

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Identifying policy challenges hampering progress towards global education targets and commitments

[Full article](#)



Re-imagining approaches to inclusive education

SEAMEO INNOTECH
15th International
Conference

[Full article](#)



Addressing progress towards gender equality in education

6th Gender Review of the
Global Education
Monitoring (GEM) Report

[Full article](#)



International Women's Day 2018 - Young rural women lead educational reform

UNESCO and ASPBAE produce video on young rural women leading educational reform

[Full article](#)



Executive Council plans way forward for ASPBAE's upcoming initiatives

[Full article](#)

Widening understanding, creating inter-linkages, and identifying barriers to sustainable development

This write-up captures the discussions and main assertions of the Asia-Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development (People's Form), and the Fifth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) 2018.

[Read more](#)

Civil society welcomes a positive step forward for education at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Financing Conference

Civil society organisations, as with all other stakeholders, welcomed the positive outcomes of the GPE Financing Conference. Donors pledged \$2.3 billion to the GPE fund.

[Read more](#)

What next for the Global Partnership for Education after a transformative replenishment?

A blog by David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid

[Read more](#)

Supporting community learning centres raise awareness on Education for Sustainable Development

UNESCO's Third Expert Meeting for the project, '*Promoting Community-Based Education for Sustainable Development*' further developed prototype modules for training trainers for community-based Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

[Read more](#)

ASPBAE welcomes Kilala Devette-Chee to its Executive Council

ASPBAE is pleased to announce the appointment of Kilala Devette-Chee as ASPBAE's South Pacific female representative to its Executive Council for the period 2017-2020 with effect on 7 February 2018.

[Read more](#)



ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

Member of the Month

Youth Action Nepal

Youth Action Nepal (YOAC) is a leading national youth organisation committed in the field of youth and development issues. YOAC prioritises the essence of youth participation for sustainable and holistic development. The organisation focuses on the issues of Safe Migration and Rights of Migrant Workers, Human Rights, Democracy and Youth Participation, Peace and Social Harmony, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

YOAC helped to raise and frame the National Youth Policy in Nepal in 2010. Visit the [YOAC website](http://www.yoac.org.np) to know more.

Photo of the Month



International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March. This year's theme was 'Time is Now: Rural and urban activists transforming women's lives'

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 Rene Raya, ASPBAE's Lead Policy Analyst.

**Rene
Raya**

Lead
Policy
Analyst



ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

REGIONAL/SUB-REGIONAL NEWS AND VIEWS

This section of the Bulletin is dedicated to highlighting news and events from the Asia South Pacific region or each of ASPBAE's sub-regions – South and Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific. For this edition and on the occasion of International Women's Day (8 March), we highlight a statistical snapshot of gender equality in the Asia Pacific.

Gender equality in Asia Pacific education: International Women's Day 2018 statistical snapshot



Girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to lag behind in education in the Asia Pacific.

This year's International Women's Day theme, '*Time is now: Rural and urban activists transforming women's lives*', calls for actions to empower rural women. Education is essential to these efforts.

Ensuring that girls and boys stay in school and benefit equally from quality education drove the Education for All movement and the international community again made this a priority in the Sustainable Development Goal 4-Education 2030 Agenda.

How is the Asia Pacific responding to this call? Despite significant progress over past decades, girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to lag behind in education in the Asia Pacific.

Below are some statistical trends that reflect the reality of women in education in the Asia Pacific –

Increasing number of females participating in education today

While challenges remain, we can also point to major advances in expanding education's reach in Asia-Pacific. For example, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the number of girls and women who have gained access to education in the region increased substantially from 2000 to 2016. During that time, the number of female out-of-school children, adolescents, and youth of primary and secondary school age in the region dropped by 67 million. In 2016, 453 million girls and women were studying from pre-primary to tertiary education in the region.

Participation in pre-primary to tertiary education was generally in favour of males across the Asia Pacific in 2000, according to the gender parity index of the gross enrolment ratio in the region. As the number of females going to school increased, gender parity was reached in Central Asia and East Asia and the Pacific in 2016. In fact, female enrolments increased in tertiary education by 41 million between 2000 and 2016, resulting in participation levels in this area being in favour of females in many parts of the region today.

Rural females have region's lowest youth literacy rates

Although more girls and women in the region are able to access educational opportunities, females are still at a disadvantage, particularly those in rural areas.

Looking at literacy levels among youth – the percentage of people aged 15-24 who can read a simple sentence – illustrates this disparity. Females in rural areas lag behind those from other socio-economic backgrounds. For example, in Pakistan,



ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Although more girls and women in the region are able to access educational opportunities, females are still at a disadvantage, particularly those in rural areas

86% of young males in rural areas were literate compared to only 52% of young females in rural areas. Likewise, in Timor-Leste, 79% of young women in rural areas were literate, which is below the national average of 86%.

Advocating for girls' education with data

While more girls and women are in school today in the Asia Pacific than ever before, we cannot afford to be complacent. Efforts must continue to ensure all children – girls and boys – have access to education, including the region's 61 million out-of-school female children, adolescents, and youth. Disaggregated data reveal that females continue to face higher barriers to education than males in rural villages.

Data present evidence to show where girls and women remain at a disadvantage and help guide our support to where it is needed most in the pursuit of gender equality.

This write-up is a reproduction of an article appearing on the [UNESCO Bangkok website](http://unesco.org). [BACK]

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Widening understanding, creating inter-linkages, and identifying barriers to sustainable development

Asia-Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development (People's Forum) 2018;
Fifth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) 2018

25-27 March 2018; 28-20 March 2018; Bangkok, Thailand

The High Level Political Forum is the United Nations platform to follow up and review the progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2018, its theme is "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" with focus on the Goals 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 11 (sustainable cities and communities, 12 (responsible consumption and production, 15 (life on earth) and 17 (partnership for the Goals).

In preparation for the HLPF to be held in the UN Headquarters in New York in July 2018, the UN Economic and Social Commission in Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) convened the Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), which was preceded by the Asia Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development (APPFSD/People's Forum 2018) which was organised by the Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (APRCM) in collaboration with UNESCAP and UN Environment.

Asia Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development (Peoples' Forum)

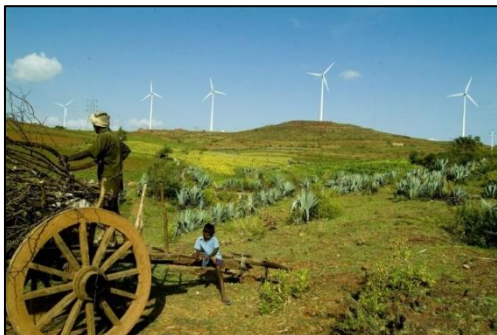
25-27 March 2018, Bangkok, Thailand

The Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum on Sustainable Development, or the People's Forum, with the theme, '*Defending the Environment and Redefining Resilience: Our Collective Actions for Development Justice*', was a space for civil society organisations (CSOs) to work together and consolidate their positions and recommendations for a regional sustainable development agenda. Asia Pacific CSOs from different sectors and countries explored common ground and actions, developed common messages, and coordinated strategies for more effective participation in the national, regional, and global intergovernmental processes on sustainable development.

The aims of the People's Forum were to -

1. Foster the sharing and learning from the variety of experiences of organisations and constituencies and to enhance capacities of civil society participants on sustainable development at the national, regional, and global levels. It also aimed to enhance capacities on the opportunities and modalities for engaging these processes, including identifying and dealing with key systemic issues/barriers to the achievement of sustainable development.
2. Help build an understanding of sustainable development as a comprehensive whole with strong inter-linkages across its various dimensions and components; therefore, to also link the work of various other CSO campaigns, peoples' movements, grassroots constituencies, and scientific and academic communities across national borders.

In preparation for the High Level Political Forum to be held in New York in July 2018, ESCAP convened the Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), which was preceded by the Asia Pacific People's Forum on Sustainable Development (People's Forum 2018).



The theme of the People's Forum was '*Defending the Environment and Redefining Resilience: Our Collective Actions for Development Justice*'. CSOs came together and consolidated their recommendations for a regional sustainable development agenda.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



One of the aims of the People's Forum was to build an understanding of sustainable development and its links to civil society campaigns and people's movements.

Asia Pacific CSOs from different sectors and countries explored common ground and actions, developed common messages, and coordinated strategies for more effective participation in the national, regional, and global intergovernmental processes on sustainable development.



Some of the key recommendations made by civil society regarding the different country contexts of resilience were changing systems that impact people's lives and collectively working together for development justice and human rights.

3. Dialogue on the structure and content of the APFSD with its theme, 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and Pacific', as well as formulate joint positions, and strategise interventions at the APFSD, High-Level Political Forum.
4. Reflect on the work of Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCM) and agree on joint actions and follow-up to civil society positions adopted to strengthen and support each other's ideas, plans, and actions across national borders.

Approximately 250 civil society participants from the Pacific, East/North Asia, North/Central Asia, South/Southwest Asia, and Southeast Asia participated in the People's Forum. The different constituencies represented at the Forum were NGOs, women, youth, members of social and community enterprise initiatives, farmers, trade unions/workers, representatives from the field of science and technology, indigenous people, urban poor, migrants, persons with disabilities, people living and affected by HIV/AIDS, representatives of the LGBTI community, older people, people affected with conflict and disasters, fisherfolks, and local authorities.

Through 7 thematic plenary sessions and 24 parallel workshops clustered under 4 themes, the People's Forum generated discussions and widened the understanding on relevant SDG targets. The themes of the plenary sessions were - Systematic Barriers in Achieving Transformation; Relevance of SDGs to our Lives; Means of Implementation; Achieving Development Justice within Planetary Boundaries; Accountability and Monitoring; Power of Peoples' Movements; and Building Collective Strategy.

Discussions at the People's Forum also focused on definitions of resilience based on country contexts. Arising from the discussions, some of the key points from civil society included -

- Philippines: Resilience is not only surviving and bearing the suffering but importantly changing the system that impact on people's lives.
- Thailand: Resistance is protecting our lives and the lives of our next generation.
- Indonesia: Working for development justice that includes everyone and protect the lives of people for the better.
- Fiji: Collectively working with each other and fight for our rights in light of government reneging on its commitments to human rights.
- Resistance as a form of resilience.

The People's Forum called attention to the authenticity of the VNRs as they provide only glowing reports of governments and do not address the key challenges (systemic barriers, contradictions, inequity) in ensuring the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Towards building its intersectoral advocacy in the SDGs and give prominence to education in all the SDGs, ASPBAE encouraged its members to participate in both the People's Forum and the APFSD. Eight member organisations, including ASPBAE, applied for the events. Of the nine applications, four organisations – Coalition for Educational Development-Sri Lanka, Afghanistan National

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

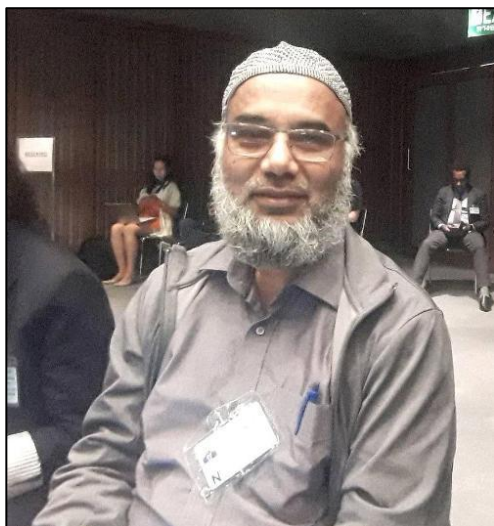
February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



ASPBAE delegates met in the lead-up to the People's Forum to discuss how they can argue for the foundational role of education and learning in all the SDGs. Some of the issues raised were on access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health education for children, youth, and adults, and engaging marginalised young people through participatory approaches.

Education was interspersed in the People's Forum statement with regard to awareness raising to empower girls and information about their bodies, and CSOs and governments together spreading more awareness about laws and rights of residents.



ASPBAE Executive Council Member, Ehsanur Rahman, was the rapporteur in the breakout session on 'Inclusive Policy Making: The role of academia in supporting civil society in addressing systemic issue'.

Education Coalition (ANEC), Pakistan Coalition for Education, and Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) received invitations to both events. Due to difficulty in getting a visa on short notice, only Ehsan Rahman of DAM, who also represented ASPBAE, and Kamal Herath of CED-Sri Lanka were able to participate in the two forums, while Thea Soriano of ASPBAE joined the People's Forum.

ASPBAE delegates met a day before the People's Forum to discuss how they can argue for the foundational role of education and learning in all the SDGs. In the themes addressed in workshops at the People's Forum, they raised issues on:

- The importance of wash and sanitation in schools which impacts on learning of female and male students.
- Access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health education for children, youth, and adults.
- Engaging marginalised young people in urban cities and rural communities through participatory approaches and recognising their ability to take action for sustainable development.
- The role of education and learning in school and community towards sustainable consumption and lifestyles as well as building capacities for sustainable production.
- Ensuring government's financing of the all the SDGs, especially implementing strategic policies and programmes that will benefit and empower marginalised sectors.
- The critical importance of human rights education and broader citizenship education so that people are aware of their rights and hold governments to account (democratic governance).

These key recommendations have been notably incorporated in the People's Forum Statement.

Ehsanur Rahman was the rapporteur in the breakout session on 'Inclusive Policy Making: The role of academia in supporting civil society in addressing systemic issue'. One key recommendation was that, "Academic and action research can be a basic premise to bring CSO/NGO and academic institutions for proper documentation and publication of experience, impact assessment, mapping of good practices, and equipping/capacity building for evidence-based advocacy for policy formulation and programme planning."

The outcome of the People's Forum was a collective [statement](#) where several key issues were identified for taking forward at the Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD). The intersection of education in the SDGs were articulated in the Statement such as:

- Education and awareness raising to empower girls with factual information about their bodies and how to look after it especially in case of menstrual hygiene which is a main cause of girls' dropping out from school; integrating menstrual hygiene in the school curriculum
- Achieving Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities through an integrated approach and linking it to the other goals such as poverty eradication, food security, provision of key services such as health,

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) provided an opportunity for dialogue on the readiness of the region to identify resilience capacities needed to effect the transformations envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Several issues, such as progress in implementation, assessment and interlinkages of the SDGs, Voluntary National Reviews (VNR), regional road map of SDGs, and partnerships were discussed and debated at the APFSD.



Many Ministers and government delegates made references to the key importance of education in achieving the SDGs.

education, water, energy, climate change and disaster risk, employment and industrialization, bio diversity and others.

- CSOs and governments together must spread more awareness about laws and rights of residents including legal aid, and jointly undertake urban studies on neighbourhoods, transform participatory planning principles into action planning level, and prompt local peer learning among local authorities.

Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)

28-30 March 2018, Bangkok, Thailand

The Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) was held with more than 600 stakeholders reviewing regional progress made on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year's APFSD provided an opportunity for dialogue on the readiness of the region to identify resilience capacities needed to effect the transformations envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Several issues such as progress in implementation, assessment and interlinkages of the SDGs, Voluntary National Reviews (VNR), regional road map of SDGs, and partnerships were discussed and debated at APFSD. Some of the side events focused on sharing innovative practices and examples in resource management, community-led approaches, making cities resilient, social entrepreneurship, energy efficiency, the VNR process, health and well-being, and water management, amongst others.

Many Ministers and government delegates made references to the key importance of education in achieving the SDGs. In the panel discussions on transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies, Faimalotoa Kika Iemaima Stowers, Minister of Women Affairs, Social Development of Samoa, emphasised the development of education programmes to cope with natural disasters. Stowers shared her country's experience in improving the understanding of risk drivers, identifying the main vulnerable groups, and increasing local communities' awareness of potential disasters through training programmes¹. Also, on disaster risk reduction, Haoliang Xu, UN Development Programme (UNDP), cited how the designation of evacuation routes, cellphone mediated alerts, and educating school children can significantly reduce human fatalities.² During the sharing of progress of SDG 12, the presentation on the ESCAP-led survey mentioned consumer information and education as one of the issues requiring increased attention.

The final Report of the APFSD made clear references to the importance of education for resilience and development justice:

¹ Summary of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development: 28-30 March 2018, APFSD Bulletin
2 April 2018 Vol. 208 No. 22

² Ibid.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The APFSD final report made clear references to the importance of education for resilience and development justice.

“...The Forum noted efforts in the region to identify and empower poor and vulnerable populations, including women and children, and to strengthen resilience through social inclusion, health, education, housing, nutrition and food security, water and sanitation strategies and awareness programmes. Capacity-building and regional cooperation were also discussed as opportunities to develop mechanisms for mutual support, with a view to defining common approaches, strengthening climate change response and building resilient communities, including in coastal areas and low-lying islands.”

Participants also called for early warning systems for preparedness in cases of natural disasters and even economic shocks, to be integrated in education systems.

Click [here](#) to read the APFSD report.

The APFSD provided a platform for countries to share regional perspectives, support the presentation of their voluntary national reviews, and assess progress made on the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

The APFSD, likewise, provided a platform for countries to share regional perspectives, support the presentation of their voluntary national reviews, and assess progress made on the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

Sri Lanka is one of the countries that will submit a Voluntary National Review (VNR) on its country's progress in implementing the SDGs in the forthcoming High Level Political Forum (HLPF). The coalition, CED-Sri Lanka, has been actively engaging the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife before coming to the preparatory meetings in Bangkok. It participated in the deliberations of the Sri Lankan Stakeholder SDG Platform, and advocated for issues on education and SDGs to inform the VNR process and report. Post APFSD, it urged the Ministry of SDGs and Wildlife to hold a broad consultation on the VNR. On 23 April, the consultation was organised by the Ministry and attended by more than 200 civil society organisations and where two representatives from UNESCAP participated.



Sri Lanka is one of the countries that will submit a Voluntary National Review (VNR) on its country's progress in implementing the SDGs in the forthcoming High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

In addition to government's VNR processes, the Civil Society Stakeholder Platform-Sri Lanka also organised a consultative workshop on 26th April 2018 to develop the Voluntary People Review on SDGs. In this effort, CED-Sri Lanka will lead the SDG-04 cluster with the participation of civil society organisations, Ministry officials, and education officials.

This write-up is based on information appearing on the [UNESCAP website](#) and contains excerpts from reports by Ehsanur Rahman, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Bangladesh), and ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing South and Central Asia and Kamal Herath, Board Member of CED Sri Lanka. [\[BACK\]](#)

Bulletin continued on next page...

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The replenishment campaign of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for 2018-2020 was co-hosted by Macky Sall, President of Senegal, and Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

Civil society welcomes a positive step forward for education at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Financing Conference

1-2 February 2018, Dakar, Senegal

The replenishment campaign of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for 2018-2020 aimed to raise the funds needed to deliver GPE 2020, the partnership's strategic plan, and increase global education financing to ensure SDG 4 can be achieved. The campaign culminated in the GPE Financing Conference in Dakar which was co-hosted by Macky Sall, President of Senegal, and Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

Civil society organisations (CSOs), as with all other stakeholders, welcomed the positive outcomes of the GPE Financing Conference. The event was a significant high-level moment for education internationally with 10 current heads of state, 100 Ministers, and 1,200 participants, consisting of government officials, civil society, foundations, multilateral organisations, and the private sector, attending.

The GPE Financing Conference aimed to raise the funds needed to deliver GPE 2020, the partnership's strategic plan, and increase global education financing to ensure SDG 4 can be achieved.

Donors pledged \$2.3 billion to the GPE fund, with further pledges to be confirmed. Even more impressive, however, was the fact that over 50 developing countries pledged a combined \$30 billion to their own national education budgets, taking the projected total till 2020 to \$110 billion. Further details about the respective country pledges can be found on the [GPE website](http://www.gpe.org).

While donor pledges will continue to remain very important in achieving the SDG 4 Goal and its targets (much more donor funding is needed), the pledges from developing countries signal the increasing importance of domestic financing in ensuring the sustainable funding needed for governments to meet their obligations to fulfil the right to education for all.

The Education Financing Conference consisted of an initial Partnership Day on 1 February where all stakeholders (donors, multilateral organisations, foundations, CSOs, private sector representatives), were involved in discussions on key education financing issues. This was followed by the Replenishment Day where government leaders in turn were able to announce their funding pledges for education in front of the full assembly of participants.

Civil society was prominent in the Partnership Day, with many CSOs presenting, facilitating, and participating actively in many forums. Key education issues were analysed with the lens of education financing. Issues included equity and inclusion, education for the future, with a focus on youth, education in emergencies, and improved and more equitable learning outcomes.



The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) facilitated a session that promoted the work of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), entitled 'Civil Society Advocacy in Sustainably Financing Education'.

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) facilitated a session that promoted the work of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), entitled 'Civil Society Advocacy in Sustainably Financing Education'. GCE President, Camilla Croso, and GCE Global Coordinator, Chike Ayanwu, presented at the session, along with Cheikh Mbow, National Coordinator of Coordination des ONG et Syndicats pour la Défense d'une Education Publique de Qualité (COSYDEP). Additionally,

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



ASPBAE's Helen Dabu (R) presented on behalf of the Global Campaign for Education.

ASPBAE CSEF Regional Coordinator, Bernie Lovegrove, summarised the key work of national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific and introduced four national coalition representatives to the forum - Chin Chanveasna, NEP Cambodia; Noopur, NCE India; Addie Unsi, E-Net Philippines; and Ram Gaire, NCE Nepal.

The Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) made a presentation on '*Africa Funding Africa: Is Domestic Financing Myth or Reality*'. A number of Foundation and NGO representatives presented in a session entitled, '*Accountable Financing: What Does GPE Funding to Support Education as an Accountable Human Right Involve at a time of Growing Privatisation?*'. ASPBAE's CSEF Deputy Coordinator, Helen Dabu, also presented on behalf of GCE.

Another session that gained strong interest was on '*Tax Justice and Education Financing*', organised by ActionAid, GCE, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and the Global Alliance for Tax Justice. Panelists included Camila Croso, GCE President, and David Archer, Head of Program Development, ActionAid.

Camilla Croso, Chiekh Mbow (COSYDEP), and David Edwards, Secretary General, Education International, all presented in larger afternoon forums on issues related to equity and inclusion, and improving education systems, with a focus on teachers.

At the Replenishment Day itself, President Macron of France and President Macky Sall of Senegal lead the way with generous pledges. As part of a panel plenary in front of the 1,200 participants, GCE President, Camilla Croso, was able to present common civil society positions.

The concerted effort over the last two years, led by GPE, resulted in the mobilisation of \$32 billion for education that otherwise may not have been secured, so the process and the culminating Replenishment pledging event was important and successful in the achievement of SDG4, and CSOs can be pleased that collectively they played a strong and active role in this process.

The challenge now is to ensure that all the pledges are honoured, and that CSOs work to hold governments to account for them. Another challenge is that the contribution of donor countries did not reach the hoped for \$3.1 billion target of GPE, so CSOs will want to lobby donor countries for increased contributions to play their part.

Other challenges identified by CSOs moving forward is to advocate for increasing domestic tax revenue to enable increases in domestic education budgets. Additionally, CSOs will need advocate to ensure that, in GPE calculations, debt servicing is included when determining the percentage of the national budget that goes to education.

This write-up contains excerpts from the [GPE website](http://www.gpe.org). [\[BACK\]](#)



ASPBAE's Bernie Lovegrove (L) at the GPE Financing Conference with national education coalition representatives from NEP Cambodia, NCE India, E-Net Philippines, and NCE Nepal.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

What next for the Global Partnership for Education after a transformative replenishment?

By David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid



David Archer, Head of Education,
ActionAid.

The [Global Partnership for Education](#) replenishment event, co-hosted by President Macron and President Macky Sall on 2 February 2018 in Senegal (West Africa), was a landmark moment for education financing. Over \$2 billion were pledged by donors for the GPE's core fund to support developing countries with credible education sector plans over the coming years. More dramatically, over \$30 billion was pledged by developing country Presidents and Ministers to their own citizens – increasing projected budgets for education from \$80 billion to \$110 billion. This should mark a turning point in how we all conceive the GPE and its potential in the coming years.

The partnership of donors, developing countries and strong civil society representation is a key strength of GPE and it is the inter-dependency of these that has helped GPE make a breakthrough. Too often in the past, aid funding has displaced domestic spending in the education sector, as in other sectors. A few years ago, one government that will remain nameless cut its spending on education from 17% of the budget down to 14%` and then approached GPE for a grant of \$100 million to fill the gap. This ends up doing more harm than good – replacing sustainable domestic funding with short term and unpredictable aid. GPE responded by making it an absolute requirement that developing country governments maintain or increase their own spending (towards or beyond a benchmark of 20% of national budgets) to be eligible for GPE support.

In the previous replenishment of GPE in 2014, developing countries made their own pledges for the first time and promised to increase spending by \$26 billion. This was bold but lacked credibility as the pledges lacked baselines and the formats in which they were presented made it almost impossible to track. ActionAid, working with the [Global Campaign for Education](#), reviewed the progress of these pledges to the extent possible and found they fell short in many ways. We used this to make the case for more credible domestic pledges in the future. The secretariat of the Global Partnership for Education has now done systematic work to ensure that the pledges made on 2nd February 2018 all have clear baselines, are formulated in a clear way and can indeed be tracked.

This time, then, the \$30 billion announced by developing countries should constitute truly serious commitments – and so it is not unreasonable to say that GPE mobilised a total of \$32 billion for education over the coming three years. This makes it bigger than any other replenishment of any other fund that I am aware of – and more importantly, the vast bulk of this money is predictable and sustainable domestic financing and is focused on promoting systemic reform. Too many other global funds, such as those in the health sector, end up displacing domestic funding, supporting short term projects for earmarked initiatives and sometimes undermining rather than reinforcing systems. Having lived in the shadow of health funds for many years, the education sector should truly celebrate!

Over \$2 billion were pledged by donors for the GPE's core fund to support developing countries with credible education sector plans over the coming years. Over \$30 billion was pledged by developing country Presidents and Ministers to their own citizens.



The partnership of donors, developing countries, and strong civil society representation is a key strength of GPE and it is the inter-dependency of these that has helped GPE make a breakthrough.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The full detail of all the domestic funding pledges need to be transparently shared immediately so that national civil society actors can hold their governments to account on financing.

There are of course some BUTs. Firstly, the way in which the GPE measures the share of the budget spent on education must be reassessed, looking at total government spending, before debt servicing rather than after debts have been paid. This is the standard practice and changing this as [GPE has proposed](#) is deeply problematic, not least because it normalises debt at a time when debt levels are rising and often constrain education spending.

Secondly, the full detail of all the domestic funding pledges need to be transparently shared, immediately, so that national civil society actors can [hold their governments to account](#) on financing, knowing exactly what they promised. It must be representative broad-based alliances of national civil society, not the GPE or donors, that play this role, as governments are accountable to the citizens in their own country for delivering on the right to education. National education coalitions that are members of the Global Campaign for Education are ready to take on this work in 85 countries and simply await the release of the full details of the pledges made by their governments. These coalitions will also pressurise their governments to produce annual National Education Monitoring Reports – which is a key recommendation from this year's Global Education Monitoring Report on accountability.

Broad-based alliances of national civil society should be responsible for holding their governments to account on financing, not GPE or donors. Coalitions that are members of the Global Campaign for Education are ready to take on this work in 85 countries.

Thirdly, there is an urgent need for GPE to explore new ways for developing country governments to make financing commitments to education. Looking just at the share of the budget spent on education is a blunt instrument and many Ministers of Education in Dakar committed to spend 25% or more, but observed it is still not enough. In many cases the reason is obvious. A large share of a small pie is a small amount. The real challenge for many countries is to increase the size of the pie – by [increasing domestic tax revenue](#). On average, the tax to GDP ratio of low income countries is only 16% whilst OECD countries collect more than double that and some countries with strong public services have ratios over 40%. GPE must get serious now about what it can do to support countries to expand their tax base in a progressive way, whilst maintaining or increasing the share of revenues spent on education. President Akufo-Addo of Ghana rightly observed in [his speech at the GPE event](#) in Dakar, 'every year \$50 billion go out of Africa by illicit means'. He called passionately for fair tax on natural resource extraction and for countries to 'organise ourselves to ensure that the huge wealth of this continent is used for the benefit of its people and not for those outside'. Civil society campaigners have already made these connections between education justice and tax justice and some donors like Norway and France are now echoing the call. GPE urgently needs to do more to maximise the connections between progressive tax and progressive spending on education.



Pakistan gives away \$4 billion a year in unnecessary tax incentives to big companies. 20% of that would be enough to get all the 5 million children out of school into school and to enable the deployment of 100,000 new professional teachers.

Fourthly, GPE needs to be exemplary in the way that it engages with the private sector in the coming years. Two of the most glaring ways in which developing countries are losing tax revenue are through governments giving away what the IMF call harmful tax incentives to multinational companies and through aggressive tax avoidance by some of the richest companies. The government of Pakistan, for example, gives away \$4 billion a year in unnecessary tax incentives to big companies – and 20% of that would be enough to get all the 5 million children out of school into school and to enable the deployment of 100,000 new professional teachers. There is a [Global Business Coalition on Education](#) that is

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Those who are least accountable in education tend to be the international community. Civil society pressure will be crucial. Some donors need to commit more funding and all donors need to deliver on their promises without imposing conditions.

now connected with the GPE Board and which includes major companies like Microsoft, Intel, Accenture, KPMG, Pearson, Reed Smith, Gucci, Chevron, Tata and Standard Chartered Bank. The biggest single contribution each of them could make to improving education around the world would be for each to commit to fully transparent country-by-country reporting of their tax affairs so that they are in the forefront of paying fair taxes in the countries where they make their profits. This should be a requirement for those who wish to engage seriously with GPE.

Finally, we all need to help GPE to hold the donor community to account. Donor countries delivered just over \$2 billion (with notable commitments from EU, UK, Norway, France, Denmark, Sweden, Canada and UAE – and even a small grant from Senegal itself!) but the GPE hoped to raise over \$3.1 billion. As the [Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8](#) powerfully observes, those who are least accountable in education tend to be the international community. Here again, civil society pressure will be crucial. Some donors really need to commit more funding and all donors need to deliver on their promises without imposing conditions.

Let us all work together to celebrate this ground-breaking replenishment of GPE and let us understand that it marks a fundamental shift of power, rightfully placing developing countries and their citizens at the heart of the progress we are making on fulfilling the right to education.

The above is a reproduction of a [blog written by David Archer](#).

GPE has released the [listing of Developing Country Partner \(DCP\) pledges](#) made during the 2018 Replenishment Summit. [\[BACK\]](#)

Identifying policy challenges hampering progress towards global education targets and commitments

4th meeting of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee

28 February-2 March 2018, Paris, France



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (R), with SEAMEO Deputy Director, Ethel Valenzuela, at the 4th SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee meeting in Paris.

The multi-stakeholder SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (SC) is the main global consultation and coordination mechanism for education in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As mandated by the Education 2030 Framework for Action, the Steering Committee “provides strategic guidance, reviews progress drawing on the GEM report, and makes recommendations to the education community on key priorities and catalytic actions to achieve the new agenda, monitors and advocates for adequate financing, and encourage coordination and harmonization of partner activities.”

The Education 2030 Steering Committee meeting held in Paris aimed to –

1. Agree on a strategy for global review, monitoring, and reporting process, in view of HLPF 2018 and the 2019 Review.
2. Define positions and recommendations of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee on key strategic areas.
3. Refine the advocacy, communication, and outreach strategy of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

4. Define next steps for the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (next meeting, rotation of members, and the Global Education Meeting 2018).

Click [here](#) for the Summary of the Meeting Decisions and Recommendations.



Some of the highlights of the meeting were on issues around indicators and financing.

Some of the highlights of the meeting were on issues around indicators and financing. On indicators, there was a push for the "investment case in data", something which was also put forward during the Replenishment Conference of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) held in February 2018, and which GPE and the private sector are taking forward to support.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), and the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) argued for a sum of USD280 million to that end. Civil society intervened so that the final recommendations on indicators were not all centred around measurable learning outcomes, but on formative and diagnostic evaluations as well. It was apparent that GPE will have a growing influence in the realm of indicators, especially because it will be financing work in this area, including that of UIS.

The issue of financing continued to be a cause for concern for civil society organisations (CSOs) in the meeting. A paper on 'Innovative Financing' was one of the core meeting papers, and a side event on this theme was convened by France, the Commission and the Global Business Coalition for Education, which revolved around bonds and the private sector. CSOs were concerned about the strong focus on the 'financialisation of education' during the meeting and argued for equal attention to tax justice and the reaffirmation of the commitment to free education in the discourses on education financing.

The Steering Committee also discussed its submission to the High-level Political Forum 2018, underscoring the role of education in the SDGs in focus: SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (clean energy), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 15 (life on land). The final submission of the Steering Committee is available [here](#).

Also at the meeting, the GEMR and Youth representative in the SC presented two campaigns on the right to education - one on justiciability of the right to education, and the other on the importance of governments to report regularly on the right to education. Both were endorsed by the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee also agreed the features of the Global Education Meeting (GEM), set for 3-5 December 2018 in Brussels. As indicate in the Education 2030 Framework for Action, the GEM "will be organised by UNESCO in consultation with the Education 2030 Steering Committee to review the Education 2030 Agenda against progress made". In preparation for the GEM, regional consultations will be organised in 2018 as follows –



Dankert Vedeler (L), Co-Chair of the Education 2030 Steering Committee Meeting, and UNESCO Assistant Director-General, Qian Tang, in the concluding session of the Steering Committee Meeting. Mr. Tang retired on the same day.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Civil society ensured that the final recommendations on indicators were not all centred around measurable learning outcomes, but on formative and diagnostic evaluations as well.

- Pan African High-Level Conference on Education 2018: 25-27 April 2018, Nairobi, Kenya
- 4th Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED 4): 14-16 July 2018, Bangkok, Thailand
- Latin America and the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting: 25-26 July 2018, Sucre, Plurinational State of Bolivia
- Regional Consultation hosted by the Council of Europe: 24 October 2018, Strasbourg, France
- ALECSO Ministerial Meeting: 10 May 2018, Tunis, Tunisia
- Arab Regional Meeting on Education 2030: October-November 2018

The rotation of members of the Steering Committee was also discussed as the two-year term of the incumbent members was coming to an end in 2018. In discussions with the Coordination Group of the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CC NGO/Ed 2030), it was agreed that the two slots for civil society in the SC will be shared by – (1) the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), for another two-year term; while (2) the other civil society slot will be shared by the Arab Campaign for Education (ACEA), who will be lead in the first year (2018), and ASPBAE as lead in the second year (2019).

ASPBAE will lead in the civil society slot on the Steering Committee in 2019.

The next Steering Committee meeting is set for 12-13 September 2018 in Paris, France.

This write-up is based on a report by GCE President, Camilla Croso, and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, to the Coordination Group of the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CC NGO/Ed 2030). The Meeting Papers can be accessed [here](#). [BACK]

Re-imagining approaches to inclusive education

SEAMEO INNOTECH 15th International Conference

6-8 March 2018, Quezon City, Manila, Philippines

By Nitin Paranjape, Abhivyakti Media for Development, India



ASPBAE was one of the co-organisers of the SEAMEO INNOTECH conference and invited its partners in the youth-led action research initiative from India, Indonesia, and the Philippines to participate and share their experiences, findings, and recommendations on girls' education.

Abhivyakti Media for Development (India), in partnership with ASPBAE, has completed a pilot initiative on youth-led action research on girls' education in five villages of Nashik and Dhule districts in Maharashtra, India. Several stories of the young girls and their struggles with education were inspiring and were shared at the 15th International Conference organised by the South East Asia Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), through its centre, SEAMEO INNOTECH (SEAMEO Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology) in Quezon City. The focus of the conference, which was attended by approximately 200 participants working in formal or non-formal education, was on re-imagining approaches to inclusive education.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

The three-day SEAMEO INNOTECH conference, under the broad theme of inclusive education, focused on the question - 'How do we grow a learning community that welcomes everyone?'



The conference used the power of stories to explore the inclusive quality of education from the perspective of learners who are traditionally unseen, unheard, and under-served.



Some of the proposed topics for discussion were on addressing the learning needs of the marginalised communities, quality education for all, creating a culture of inclusivity, and climate change.

ASPBAE was one of the co-organisers of this conference and invited its partners in the youth-led action research initiative from India, Indonesia, and the Philippines to participate and share their experiences, findings, and recommendations on girls' education. Representatives from Abhivyakti (India), E-Net Philippines and SPPI (Philippines), and ASPPUK (Indonesia) participated in the conference.

In the lead up to the SEAMEO INNOTECH conference, the ASPBAE team met with community youth representatives from Manila and Capul to share their experiences in youth-led action research. They also visited the National Youth Commission of the Philippines and explored possibilities of influencing the Commission on their youth education agenda.

The three-day SEAMEO INNOTECH conference, under the broad theme of inclusive education, focused on the question - 'How do we grow a learning community that welcomes everyone?'. The conference was a mix of plenary presentations, synthesis sessions, and concurrent breakout discussions on inclusive education and its relationship to the learning themes which were - (1) Inclusive Leadership (2) Inclusive Learning Culture, and (3) Inclusive Policies and Practices. The conference used the methodology of Open Space Technology, which allowed the participants to co-create the agenda and determine ways to take it forward. A selection of compelling stories addressing the three learning themes framed the conference deliberations. Learning conversations were facilitated using a modified Open Space Technology approach that engaged participants to discuss education-related issues as well as exchange and share new ideas and best practices in the implementation of inclusive teaching and learning strategies in the region. The conference used the power of stories to explore the inclusive quality of education from the perspective of learners who are traditionally unseen, unheard, and under-served.

Some of the proposed topics for discussion were on addressing the learning needs of the marginalised communities, quality education for all, creating a culture of inclusivity, climate change, Shodhini (seekers) stories of empowerment, managing learners with a difference, receptive education policies, managing negative perceptions, mindfulness and inclusive education, and tools of action research, amongst others. ASPBAE and its partners proposed two sessions, one on youth-led action research in the three countries, and the other on community tools developed in the youth-led action research.

Community youth from the action research spoke of their experiences of conducting the research and the challenges they faced. Representatives from the 3 organisations in India, Indonesia, and the Philippines shared the overall goal of the action research, reasons for its conception, and efforts in advocating it to different stakeholders in their countries.

In conclusion, the stories of the young women were engaging and made the theme of inclusive education easy to relate to and understand, enabling participants to continue working forward in this regard in their own context and socio-cultural realities. [\[BACK\]](#)

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The UNESCO meeting reviewed prototypes and modules for training trainers for community-based ESD.

Supporting community learning centres raise awareness on Education for Sustainable Development

9-11 February 2018, Bangkok, Thailand

UNESCO's Third Expert Meeting for the project, 'Promoting Community-Based Education for Sustainable Development', was held in Bangkok.

Building on the first two experts meetings in 2016-2017, the third meeting reviewed the prototype modules and further developed them for training trainers for community-based Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Participants also agreed on the principles and processes for piloting the modules in select countries in the Asia Pacific.

The training of trainers (ToT) modules for community-based ESD aim to support community learning centres and community organisations in their education and awareness raising initiatives on sustainable development.

Three interconnected modules were finalised, namely Reflect, Share, and Act. The 'Reflect' module aims to help trainers reflect on their experiences towards further understanding of the concepts, history, and approaches in ESD. The 'Share' module aims to enhance the capacities of the trainers to share with community educators the principles, framework, and reflective approaches that guide ESD. The 'Act' module aims to help trainers design, plan, implement, and evaluate community-based ESD.

The modules are anchored on the principles of ESD, which are – (1) holistic (2) community ownership-based (3) participatory, and (4) empowering. The methods that will be employed will be reflective and will feature case studies, storytelling, and problem-posing activities.

The modules will be piloted in India, Japan, and the Philippines in mid-2018. The experts/resource persons from UNESCO-Bangkok, ASPBAE, DVV, Centre for Environment Education (CEE, India), Okayama University (Japan), and RMIT University (Australia) will hold workshops to train the "master trainers" who will then train the community educators. The community educators will implement the ESD workshops or discussions, targeting learners in communities and community organisations.

Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, ASPBAE Immediate Past President, and ASPBAE's Thea Soriano participated in the meeting. Also present were Uwe Gartenschlager of DVV International. Ushio Miura, of UNESCO Bangkok, coordinated the meeting that was sponsored by UNESCO-Bangkok, the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL), and DVV International. [\[BACK\]](#)



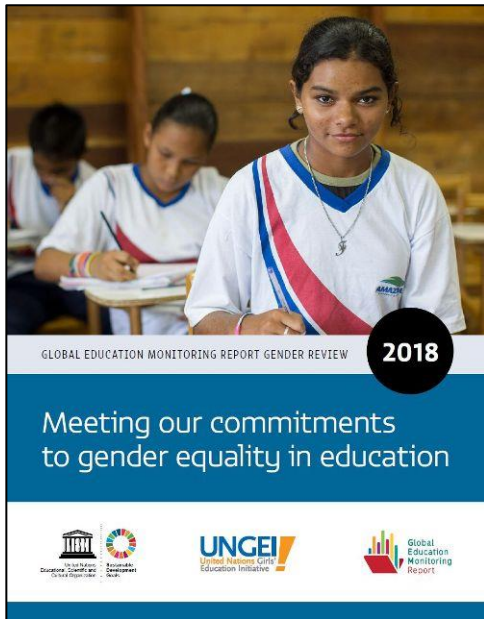
The training of trainers (ToT) modules for community-based ESD aim to support community learning centres and community organisations in their education and awareness raising initiatives on sustainable development.

Bulletin continued on next page...

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



Addressing progress towards gender equality in education

6th Gender Review of the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report

8 March 2018

The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report released its [6th Gender Review](#) on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March. The Review explores the shortfalls in securing gender equality in education and proposes solutions to the challenges we face. Its key finding is that only 44% of countries have made full legal commitments through international treaties to the cause of gender parity in education.

The Review reports that 34% of countries have not achieved parity in primary, 55% in lower secondary, and 75% in upper secondary. It highlights a wide range of measures to remove barriers to education for girls and to hold governments to account for gender inequalities. These include periodic review of curricula, textbooks and teacher training programmes; adequate school infrastructure including single sex sanitation facilities; increased representation of women in education leadership positions; stronger policies to tackle school-related gender-based violence and establishing codes of conduct for students and teachers.

The Review, produced with the support of United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), looks at the causes of slow progress towards gender equality in education, and how such issues may be addressed. Recalling countries' legal commitments to the right to education for girls and women through international treaties, it focuses on three - the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Seven countries had not fully ratified the conventions.

The global launch of the 2018 Gender Review took place at an event in New York co-hosted by the GEM Report, the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Malala Fund. The event combined a presentation of the 2018 Gender Review, as well as a high-level panel involving representatives from UNESCO, UN Women, the National Education Association (United States), and the Akilah Institute (Rwanda).



The gender review, produced with the support of United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), looks at the causes of slow progress towards gender equality in education, and how such issues may be addressed.

This write-up contain excerpts from an article appearing on [reliefweb](http://reliefweb.org). [\[BACK\]](#)

Bulletin continued on next page...

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

International Women's Day 2018 - Young rural women lead educational reform



Time is now: Rural and urban activists transforming women's lives' is the theme of this year's International Women's Day (IWD), which is celebrated around the world on 8 March 2018.

UNESCO and ASPBAE produced a video for International Women's Day 2018 focusing on young women's voices from the youth-led action research project.

The action research provides young rural women with the skills and competencies needed to seek the needed evidence to inform educational reform in their communities.

UNESCO and ASPBAE produce video on young rural women leading educational reform

International Women's Day 2018

8 March 2018

UNESCO and ASPBAE produced a [video](#) for International Women's Day 2018 focusing on young women's voices from the youth-led action research project.

The introduction of the video featured on the UIL website is reproduced below -

"Women around the world face several obstacles to improving their lives. For young women from rural areas, these challenges are tied to socio-economic and cultural contexts. Often, their access to education and training opportunities is limited and they have to develop innovative ways to voice such concerns with an impact on an education policy that is guided by the fundamental principle of gender equality."

This is one reason why young rural women in India, Indonesia, and the Philippines are taking part in an action-research project developed by ASPBAE and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). The project provides them with the skills and competencies needed to seek the needed evidence to inform educational reform in their communities. This initiative is enabling young women in rural areas to continue learning and improve their livelihoods and the health of their families."

Other videos of the ASPBAE-UIL Youth-led Action Research Project are available [here](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

Executive Council plans way forward for ASPBAE's upcoming initiatives

4-7 February 2018, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India



ASPBAE's Executive Council and staff met in Jaipur, India, to take stock of ASPBAE's activities in 2017 and to strategise its interventions and plans for 2018.

ASPBAE's Executive Council (EC) convened in Jaipur to take stock of ASPBAE's activities in 2017 and to strategise its interventions and plans for 2018. They also welcomed Kilala Devette-Chee, who joined the Executive Council as the new female representative from the South Pacific to the ASPBAE Executive. The meeting also presented an opportunity for EC members to better acquaint themselves with the work of some of ASPBAE's members in India, and to experience the vibrant culture of Jaipur. The meeting was hosted by Azad Foundation, an ASPBAE member based in New Delhi but with offices in different states of the country including Jaipur. ASPBAE staff, staff of Azad Foundation and Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Director of DVV International for South East Asia were invited to parts of the Executive Council meeting.

As customary in the design of its meetings, a Forum was organised within the Executive Council meeting to offer an opportunity for the EC and its invitees to interact with several of ASPBAE's members in India and to gain an overview and understanding of the context of education and lifelong learning in the country. Three ASPBAE member organisations made comprehensive and well-informed

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



EC and staff interacted with ASPBAE's members in India who provided an overall view of the context of education and lifelong learning in the country. Satyendra Kumar of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI) addressed the issue of social inclusion in education.

presentations covering different aspects of education in India. Amrita Gupta of Azad Foundation presented on livelihoods for marginalised women in India addressing issues such as low literacy levels, decreasing labour force participation, violence against women, and marginalisation. Amrita spoke about the work of Azad Foundation, its empowerment and capacity building initiatives on skills and employment for marginalised women, its feminist leadership programme, and its research work on '*Financing Options for Skills for Work for Marginalised Women*'.

Satyendra Kumar of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI) addressed the issue of social inclusion in education where he highlighted the issues of caste and communal violence, untouchability, and religious divides. He shared statistics showing unequal development indicators amongst different castes, classes, ethnic groups, and religions (such as low literacy rates, gender gap in literacy, and out-of-school children), evidence of ongoing discrimination and exclusion of marginalised communities in education. Satyendra also highlighted the gaps in the education budget – its low levels and inefficient use.



Ramakant Rai of the National Coalition for Education (NCE) India, highlighted some of the issues and challenges regarding the Right to Education Act in India.

Ramakant Rai of the National Coalition for Education (NCE), India, gave a historical background of India's achievements in literacy and the status of early childhood care and development. He underscored the issue of child labour in the country, the gaps in education for adolescents and youth, and in school enrolment (including girls' enrolment). Ramakant Rai then elaborated on the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE). Some of the issues he raised regarding RTE were the high number of children with special needs who are illiterate and for whom the education system is poor equipped. He further mentioned that only 8% of schools in India comply with RTE norms and cited the example of students who continue studying in schools that fail to meet pupil-teacher norms. Ramakant Rai also highlighted that there are 660,000 untrained teachers in the country, and that there continue to be 950,000 vacant posts for teachers. The other challenges included poor maintenance of records of school-aged children, unfair selection of students in schools largely based on interactions with parents, and non-integration of students from economically weaker sections in private schools. However, the largest threat to RTE that he mentioned was budgetary allocations to education that remain insufficient and inadequate. The government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which is the flagship programme of RTE in India, increase only by a little over 11% for 2018-2019. Further, the gross school education budget allocation for 2018-19 is less than 4% higher than the revised budget estimate of the current year. Ramakant Rai concluded his presentation by detailing out several recommendations, including immediate recruitment of professionally trained teachers, discouraging all forms of privatisation and commercialisation of education, and ensuring provisions for skill development, vocational and technical development, as well as the provisioning of tertiary education for youth and adults free of cost.



A lively discussion was held by representatives of several women's groups who spoke about the history of the women's movement in Rajasthan, their achievements, and accomplishments.

The presentations were followed by lively discussions by representatives of several women's groups who spoke about the history of the women's movement in Rajasthan, their achievements and accomplishments in the field of work, advocacy with local governments, and their campaign for women's empowerment within families, in education institutions, and in governance structures.

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org



The EC deliberated on ASPBAE's activities and plans where they provided their strategic advice and directions to the organisation's interventions.

In the business sessions of the meeting, the EC deliberated on ASPBAE's activities and plans where they provided their strategic advice and directions to the organisation's interventions in areas such as advocacy, leadership and capacity development, partnerships, resource mobilisation, and its membership across the region. Some of the specific issues that were discussed focussed on SDG and SDG 4 interactions, education financing, advocacy on youth and adult education and learning, leadership and capacity building for advocacy, particularly for youth and adult education and practice, information and communications, and gender mainstreaming.

Updates were also shared on the work of DVV International, and ASPBAE's involvement with the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CC/NGO Ed2030), different SDG follow-up mechanisms, and its engagement with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The EC approved the Report of the Secretary-General, Maria Khan, where she detailed out specific programmes, objectives, initiatives, and activities for ASPBAE and its membership for the coming year. The 2018 Plans and Budgets were also approved by the Executive at the conclusion of the meeting – to steer ASPBAE's work for the year. It also welcomed 11 new member organisations into ASPBAE.

The next EC meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2019. [\[BACK\]](#)

ASPBAE welcomes Kilala Devette-Chee to its Executive Council

ASPBAE is pleased to announce the appointment of Kilala Devette-Chee as ASPBAE's South Pacific female representative to its Executive Council for the period 2017-2020 with effect on February 7, 2018.

Kilala is currently Vice Chair in ASPBAE's member organisation - PNG Education Advocacy Network (PEAN), Papua New Guinea (PNG). She is also the Senior Research Fellow and Head of Universal Basic Education Research Programme at the National Research Institute, PNG, and Women and Youth Advocate in the 'Women Arise Movement', Port Moresby, PNG.

Kilala has a Certificate in Knowledge Co-Creation Programme on Capacity Development for the Analyses of Education Policy Making and its Effects (Hiroshima University Japan and Chiang Mai University, Thailand) and is Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Linguistics (University of Canberra, Australia).

ASPBAE looks forward to working with Kilala and to her contributions to the Executive Council. [\[BACK\]](#)



ASPBAE welcomes Kilala Devette-Chee to its Executive Council as the female representatives for the South Pacific.



Asia South Pacific Association
for Basic and Adult Education
Learning Beyond Boundaries

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

February-March 2018

www.aspbae.org

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

Photo credits: Some photos used in this Bulletin have been sourced from the internet and belong to international NGOs, networks, and individual photographers.