

ASPBAE THIS MONTH

January-February 2019

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ASPBAE's Executive Council and staff interact with members in Japan

[Full article](#)



World marks first-ever International Day of Education on 24 January 2019

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UNESCO launches call for 2019 Prize on Education for Sustainable Development

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Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

World Youth Report

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VOICES from ASPBAE's Membership

WAVE Australia

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Goodbye and Thank you, Gani Serrano

[Full article](#)

Making non-traditional livelihoods work for the marginalised through education

Azad Foundation, in collaboration with ASPBAE and others, organised India's first international conference on '*Making Non-Traditional Livelihoods Work for the Marginalised*'. The conference addressed issues related to women's workforce participation and non-traditional livelihoods for resource-poor women. - [Read more](#)

Landmark Abidjan Principles on the right to education adopted by pool of eminent experts

Human rights experts from around the world came together in Abidjan to discuss, finalise, and adopt the *Guiding Principles on the human rights obligations of States to provide public education and to regulate private involvement in education*. - [Read more](#)

Education partners and stakeholders meet to prepare for the 6th APFSD

An SDG 4 Reference Group meeting was held to discuss the draft SDG 4 goal profile as a key input to the 6th Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD). ASPBAE participated as one of two civil society regional organisations invited to attend.

[Read more](#)

ASPBAE elected to Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) as representative of CSO 2 constituency

ASPBAE, with representation of its Secretary-General, Maria Khan, was elected Alternate for the CSO 2 constituency on the GPE Board of Directors, along with CLADE as Main representative, through representation of Camilla Croso.

[Read more](#)

Appraising country grant applications and reviewing domestic financing requirements

The Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) members of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) met in London to appraise country grant applications and discuss the key agenda around the results of GPE's country level evaluations. - [Read more](#)

Education News and Views

School-related violence and bullying on the basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression (SOGIE): Synthesis Report on China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

[Read more](#)



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Member of the Month

National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC), Australia

In 2015, with ASPBAE's support, a National Indigenous Youth Education Advocacy Workshop was held bringing together 19 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from around Australia. Together, the delegates formed the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) to work on issues related to education and supporting the next generation of leaders to reimagine and redefine education. NIYEC is committed to youth engagement in their work, indigenous rights and self-determination, and a transformative education. Visit the [NIYEC website](http://www.niyec.org.au) to know more.

Photo of the Month



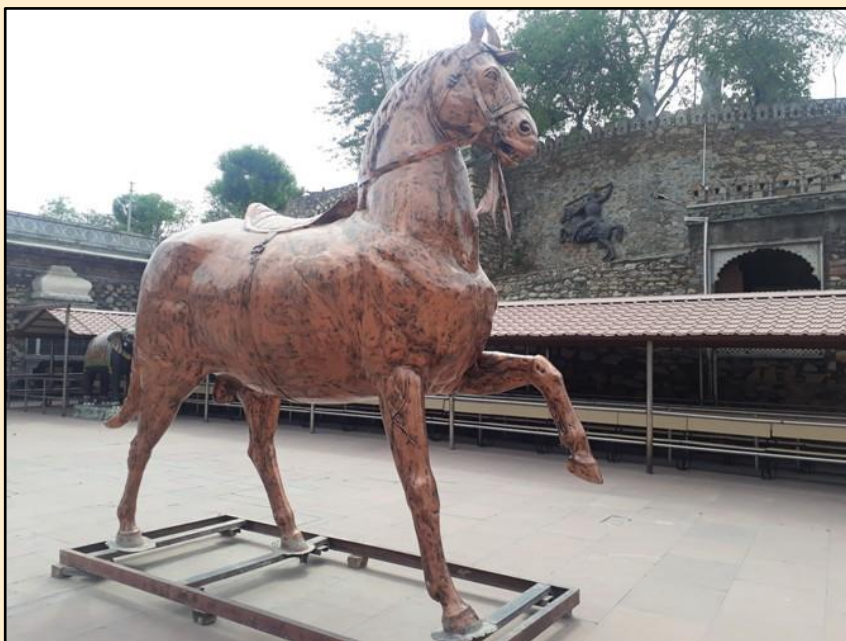
The first ever International Day of Education was celebrated on 24 January 2019. It was observed in celebration of the role of education for peace and development.

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 Santosh Satpute, Administrative Assistant in the RNET project office of Abhivyakti Media for Development.

Santosh Satpute

Administrative Assistant in the RNET project office of Abhivyakti Media for Development



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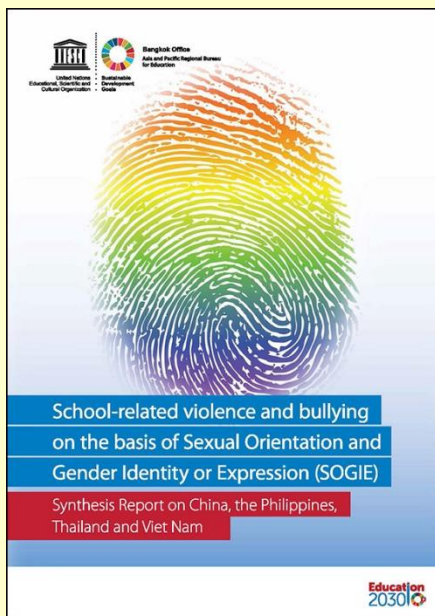
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EDUCATION NEWS AND VIEWS

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

School-related violence and bullying on the basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression (SOGIE): Synthesis Report on China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam

30 April 2018



The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have a long-standing commitment to address violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression (SOGIE) in Asia Pacific schools under UNDP's Being LGBTI in Asia initiative. As a part of this initiative, UNDP and UNESCO aim to strengthen regional leadership, advocacy, and mobilisation for increased awareness of the importance of education sector responses to violence based on SOGIE in the Asia Pacific region, and to scale up the availability of comprehensive evidence-based programmes to prevent and respond to violence based on SOGIE in educational institutions.

In June 2015, the Asia Pacific regional offices of UNESCO and UNDP co-organised a Regional Consultation on School-Related Bullying, Violence, and Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression (SOGIE), hosting thirteen country delegations. In 2016, as a follow-up to this regional consultation, UNESCO and UNDP supported four national consultations on violence based on SOGIE in the education sector in China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. Recommendations from the regional and national consultations included an interest to build a stronger evidence base of the nature and scope of violence based on SOGIE in Asia Pacific.

This [synthesis report](#) is informed by findings from four individually-developed country briefs on violence on the basis of SOGIE in schools in China, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The report was commissioned by UNESCO Bangkok, with support from UNDP's Being LGBTI in Asia initiative, to broaden the regional awareness and understanding about addressing violence on the basis of SOGIE in educational institutions, while also identifying best practices and policies. It aims to raise awareness and mobilise support for advocacy among educators, research institutions, policymakers, and activists at the national and regional levels.

The four briefs add valuable insight to what is already known about the causes, manifestations and scale, as well as the impact and consequences of violence on the basis of SOGIE in educational settings in the four respective countries. Each brief examines the unique programmatic and policy milieu with regards to prevention of and response to violence on the basis of SOGIE in educational settings. While the findings in each brief are country-specific, they also reflect the broader context and situation of LGBTI persons in educational settings across the Asia Pacific region.

This write-up is derived from information appearing on the [UNESDOC website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

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VOICES - From ASPBAE's Membership

'VOICES - from ASPBAE's Membership' is a space for ASPBAE's members to highlight an important initiative, achievement, learning, or challenge; share their experiences and stories; talk about how they are making a difference; and reach out to the larger ASPBAE membership across the Asia Pacific. In this section, we feature a contribution from **Women in Adult and Vocational Education, Inc. (WAVE), Australia.**

Focusing on women and post-compulsory education and training

By Elaine Butler, WAVE, Australia.



WAVE represents the interests of women and girls in adult, vocational, and work-related education and training, and the links between these, employment outcomes, and labour market positions.

(although membership is free), and funds raised through other activities such as research projects, seminars, and conferences.

WAVE aims to – (1) provide a national feminist network for women who work and study in adult, vocational, and work-related education and/or training; (2) provide advice and advocacy on behalf of members to decision makers in relation to the adult and vocational education sectors; (3) promote social justice and equity in and through adult and vocational education institutions, policies and practices; (4) strengthen links and build areas of mutual co-operation with other organisations, local, national and international, including but not limited to, women's and adult and vocational organisations; and (5) undertake research that will advance the interests of women in adult, vocational and work-related education and training.

WAVE's membership on a range of other organisations provides the opportunity not only to collaborate with others but also to extend its advocacy work, and insert a focus on education and training for women and girls, along with SDGs 4, 5 and 8 – otherwise all too often missed. WAVE is an active member of two of the Australian government's national women's alliances (NWAs) - Equality Rights Alliance and economicSecurity4Women. This involves WAVE in advocacy and lobbying work nationally on significant issues of concern to Australian women, as well as linking it with international groups such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and Australia's SDG commitment. As well as being a member of ASPBAE, WAVE also belong to Women's Major Group and NGO Major Group.

Women in Adult and Vocational Education, Inc. (WAVE) is an Australian NGO, the only national organisation with a single focus on women and post-compulsory education and training. WAVE represents the interests of women and girls in the broad areas of adult, vocational, and work-related education and training, and the links between these, employment outcomes, and labour market positions.

Formed in 1987, WAVE operates as a national network with an Executive that comprises coordinators from each of Australia's states and territories, along with a national coordinator. As well as contributing to WAVE, executive members work in a variety of organisations and occupations with a shared interest in WAVE's core areas of interest.

The Executive works on a voluntary basis, with no office or paid staff; no continuing funding source other than contributions from members



WAVE aims to provide a national feminist network for women who work and study in adult, vocational, and work-related education/training and advocate for issues related to adult and vocational education.

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For 2019-2020, WAVE's work will focus on equity in education and training, social inclusion, and employment and decent work.

WAVE is working on three 'pillars' to organise its work for 2019-2020: equity in education and training, social inclusion, and employment and decent work. As well as elections in a number of states, Australia is gearing up for a federal election in 2019.

WAVE's advocacy work is rapidly gaining pace – on its own and in association with other civil society organisations (CSOs). The main focus of WAVE's advocacy centres on the National Vocational and Education Training (VET) system, as well as issues associated with gender justice more broadly. Its national coordinator is contributing to a gender lens for the upcoming national budget with a focus on education and training.

The national VET sector has been subject to a lot of critique, especially over the last 18 months. The Australian government established a 'Review into VET'. As well as arguing that education and training for women and girls requires intensive action to redress lack of focus on gender equity in the current Australian VET system, WAVE's submission commented on a

range of key challenges in the VET sector that require action -

- Supporting women and girls to build skills and achieve successful careers.
- Meeting international obligations.
- Women and girls in the workforce.
- The marketisation of VET.

WAVE argued that the government increase funding to VET, particularly Technical and Further Education (TAFE), and ensure women and girls have access to a strong, national, public vocational education and training system.

WAVE recommended that the national VET system provide -

- Career advice, counselling, and targeted support for women and girls to undertake training for viable, well-paid, tenured jobs.
- Technical and trade training that is accessible for women and girls in all areas of skills shortages, emergent occupations and industries.
- Training provision that is high quality, affordable, inclusive, and relevant for the diversity of all Australian women.
- Access and support for all women and girls to participate and complete in subject areas that are 'non-traditional', i.e. STEM subjects.
- A genuine commitment to full implementation of gender equity policies in education, training, and employment. [\[BACK\]](#)



The main focus of WAVE's advocacy centres on the National Vocational and Education Training (VET) system, as well as issues associated with gender justice.

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The International Conference on 'Making Non-Traditional Livelihoods Work for the Marginalised' addressed various issues related to women's workforce participation and non-traditional livelihoods for resource-poor women.

Making non-traditional livelihoods work for the marginalised through education

16-18 January 2019, New Delhi, India

Women's participation in the labour force is a driver of a country's growth and indicates the potential of a country to grow rapidly. However, the participation is mostly underutilised and hampered by gender-based discrimination and inequality. To address this challenge, along with stagnant job market and rising unemployment, it is critical to move beyond traditional approaches to skilling and livelihood.

Azad Foundation, in collaboration with ASPBAE and other like-minded organisations, organised India's first international conference on 'Making Non-Traditional Livelihoods Work for the Marginalised'. The conference addressed various issues related to women's workforce participation and non-traditional livelihoods for resource-poor women.

Non-traditional livelihoods, such as driving, masonry, painting, and mechanics is a way of "breaking the glass ceiling" that does not allow poor women to choose livelihoods with dignity and which are remunerative. The conference brought together experts who influence policy and experts who make the change happen.

The conference also aimed to create a platform to deliberate ways to overcome existing gender disparities in learning opportunities and skills ensuring equitable technical and transferable skills in accessing employment and decent jobs. It provided a platform to share and learn about the non-traditional livelihoods for women that challenge gender norms in work and skill development, create mobility, remunerative incomes, and a sense of identity and dignity.

The conference was divided into several plenary and workshop sessions around three areas: (1) context of women's workforce participation and challenges; non-traditional livelihoods breaking gendered divisions of labour at home and outside; (2) building an ecosystem of support for sustaining women at their workplace; creating gender sensitive markets; (3) exploring interconnections between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for decent work for marginalised women; articulating key elements for decent work for marginalised women.

Sharing the global and regional context on women's labour force participation, Jayati Ghosh, Development Economist and Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU, New Delhi), mentioned the increase of women in unpaid care work. Highlighting the need to increase public employment opportunities that improve quality of life, she stressed the importance of the political choice of countries in policy formations and implementation that acknowledges care work and non-traditional livelihood.

Nani Zulminarni, ASPBAE President, was one of the panellists in the opening plenary on women's workforce participation and its challenges, where she elaborated on the systemic challenges to women's workforce participation, specifically in Southeast Asia. ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano spoke in the

The Conference included deliberations on the context of women's workforce participation and challenges; building an ecosystem of support for sustaining women at their workplace; creating gender sensitive markets; and exploring interconnections between the SDGs for decent work for marginalised women.



Feminist activist, Kamla Bhasin addressing the NTL Conference in New Delhi.

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ASPBAE organised a parallel session named 'Skill development and education for Marginalised women', aimed at validating, enriching, and disseminating the results of the ASPBAE research study on financing options for livelihoods for marginalised women in India and Indonesia.

ASPBAE organised a parallel session on the intersection between advocacy for women's education and skills development in SDG 4 and other SDGs (SDG 8, decent work; SDG 10, reducing inequalities). ASPBAE's Maria Khan, Nani Zulminarni, and Thea Soriano contributed to the discussions, as did ASPBAE members WAVE Australia and the Afghan Women's Network.



The NTL Conference provided a platform to share and learn about the non-traditional livelihoods for women that challenge gender norms in work and skill development, create mobility, remunerative incomes, and a sense of identity and dignity.

plenary on the interconnections between the SDGs, emphasising the links between SDG 4 and SDG 8 for decent work for marginalised women.

ASPBAE contributed to the discourses by organising a parallel session focussing on the intersection between advocacy for women's education and skills development in SDG 4 and other SDGs such as SDG 8 on decent work and SDG 10 on reducing inequalities. The parallel session, named 'Skill development and education for Marginalised women', aimed at validating, enriching, and disseminating the results of the ASPBAE research study on financing options for livelihoods for marginalised women in India and Indonesia.

Maria Khan, ASPBAE Secretary-General, initiated the discussion by stressing the issue of working with marginalised women and advocating with governments for quality public services. Nani Zulminarni, Executive Director, PEKKA Indonesia and ASPBAE President, shared the Indonesia country case study emphasizing the need for a gendered notion in skill development and financing a gender just framework for skill development and decent work. She shared the civil society model of skill development which underlines comprehensive capacity enhancement that includes skills training with leadership and business management.

Elaine Butler of WAVE Australia shared a synthesis of the two country cases from India and Indonesia specifying that the future of work and learning are interdependent. Sharing the challenges faced by Afghan women related to the legal legitimacy of women's work, Roshan Mashal of the Afghan Women's Network, an ASPBAE member, reiterated the need for a transparent and responsive monitoring mechanism system for the implementation of laws and policies at the national level that provide educational, economic, and business opportunities for women. ASPBAE's Cecilia Soriano concluded the session with underscoring the ways to translate the research findings into advocacy efforts, networking with different stakeholders and lobbying with states at various levels.

The conference ended with a charter of demands that highlighted the formation of an enabling environment for marginalised women and gender minorities to enter and sustain their participation in the workforce. At the 63rd Commission of Status of Women (CSW), Azad foundation shared the key demands in a parallel session on '*Realising Women's Economic Empowerment through Non-Traditional Livelihoods*'. ASPBAE included the recommendations from the charter in the statement during the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and round table discussion on SDG 4 (Quality Education). Azad has used the charter recommendations in their contribution to review reports on SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and will advance the recommendations from the charter at the upcoming High-level Political Forum (HLPF).

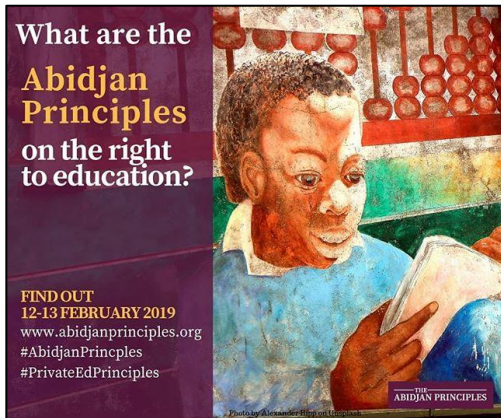
The charter of demands has been forwarded within various national and state level institutions to speak about transformative skill training and enabling environments for sustained work participation; liaise with TVET institutions for holistic and transformative skilling using a Gender Just Skill Education (GJSE) framework; and share the charter with local civil society and practitioners of NTL.

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The Abidjan Principles seek to strengthen efforts to ensure that the right to education is protected from private actor involvement in education.

Landmark Abidjan Principles on the right to education adopted by pool of eminent experts

12-13 February 2019, Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire

On 13 February 2019, following three years of consultations, documentation, and drafting, human rights experts from around the world came together in Abidjan to discuss, finalise, and adopt the Guiding Principles on the human rights obligations of States to provide public education and to regulate private involvement in education.

The document, now known as the [Abidjan Principles](#), identifies and unpacks the existing obligations of states under international human rights law to provide quality public education and to regulate private actors in education in the context of the rapid privatisation and commercialisation of education globally and in the Asia Pacific region. The landmark document, intended to directly inform education policies, was signed in the presence of the Minister of Education of Côte d'Ivoire, Kandia Camara, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Boly Barry Koumba.



Education and human rights advocates and campaigners met to discuss the dissemination of the Abidjan Principles. Among them were, L-R: Ram Gaire of NCE Nepal, Rene Raya of ASPBAE, and Addie Unsi of E-Net Philippines.

The drafting of the Abidjan Principles was led by a committee made up of nine internationally-renowned experts chaired by Professor Ann Skelton from South Africa, a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UNESCO Chair of Education Law in Africa. Another 15 eminent human rights and legal experts participated in the adoption conference, including experts from the India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Australia. A secretariat, made up of Amnesty International, the Equal Education Law Centre, the Global Initiative for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights, and the Right to Education Initiative, facilitated the consultative process.

Dozens of education and human rights advocates and campaigners observed the adoption of the Abidjan Principles and met shortly after to discuss the dissemination of the document. Among them were representatives of regional and national education networks from around the world affiliated with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). ASPBAE was represented by Rene Raya, Lead Policy Analyst; Ram Gaire, Programme Manager of the National Campaign for Education-Nepal (NCE Nepal) and GCE Board Member; and Addie Unsi, National Coordinator of E-Net Philippines.



A pool of experts in discussions during the process of adopting the Abidjan Principles.

The Abidjan Principles constitute a milestone to address the raging debates about public and private education, following the significant increase in private schools and Public Private Partnership (PPP) in education that has taken place in the last two decades. By providing a rigorous legal framework detailing States' existing legal binding obligation, they will help to ensure that the discussion on education policies put the right to education at their core.

Professor Ann Skelton, who chaired the adoption conference, noted that for the first time, a document *"provides a rigorous and comprehensive legal framework to address one of the most crucial current issues in education policies: the role of the State and private actors."*

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ASPBAE and member national education coalitions have been campaigning against the rising privatisation and commercialisation of education across the region and calling for strong and well-funded public education systems.

Jayna Kothari, a Counsel in the Karnataka High Court and the Supreme Court of India, said, 'This (the Abidjan Principles) is particularly relevant in the Asia Pacific region, where the unchecked growth of private schools is creating harmful discrimination and social division.'

ASPBAE, along with member national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific, have been campaigning against the rising privatisation and commercialisation of education across the region and calling for strong and well-funded public education systems.

In previous years, parallel reports were submitted to the UN Human Rights Council and UN Human Rights treaty bodies which warned against the rise of unregulated private educational institutions and the risk of segregation in education. [\[BACK\]](#)

Appraising country grant applications and reviewing domestic financing requirements

29-31 Jan 2019, London, U.K.



The Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) of the Global Partnership for Education met to appraise country grant applications, review the domestic financing requirements and workstreams created in response to GPE's Effective Partnership Review (EPR).

The Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) members of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) met to appraise country grant applications and discuss the key agenda around the results of GPE's country level evaluations, review the domestic financing requirements and workstreams created in response to GPE's Effective Partnership Review (EPR).

ASPBAE's Helen Dabu represented the CSO2 (Southern) constituency and provided inputs and recommendations in consultation with the civil society organisation (CSO) constituencies, especially with national education coalitions whose countries have submitted grant applications for this round.

Seven grants were appraised and discussed by the Committee - Papua New Guinea (PNG), Nepal, Uzbekistan, Benin, Burundi, Tanzania-Mainland, and Senegal.

Civil society comments were received from these countries, and were raised during the GPC meeting, which ranged from contextual, programmatic, and thematic concerns such as on democratic spaces, fiscal vulnerabilities of countries, especially those accessing GPE's multiplier funding, access to information and data of CSOs, alignment of the grants to education sector analysis and sector plans, and the need to strengthen gender and equity indicators.

The Committee also discussed findings from GPE's country-level evaluations and how the GPC can use these evaluations to inform its work and deliberations of country grants. GPC deemed it important to look at this closely since the Committee's work is not only to review grant applications, but also to review the performance of grants.

Brief discussions were also held on the domestic financing requirement to access GPE grants wherein the GPE Secretariat shared their findings on the 20%

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CSOs are advocating for the inclusion of debt servicing in the calculation of the national budget to get a realistic indicator of whether or not countries are meeting their domestic financing commitments.

requirement on financing for education, based on their review of the experiences of developing country partners that have applied under GPE's funding model. Helen Dabu made an intervention on this based on the position made by CSOs in the GPE Board meeting in Paris in December 2017 expressing CSOs' disagreement in the current formula used by GPE in calculating education budget viz. national budget which excludes debt servicing. CSOs are advocating for the inclusion of debt servicing in the calculation of the national budget to get a realistic indicator of whether or not countries are meeting their domestic financing commitments.

Lastly, Committee members were updated on the recent workstreams established by the GPE Secretariat in response to the results of GPE's Effective Partnership Review (EPR) needing involvement by GPC members and their constituencies interested to participate in this piece of work.

Below are the workstreams created which will function for about six weeks (between February to March) to help offer recommendations for improvement in GPE processes to address concerns raised in the EPR – (1) Strengthening the country level partnership and policy dialogue (ASPBAE, through Helen Dabu, is part of this workstream); (2) Strengthening the education sector planning process; (3) Streamlining the Education Sector Program Implementation Grant application/quality assurance process; (4) Strengthening transparency and accountability of the Grant Agent. [\[BACK\]](#)

Grants from Papua New Guinea (PNG), Nepal, Uzbekistan, Benin, Burundi, Tanzania-Mainland, and Senegal with discussed by the Grants and Performance Committee.

ASPBAE elected to Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) as representative of CSO 2 constituency



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (above), was elected Alternate for the CSO 2 constituency to the Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) along with CLADE (Latin America education coalition) as Main representative, through representation of Camilla Croso.

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) conducted an election to select civil society representatives on the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Board of Directors. ASPBAE, with representation of its Secretary-General, Maria Khan, was elected Alternate for the CSO 2 constituency (explained below) along with CLADE (the Latin America education coalition) as Main representative, through representation of Camilla Croso. Both take over from the outstanding work and leadership of Laura Giannecchini of CLADE and Zehra Arshad of PCE, Pakistan, who were the CSO 2 representatives in the GPE Board for the last two years.

Representation in the GPE Board is by constituency and civil society is one such constituency. The civil society constituency is represented in four categories – (1) International NGOs and 'Northern' coalitions/NGOs (CSO 1); (2) CSOs from Developing countries and regions (CSO 2); (3) Teaching profession (CSO 3); and (4) Private sector/foundations (PS/F). Each of these constituencies has 2 slots in the Board - a representative and an alternate. In practice, these roles are almost co-equal (both attend all meetings, can speak and participate, have access to all material). Oxfam IBIS (Main representative) and Plan International (Alternate) were elected to the CSO 1 constituency represented by Kira Boe and Yona Nestel, respectively. The teaching profession, or CSO3, is represented by Gifty Anyogbe Apanbil of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (Main) and Haldis Holst of Education International (Alternate). The PS/F constituency is

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As a strategic policy space, it has been important to ensure that civil society continues to be well represented in the GPE Board with strong civil society leadership, rooted and connected with the global civil society movement for education.

represented by Randa Grob-Zakharyof Porticus (Main) and David Boutcher of the Global Business Coalition for Education (Alternate).

GPE is a strategic global policy platform for education. With the global agenda having been agreed through the global UN/UNESCO processes (where ASPBAE is represented through the EFA/Education 2030 Steering Committees) - the focus of action now moves to the implementation of the agenda. Financing of education, education sector plans - has thus become more strategic. GPE is currently the main global financing mechanism for education. As a strategic policy space, it has been important to ensure that civil society continues to be well represented in the GPE Board with strong civil society leadership, rooted and connected with the global civil society movement for education. [\[BACK\]](#)



The SDG 4 Reference Group meeting discussed the draft SDG 4 goal profile as a key input to the forthcoming 6th Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD).

Education partners and stakeholders meet to prepare for the 6th APFSD

18 January 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

An SDG 4 Reference Group meeting was held to discuss the draft SDG 4 goal profile as a key input to the forthcoming 6th Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD). The meeting saw the participation of representatives of leading UN Agencies in the field of education, as well as representatives of sub-regional organisations, and civil society involved in the implementation of SDG 4 on 'Quality Education'. The meeting, jointly organised by UNESCO, UNICEF, and UNESCAP, saw the participation of ASPBAE as one of two civil society regional organisations that was invited to attend the meeting.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya offered several recommendations to improve the SDG 4 profile document, highlighting the urgency of addressing equity, inclusion, financing, quality, and governance.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya provided several suggestions to the SDG 4 profile document, highlighting the urgency of addressing equity, inclusion, financing, quality, and governance. He noted specifically the following -

- The region is off-track in meeting SDG 4 targets, thus, the need to accelerate efforts to get back on track.
- Even worse, inequities in education have actually widened in some countries in the region.
- Gender disparity still persists while disparities by location and wealth, disability, and ethnicity, and education for migrants, must be given attention.
- Education spending levels in relation to GDP and total expenditure have gone down since 2000.
- On quality education, there is a need to go beyond the core learning competencies to the broader meaning of quality education that includes Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), including issues such as social awareness, gender sensitivity, and peace and human rights, amongst others.
- On adult education, literacy, non-formal education, and lifelong learning systems, affirmative action is needed to ensure that "no one is left behind" in SDG 4.4 (skills), 4.5 (gender disparities), and 4.6 (youth and adult literacy and numeracy). Marginalised youth and adults will benefit from programmes that are targeted towards their needs and where governments invest in support systems (e.g. day care, scholarships).



The SDG 4 Goal profile is envisaged to be finalised in a multi-stakeholder roundtable discussion to be held during the 6th APFSD (March 2019, Bangkok).

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ASPBAE as one of two civil society regional organisations invited to attend the meeting.

The SDG 4 Goal profile is envisaged to be presented and finalised in a multi-stakeholder roundtable discussion to be held during the 6th APFSD from 27-29 March 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. The main outcome of the said roundtable is to develop policy recommendations on regional priority for action and will be included in the Chair's summary of the 6th APFSD to be relayed to 2019 High-level Political Forum (HLPF). [[BACK](#)]



ASPBAE's Executive Council and staff interact with members in Japan

27 February 2019, Tokyo, Japan

ASPBAE's Executive Council (EC) meeting was convened from 28 February-4 March 2019 in Gotemba, Japan, hosted by its members, the Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA) and the Development Education Association and Resource (DEAR) Centre, with the support of the Japan NGO Network for Education (JNNE).

It has been customary for the Executive Council meetings to be organised in a way that allows the Executive to directly interact with its members in the country where the meetings are convened. This facilitates greater exposure of the EC to the contexts of work and engagements of its members; and thus, help root and better inform the EC in their deliberations on ASPBAE's work and future plans.

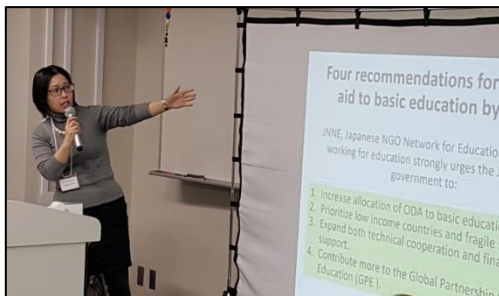
For its 2019 meeting in Japan, an interaction was organised with ASPBAE members in the country. The interaction was organised around the following specific objectives –

1. Offer a space for the ASPBAE EC members and staff to better understand the education context in Japan, through the prism of equity, a core principle advanced by ASPBAE.
2. Learn from the rich experience of Japanese members and ASPBAE in advancing the SDGs and SDG4, in particular. This is especially relevant given that SDG4 is under the review spotlight in 2019 through the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) processes.
3. Discuss ways and avenues for coordination action and strengthened engagement of Japan members in ASPBAE initiatives.
4. Discuss ways of collaboration with JNNE on its advocacy initiatives.

After a formal welcome by Eri Yamamoto of SVA and ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and an introduction to the meeting by ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, Chizuko Nagaoka of the Japan Women's University gave a presentation on '*Understanding the Japanese Context: A focus on Education and Marginalisation in Japan*'. The presentation outlined existing education policies and programmes aiming to reach those who have been marginalised in the Japanese education system – those who have not completed compulsory education, adults with none or limited literacy skills, migrants, children, youth, and adults from minority ethnic communities.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya presented on findings of the CSO Spotlight Reports on SDG 4 in the Asia Pacific, including Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and SDG

Eri Yamamoto of SVA Japan, addressing the interaction with Japan members in Tokyo. She is also a member of the ASPBAE Executive Council.



Naoko Shiroya of JNNE and Plan International, Japan, briefed participants on the plans of JNNE, especially in preparation for the G20 Summit which Japan is hosting in Osaka in June 2019.



DEAR's Eno Nakamura spoke about the work of DEAR, especially on global citizenship education and advocacy with governments to mainstream SDG 4.7 in Japan's education systems.

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Participants of the Japan members' meeting.

rollout, and ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano addressed ASPBAE's SDG-SDG 4 advocacy plans. Other presentations included mainstreaming SDG 4.7 in Japan (DEAR) and on Japanese development cooperation and education – analysis and advocacy plans of JNNE. Eno Nakamura of DEAR briefed the participants on the work of DEAR, especially on global citizenship education and their advocacy efforts with governments to mainstream SDG 4.7 in Japan's education systems.

Naoko Shiroya of JNNE and Plan International, Japan, briefed participants on the plans of JNNE, especially in preparation for the G20 Summit which Japan is hosting in Osaka from 28-29 June 2019. JNNE is a member of the Civil Society 20 (C20) Education Working Group, one of the seven Engagement Groups organised by civil society to advocate within the G20 Summit.

JNNE proposed ASPBAE's participation in a workshop during the C20 event (21-23 April in Tokyo) on education financing addressing issues of privatisation and commercialisation of education at C20 Japan. They also sought ASPBAE and its members' participation and input in the C20 Policy Paper on Education. [\[BACK\]](#)



UNESCO called on countries to increase political commitment to education as a force for inclusion driving the achievement of all the SDGs.

World marks first-ever International Day of Education

24 January 2019

The world marked the first-ever [International Day of Education](#) on 24 January, which was proclaimed by the [United Nations General Assembly](#) last year in celebration of the role of education for peace and development. UNESCO called on countries to increase political commitment to education as a force for inclusion driving the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals.

Today, 262 million children and youth still do not attend school; 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic math; less than 40% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete lower secondary school and some four million children and youth refugees are out of school.

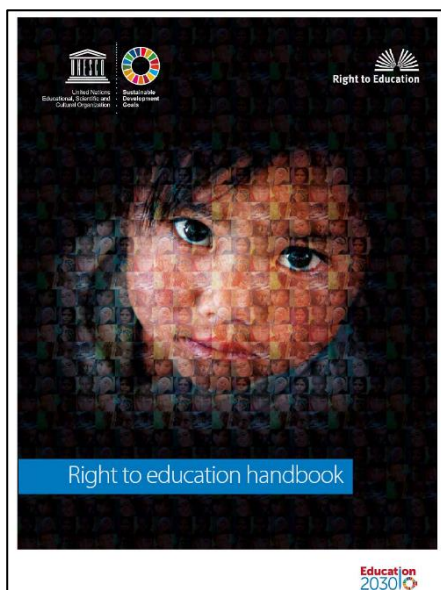
"Education is the most powerful force in our hands to ensure significant improvements in health, to stimulate economic growth, to unlock the potential and innovation we need to build more resilient and sustainable societies," said Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director General in her statement for the Day. "We will not succeed in breaking the cycle of poverty, mitigating climate change, adapting to the technological revolution, let alone achieve gender equality, without ambitious political commitment to universal education."

Headline figures point to the challenges

UNESCO released a new [right to education handbook](#). It also published new data on education inequalities showing which population groups are lagging behind in achieving SDG 4.

According to new data released by UNESCO's Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Global Education Monitoring Report -

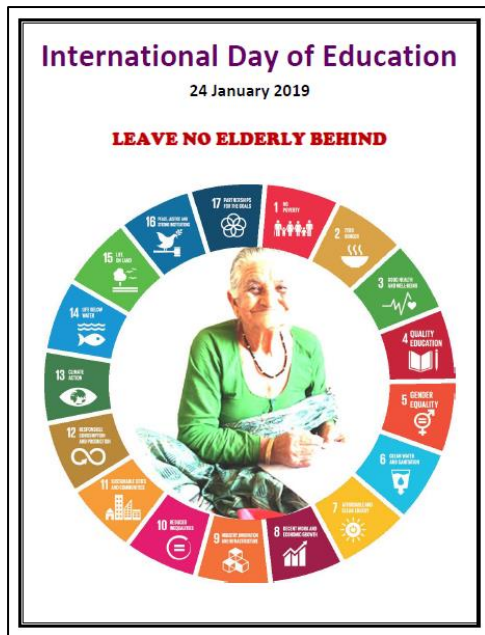
- The poorest children and youth in low-income countries are less than 1/2 as likely to complete primary school than the richest.



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Without inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind.

- They are less than ¼ as likely to complete lower secondary school.
- They are 1/10 as likely to complete upper secondary school.
- Children in rural areas are over twice as likely to be out of school than children living in urban areas in low-income countries.
- Only 2% of the poorest girls in low-income countries complete upper secondary school.

These figures from the World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE) highlight the need for urgent action to reduce inequalities, which should be high on the agendas of countries and development partners.

"How we implement the global education goal will determine the success or failure of the entire push to end poverty, generate inclusive growth, strengthen peace and protect the planet," said Stefania Giannini, Assistant-Director-General for Education.

Celebrating education's role for peace and development

The first celebration of the Day was marked at the United Nations in New York in an [event](#) co-organized by UNESCO and the Permanent Missions of Ireland, Nigeria, Norway, the Republic of Singapore, and the State of Qatar. The event's theme, 'Education: A Key Driver for Inclusion and Empowerment', echoed the focus of the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) that takes place in New York this July, which will review SDG 4, among other goals. Bringing together the voices of governments, the UN system, the private sector, and youth organisations, the event was a platform to highlight education's vital contribution to the entire 2030 Agenda and to strengthen collective action to achieve SDG4.

A new initiative called [Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning](#) was also launched in New York, formed by representatives of Member States to the UN, to advocate for sustained commitment to education in the 2030 Agenda. Panel discussions and screenings were organized in Geneva, Brussels and other locations around the world to mark the Day. Click [here](#) for more on the International Day of Education.

This write-up draws from an article appearing on the [UNESCO website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

UNESCO launches call for 2019 Prize on Education for Sustainable Development

29 January 2019



The UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD honours outstanding projects by individuals, institutions, and organisations related to ESD.

The call for nominations for the fifth edition of the UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is now open. The Prize annually rewards three outstanding projects and programmes promoting ESD with USD 50,000 each.

Governments of all Member States as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in official partnership with UNESCO are invited to nominate up to three individuals, institutions, or organisations engaged in ESD for the 2019 edition.

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The deadline for submission is 30 April 2019 (midnight, Paris time).

Nominations must be written in English or French and need to focus on a specific ESD project or programme of the nominee. They will be assessed by an independent jury of five international experts on the basis of their potential for transformation, integration and innovation. Projects must have been running for at least four years, already show evidence of a high impact, be easily replicable and scalable and contribute to one or more of the five Priority Action Areas of the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP) as well as to the Sustainable Development Goals. Self-nominations are not accepted. Interested candidates are advised to contact the National Commission for UNESCO in their country, or an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO.

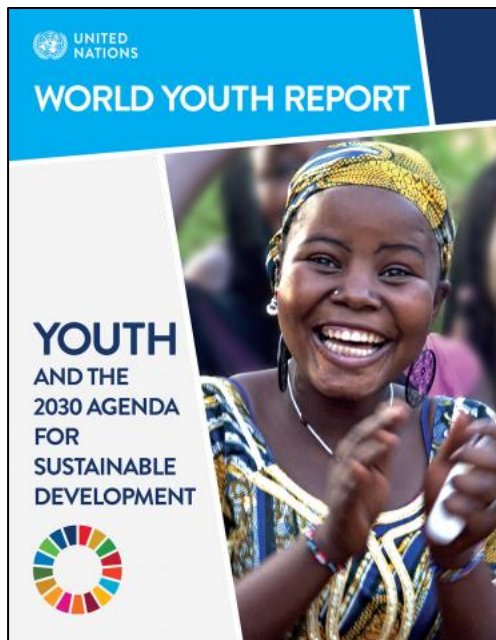
The deadline for submission is 30 April 2019 (midnight, Paris time). Nominations must be submitted at this link, only accessible to UNESCO Member States and NGOs in official partnership. User guides for the online nomination platform as well as replies to Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the Prize website.

The UNESCO-Japan Prize was established in 2014 in the framework of the GAP, and is generously funded by the Government of Japan. This year's winners will be announced by the Director-General of UNESCO in September. In addition to receiving the monetary award at an official ceremony in Paris, all winners will be invited to join the Partner Networks of the Global Action Programme on ESD.

This write-up draws from information appearing on the UNESCO website. [\[BACK\]](#)

Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

20 February 2019, New York, U.S.A



The World Youth Report examines the mutually supportive roles of the new agenda and current youth development efforts.

The World Youth Report on [Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), examines the mutually supportive roles of the new agenda and current youth development efforts.

The report provides insight into the role of young people in sustainable development in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related frameworks, in particular, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Programme of Action for Youth.

The Report considers the role the 2030 Agenda can play in enhancing youth development efforts and examines how evidence-based youth policies can help accelerate youth-related objectives. It explores the critical role young people have in the implementation of sustainable development efforts at all levels.

Far from being mere beneficiaries of the 2030 Agenda, young people have been active architects in its development and continue to be engaged in the frameworks and processes that support its implementation, follow-up and review.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda represented the culmination of an extensive three-year process involving Member States and civil society, including youth

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The report explores the critical role young people have in the implementation of sustainable development efforts.

organisations, in the development of specific goals and targets - and marked the beginning of a 15-year journey to achieve sustainable development by 2030.

Today, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population.¹ The active engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is central to achieving sustainable, inclusive and stable societies by the target date, and to averting the worst threats and challenges to sustainable development, including the impacts of climate change, unemployment, poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and migration. While all the Sustainable Development Goals are critical to youth development, this Report focuses primarily on the areas of education and employment, underlining the realisation of targets under these Goals as fundamental to overall youth development. Issues related to other Goals - including gender equality, good health, reducing inequality, combating poverty and hunger, and action on environmental issues and climate change - are also addressed briefly within the scope of the Report.

Click [here](#) to access the Executive Summary of the report.

This write-up draws from an article appearing on the [UN website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

Goodbye and Thank you, Gani Serrano



ASPBAE's 2nd General Assembly (1996), Darwin, Australia.

It was with deep sadness that ASPBAE received news on 22 February 2019 of the demise of Gani Serrano, President of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), an ASPBAE member.

Gani was one of ASPBAE's esteemed fellow travellers. He was with us in our first General Assembly in Tagaytay (Philippines) as part of the host/organising committee. He helped shape ASPBAE's flagship training programme, the Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC), in 1997 following CONFINTEA 5, where Gani also participated as part of the ASPBAE-ICAE CSO contingent. He was a member of the resource person team when we launched our intermediate leadership training course, NEXT 2, more than a decade after.

Somewhere on the internet where our lives tend to be curated these days, he is described as "an occasional poet and guitar player". An iconic image is of the 2nd General Assembly of ASPBAE in 1996 (Darwin, Australia). That's Gani on his guitar - leading a rendition of a John Lennon classic. We recreated that scene somewhat many years after, when PRRM hosted ASPBAE's launch of our 50th anniversary celebrations in 2014 in Manila - one of the numerous ASPBAE events PRRM supported with great generosity, under Gani's leadership.



Launch of ASPBAE's 50th Anniversary celebrations (2014), Manila, Philippines.

But Gani's contributions went far beyond what he did for PRRM, ASPBAE, and ICAE - for which we have also been enriched profoundly. He authored one of the first definitive publications on civil society in the region - giving us voice and a profile when we were still largely operating in the fringes of policy. His work and writings on sustainable development, on equity and equality have shaped the movement's discourse. He stirred us all into believing that civil society has a critical role to play in defining an alternative development path – ending the

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fragility of this planet and guaranteeing a just peace, equity, and a good life for all for many more generations to come.

His was a consistent, tireless voice championing the interests of those deprived of their rights and dignity - in the Philippines, at the UN, with the World Bank and ADB, with guerrilla fighters, naysayers - anyone who would care to listen. Or had to listen. Erudite, competent, amusing, provocative, passionate - his message touched many.

Our loss is immense with his passing.

Condolences to PRRM and Gani's family may be sent through PRRM Executive Director, Marlon Palomo at mppalomo@prrm.org and/or info@prrm.org.

This message is derived from the condolence message of the ASPBAE Executive Council and staff to PRRM and Gani's family. [\[BACK\]](#)

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.

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