of global citizenship. Education systems recognize that schools are not simply about the transfer of academic knowledge, but about providing learners with the competencies to contribute to a more just, equal and peaceful world. [Target 4.7 within the Sustainable Development Goals](#) speaks of this importance, positioning education as central to fostering the citizens needed to contribute to the 2030 agenda.

There is an effort to develop and implement different forms of transformative education, under themes such as global citizenship education, comprehensive sexuality education, education for sustainable development, and increasingly, violence prevention education. The challenge ahead is to identify good practices in these areas and use those to reform education systems.

The success of violence prevention education, and in fact all forms of transformative education, relies on changes in school policies and curricula, as well as a shift in the mindset of teachers and their pedagogical practice. This means recognizing the importance of content that goes beyond traditional subjects. Such programmes are only effective when taught well and yet they can be [a challenging space for teachers](#).



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



UNESCO's experience of implementing the [Connect with Respect](#) violence prevention programme in five countries in east and southern Africa and the Asia-Pacific sheds some light on this. The programme involves training of teachers in a curriculum tool that aims to foster critical thinking, promote gender equal attitudes and develop help-seeking skills in learners.

The pilot interventions show promising results in shifting harmful gender norms and attitudes in both teachers and learners. Teachers spoke about how the process of introspection had changed them and reaffirmed their thinking about protecting learners from harm.

Yet they also told us about the challenges in taking such a programme on. Some found it difficult to find space in an already stretched curriculum. Others found the teaching methods— learner-centred approaches that make the programme effective – challenging to adopt. For many, talking about issues such as gender and violence is sensitive in their local context.

Beyond the classroom, teachers also told us of the need to strengthen the whole school approach to addressing gender-based violence, a holistic approach that involves the broader school community and education sector. This includes strong reporting mechanisms and links to services where students can be referred as needed. We are starting to see examples of how this 'whole school' vision of safety can be made real, like in Zimbabwe where [teachers are working with the whole school community](#) to eliminate violence.

## Why is this work important in the context of COVID-19?

Widespread school closures have presented new challenges for preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Quarantines and other social distancing measures linked to COVID-19 resulted in increased reports of violence against children, sexual exploitation and domestic violence. On re-opening, schools play a crucial role in [providing a safe learning environment and supporting the wellbeing of returning learners](#).

Investment in transformative learning is an investment in student wellbeing. The kinds of skills they develop in such programmes are central to their building the resilience to cope with threat and uncertainly.

## Using the power of collective action to find solutions

We know that we are not alone at UNESCO is shining a spotlight on the role of education in ending gender-based violence. And we know that complex problems require complex solutions which are better tackled together. This is why we continue to invest in our partnerships with other organizations. Last month I reconfirmed UNESCO's commitment to end violence in school through the [Safe to Learn campaign](#) and to harness the evidence we have generated to support country actions. Throughout 2020 we continued to elevate our work with [UN Girls Education Initiative](#) and the 60 partners working together to #EndSRGBV - providing guidance and sharing lessons from countries around the world. The [tweets](#), [blogs](#) and online events during the 16 Days of Activism are all a powerful testimony to the wave of action and commitment to changing the status quo.

Only through collective and coordinated action to address the root causes of gender-based violence in and around schools can education systems truly 'build back better' and provide safe, inclusive learning environments for all children.

*This write-up appeared on the [UNESCO website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)*

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



The Regional Strategic Workshop aimed to deliberate and build consensus on the future priorities and directions of ASPBAE.

## Shaping ASPBAE's vision for the future

### Regional Strategic Planning Workshop

15-17 December 2020, Virtual

Calling for protection and increase of education **BUDGETS**, empowering people with skills to build **SUSTAINABLE FUTURES** and advance **HUMAN RIGHTS**, amplifying **INTER-GENERATIONAL** voices, building **INCLUSIVE** and **RESILIENT** education and **LIFELONG LEARNING** systems that advance the **FULL SDG 4 AGENDA**, supporting **TEACHERS** and **LEARNERS**, **INCLUSION** in education, challenging **ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION**, and ensuring **WOMEN** and **YOUTH** participation in decision-making were some of the messages which emerged from ASPBAE's three-day Regional Strategic Planning Workshop, the first to be organised virtually in ASPBAE's history of strategic planning processes.

Discussions at the Regional Strategic Planning Workshop were aimed at informing and shaping ASPBAE's strategic directions for 2021-2024, as part of ASPBAE's 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

The workshop, which had as its theme, '*re-IMAGINE, re-THINK, re-CREATE: Adapting to Change, Preserving the Gains, Ensuring Empowering Education and Lifelong Learning for ALL*', saw the participation of approximately 150 participants, including country voting representatives, accredited ASPBAE members, Executive Council (EC) members, staff and ASPBAE partners across the Asia Pacific and beyond the region.

### INAUGURAL AND WELCOME

The workshop began with an energizing inaugural session consisting of a cultural welcome from members representing ASPBAE's 5 sub-regions.

In her introductory remarks, ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, spoke about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on millions of people around the world and in the Asia Pacific. She stated that approximately 71 million people were pushed back to extreme poverty in 2020. The income of 1.6 billion people working in the informal economy was significantly affected, with their income estimated to have fallen by 60% in the first month of the crisis. 1.6 billion students, including hundreds of millions of children and youth, were unable to continue their learning.

However, she also spoke about hope and new opportunities emerging from the pandemic. "*The COVID context also offers some opportunities, such as widening of public policy consciousness, broader frontiers of learning and education, spaces of creativity in quality education provision that integrate home, communities and schools as arenas of teaching and learning that are relevant for children, youth and adults in meaningful and empowering ways. We need to re-think, re-imagine and re-create, adapting to change, preserving the gains and ensuring empowering education of lifelong learning for all,*" as articulated by Nani.



In her introductory remarks, ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, spoke about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on millions of people around the world and in the Asia Pacific.



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# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



The new ASPBAE Executive Council for 2021-2024 was introduced in the first day of the Strategic Planning Workshop.

## INTRODUCING THE NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, introduced the new ASPBAE Executive Council for 2021-2024 as follows:

**Sub-Region 1, South Asia:** **Meenu Vadera** (Azad Foundation, India), and **Ehsanur Rahman** (Dhaka Ahsania Mission, DAM, Bangladesh)

**Sub-Region 2, East Asia:** **Eri Yamamoto** (Shanti Volunteer Association, SVA, Japan), and **Amartuvshin Dorjsuren** ("All for Education", AFE, Mongolia)

**Sub-Region 3, Southeast Asia:** **Nguyen Thi Kim Anh** (Vietnam Association for Education for All, VAEFA, Vietnam), and **Thein Lwin** (Thinking Classroom Foundation, TCF, Myanmar)

**Sub-Region 4, South Pacific:** **Kilala Devette-Chee** (Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network, PEAN), and **Peter Clinton Isaac Foese** (Adult and Community Education, ACE, New Zealand)

**Sub-Region 5, Central Asia:** **Nasiba Mirpochoeva** (MCF MicroInvest), Tajikistan, and **Tilebaldy Uulu Eliizar** (Institute for Youth Development, IYD, Kyrgyzstan)

Maria introduced **Nani Zulminarni** as the incumbent **ASPBAE President** for the next four years and who, in that role, will also represent ASPBAE in the Executive Committee of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) as Vice President for the Asia Pacific.

## WELCOMING ASPBAE'S NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL

ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, shared that the new Secretary-General was selected after a comprehensive executive search, well-publicised advertisements and EC deliberations and assessment in 2020. She introduced Helen Dabu as the new Secretary-General effective 1 January 2021.

Helen has solid track record in advocacy, capacity building, institutional building, and networking in the region. As a lawyer, she has dedicated her professional life to championing human rights and trail-blazed ASPBAE's efforts to facilitate the formation of national education coalitions in countries where they didn't as yet exist and where ASPBAE membership and linkages were then thin. She co-managed ASPBAE's extensive capacity-building for advocacy programme. Helen currently represents civil society in the Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

In her welcome remarks, Secretary General-Designate, Helen Dabu, reaffirmed ASPBAE's fidelity to and staying strong on asserting education and lifelong learning as fundamental human right. She asserted that pursuing education and lifelong learning as a human right will help address entrenched, systemic, and intergenerational inequalities, exclusion and discrimination.

In light of the challenges and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Helen expressed that, *"We will never underestimate the long-term impact of this pandemic into our lives, into our work and how we plan. It will be part of a broader context piece we need to navigate alongside other development issues. But no matter how the context can be unsettling and challenging, ASPBAE's fundamentals are strong. We will never be afraid to face the uncertainties and*



Helen Dabu was introduced as the new ASPBAE Secretary-General, taking over from Maria Khan. Helen reaffirmed ASPBAE's fidelity to and staying strong on asserting education and lifelong learning as fundamental human right.



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



A new ASPBAE logo was launched at the regional workshop, reflecting a more vibrant and forward-looking identity for the organisation.



A session on 'Understanding the Context to re-Imagine, re-Think, re-Create' brought together leaders in the education movement who reflected on what the context holds for the movement in the Asia Pacific.



Lalita Ramdas, former President of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), called for attention to several global trends impacting people's lives such as climate change, democracy, poverty, and rising discriminations, including violence against women.

*discomforts of change, because ASPBAE is a movement for change sustained by its broad and diverse membership in the region."*

Helen also emphasised how the strong fundamentals built over the years by the incumbent SG, Maria Khan, will help ASPBAE weather shocks and disruptions amidst the current unsettling and challenging context.

## LAUNCHING THE NEW ASPBAE LOGO

The Regional Strategic Planning workshop was an opportunity for ASPBAE to launch its new logo, paving the way to refresh a number of ASPBAE's communication platforms and materials. The new logo reflects a more vibrant, forward-looking identity and captures ASPBAE's aim of continuing to set the bar high in education & lifelong learning. It officially comes in to use on 1 January 2021.

The design swaps the previous logo with more vibrant green-blue colours and yet, retains a part of the older version. Taking this approach of refreshing and also carrying forward from the past, the new logo brings with it a design more in line with ASPBAE's commitment to its work in a fast-changing world, and in diverse development and education contexts regionally and globally. With this, ASPBAE aims to sustain its strong presence and continue working closely with its members, partners, and donors to pursue its education and lifelong learning agenda.

## SETTING THE CONTEXT

Deliberations at the workshop began with a session on 'Understanding the Context to re-Imagine, re-Think, re-Create'. Chaired by ASPBAE Secretary General, Maria Khan, the session brought together several leaders in the education movement who each reflected on what the context holds for the education movement in the Asia Pacific and the appropriate strategies that will advance the movement's aspirations forward.

Lalita Ramdas, former President of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and former Chairperson of Greenpeace International, proposed attention to five critical global trends impacting people's lives - *socio-ecological* (climate change, global energy transition), *socio-technological* (digital revolution, artificial intelligence), *socio-political* (democracy, fascism, trampling of human rights), *socio-economic* (growing concentration of wealth on a few, deepening global poverty), and *socio-cultural* (patriarchy, religious and other fundamentalisms, rising discriminations based on race, caste and gender, violence against women).

Lalita cited three contemporary examples of hope and optimism for the future, where citizens have united in protest and resistance - Black Lives Matter movement (USA); nation-wide protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act in India; and farmers coming together in North India to challenge unjust laws, arbitrarily introduced, and which endangers their livelihoods and renders them more vulnerable to corporate interests.



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



**Refat Sabbah, President of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), stressed the importance of attention to education financing in the context of COVID-19.**

Refat Sabbah, President of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), stressed the importance of attention to education financing in the context of COVID-19. *"The pandemic will push our education movement ten years back if we don't address the most urgent concern of financing of education"*, he cautioned. He also spoke about the threat of increasing involvement of the private sector in education in these pandemic times as tools and technology are a necessity for virtual and online education and learning. He highlighted emerging gender issues such as girls dropping out of education due to preference given to boys to continue schooling in the pandemic, increasing cases of domestic violence and violence against women, and widespread discrimination, especially against marginalised communities.

Refat also emphasised on the plight of teachers in formal and informal sectors. They have been challenged by the digital divide and their economic wellbeing has been severely impacted by the pandemic. He concluded by saying, *"If we want to do our best in the coming years, then we have to build ourselves as a global movement. We have to believe that our work is more urgent than before"*.

*"We can overcome many issues even if half a percent of our population become changemakers"*. This was the main thesis of ASPBAE President Nani Zulminarni's contribution to the discussion. She stressed the need to support community changemakers for lifelong learning, starting from an early age. For the last 10 years, ASPBAE has been strategically and intensively working with youth-led movements for change. Those emerging from these movements can be leaders of the new generation.

Nani further highlighted the need to redefine and reconstruct new leadership for the future so that it is collective and inclusive rather than structural and dominating. She said this should be part of lifelong learning from childhood to foster leadership skills in children. This would also help young people work together, cooperate and collaborate. Lastly, she emphasised the need to enable intergenerational dialogue and learning and value each generation's contribution as each has their own interpretation and response to the context which we need to integrate in our work.

Shradha Koirala, a youth leader at the National Campaign for Education (NCE), Nepal highlighted the need for platforms to connect young people and bring their collective thinking and creative skills together to redefine goals and strategies on the right to education and ensure that interventions are contextual, impactful, and relevant.

Shradha underscored the need for advocacy to focus on increasing investments for public education, with a special focus on youth empowerment and strengthening the teaching profession. She stressed that campaigns and movements would be more successful if concepts associated with gender equality, youth empowerment, global citizenship, and peace were integrated in political agenda.



**Shradha Koirala, a youth leader at NCE Nepal, highlighted the need for platforms to connect young people and bring their collective thinking and creative skills together to redefine goals and strategies on the right to education.**

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



**ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, reminded that education activists need to work hard to re-shape education systems to be more enabling of the transformation societies need that genuinely promotes social justice for all, sustainable development and a just peace.**

Discussions at the plenary pushed for a larger role of lifelong learning as a core strategy to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic; for ASPBAE to continue to optimise its significant reach across the region; harness the strength of CSOs to engage in shrinking democratic spaces; foster intergenerational learning; tap into indigenous knowledge; and address the narrowing down of the SDG 4 targets.

In conclusion, Shradha reiterated that, *"The COVID-19 pandemic has given us an opportunity to re-think and re-imagine what is happening to our education system and how the young generation is struggling to adjust to it. It is our generation's responsibility to make the best out of available opportunities and work towards education and learning systems that are more equitable. It is our responsibility to ensure that the young generation reaches its full potential"*.

Discussions following the reflections from the panellists pointed towards the need to push for a larger role of lifelong learning as a core strategy to address the challenges posed by COVID; for ASPBAE to continue to optimise its significant reach across the region, including to multicultural and diverse constituencies throughout the Asia Pacific and foster greater solidarity amongst its membership; harness the strength of civil society organisations (CSOs) to engage in shrinking democratic spaces; foster intergenerational learning and solidarity work, tap into indigenous knowledge systems and wisdom; and address the challenge of narrowing down of the SDG 4 targets which is seeing an increase in privatisation of education, pushing countries in greater debt and forging wider gaps in financing of public education.

In her concluding remarks at the close of the session, Maria Khan reminded that it is evident that the world is confronting multiple crises which preceded and have been aggravated by the COVID pandemic. Wars, conflicts and natural disasters made more violent by the climate crisis have remained outstanding challenges. The world is confronting a crisis of governance. Authoritarian rule is legitimised by electoral processes; fake news is systematically promoted by vested interests, challenging the ability of democratic and responsible governance to thrive and take better root. Societal divisions have been stoked for narrow political ends, targeting minority communities or those rendered inferior on the basis of gender, race, caste, religion. Protest and resistance have been increasingly criminalised and brutalised.

Education has the potential to challenge all these but education rights activists also realise that education has historically been a powerful tool to preserve the status quo and promote the narrow self-interest of those in power. Education activists need to work hard to re-shape education systems to be more enabling of the transformation societies need that genuinely promotes social justice for all, sustainable development and a just peace. There is much promise because the movement for change that has been built remains strong. It has a wide reach and has built up the capacities to integrate local, regional and global networks. It is able to foster south-south, north-south cooperation with intergenerational solidarity and unity. Future work should preserve and build on these gains.

## **DIALOGUES ON THEMATIC AREAS AND SUB-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

Giving further depth to reflections on the current context and the implications of these to ASPBAE's work, a set of parallel thematic group discussions were organised - (1) Bridging the divides in digital education and learning: experiences from advocacy and practice; (2) Advancing disability inclusive education and lifelong learning; (3) Racism and identity-based discrimination: the challenges for education; (4) Self-determination and indigenous education: perspectives from the Pacific experience; (5) Fake News and challenges to democratisation:



**Parallel thematic group discussions on issues such as bridging the digital divide, inclusive education and learning, and identity-based discrimination were held to further deepen reflections on the context and implications on ASPBAE's work.**



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



ASPBAE Executive Council (EC) member from East Asia, Batjargal Batkhuyag, was one of five EC members who shared insights and sub-regional perspectives to guide ASPBAE's work.

implications for our SDG 4.7 agenda; (6) Education Financing; (7) Artificial Intelligence and Education; (8) Advancing Adult Learning and Education (ALE) advocacy and practice in the current context; and (9) Advocating for skills for decent work of marginalised women.

The discussions elaborated on the concepts, debates and discourses in these different thematic areas, described how they manifest especially in the Asia Pacific region and concluded with recommendations for ASPBAE's future work on capacity-building, advocacy and strategic partnership building.

Finally, the context of ASPBAE's work was reviewed from the prism of its five (5) sub-regions. Select members of ASPBAE's Executive Council were invited to share sub-regional perspectives, characterising the peculiar contexts of the sub-regions they represent. EC members spoke about the development and education issues that were most pronounced in their respective contexts that ASPBAE should be cognisant of while planning its work in the next four years.

The following ASPBAE EC members shared their insights and feedback with a sub-regional lens:

- Ehsanur Rahman, EC Representative for South Asia
- Batjargal Batkhuyag, EC Representative for East Asia
- Nguyen Kim Anh, EC Representative for South East Asia
- Peter Clinton Isaac Foaese, EC Representative for South Pacific
- Nasiba Mirpochoeva, EC Representative for Central Asia

## REPORT OF THE ASPBAE SECRETARY-GENERAL (2017-2020)

Maria Khan presented the Secretary-General's report for 2017-2020. This presentation served two objectives: first, it was offered as a measure of accountability – reporting back to the ASPBAE membership, what ASPBAE had done in the last 4 years with respect to the steer the 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly offered in defining the organisation's strategic directions; and second, it was offered to inform the ongoing discussions on the strategic plans of ASPBAE – knowing the foundations ASPBAE could stand on, is essential to defining the potential, opportunities and gaps to address, moving forward.

The presentation reminded on the premises that defined the articulation of ASPBAE's current strategic plan and highlighted the milestones of ASPBAE around its four core strategies - Policy Advocacy, Leadership and Capacity Building, Building Strategic Partnerships, and Institutional Strengthening. Challenges in meeting some targets were also mentioned, including possible trajectories for ASPBAE's future work.

Elaborating on the specific experiences around ASPBAE's core strategies, small group discussions were also organised following the Secretary General's Report. These discussions focused further on propositions regarding ASPBAE's future directions, seeking members' feedback on new areas or recontextualised approaches to ASPBAE's undertakings.

Select ASPBAE Executive Council members shared sub-regional perspectives, characterising the contexts of the sub-regions they represent. They spoke about the development and education issues that were most pronounced in their respective contexts that ASPBAE should be cognisant of while planning its work in the next four years.



Maria Khan presented the Secretary-General's report for 2017-2020. The presentation reminded on the premises that defined the articulation of ASPBAE's current strategic plan and highlighted the milestones of ASPBAE around its core strategies.

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



ASPBAE Executive Council member from the South Pacific, Peter Clinton Isaac Foaese, moderated a session dedicated to hearing youth voices to inform ASPBAE's strategic thinking.

## VOICES FROM THE YOUTH

A session was dedicated to hearing youth voices to inform ASPBAE's strategic thinking. In the session, *'Recommendations from the Regional Youth Consultation'*, moderated by ASPBAE EC member from the South Pacific, Peter Clinton Isaac Foaese, the recommendations emerging from youth consultations were presented by four youth leaders – Nimesh Moneravilla, CED Sri Lanka; Kajal Boraste, Abhivyakti Media for Development (AMD) India; Vichelle Yumuya, E-Net Philippines; and Lae Santiago, ASPBAE. These were drawn from country-level youth consultations in seven countries (India, Nepal, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Philippines), which were then shared and further enriched in the discussions within the ASPBAE Regional Youth Consultation, which saw the participation of young people from 16 countries in the Asia Pacific.

The youth leaders highlighted issues of education access, inclusion, and quality of education. They spoke about the loss of livelihoods which trapped more people in a cycle of poverty. Due to the impact of the pandemic on health and mental wellbeing, there is disruption in learning of young people. They highlighted the challenge of the widening digital divide, the corporate capture of education and its implication for learning continuity.



Youth speakers called for more meaningful participation of young people in advocacy platforms, strengthening the voices of marginalised youth and reiterated ASPBAE's role in building capacities at local, national, and international levels to enable young people to be more engaged.

There was a recommendation for ASPBAE to add more value to its youth work by gaining a deeper understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on education and on the lives of young people. There is a need to identify specific needs and demands of the most marginalised youth, advocate for stronger public education that is gender responsive, greater investments in education and a meaningful dialogue on quality of education and life skills training. The youth speakers called for more meaningful participation of young people in advocacy platforms, strengthening the voices of marginalised youth and reiterated ASPBAE's role in building capacities at local, national, and international levels to enable young people to be more engaged.

## TAKING FORWARD ASPBAE'S STRATEGIES

Participants contributed to the discourse on enhancing and taking forward ASPBAE's strategic areas. Based on the strategy group reports which shared three key recommendations for each of the strategic areas that will feed into ASPBAE's strategic plan for 2021-2024, the following representatives from ASPBAE partners took turns in providing feedback and insights - (1) **Policy Advocacy** – Takafumi Miyake, Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA), Japan; (2) **Capacity Building for Advocacy** – Grant Kasowanjete, Global Campaign for Education (GCE); (3) **Capacity Building for Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Practice and Advocacy** – Uwe Gartenschlaeger, President, European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA); (4) **Youth Constituency Building** - Nelsy Lizarazo, Latin American Campaign on the Right to Education (CLADE); (5) **Gender Mainstreaming** – Nelsy Lizarazo, CLADE, wherein, Nelsy's feedback and analysis were received through a written submission after the session; (6) **Information and Communications** – Kajal Boraste, Abhivyakti Media for Development (AMD) India; (7) **Membership** – Katarina Popovic, International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). This session was moderated by ICAE President and former ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara.



Jose Roberto Guevara, President of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), moderated the session where ASPBAE partners provided feedback and insights on ASPBAE's strategic areas.



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



In closing, ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, emphasised the need to advocate for gender-just frameworks in education policies and to ensure intergenerational and intersectoral voices in the education movement.

## THE FINALE

ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and Secretary-General-Designate, Helen Dabu, offered closing remarks to the Virtual Regional Strategic Planning Workshop. Nani highlighted the need to be cognisant of emerging themes such as disability inclusive education, ethnic and indigenous education, identity-based discrimination, fight against racism, fake news and misinformation, Artificial Intelligence, and the digital divide. She stressed the need to customise strategies in the sub-regions to ensure that ASPBAE's work is relevant to their contexts. She noted the need for more spaces to promote the work of ASPBAE members and facilitate further collaboration among them. Nani strongly emphasised the need to advocate for gender-just frameworks in education policies and ensure intergenerational and intersectoral voices in the education movement.

Reflecting lessons from the writings and work of the incumbent SG, Maria Khan, Helen stressed the value of **4Ps** in ASPBAE's work as affirmed by the input of its members - Persevere, Play, Persist, and Partner – wherein, there is a need for ASPBAE to:

Secretary General-Designate, Helen Dabu, reflected on her lessons from the writings and work of the incumbent SG, Maria Khan, and stressed the value of 4Ps in ASPBAE's work as affirmed by the input of its members - Persevere, Play, Persist, and Partner.

- **Persevere** in continuing to be a movement that will hold governments to account on their responsibility to deliver the right to education and lifelong learning for all (and ALL means ALL) – ensuring attention to basic, youth and adult learning and education
- Affirm members **play** a critical role in ensuring that ASPBAE remains vibrant and relevant. ASPBAE membership outreach needs to have an **interplay** of thematic, sectoral and sub-regional approaches
- **Persist** in our bottom-up approach; ensure linkages of local to national to regional and global work in asserting the full delivery of SDG4 agenda.
- **Partner** with social movements – movements for tax justice, movements for people with disabilities, so on and so forth; That education and lifelong learning is an intergenerational agenda – voices from all generations must be heard, everyone must be engaged!



Incumbent ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (L), with ASPBAE's Anita Borkar (R) at the session where several of ASPBAE's past and present members, partners, donors, staff and friends honoured Maria's immense contribution to ASPBAE and to the education movement, to her leadership, and to the legacy she leaves behind.

In conclusion, incumbent Secretary-General, Maria Khan, reflected on her tenure of over 25 years. She expressed confidence in the rich experiences of the Executive Council and staff to carry ASPBAE's work forward effectively. She spoke with pride about the membership and reiterated that ASPBAE has withstood several challenges over the decades and will continue to reshape itself to remain relevant. *"Thank you for 25 years of your support, confidence, and friendship. It has been the honour of my lifetime to be called to serve. It has been a great ride"*, said Maria Khan as she addressed members, staff and partners for the last time as ASPBAE Secretary-General.

A farewell session took place where several of ASPBAE's past and present members, partners, donors, staff and friends all came together to honour Maria's immense contribution to ASPBAE and to the education movement, to her leadership, and to the legacy she leaves behind.

Click [here](#) to read a special edition of ASPBAE's tri-annual newsletter, *Ed-lines*, on the leadership transition in ASPBAE and tributes to Maria Khan. [[BACK](#)]





# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

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**The Board recommended, amongst others, hardwiring gender equality throughout the GPE 2021-2025 strategy.**

The CSO2 Constituency emphasised that GPE's financing schemes should not reinforce indebtedness of countries and recommended GPE work closely with developing country partners to support strategic and informed discussions to address key issues affecting education budgets, including action to expand tax revenues and address debt.



**The CSO2 constituency recommended maintaining and upholding the existing governance mechanisms in GPE which draws on the strengths of constituencies to support the Partnership.**

of key education data to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), with gender-linked and disaggregated data that demonstrate commitment to addressing gender inequalities in education. After thorough Board discussions and deliberations, the first two requirements were explicitly included in the Board decision language, while the third component will be considered as GPE Secretariat will further develop the results indicators under the Partnership's monitoring, evaluation and learning framework.

Further, through the efforts by CSOs in the Board, the importance of human rights has also been acknowledged, with the Board affirming the Coordinating Committee's decision to request that the GPE Secretariat seek expertise in 2021 to review ways to strengthen human rights principles in GPE operations and report back to the Board.

Regarding the FFF, the Board recommended, amongst others, hardwiring gender equality throughout the GPE 2021-2025 strategy. Ahead of the meeting, various donor constituencies endorsed and circulated a Joint Note, that was supported by several constituencies, including CSOs, on hardwiring gender equality throughout the GPE 2021-2025 strategy. The Board approved this process to be integrated within GPE's System Transformation Grant. Further, subject to securing at least US\$100 million in new resources (with an initial funding target of US\$ 250 million), the Board approved the creation of a thematic funding window for gender equality, including girls' education, to be used as an incentive to hardwire priorities.

Further, while the Board consensus has approved the inclusion of social or development impact bonds as a GPE innovative financing mechanism, the CSO2 constituency has requested for the recording of its NO vote on this decision in the minutes of the Board meeting given the constituency's fundamental concerns on impact bonds as a financing scheme for education.

In CSO2 Constituency's intervention in the FFF, it emphasised that GPE's financing schemes should not reinforce indebtedness of countries and recommended GPE to work closely with developing country partners to support strategic and informed discussions with Ministries of Finance which address key issues affecting education budgets, including action to expand tax revenues at country level, address debt and move away from austerity.

CSO2 also reiterated serious concerns on social or development impact bonds (SIBs/DIBs) given that it would exacerbate inequalities in education, and maintained the constituency call for its removal/exclusion in GPE's innovative financing mechanisms.

Lastly, the Board also discussed the ongoing GPE Governance Review wherein, the CSO2 constituency recommend maintaining and upholding the existing governance mechanisms in GPE which draws on the strengths of constituencies to support the Partnership. In particular, CSO2 called for the continuation of GPE constituency-based representative standing committees and ensure that working committees are empowered to conduct their tasks.

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)

The current term of GPE Board and Committee members has been extended until 19 April 2021.

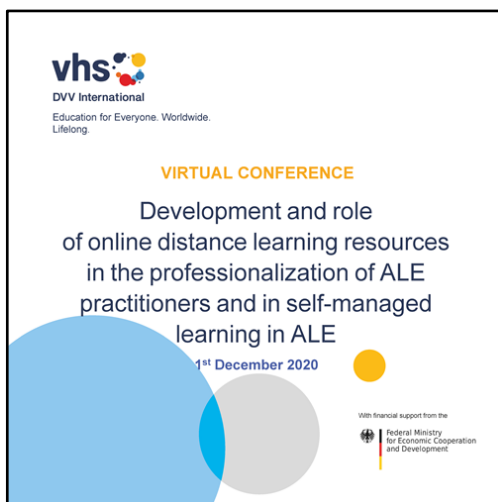
The discussions about the Governance Review will further take place in the first quarter of 2021. Linked to this, the GPE Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC) recommended to the Board to extend the mandates of the current Board and Committee members when the governance review process will be concluded. This recommendation was approved through a non-objection decision of the Board on 14 December 2020 which takes the current term of GPE Board and Committee members until 19 April 2021.

The final decisions approved by the GPE Board in this December meeting can be found [here](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

## DVV virtual conference on professionalisation of Adult Learning and Education (ALE): The role of online resources

1 December 2020, Virtual

By Ravshan Baratov, Regional Programme Manager for Central Asia, DVV International



The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed a major shift in learning realities, both in the formal and non-formal education sectors. Countries around the world had to adapt new approaches to teaching and learning. Previously, distance and online learning used to be an asset for complementary education, ensuring inclusiveness or continuous training at higher-level education. In 2020, this has become compulsory in schools, universities, and in the development sector – being the only opportunity to reach vulnerable groups of the population with training and activities aimed at mitigating the consequences of the pandemic.

Given the challenge of the rapid shift to distance and online learning, both teachers and students have struggled in terms of digital skills and competencies required to move to online education that offers quality and leaves no one behind. Furthermore, the various levels of existing digital infrastructure in different countries expose additional challenges for its application. Despite all the challenges, one must recognise that the role and development of distance and online learning has seen major boosts in accessibility and quality in certain contexts within the year. It will further gain an importance in the years to come as it opens some great opportunities in terms of diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

For reviewing and discussing current developments, DVV International organised a virtual conference on the *Development and role of online distance learning resources for the professionalisation of ALE practitioners* and especially in self-managed learning in Adult Learning and Education (ALE). The virtual event presented some of the best practices in developing online learning products from Europe and Asia aimed at reaching out to various communities. Special attention was drawn to building capacities of and encouraging adult educators to both take on the challenge of organising online learning offers and raise their methodological skills as trainers for adults.

DVV International organised a virtual conference that presented best practices in developing online learning products from Europe and Asia. Special attention was given to building capacities of and encouraging adult educators to organising online learning and enhance their skills as trainers.



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

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**Director of DVV International, Christoph Jost, highlighted the need for professional exchange to take on the challenges imposed by the new configurations and expressions of adult learning and education as informed by the current COVID context.**

The conference opened with a welcome speech by the Director of DVV International, Christoph Jost, highlighting the objective of the event and the need for professional exchange to take on the challenges imposed by the new configurations and expressions of ALE as informed by the current context. Best practices of professional ALE development programmes were represented by the recently developed Curriculum globALE Module on digital didactics for adult educators and efforts of the Adult Education Association of North-Rhein Westphalia (Germany) on proving digital education skills for its employees and trainers during the pandemic.

Best practices from Asia were highlighted through a presentation from the Korea-based Global Citizenship Education programme developed by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU/UNESCO), UNESCO Bangkok's online course on lifelong learning for service providers (government and NGOs) being currently developed for going online, and by E-Net (Philippines) and Nirantar (India), both ASPBAE members, covering their responses to the training needs of vulnerable groups during the pandemic.



**The virtual conference was a part of the Global Adult Education and Development project of DVV International which aims to further develop Curriculum GlobALE through the elaboration and introduction of digital resources.**

The concluding panel discussed pathways towards raised digital capacities and innovative formats for and by adult educators in the global context, inviting established ALE-experts to elaborate and exchange views on relevant topics to be considered and to answer questions from the audience.

The virtual conference was a part of the Global Adult Education and Development project of DVV International, '*Development of digital tools for further development of the Curriculum GlobALE (CG)*', which aims to further develop CG through the elaboration and introduction of digital resources (video lectures, instructions, and other media resources) for each module that provide further input on and guidance through important topics of the programme modules. The project utilised the platform of the virtual conference to present the project results and some of the digital outputs created.

The full recording of the virtual conference is available on [YouTube](#), with a shorter version focusing on the highlights of the event will also be made available. [\[BACK\]](#)



**The workshop on materials development for YAR Trainings was organised by ASPBAE and E-Net Philippines.**

## **Ensuring sustainability of Youth-led Action Research (YAR) through continuous training and innovate research**

5-6 December 2020, Antipolo, Philippines

By Vichelle Yumuya, E-Net Philippines

Young people from the Philippines gathered together for a workshop on material development for the Youth-led Action Research (YAR) training. The participants were YAR trainers and mentors from Youth for Nationalism and Democracy (YND) and Safe Cities Youth Theatre Advocacy Group (SCYTAG). They were joined by youth mentors from E-Net Philippines and ASPBAE.

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



The young researchers came together to reflect on their collaboration under the Youth-led Action Research (YAR) initiative and to build an evidence-based agenda for education from the perspectives of marginalised youth.

The youth, especially those in marginalised and excluded sectors, are the most effected, not just by the pandemic, but also by disasters, economic crisis, lack of education, mental health crisis, and poor reproductive health. As we approached the end of 2020, E-Net and ASPBAE believed it is important for young people to gather and reflect on their collaboration under YAR and as a platform to build evidence-based agenda for education from the perspectives of marginalised youth. Due to government regulations during the pandemic, the workshop invited only a few youth participants and safety protocols were observed.

## Reflections from the YAR Project

Usually when we talk about youth, we talk about students. The YAR project was a platform initiated to recognize the Out-of-School-Youth (OSY) sector and find out their personal circumstances and challenges. The number of OSY increased during the pandemic compared to 2016 when E-Net's YAR started. The researchers felt the need to dig deeper and find out why this is happening. When we know and understand their situation, we can collectively formulate concrete solutions that we can propose to the government.



Vichelle Yumuya of E-Net Philippines took part in the workshop where participants spoke about the challenges young people face due to the pandemic.

Knowing each young person's context is important because the reasons why people are out of school are different from one another. But in the main, the problem is the financial incapacity of their families to support them. In the Philippines, there are still additional expenses that they need to spend on school supplies, allowances, and school projects. During the pandemic, some young people dropped out because their parents lost their jobs during the pandemic. They could not afford to buy gadgets and mobile data for online learning, and were forced to go to work to help their families. Furthermore, due to the YAR project, the researchers were able to know that there are other causes as well, such as mental health problems and bullying. More and more youth in the community are experiencing anguish, depression, and, worse, thoughts of committing suicide during the pandemic. There is also an increasing number of teenage pregnancies, one of the reasons why they are dropping out of school.

## Ways forward

E-Net Philippines, in partnership with ASPBAE, will ensure the sustainability of YAR by continuous training of researchers and develop innovative ways to conduct the research. At the same time, follow-up actions, such as relief operations work initiated by young people, should be strengthened and emphasized as part of the YAR work. By doing that, we can show that young people can do something and help in the communities.



E-Net Philippines, in partnership with ASPBAE, will ensure the sustainability of YAR by continuous training of researchers and develop innovative ways to conduct the research.

For young people in the communities, the word "research" can be intimidating. This stigma should be broken by exploring and applying new ways of communicating with young people. Research work during the pandemic is limited because there is no face-to-face contact. There should be a change and re-visualization of the methodology of the research.

E-Net Philippines and ASPBAE will endeavour to work with the youth trainers on the suggestions coming out of the workshop to inform the plans for YAR in 2021.

[\[BACK\]](#)



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



## ASPBAE conducts first on-line Youth-led Action Research (YAR) training with its member, CED Sri Lanka

29-30 December 2020, Virtual

ASPBAE conducted its first online training with the Coalition for Educational Development (CED), Sri Lanka, that was part of ASPBAE's Youth-led Action Research (YAR) initiative.

ASPBAE is keen to expand the action research to its members in the Asia Pacific region as a strategic tool to engage with marginalised youth. The aims of this initiative are two-pronged - first, to develop capacities of the youth to do action research and enable them to become knowledge-producers in their local communities, and second, to generate youth perspectives on education programmes and strategies that will benefit marginalised communities. ASPBAE member, CED Sri Lanka, will be implementing this action research initiative with committed youth researchers from marginalized communities.

To prepare better and plan effectively, the first training of trainers was organized with its senior trainers and youth leaders. ASPBAE's Thea Soriano and Sunil Gangavane jointly facilitated the training.

Drawing on the rich experiences of engaging with young people from marginalised communities using action research, facilitators were able to design the training which is easily adaptable to the needs of youth in diverse communities. In the first session, the importance of understanding youth researchers' lived realities, strengthening their group work, and building a learning environment were discussed along with unpacking the concept of action research. In the second session, the overview of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) and processes were covered. Aside from the concepts of PAR and its history and practice, concrete examples from previous YAR work were also presented.

Reflections at the end of each day highlighted how these training sessions can be further contextualized and implemented with youth participants. Nimesh, a youth coordinator shared, *"We have to be more passionate about conducting activities during these unsettling pandemic times. We have to focus more on how the activities can be changed with innovative avenues"*.

The training concluded by discussing practical challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on travel and gatherings, and innovative ways to mitigate these. The group will be engaged for the next series of training related to YAR in the coming months. [\[BACK\]](#)

**ASPBAE conducted its first online training with the CED Sri Lanka to develop capacities of youth to do action research, and generate youth perspectives on education programmes and strategies that will benefit marginalised communities.**

**The sessions included a discussion on the importance of understanding the youth researchers' lived realities and strengthening their group work.**



**The first training of trainers for youth in Sri Lanka was organized with CED's senior trainers and youth leaders. ASPBAE's Thea Soriano and Sunil Gangavane jointly facilitated the training.**

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



**Abhivyakti Media for Development, AMD (India) organised a workshop for young researchers to brainstorm on developing tools and training materials for the Youth-led Action Research (YAR) e-manual.**

## Young researchers in India identify training materials for Youth-led Action Research (YAR) e-manual

28-30 December 2020, Nashik, India

There is a famous quote by Benjamin Franklin, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, that says, “Tell me and I forgot, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn!” Doing is the most sustainable way of learning.

The YAR - Youth-led Action Research - is a platform to learn, change and to sustain by doing and experiencing. The YAR plant, planted 5 years ago, with support from ASPBAE, has now grown in many ways and with many dimensions. More and more *shodhini*'s (young women researchers), through their stories of sorrow, stories of happiness, experiments of and experiments for transformation, success and failures have taught us a lot in this journey. But this journey of transformation is unending and to keep it flowing there is a need to develop widely replicable models. ASPBAE, therefore, initiated the development of a YAR e-manual for those wanting to replicate the process for their own communities. The process included reaching out to YAR partners to contribute to developing the training material.



**Participants highlighted several important tools and training materials to take the YAR forward such as addressing the challenges posed by patriarchy, and community mapping exercises for effective data collection, amongst others.**

Abhivyakti Media for Development (India) organised a workshop for the young researchers to brainstorm on developing tools and training materials for the YAR e-manual. *Shodhini*'s shared their experiences of working in their communities, and of their interactions with researchers from other countries. They recognised the transition of *shodhini*'s from researchers to trainers and mentors as a very significant step towards deepening the role of *shodhini*'s in their communities. *Shodhak*'s, or young male researchers, were also a part of the workshop and contributed towards developing the training materials.

The YAR has been a process of transformation for those who have been a part of it. Participants shared the change it has brought to their lives. In the workshop, they discussed how and why the transformation happened, what the process was, what helped and what didn't. Participants drew a process tree where they indicated the milestones of the transformation process. They discussed the important role of training and capacity building in the evolution of the role of the researchers and brainstormed on ways the skill building can be further developed and enhanced for the next generation of researchers.



**Participants discussed the important role of training and capacity building in the evolution of the role of the researchers and brainstormed on ways the skill building can be further developed and enhanced.**

Participants highlighted several important tools and training materials to take the YAR forward such as addressing the challenges posed by patriarchy, community mapping exercises for effective data collection; training in photography and creating easy to understand visuals on thematic areas such as girls' education, livelihoods, menstruation, and marriage; use of local communication methods such as puppetry; enhancing the YAR tree to understand and review the research process through the eyes of the researchers; and compiling case studies and good practices of the YAR process.

The young researchers committed to participating in the process of developing the tools and training materials for the YAR e-manual. [\[BACK\]](#)



# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)



## ASPBAE participates in strategising meetings of the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC) to build synergies and forge new collaborations

*November-December 2020, Virtual*

A series of five virtual meetings was organised by the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC) and held in November and December 2020 to gather members and take stock of the progress as a Consortium since the last global meeting in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in 2019. Members were also invited to reflect on the current global context in relation to education and its increasing privatisation, and agree on how to organise as a group in the year 2021. The meetings provided an opportunity for the members to learn, exchange, and share information and updates on their respective research and campaign initiatives.

The PEHRC is a network of national, regional, and global organisations and individuals that steers a global campaign against privatisation and commercialisation of education, including Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in education. It also leads and coordinates the roll-out and promotion of the Abidjan Principles.

As an active member of the Facilitation Group (FG) of the PEHRC, ASPBAE participated in the virtual meetings. Representatives of national education coalitions, particularly the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) Bangladesh, National Coalition for Education in India (NCE), National Campaign for Education-Nepal (NCE-Nepal), and Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-Net Philippines), were also present in the sessions.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya participated in all the sessions and was one of a number of speakers. He presented part of the history of the PEHRC and its early engagement in the regulation of the role of the private sector in the provision of education in Session 2 on the '*PEHRC Review: Identifying strategies, existing synergies, and new collaborations for 2021*', which was held on 18 November 2020 and attended by 55 participants from five different regions. The rest of the session reviewed the PEHRC's key strengths and areas of improvement, the calendar of internal events for 2021, and synergies and potential collaborations.

The outcomes of the meetings put forth an agreed list of activities, priorities, and synergies for the upcoming year, and a revised network structure to help implement PEHRC's 2021 strategy. Among the priorities agreed were the continuing campaigns against privatisation and the corporate capture of distance education amidst the pandemic; increased financing of public education; popularisation of the Abidjan Principles; information exchange and joint actions among members; and dissemination of narratives on strong public education systems, among others. Members of the PEHRC will build on the collective calendar and share regular updates on projects and potential collaborations. ASPBAE will continue to sustain its engagement as a member of the Facilitation Group (FG). [\[BACK\]](#)

A series of five virtual meetings was organised by the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC) to take stock of the progress as a Consortium since the last global meeting in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in 2019.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya presented part of the history of the PEHRC and its early engagement in the regulation of the role of the private sector in the provision of education.



Among the priorities agreed were the continuing campaigns against privatisation and the corporate capture of distance education amidst the pandemic; increased financing of public education; information exchange and joint actions; and dissemination of narratives on strong public education systems.

# ASPBAE THIS MONTH

December 2020

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)

## Family Literacy Team of the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines, holds Third Postgraduate e-Forum on Adult Education

*By Gina Lontoc, University of Santo Tomas, Philippines*

The Global Challenges Research Funds (GCRF) Family Literacy Team of the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines, held its final Postgraduate e-Forum entitled, *'Family Literacy Initiatives, what can be learned? Impact on Policymaking and Community Program Design and Implementation'*. The aim of this e-forum was to facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned from previous experiences to improve the participants' understanding of potential challenges and benefits of family literacy and intergenerational learning initiatives. There were 103 local and international participants who signed up for the webinar. One of the highlights of this online event was the presentation of outputs of mentees who had participated in the two-month Family Literacy and Intergenerational Learning Mentorship Programme.

The programme started with the welcome remarks of Prof. Lilia Sison, Ph.D., Director of the UST Office for International Relations and Programs. Gracing the event were Symon Chiziwa of the University of Malawi, Zomba, Malawi, Cecilia (Thea) Soriano of ASPBAE, and Valerie Damasco of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

After the presentations and open forum was the showcase of Family Literacy and Intergenerational Learning Mentorship Programme outputs. Reflections followed thereafter which were given by Kamal Raj Devkota, Lecturer/Trainer from the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University, Nepal, and by Rev. Fr. Boyd Sulpico, O.P., the Provincial Syndic of the Dominican Province of the Philippines. To conclude the day's event, Prof. Michael Anthony Vasco, Ph.D., Dean of the UST Graduate School, gave the closing remarks.

This online activity was funded by the Global Challenges Research Funds (GCRF) which was awarded to Asst. Prof. Gina Lontoc, Ph.D. and Prof. Camilla Vizconde, Ph.D. for their research project, 'Family literacy and sustainable development: How can we build on indigenous intergenerational learning?' [\[BACK\]](#)



**GCRF-UST**  
Family Literacy Postgraduate Online Events

**E-FORUM 3: DECEMBER 10, 2020**  
(9:00AM-11:00AM) MANILA TIME

Family Literacy Initiatives, what can be learned?: Impact on policymaking and community program design and implementation

TALK: "Implications of family literacy and intergenerational learning initiatives on policymaking and community building"

**Guests:**



**Dr. Symon Chiziwa**  
School of Education  
University of Malawi, Zomba, Malawi



**Dr. Valerie Damasco**  
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education  
University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada



**Ms. Cecilia Soriano**  
Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)  
Quezon City, Philippines

**Reactors:**



**Dr. Kamal Raj Devkota**  
Lecturer/Trainer, Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID)  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal



**Rev. Fr. Boyd Sulpico, O.P.**  
Provincial Syndic  
Dominican Province of the Philippines

For inquiries: [familyliteracy.ust@gmail.com](mailto:familyliteracy.ust@gmail.com)

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/eforum3>

The aim of the e-forum, in which ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano participated, was to facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned to improve understanding of potential challenges and benefits of family literacy and intergenerational learning initiatives.

**Publishing ASPBAE's write-ups:** Please contact ASPBAE's Information and Communications Coordinator, Medha Soni, at [medha.aspbae@gmail.com](mailto:medha.aspbae@gmail.com) if you wish you re-produce any material published in this Bulletin.

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