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Building leadership capacities of marginalised youth in Timor Leste

Youth-led Action Research training

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Enabling marginalised youth define community actions in Vanuatu

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Planning education in an AI era: Lead the Leap

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Education News and Views

New data reveals attacks against education around the world

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Adult Education and Development Conference addresses the power of adult learning and education

The 6th Adult Education and Development Conference (AEDC), organised by DVV International, dealt with the specific role of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within the Agenda 2030 and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). - [Read more](#)

Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO) strengthens synergies for SDG engagements

The CoNGO annual meeting in Bangkok was the third meeting of the CoNGO in the region that aimed to strengthen exchanges of experience and mutual learning, mostly around civil society engagements on Agenda 2030: Sustainable Development Goals. Outcomes. - [Read more](#)

Working towards enhancing communication, coordination, and consultation between Developing Country Partners

Global Partnership for Education Developing Country Partner's (DCP) Meeting

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) organised a meeting of Developing Country Partners (DCP) in Kathmandu. Over 50 DCP focal points from Africa, Latin America, and the Asia Pacific participated. - [Read more](#)

Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC) of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) meets in Paris

An important discussion point at the GEC meeting was on the creation of a distinct private sector constituency in the GPE Board. The CSO2 representative, Fotouh Younes, expressed her concern about this proposal, stating that, "...we do not see the private sector approach dealing with education as a human right or a public good for all." - [Read more](#)

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Member of the Month

Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA)

The Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA) is an indigenous, non-profit, NGO with a feminist agenda. It is dedicated to promoting the self-reliant development of disadvantaged communities and to the advancement of women's and children's rights. It seeks to empower women through collective organisation, personal development, skills training, access to resources, and advocacy. CWDA facilitates participation of grassroots women in awareness-raising activities on women's issues, creating favourable local environments for women's forums and activities. Visit the [CWDA website](http://www.cwda.org.kh) to know more.

Photo of the Month



The International Day of Living Together in Peace is held on 16 May as a means of regularly mobilising the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding, and solidarity.

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 Peter King, Capacity Support and Advocacy Adviser, Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), based in Australia.

Peter King

Capacity Support and Advocacy Adviser, Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)



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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 new data about attacks against education around the world.

New data reveals attacks against education around the world

28 May 2019



More than 14,000 armed attacks on education took place in the last five years in 34 conflict-affected countries.

New and updated data of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack ([GCPEA](#)) shows that more than 14,000 armed attacks on education took place in the last five years in 34 conflict-affected countries. The GCPEA, of which UNESCO is a founding member, released the new data ahead of the 4th anniversary of the [Safe Schools Declaration](#). High-level representatives from over 90 countries gathered in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, from 28-29 May 2019 at the [Third International Conference on Safe Schools](#) to mark the occasion and encourage other states to endorse the Declaration. The Conference provided a forum to share experiences, raise awareness, and increase the visibility of the Declaration and the [Guidelines](#). It was also an occasion to encourage cooperation and deeper gender responsive implementation of the Declaration and the Guidelines.

The new GCPEA data reveals that there were 10,000 attacks on schools, including buildings that were bombed, damaged, or used by armed forces or groups. Nine countries each suffered more than 500 attacks on schools. Higher education facilities came under siege in at least 20 countries around the world. The research also found that in at least 30 countries, schools were used for military purposes. Girl and women students and teachers were also directly targeted in at least 18 countries through bombings of girls' schools, abduction, rape, and harassment.

To date, 89 countries - almost half of all UN Member States - have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, and committed to taking concrete action to end targeting of schools and universities, students and staff.

As the UN agency with a mandate in higher education, UNESCO appeals to all countries to protect education at all levels, including higher education, from attack during armed conflict. *"Attacks against education are attacks against knowledge and the power it brings to transform lives, to build the future,"* said Stefania Giannini. *"The need to protect education in contexts of crisis and conflict - and to make it a force for reconciliation - has never been more urgent."*

In 2018, UNESCO launched the '[Revive the Spirit of Mosul](#)' initiative to rebuild the heritage and revitalize the educational and cultural institutions of Mosul. The Organisation will invest its technical expertise and mobilise funding to support the country rebuild the education sector. UNESCO will also focus on the rehabilitation and modernisation of the University of Mosul's library, which was destroyed during the war.

Click to view a UNESCO video, [Protect education from attack](#). Learn more about UNESCO's work in [education in emergencies](#).

This article appeared on the [UNESCO website](#). [[BACK](#)]

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DVV International organised its 6th Adult Education and Development Conference focusing on the specific role of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within Agenda 2030 and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Adult Education and Development Conference addresses the power of adult learning and education

7-8 May 2019, Weimar, Germany

The 6th Adult Education and Development Conference (AEDC), organised by DVV International, dealt with the specific role of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within the Agenda 2030 and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). More than 150 experts, practitioners, and cooperation partners from the global network of DVV International presented good practice examples and discussed the positive effects of ALE on sustainable development.

Expert panels and working groups elaborated on strengths and challenges of ALE, in particular with regards its contributions to the overall agenda, its role for the education goal (SDG4) and interlinkages with other goals under review during the next HLPF. A key note presentation by the former Director of UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report, Aaron Benavot, informed participants about monitoring progress on ALE-based international indicators and discussed reasons for the still insufficient visibility of the sub-sector.

ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, were part of different panels organised at the Conference. Nani was part of the panel on '*Creating inclusive societies through adult learning and education (SDG 10)*'. Maria was part of the final panel on '*Making Use of Potential - Increasing Visibility and Lobbying for Adult Education*'.

The Conference deliberated on a draft [Outcomes document](#) to be released in time for the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2019. Several DVVI publications were also released during the event including a coffee table book on 50 years of DVVI which featured all its partners through the years, including ASPBAE.

The conference participants agreed that the lifelong learning approach of SDG4 provides a potentially broader playing field for ALE. However, they also came to the conclusion that complexity and diverse learning formats (formal, non-formal, and informal) of ALE are both an asset and a challenge. It was noted and discussed that concept and scope of adult learning and education, possible interlinkages, and promising programme approaches for development are not always well known outside the ALE community. A particular challenge is often the lack of quantifiable data to show effects and impacts on individual learners, communities, and society as a whole.

Participants stressed that the "power" of ALE must be better communicated to governments, donors, citizens, and other stakeholders. This should especially consider the potential to be effective across sectors and to fulfil key promises of the Agenda 2030, namely to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first. Furthermore, participants acknowledged that the role civil society and non-formal settings can play to promote the SDGs have to be even better elaborated. Eventually, it was stated that ALE is not a one-size-fits-all solution for development but rather a cross-cutting enabler and a precondition for

Participants stressed that the "power" of adult learning and education must be better communicated to governments, donors, citizens, and other stakeholders. This should especially consider the potential to be effective across sectors and to fulfil key promises of the Agenda 2030.



ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, were part of different panels organised at the Conference.

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ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (centre with microphone) participating in a panel discussion on 'Making Use of Potential - Increasing Visibility and Lobbying for Adult Education'.

participation and inclusive processes that allow for broad-based development and pro-poor growth.

Participants and stakeholders agreed on a set of key messages that were developed on basis of the aforementioned outputs and with the involvement of the global network of DVV International. The key messages presented in the course of the Conference were divided into six thematic blocks, starting with the overall role of ALE for Agenda 2030, followed by its contributions to the educational goal. Interactions and interlinkages with four other SDGs were laid down to highlight the relevance of ALE for reducing inequalities and conflict prevention, promoting climate action, and assuring decent work and better employment opportunities for all.

The key messages focussed on the added value of ALE and addressed challenges, requirements, and recommendations.

The event also intersected with another commemorative event of the German Adult Education Association (DVV) which was also celebrating a century of 'folk high schools' in Germany. This allowed for international participants to interact with dynamic adult education associations in Germany.

DVV International celebrates 50th anniversary

7 May 2019, Weimar, Germany

DVV International celebrated its 50th anniversary in Weimar on 7 May with a ceremony featuring Federal Development Minister Gerd Müller as the keynote speaker. The celebrations formed part of an international conference on the role of adult education in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. ASPBAE President Nani Zulminarni and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, were present on the occasion and congratulated DVVI on ASPBAE's behalf on this important milestone in DVVI's life.



"The world needs nothing more than education", said Federal Development Minister, Dr. Gerd Müller, in his keynote speech during DVVI's 50th anniversary celebrations in Weimar.

The ceremony in Weimar was attended by approximately 250 guests from Germany and abroad. In his keynote speech, Gerd Müller, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, paid tribute to the Institute's decades of successful commitment, and emphasised the considerable significance attaching to adult education for development: *"Lifelong education forms the basis for reason, tolerance, equality, conflict prevention, peace at home and between peoples. The world needs nothing more than education."*

David Atchoarena, Director of UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), congratulated the Institute: *"DVV International is an influential player in the international adult education community. UNESCO is looking forward to continuing its cooperation with DVV International, especially in this crucial phase of Agenda 2030. We wish DVV International all the best for the next 50 years too."*

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ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni (R), and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (L), at the DVV Adult Education Centre in Apolda, Germany.

"Only if adults too receive adequate education will it be possible to implement the Agenda 2030", said Christoph Jost, Director of DVV International. "We need adult education for all people worldwide in order to be able to successfully walk the path to a globally just and peaceful society."

The 'Rita-Süssmuth-Award for the international Volkshochschule' was also awarded for the first time during the ceremony, under the auspices of the German Association of Cities and Towns. Honorary DVV International President, Rita Süssmuth, acknowledged the adult education centres (*Volkshochschulen*) in Bonn, Hanover, and Ulm with the award that is named after her for an international orientation of educational work at the local level.

The anniversary celebrations took place as part of the international adult education conference.

During their stay in Weimar, delegates from Southeast Asia visited the Adult Education Centre in Weimar and Adult Education Centre of Weimarer Land in Apolda where they were warmly received. The study visits offered a very useful exposure to the work on adult education in Germany – especially with respect to the integration of migrants and refugees. It was equally interesting to learn more about the history of adult education centres in this area which was part of the former East Germany: how they evolved and the roles they played in the processes of German reunification.



The study visits offered a very useful exposure to the work on adult education in Germany – especially with respect to the integration of migrants and refugees.

The delegation also had an opportunity to meet with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the state of Thuringia, Gabi Ohler, at the Ministry office in Erfurt. She and other officials of the Ministry described the legal, policy, and financing framework for adult learning and education in the state and in Germany. The delegation included the Deputy Minister of Education from Cambodia, Nos Sles, ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and other education representatives from Southeast Asia.

This write-up draws from a DVV International [report](#) on the Adult Education and Development Conference and on a write-up on its 50th anniversary on the [DVV International website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)



Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO) strengthens synergies for SDG engagements

29-30 May 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN ([CoNGO](#)) held its annual meeting in Bangkok. It was the third meeting of the CoNGO in the region that aimed to strengthen exchanges of experience and mutual learning, mostly around civil society engagements on [Agenda 2030: Sustainable Development Goals](#). A diversity of civil society organisations participated in the meeting including women's groups, entrepreneur and chamber of commerce organisations, ecumenical religious organisations, advocacy networks, and academe.

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President of CoNGO, Liberato Bautista, emphasised that CoNGO is an intentional engagement of NGOs with the UN guided by the whole of the UN, whole-of-society, and whole-of-people approaches.

ASPBAE's Cecilia Soriano presented the ASPBAE's advocacy on SDG 4 and how it is integrally linked to the other SDGs, especially with SDG 8 (decent work) and SDG 5 (gender equality). She also argued that education should be embedded as a core strategy in implementing all the other SDGs.

The meeting highlighted good practices such as what initiatives have worked, what cooperation mechanisms with other stakeholders have proven valuable; as well as core challenges, what impediments have arisen in cooperation and outreach; and lessons learned, including what new mobilisation actions and channels are needed and/or foreseen to make progress on SDG implementation.

In his welcome address, Pornchai Mongkhonvanit, President of [Siam University](#), said that in advocacy for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the university is breaking barriers between higher education and social education. Towards working together for the SDGs, the university is also breaking barriers between its different departments.

Reiterating the need for cooperation, the President of CoNGO, Liberato Bautista, in his opening statement said that CSOs must harness the power of Co – consultation and collaboration. He said that “*we must guard the consultative process*” where the process is more meaningful when the dialogue between CSOs and the UN is two-way. He further emphasised that CoNGO is an intentional engagement of non-government organisations (NGOs) with the United Nations (UN) guided by the whole of the UN, whole-of-society, and whole-of-people approaches.

After the opening, the CoNGO members shared their work on the six SDGs being reviewed under the [High-level Political Forum \(HLPF\) 2019](#). The presentations focused on the analysis, lessons learnt, and cooperation for the SDGs at the country and/or regional level.

Hiro Sakurai of [Soka Gakkai International](#) said that [SDG 4.7](#) is one of the most important and relevant areas of work for the organisation. He shared the consistent features of their work such as - covering almost all issues identified in Target 4.7 such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), human rights education, gender, a culture of peace and non-violence, and Global Citizenship Education (GCED); making education tools and projects free, accessible, easy-to-understand, and available in diverse languages; ensuring a youth-driven, women-led and intergenerationally collaborative initiative.

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry ([CACCI](#)) shared its work on SDG 4 and SDG 8. It supported learners and workers in finding decent jobs by providing formal and non-formal education and training. CACCI argued that for “*people who are not able to achieve tertiary education, vocational training or on-the-job training can improve the quality of employment.*” Further, CACCI presented its strategies, methods, and outcomes of providing education and training in the Asia Pacific and how it helps to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

Cecilia “Thea” Soriano of ASPBAE presented the network’s advocacy on SDG 4 and how it is integrally linked to the other SDGs, especially with [SDG 8](#) (decent work) and [SDG 5](#) (gender equality). She also argued that education should be embedded as a core strategy in implementing all the other SDGs. Thea emphasized the need for civil society analysis of the SDGs and shared the results of the country Spotlight Reports produced by its 16 members who are engaging



The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) shared its work on SDG 4 and SDG 8 and stressed that vocational training can improve the quality of employment.

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CoNGO will seek to foster long-term and enhanced cooperation amongst CSOs and with the United Nations mechanisms monitoring the SDGs.

both the [Voluntary National Review](#) and the overall HLPF 2019 where the progress of [SDG 4](#) (quality education) is being reviewed.

The other members of the CoNGO further presented their work on SDG 8, [SDG 10](#) (reducing inequalities), [SDG 16](#) (peace, justice, and strong institutions) and [SDG 17](#) (partnerships) and others focused on the linkages of SDG 8 to SDG 5. CoNGO will produce a synthesis of the discussions that will then be used for its advocacy in the HLPF 2019. In the forthcoming HLPF in New York, ASPBAE is co-organising a side event with CoNGO and Soka Gakkai on 'Education to end inequality and promote peace'. CoNGO will seek to foster long-term and enhanced cooperation amongst CSOs and with the United Nations mechanisms monitoring the SDGs. [\[BACK\]](#)



The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) organised a meeting of Developing Country Partners (DCP) in Kathmandu to, amongst other things, improve communication, coordination, and consultation between the DCP constituencies.

Working towards enhancing communication, coordination, and consultation between Developing Country Partners

Global Partnership for Education Developing Country Partner's (DCP) Meeting
28-30 May 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal

By Ram Gaire, National Campaign for Education-Nepal (NCE Nepal)

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) organised a meeting of Developing Country Partners (DCP) in Kathmandu. Over 50 DCP focal points from Africa, Latin America, and the Asia Pacific participated. The objective of the meeting was to improve communication, coordination, and consultation between the DCP constituencies and to obtain consensus on proposed decisions and policies to be discussed in subsequent Board meetings. This meeting provided the opportunity for DCP Focal Points to engage in knowledge and best practice exchange on sector planning, implementation, and monitoring, and understand the education systems in GPE member countries.

The meeting lent itself to improving GPE partner countries' engagement in GPE governance processes and reviewing the work of the partnership, including knowledge sharing, country-to-country learning, and enhancing cooperation among them.



The meeting of the Developing Country Partners aimed to engage partner countries in GPE governance processes and review the work of the partnership itself.

DCP focal points discussed three areas – (1) The policy agenda of the upcoming Board meeting, including the effective partnership review, mutual accountability, risk management, and private sector strategy; (2) Strategies to strengthen communication within and across the GPE Developing Country Partner constituencies and understand the process and strategies of GPE, and; (3) Cross-country learning, experience sharing, and better understanding of country contexts. DCP focal points raised issues related to partnership processes and their effectiveness in-country. Discussions especially focused on establishing and enhancing the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) partnership.

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The Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) in Nepal was discussed focusing on how partnership/coordination has supported the Nepalese education sector development with coordinated efforts of different agencies.

Ram Gaire, NCE Nepal, and Enamul Hoque, CAMPE Bangladesh, participated in the meeting on behalf of civil society.

On behalf of civil society, Ram Gaire of NCE Nepal and Enamul Hoque of CAMPE Bangladesh participated in the meeting. Civil society organisations (CSOs) had very limited space to intervene. However, it was a good opportunity for them to pose their views and analysis regarding GPE's proposed Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES). It was also a good platform to get a clearer view about the thoughts, views, and position of different Developing Country Partner countries and constituencies on the PSES and wider GPE policies and strategies. Civil society managed to interact with the GPE focal points of the Developing Country Partners and shared with them, a paper on CSO analysis of the GPE private sector strategy. Enamul Hoque of CAMPE Bangladesh spoke about the concerns of CSOs regarding the GPE private sector strategy. He stressed that education is a human rights issue and that it the responsibility of the State to provide free education as stated in Incheon Declaration and Framework of Action and SDG 4.

The Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) in Nepal was discussed, focusing more on how partnership/coordination has supported the Nepalese education sector development with coordinated efforts of different agencies. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Nepal shared the Nepalese case on SWAp, followed by a panel discussion by representatives of the World Bank, USAID, Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN), and NCE Nepal.

Ram Gaire shared experiences of civil society's contribution to education sector planning - organising joint events, and undertaking the role of a watchdog in education policy development and implementation. He stressed that civil society organisations are contributing to sector planning by facilitating citizen's participation in policy development and implementation, promoting effective service delivery through advocacy-based activities, ensuring that voices of marginalised communities are heard and local needs responded to, enhancing capacities of civil society organisations, and information sharing and dissemination. [[BACK](#)]



The Governance and Ethics Committee oversees global governance arrangements and ethical standards to ensure that GPE is structured, governed, and functioning effectively.

Governance and Ethics Committee of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) meets in Paris

13-14 May 2019, Paris, France

By Fotouh Younes, Arab Coalition for Education for All (ACEA), Amman, Jordan; CSO2 constituency representative at the Governance and Ethics Committee of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

The Governance and Ethics Committee is a standing committee established by the Board of Directors of the Global Partnership for Education ([GPE](#)) which oversees global governance arrangements and ethical standards as well as recommends policies, practices, and/or procedures to the Board to ensure that GPE is structured, governed, and functioning effectively and ethically at the global level.

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The burning issue in the meeting was the discussion around creating a distinct private sector constituency in the GPE Board.

This participatory approach gathers representatives from different constituencies in one platform and common objectives: the civil society constituencies (northern/international, developing country, members of the teaching profession) or the private sector/private foundations constituency, multilateral agencies (multilateral and regional banks, United Nations agencies), donor countries, and developing countries. Ideally, each member serves as a spokesperson and representative and communicates the views of the constituency category to the committee during discussion and deliberation.

Because several of the Committee members were new, the meeting offered time for an introduction to GPE governance and the role of the Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC) and its members. It also enabled participants to become familiar with the ethics function and the code of conduct, in addition to the GPE approach to risk management. Also, participants discussed information disclosure and agreed that the secretariat will develop a thought document on information-sharing modalities, type of information shared across which decision-making platforms, including disclaimers, misuse of funds, communications protocol, and other key documents pertaining to this issue.

The burning issue in the meeting was the discussion around creating a distinct private sector constituency in the GPE Board. The CSO2 representative, Fotouh Younes, expressed her concern about this proposal, and requested that her comments be recorded in the minutes of the meeting: *"The power relation is not balanced to include the private sector seat and we are really concerned about that especially since we do not see the private sector approach dealing with education as a human right or a public good for all."* The decision was made by the Committee nevertheless to recommend to the GPE Board in its next meeting, the creation of a Private Foundations constituency, and a separate Private Sector constituency to replace the combined Private Foundations and Private Sector constituency in the Board.

Despite differences in positions among constituent representatives, democratic spaces such as these create a common ground for all to work together to *"ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"*. [\[BACK\]](#)

The CSO2 representative, Fotouh Younes, expressed her concern about the prospect of a distinct private sector constituency in the GPE Board.



Timor Leste is among the 4 countries where YAR will be implemented after ASPBAE piloted it in Indonesia, India, and the Philippines (2017-2018).

Building leadership capacities of marginalised youth in Timor Leste

Youth-led Action Research training

6-11 May 2019, Dili, Timor Leste

By Jose de Jesus, National Coordinator, Civil Society Education Partnership (CSEP)

Civil Society Education Partnership (CSEP) Timor Leste, in partnership with ASPBAE, will be implementing the Youth-led Action Research (YAR) project in Timor-Leste in 2019 and 2020. Timor Leste is among the four expansion countries where the YAR initiative will be implemented after ASPBAE piloted YAR in Indonesia, India, and the Philippines in 2017-2018.

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ASPBAE and CSEP began the Youth-led Action Research initiative with a five day in-country training in Dili.



The YAR training in Timor Leste was facilitated by ASPBAE's Anita Borkar and Helen Dabu, and Jose de Jesus of CSEP.



Participants of the first YAR training in Timor Leste.



25 young people participated in the YAR training in Port Vila.

ASPBAE and CSEP began the YAR initiative with a five day in-country training in Dili. Eighteen youth leaders from five municipalities - Ainaro, Aileu, Ermera, Liquiça, and Bobonaro - participated in the training. The youth leaders were selected by non-government organisations (NGOs), all members of CSEP, located in the municipalities from where the youth leaders belong to. During the training, the youth participants expressed that the villages where they come from have several opportunities for them to develop through local resources, such as cultural and religious tourism, as their municipalities are endowed with high mountain views, beaches, lakes, and waterfalls. However, there are also several factors that prove challenging for their education and development.

Participants were inspired by the training that was facilitated by ASPBAE's Anita Borkar and Helen Dabu, and Jose de Jesus, National Coordinator, CSEP. For many of them, this was the first time they had participated in a training of any kind. All participants travelled from their villages, which were far and remotely located from Dili. A few of them, who had limited reading and writing skills, participated enthusiastically. They were encouraged and excited to start collecting data from their respective villages, followed by analysis and a written community report. This work will be conducted from June-December 2019. Participants will then strategise the dissemination of the findings of their research and plan for advocacy initiatives for their recommendations in 2020.

At the opening of the YAR training, Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion (Timor Leste), Maria Jose da Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus, emphasized the importance of the training for marginalised youth as it would be beneficial for the government to have proper data on their situation related to education, gender, health, and other issues. The Secretary also stated that the government would be able to formulate appropriate policies, undertake adequate planning, and initiate and implement relevant programmes to respond to the issues and findings raised by the YAR report. She further committed her willingness to share the findings and recommendations of the study to other line ministries. She congratulated and appreciated the partnership between CSEP and ASPBAE in building leadership capacities of marginalised youth in Timor Leste.

Mentors from the five partner NGOs and President of CSEP, Veronica de Souza, also participated in the training. [\[BACK\]](#)

Enabling marginalised youth define community actions in Vanuatu

Youth-Action Research workshop

20-25 May 2019, Port Vila, Vanuatu

By Shirley Abraham, National Coordinator, Kolisen Blong Leftemap Edukesen (KOBLE)

A 5-day Youth-led Action Research (YAR) workshop was held in Port Vila which saw the participation of 25 young people. The youth were from the three communities of Etas, Eratap, and Club Hippique. Some are members of three local civil society organisations - Youth Challenge Vanuatu, Vanuatu PRIDE, and

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The aim of the YAR in Vanuatu is to enable community youth to analyse the factors preventing their greater access to and participation in basic and higher education, basic skills programmes, and other services in their communities.

The training was facilitated by ASPBAEs Anita Borkar and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano. ASPBAE's Peter King also participated.



The Vanuatu education sector gets the largest allocation in the government budget, yet some important sectors are under-resourced, such as post-school education and school drop-outs.

Vanuatu Civil Society Disability Influencing Network (VCSDIN). They represent the disadvantaged and marginalised groups of out-of-school youth, those living with disabilities, and some are members of the LGBTQI community.

The YAR is an initiative from ASPBAE in partnership with the Kolisen Blong Leftemap Edukesen in Vanuatu, (KOBLE). The training was facilitated by ASPBAEs Anita Borkar and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano. ASPBAE's Peter King also participated in the training.

The aim of the YAR in Vanuatu is to enable community youth to analyse the factors preventing their greater access to and participation in basic and higher education, basic skills programmes, and other services in their communities. By researching themselves, they more fully understand their situation and therefore are better able to define community actions that can help them.

The workshop was a great success with many of the participants enjoying the opportunity to think about their communities and their places in the communities in a different way. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the youth to conduct mapping and village profiling exercises.

Martino Sam, a young man from the Etas Community, relished the opportunity, *"I have never done a community mapping before and this simple exercise has really expanded my understanding on how our local resources can nurture us, and what things can make life difficult or get in our way. It's important to understand the main actors in community life and how influential they are"*.

The youth participants also commented how they had formerly believed that research was done by experts or consultants, and how that meant that only certain views were heard. During the workshop, they came to realise how important it is that young people do research in their own communities.

Some of the participants had previous experience in conducting surveys and focus groups, but none had been a part of any design phase or in analysing their own data and producing their own reports. They found the prospect exciting, and they finished the workshop full of expectations and energy.

The Vanuatu education sector gets the largest allocation in the government budget, yet some important sectors are under-resourced. A recent review conducted by KOBLE identified five issues in particular that needed to be addressed – (1) access to post-school education (2) drop-outs from the system (3) skills mismatch (4) youth literacy, and (5) education for youth living with a disability. These are some of the important issues that form the background to the research, also allowing the participants to better understand the education context in their communities and organisations.

Shirley Abraham, National coalition Coordinator of KOBLE, was encouraged by the performance of the participants - *"There is so much energy coming out from these young people. They seem really motivated, and it's great to see all the youth, especially youth with disabilities, fully involved in the activities. I know it's obvious anyway, but seeing the youth with disabilities' efforts and their ability,*

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despite their physical impairment, proved yet again that they are not limited and can be good researchers. Who better to research and understand the barriers to mainstreaming inclusive education?"



Participants of the YAR training in Vanuatu.

The workshop ended well with a plan of action and way forward facilitated by Shirley Abraham. The YAR participants decided to organise the first design workshop by the end of June 2019 and research will be conducted in July this year.

Finally, the participants farewelled the three ASPBAE staff with feathers, symbolizing the wings of a bird. As Meriam Sam said, *"This training has given the participants extra wings. This workshop has enabled them to fly to the new heights that were talked about on day"*.

KOBLE would like to acknowledge ASPBAE for the partnership. It can already see the positive impact on the youth that participated in the YAR workshop and believe they will be able to influence other marginalised groups in their communities to advocate for change in the development of the country. [\[BACK\]](#)

Planning education in an AI era: Lead the Leap

International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Education

16-18 May 2019, Beijing, China



An UNESCO international conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Beijing provided a platform to debate, amongst other things, whether skills need in an AI era can be anticipated and identify latest AI trends shaping education and learning.

An international conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and education took place in Beijing. The conference provided a platform for Member States, international organisations, civil society, and the AI industry to –

- Debate whether skills needed to successfully cope in the AI era can be anticipated, and share experiences on the development of such skills that will enable humans to adapt to a society informed by AI;
- Exchange information on the latest trends in AI and how the trends are shaping education and learning;
- Assess lessons learned from emerging national policies and strategies for leveraging AI to achieve SDG 4; and
- Strengthen international cooperation and partnership for promoting equitable, inclusive, and transparent use of AI in education.

For education and learning, there is a consensus that the impact of AI has a benefit-risk duality. To reinvent education systems towards an AI era, policymakers will need to examine the benefits and potential risks of AI in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)-Education 2030 agenda on the provision of inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. As the word enters the fourth year of implementing the Education 2030 agenda, there are major challenges faced. Globally, there are 262 million children and youth out of school and a 617 million illiterate population, and in sub-Saharan Africa alone, fewer than 40% of female children complete nine years of education. Achieving the ambitious Education 2030 agenda will require unlocking all potential resources, particularly the potential of frontier technologies.

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The penetration of AI in education comes with concerns about equity, ethics, and privacy protection. Policy interventions are critical to prevent the deployment of AI in education from exacerbating digital divides, deepening existing learning inequalities, and accelerating the proliferation of gender bias in AI applications.

AI holds the potential to overcome some of these challenges, such as reducing barriers to access education, automating management processes, analysing learning patterns and optimizing learning processes with a view to improving learning outcomes. There is no doubt that AI will revolutionize the delivery and management of education and learning, but the key question is how AI can improve education quality in its wider meaning - the development of learners to their full potential able to contribute well to their communities and society. And while teachers will not be replaced by machines anytime soon, there is still need for a dynamic review of how AI will transform teachers' roles. This will require a transformational approach to teacher education, and continuous support to teachers in order to help them work in an AI-rich education environment.

The penetration of AI in education comes with concerns about equity, ethics, and privacy protection. Policy interventions are critical to prevent the deployment of AI in education from exacerbating digital divides, deepening existing learning inequalities, and accelerating the proliferation of gender bias in AI applications. At the same time, educational institutions, students, and especially children are more susceptible to the threat of the misuse and commercial manipulation of personal data by machine learning across areas. It is imperative to call on governments to take action on data protection.

To maximize AI's benefits and mitigate its potential risks for education, system-wide planning and collective action to reinvent the core foundation of education and learning are required. To achieve this, the readiness of all stakeholders, particularly policymakers, system managers and teachers, is tested.

The conference brought together over 500 international representatives from more than 120 Member States, including 70 government ministers and almost 100 representatives from UN agencies, academic institutions, civil society, and the private sector.

A synthesis report to document the main achievements and outcomes of the Conference will be published, as well as a Consensus, to be developed and adopted by the high-level representatives of the Member States.

The conference was co-organised by UNESCO, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, and the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO.

This article draws from information appearing on the [UNESCO's website](http://unesco.org). [\[BACK\]](#)

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