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October 2019

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ASPBAE conducts workshop series in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mongolia, and India on equity and gender-responsive budgeting

[Full article](#)



Determining the role of adult learning and education (ALE), advocacies, and a brand

[Full article](#)



Engaging civil society and reviewing policies in Global Partnership for Education (GPE) committees

[Full article](#)



Cementing advocacy priorities and identifying areas for action in Vanuatu

[Full article](#)



PILCD, ASPBAE member in the Philippines, wins 2019 Okayama ESD Global Prize Award!

[Full article](#)

Strengthening ASPBAE's youth constituency in the Asia Pacific

Asia Pacific regional meeting on youth constituency building

ASPBAE organised a regional meeting on youth in Bangkok. The event brought together youth participants from the Asia Pacific to analyse the context of youth in the region, and their education concerns and aspirations. - [Read more](#)

Youth speak out on leadership and meaningful participation in education policies and programmes

Youth Action-Led Research (YAR) Learning Exchange

To provide a platform for learning and exchange on the overall YAR experience to date, ASPBAE organised a YAR Learning Exchange that brought together participants from YAR participating countries. - [Read more](#)

Building capacities to strengthen the advocacy on the right to education

Regional Consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles

ASPBAE, in cooperation with the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC), held a Regional Consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles to debate contentious elements of the Principles that are relevant in education laws, policies, and programmes. - [Read more](#)

Looking at gaps and challenges in education and education aid in Southeast Asia

Open Society Foundations (OSF) Southeast Asia Education Conference

The Open Society Foundations' Education Support Programme (ESP), in conjunction with its Scholarships Programme, organised a conference aimed at analysing gaps and challenges in education and education aid in Southeast Asia, and to examine ways that the Open Society Foundations (OSF) can help address them.

[Read more](#)

Young Teachers: The Future of the Profession

World Teachers' Day

Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers' Day (WTD) commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. – [Read more](#)



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Member of the Month

Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra, India

Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra (SSK), a support organisation and a centre for Participatory Learning and Action, was founded in 1990 to promote and strengthen civil society organisations of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand in India.

SSK strives to build and strengthening CSO capacities through a people centric approach, placing people at the centre of all developmental initiatives. SSK provides capacity building support to partners through organising training programmes, workshops, and providing intensive support programmes.

Click [here](#) to know more about SSK.

Photo of the Month



World Teachers' Day is observed on 5th October every year. It aims to raise awareness about the role of teachers' in ensuring quality education at all levels and to improve the situations of teachers' in the world.

ASPBAE Lens

This is a space for ASPBAE 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. In this edition of the Bulletin, we feature a photo taken by Subrat Nayak, Programme Specialist, Training for Transformation (TfT) Programme.

Subrat Nayak

Programme Specialist, TfT Programme



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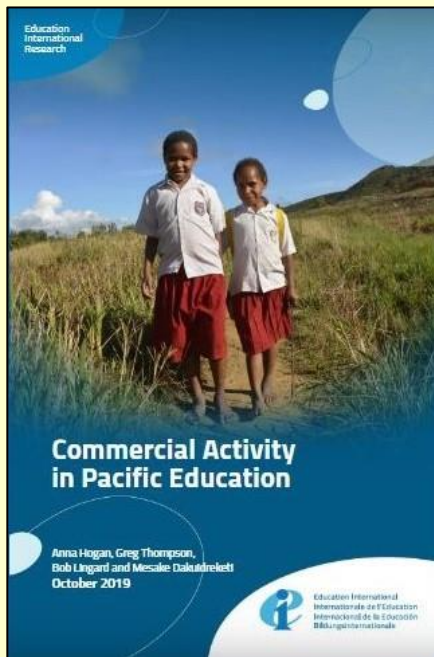
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EDUCATION NEWS AND VIEWS

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 an Education International (EI) report examining the extent of privatisation and commercialisation in education in the Pacific.

Public education systems in the Pacific plagued by commercial activity, new EI report finds



'[Commercial Activity in Pacific Education](#)', an Education International (EI) report examining the extent of privatisation and commercialisation in education in the region, was launched at the conference of the Council of Pacific Education.

The scoping study by researchers Anna Hogan, Greg Thompson, Bob Lingard from Queensland University, and Mesake Dakuidreketi from the University of the South Pacific, commissioned by Education International, in partnership with the Council of Pacific Education (COPE) – a regional organisation of education unions from the South Pacific and a subbranch of Education International – to map the trends of privatisation and commercialisation in education throughout the Pacific Islands.

Union leaders and union members from COPE affiliated unions, including the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu participated in this project. The study recruited participants from these nations to provide a preliminary understanding of education reform in COPE-affiliated systems and schools, and the impact this has on schools' and teachers' work.

Speaking at the Council of Pacific Education (COPE) conference held in Fiji, Govind Singh, COPE General Secretary, underlined that, "*This research points at many*

deeper unidentified issues plaguing the Pacific education system, including teacher recruitment, teacher morale, sustainability, and financing. The issues raised are very serious – they must not be left here."

David Edwards, General Secretary of Education International, welcomed the research, stressing, "*This research is both significant and highly concerning as it shows the expanding reach of education policies that promote the commercialisation of public education. EI commits to supporting all COPE unions to advocate for quality terms of employment, as it is only through raising the attractiveness of the profession that quality public education for all can be achieved.*"

In addition to shedding light on teaching policies driven by corporate logic, the report raises important questions related to the extent of the influence of international organisations and donors in COPE education systems. According to Angelo Gavrielatos, Director of EI's Global Response to the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education, "*This scoping report potentially reveals just the tip of the iceberg... to better understand commercialisation trends in Pacific education, it will be necessary to engage in further research, exploring in greater detail the extent and nature of influence of external organisations, donor countries, and philanthropists.*"

The authors suggest multiple important areas for further research. These will be reviewed by union leaders and priorities for action will be determined.

Click [here](#) to read the declaration of the Council of Pacific Education. [\[BACK\]](#)

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The Asia Pacific regional meeting was designed to facilitate cross-country exchange and learning, enabling the youth to define their priority issues for advocacy on education within the SDG 4 targets.

Strengthening ASPBAE's youth constituency in the Asia Pacific

Asia Pacific regional meeting on youth constituency building

23-24 October 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

ASPBAE has long recognised the role of youth as a powerful force of change that, when provided with spaces and opportunities for meaningful participation and leadership, can drive and influence transformative actions in society. In its efforts to ensure that youth are engaged in dialogue and the interests of marginalised youth are placed at the centre of the agenda, ASPBAE intends to work closely with its youth organisation members and its members cooperating with youth- and student-led organisations. This includes working with national education coalitions in at least eight countries in the Asia Pacific to support the expansion of youth participation and youth engagement in education policy, notably related to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and in ASPBAE's advocacy and capacity building work.



Youth leaders from marginalised communities and the youth and student movement within ASPBAE developed a shared analysis of the barriers to quality education and learning access of young people and identified education and development issues faced by youth in the Asia Pacific.

It is in this context that ASPBAE organised the Asia Pacific regional meeting on youth constituency building, 'Harnessing youth leadership in education in Asia Pacific', in Bangkok as the second part of the four-day regional youth consultation. The event brought together approximately 40 youth participants from the Asia Pacific to jointly analyse the context of youth in the region, and their education concerns and aspirations – drawing from the analysis and outcomes of the youth consultations around the Spotlight Reports and the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2019 processes. The Asia Pacific regional meeting was designed to facilitate cross-country exchange and learning, enabling the youth delegates to define their priority issues for advocacy on education within the SDG 4 targets.

Over the course of two days, youth leaders from marginalised communities and the youth and student movement within ASPBAE developed a shared analysis of the structural barriers to quality education and learning access of young people and identified other education and development issues faced by youth in the Asia Pacific. They also reflected on the nature and diversity of youth in the region and ways to harness their potential for leadership in education. The meeting offered a platform for rich exchange among youth participants who drafted country plans of action to spur youth-led advocacy in education and SDG 4.



The regional meeting offered a platform for rich exchange among youth participants, who also drafted country plans of action to spur youth-led advocacy in education and SDG 4.

The first day of the meeting focused on a discussion of emerging issues that impact youth development, participation, and education. Ichiro Miyazawa, UNESCO Bangkok, spoke on the negative impact on youth of the highly competitive education system, the difference between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset, as well as the rise of new technologies and its implications on the future of work. ASPBAE's Medha Soni expounded on the issue of the spread of fake news, saying that its systematic use and spread can be traced to the, "unique marriage between social media algorithms, advertising systems, people prepared to make stuff up to earn some easy cash, and a US election that gripped the nation and much of the world." She described the different types of fake news and offered ways to spot fake news.

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Matcha Phorn-in, of Sangsan Anakot Yaowachon (Thailand), highlighted issues related to youth, gender and Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) within education institutions in Thailand.



Dilli Ram Subedi, of NCE Nepal, discussed the rising migration levels of Nepali youth in search of better education and economic opportunities.



Jan Mohammad Ahmadian of the Afghanistan National Education Coalition (ANEC) spoke about how fundamentalism in education contributed to the ongoing war and conflict in Afghanistan.

Dilli Ram Subedi, President of the National Campaign for Education (NCE) Nepal, discussed the rising migration levels of Nepali youth in search of better education and economic opportunities, while Matcha Phorn-in of Sangsan Anakot Yaowachon (Thailand), highlighted issues related to youth, gender and Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) within education institutions in Thailand. She emphasised that achieving SDG 4 without addressing gender inequality, SOGIESC-based violence, human rights violation, and discrimination against youth is impossible. Jan Mohammad Ahmadian of the Afghanistan National Education Coalition (ANEC) spoke about how fundamentalism in education contributed to the ongoing war and conflict in Afghanistan. Ryan Chua of Pusat KOMAS (Malaysia), shared the dangers of shrinking and expanding democratic spaces in Malaysia, which helped propagate racial and religious sentiments.

Participants raised strong concerns on how marginalised and vulnerable youth continue to face multiple inequalities and intersecting forms of discrimination because of their age, sexual orientation, and gender identity, race, caste, ethnicity, religion, colour, disability, geographic location, socioeconomic status, migrant status, and other factors. Young women and girls, children and youth with disabilities, LGBTQI+ youth, indigenous people, poor and rural youth, migrants, refugees, nomads, stateless people, and internally displaced persons, youth living in disaster-risk and conflict-affected areas, youth exposed to drugs, and youth in orphanages were identified as the most marginalised groups who are disproportionately affected by persisting challenges in education and development. In the sphere of education, the challenges identified include the poor quality of education, outdated curricula, inadequate infrastructure, rampant corruption in the education sector, and brutal competition in schools.

Participants came up with slogans on harnessing the power of youth in advancing the right to education. The resulting messages, such as *"Our purpose in the world is not to get lost in the dark but be the light for others"*, *"Education is empowerment"*, and *"We are the right people to decide for our rights"* point to youth as change makers who can promote an inclusive and just society when they stand together.

Susan Vize, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO-Bangkok shared UNESCO's strategies for engaging young people. She mentioned that they maintain a database of 1,500 organisations in 38 countries which allows youth organisations to connect with each other and showcase their work with the UN., She called on the youth participants to assist UNESCO's outreach to other youth, observing that youth are much more effective at reaching other youth.

ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Lourdes Almazan-Khan, facilitated a panel discussion featuring youth participants from China, New Zealand, Kyrgyzstan, and India who each shared their experiences on engaging the youth, strengthening their capacities, and amplifying their voices in education. Nazik Mamasadykova of the Institute for Youth Development (IYD), Kyrgyzstan, spoke on the organisation's work with young people and in advocating with government to develop a youth policy. IYD developed a Youth Well-Being and Development

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ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, facilitated a panel discussion featuring youth participants from China, New Zealand, Kyrgyzstan, and India who each shared their experiences on engaging the youth, strengthening their capacities, and amplifying their voices in education.

Index at the national level which characterizes the realities of young people and offers a basis for IYD to craft recommendations to ministries and agencies on youth well-being, participation and development. Melissa Lama of Adult and Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa noted with concern the prevalence of racism and the unequal power dynamics that affects the participation of children and youth in schools. ACE Aotearoa helps young people become leaders and educators of youth in the community.

Yang Jiayang of PEER China talked about the organisation's efforts to provide an open and enabling environment that promotes youth empowerment. Pooja Pandey of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), India, described PRIA's efforts in engaging adolescent girls and boys in marginalised and rural communities in dialogues that interrelate education with gender. She underscored the importance of reaching not only marginalised groups but also urban, middle-class populations. Discussions also pointed to the need for peer mentoring and using human rights instruments to hold governments accountable to meet their human rights obligations and commitments.

ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano identified key events and platforms where the voices of youth can be amplified in SDG and SDG 4 advocacy. ASPBAE strengthens its youth constituency through its members that are conducting Youth-led Action Research (YAR), which mobilises youth in marginalised communities to analyse issues in the education sector, develop a youth education and development agenda that they can pursue collectively especially in their communities and in partnership with other networks operating at other levels (district, municipal, state, national etc.). Thea mentioned ASPBAE's engagement at regional and global levels, specifically during the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) where SDG 4 was reviewed for the first time, and the efforts of ASPBAE to mobilise young people in these processes. ASPBAE will continue engaging the youth in youth-led advocacy on education through consultations on SDG 4 especially at the country level.

Several presentations also revealed various opportunities for youth engagement. Yerin Kang of the Civil Alliance for Social Transformation through Education (CIATE) Korea, presented CIATE's advocacy on SDG 4.7 on Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship. Jose de Jesus, of the Civil Society Education Partnership (CSEP), Timor-Leste, discussed how their youth-led action research in the country has received support from government as the initiative has been recognised as an effective way to help generate credible data from the grassroots that can inform government policy.

Astrid Schmidt, Youth Engagement Officer at the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), shared that GCE is in the process of developing a youth engagement strategy that sufficiently represents youth. Aside from strengthening its youth constituency, GCE also plans to take part in global youth-led initiatives and link its aspirations with the national and regional efforts of youth for youth. GCE welcomes the active engagement of regional and international youth-led organisations as it aims to establish strong connections with the global youth to ensure a diverse and representative voice in the Board, and turn the dream of a global youth movement into reality.



Yang Jiayang of PEER China talked about the organisation's efforts to provide an open and enabling environment that promotes youth empowerment.

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Participants proposed actions to strengthen the youth constituency in their respective organisations.

Participants proposed actions to strengthen the youth constituency in their respective organisations. Some of the strategies and activities included engaging youth in ASPBAE regional consultation meetings on SDG 4, strengthening the youth constituency and building capacities through regional and international meetings and youth forums, engaging youth in coalition and CSO campaigns and programmes, introducing a human rights perspective to advance the right of young people, using a feminist lens to conduct research, developing a youth educator's programme and organising a trilateral meeting with youth, government, and NGOs/CSOs, and amplifying youth voices from the national to the global level through youth direct participation in global spaces for policy, network and capacity-building..

ASPBAE will continue to expand its work in strengthening its youth constituency in the region, setting in place opportunities that enable a stronger voice and agency of young people and youth-led organisations in ASPBAE's work and advocacies as a key stakeholder in education and lifelong learning.

In closing, ASPBAE Executive Member representing the South Pacific, Peter Clinton, encouraged participants to seek partnerships and set common goals that can be achieved together as a community and a family. [\[BACK\]](#)



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, welcoming participants of the YAR Learning Exchange in Bangkok.

Youth speak out on leadership and meaningful participation in education policies and programmes

Youth Action-Led Research (YAR) Learning Exchange

21-22 October 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

Across the Asia Pacific region, young people continue to face unequal access to quality education, decent employment, and opportunities for meaningful participation and leadership in civic and political spaces. Despite these challenges, however, youth remain at the forefront of social change and transformative actions. And as a powerful force of change, youth should not be overlooked or excluded in conversations, but rather given a seat at any table where decisions affecting their rights and their lives are being made.

In parallel with its efforts to amplify the voices of the youth and strengthen the youth constituency in the Asia Pacific, ASPBAE initiated in 2017, a Youth-Led Action Research (YAR), an approach that builds the leadership capacities of marginalised youth and brings to the fore their own narratives of education and empowerment. These are envisaged to continue to inform advocacy efforts and reinforce the practice of NGOs working with youth. Following a highly successful pilot of the YAR in India, Indonesia and the Philippines, ASPBAE expanded the YAR effort in 2019 to Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, Nepal and Mongolia with the perspective of scaling up further in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in 2020.

To provide a platform for learning and exchange on the overall YAR experience to date, ASPBAE organised a YAR Learning Exchange that brought together 34 participants from the YAR participating countries.



The learning exchange was a platform for exchange on the YAR experience.

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The learning exchange set the scene for sharing of the YAR journey in three pilot countries - India, Indonesia, and the Philippines - and in four expansion countries - Timor-Leste, Mongolia, Vanuatu, and Nepal.

The learning exchange aimed specifically to –

- Appreciate the outcomes and follow-through actions and plans of the YAR initiative in Indonesia, India, and the Philippines;
- Discuss preliminary findings and recommendations of the YAR from Nepal, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu;
- Share reflections of the young community researchers on the success and challenges in implementing YAR in their respective communities;
- Exchange ideas and lessons learnt on YAR as a process for engaging marginalised young people in education policy and programme development at the community, sub-national, and national levels.



Participants identified issues that youth face, such as the increase in out-of-school youth in Timor-Leste, high school drop-out rates in Vanuatu, poor representation of children in school decision-making processes in Mongolia, and the prevalence of early marriage and alcoholism in Nepal.

The YAR learning exchange set the scene for a spirited sharing of the YAR journey in three pilot countries, namely India, Indonesia, and the Philippines, and in four expansion countries, Timor-Leste, Mongolia, Vanuatu, and Nepal. Participants highlighted YAR as a continuous process that equips youth with the knowledge, techniques, and tools to develop useful life skills and positive changes in mindsets. Participants presented significant personal or community change stories creatively using theatre or community media, which are the tools used in the Philippines and India to popularise findings of the YAR and to encourage young people to participate.

Participants also reflected on what the YAR initiative needs to do to ensure that youth are effectively involved in leading the learning and transformative process of action research. They shared the findings of the YAR in the four expansion countries and identified the issues that youth face, such as the increase in out-of-school youth in Timor-Leste, alarming rates of school drop-outs in Vanuatu, poor representation of children in school decision-making processes in Mongolia, and the prevalence of early marriage and alcoholism in Nepal.



Participants also reflected on what the YAR initiative needs to do to ensure that youth are effectively involved in leading the learning and transformative process of action research.

Youth cannot bring about transformative change without the support of their families and communities, as well as NGOs, educational institutions, and governments. Participants worked on drafting key recommendations, including defining the features of an ecosystem that can allow sustained participation of youth in advancing their education aspirations and in participation in decision-making processes that impact on their education access and over-all well-being. They pointed to the need for the provision of economic opportunities for families; inclusive spaces for the active involvement of youth in decision-making processes; increased access of marginalised youth to quality education and lifelong opportunities; youth-responsive programmes, policies, and budget allocations; close cooperation among influential actors; and peer support and learning, among many others.

It is simply not enough to ensure that youth are educated and well-informed. The aim should also include empowering youth, especially marginalised youth such as underprivileged, girls, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minorities, learners from rural and remote areas, and other disadvantaged groups, to effectively and meaningfully participate in national, regional, and global spaces. This will require scaling up the scope and reach of the engagement of young leaders whose voices are becoming increasingly indispensable in the efforts to build an inclusive, youth-responsive society. [\[BACK\]](#)

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The regional consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles aimed to debate contentious elements of the Principles that are to education, specifically on the right to public education, the regulation of private actors in education, and financing and PPPs in education.

Building capacities to strengthen the advocacy on the right to education

Regional Consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles

4-5 October 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

ASPBAE, in cooperation with the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium (PEHRC), organised a Regional Consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles in Bangkok that brought together representatives of national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific, academia, human rights organisations, and international organisations.

Building on earlier initiatives and outcomes that resulted from research, information campaigns, lobby with international human rights bodies, and engagement with national parliaments and education agencies, the consultation aimed to deepen understanding on the Abidjan Principles, its salient contents and contentious provisions, the references to international law and agreements, the adoption process, and recognition extended by institutions and human rights bodies; and plan broader discussion of the Abidjan Principles and its possible uses in the upcoming advocacies of ASPBAE and coalitions for stronger public education systems, for increased financing for education, and for stronger regulation of private sector involvement in education.

ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia, Batjargal Batkhuyag, welcomed the participants to the regional consultation. International Coordinator of LDC Watch, Gauri Pradhan, gave an inspiring keynote address, stressing the importance of strengthening the right to quality public education. Masato Abe, Economic Affairs Officer at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), formally welcomed the participants to the two-day consultation.

A session on country and regional sharing created opportunities for cross-country learning and knowledge-sharing where participants from India, Nepal, the Philippines, and South Korea expounded on the substantive issues related to privatisation of education in their countries. Some of the challenges identified were the low public spending for education that is below the global benchmark, the increasing commercialisation of education in most countries across the region, and the widening inequity and segregation in education. Other issues, such as the highly competitive education in South Korea and the clear bias towards the unregulated commercialisation of education in India and the Philippines, were also discussed.

Recognising the aim of the consultation as a platform to gain a deeper understanding of the Abidjan Principles and to help strengthen the narrative for more robust public education systems as key to upholding the right to education, breakout sessions were organised for more intensive discussions. Resource persons were Ashina Mtsumi, Policy and Legal Officer of Global Initiative on ESCR (GI-ESCR), Delphine Dorsi, Executive Coordinator of the Right to Education Project (RTE Project), and Gauri Pradhan, who were also a part of the



Noopur of NCE India addressing the regional consultation in Bangkok.

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Shantha Kulathunge of CED Sri Lanka taking part in the regional consultation where discussions focused on the influence of private actors on governments, the “conflict of interest” in authority figures in education policy, being owners of private educational institutions themselves, and the use of public funds to finance and support private education.

pool of experts in the Abidjan Adoption Conference in February 2019 and were representatives of the drafting committee.

The resource persons shared the history, rationale, and process of the drafting of the Abidjan Principles. The [Abidjan Principles on the human rights obligations of States to provide public education and to regulate private involvement in education](#) were adopted by a pool of human rights and education experts in February 2019 in Côte d'Ivoire after a three-year consultation and drafting process. The Principles attempt to serve as a useful reference that can guide the way national education coalitions hold States accountable for the provision of quality public education, and approach the largely unregulated proliferation of private educational institutions.

Participants identified key issues needing further clarification, and noted contentious provisions that needed further substantiation. Participants appreciated the discussions on the right to public education and the obligation of States to protect and fulfil the right to education by providing public education and putting regulatory frameworks to ensure its quality.

During the debates at the consultation, several recurring themes emerged such as the influence of private actors on governments, the inherent “conflict of interest” in politicians and authority figures in education policy and more broadly, being owners of large scale private educational institutions themselves. In these contexts, the use of public funds to finance and support private education becomes even more egregious.



Various participants committed to using the Abidjan Principles as a reference in their lobbying for increased public budgets for education, stricter enforcement of regulations of private educational institutions, and the rising privatisation of education.

The last session of the regional consultation put a spotlight on planning the next steps for 2020-2021. Different participants shared their plans to disseminate the Abidjan Principles to their coalition members and to schools, other civil society groups, academic organisations, and human rights institutions; engage with the Ministry of Education and the National Parliament; and use different forms of media to campaign for the right to education, and raise awareness on the Abidjan Principles. Others committed to using the Principles as a reference in their lobbying for increased public budgets for education, stricter enforcement of regulations of private educational institutions and the rising privatisation of education. Participants from Mongolia, South Korea, and Kyrgyzstan spoke about organising forums and meetings, and to use the Abidjan Principles in leveraging political parties in upcoming elections for a clear stand against commercialised education.

Several coalitions noted that their existing laws and Constitutions offer no room for the use of public funds to support private schools. In such instances, drawing attention to the Abidjan principles may not be so helpful in bolstering their case for strengthened public education systems to ensure the right to education of all.

ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano, along with other resource persons, identified and outlined key events and platforms to raise advocacy positions on the privatisation of education, the regulation of private actors' involvement in education, and the Abidjan Principles. [\[BACK\]](#)

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Looking at gaps and challenges in education and education aid in Southeast Asia

Open Society Foundations (OSF) Southeast Asia Education Conference

26-27 October 2019, Bangkok, Thailand



The OSF Southeast Asia Education Conference aimed at analysing the gaps and challenges in education and education aid in Southeast Asia, and to examine ways that OSF can help to address them.

The Open Society Foundations' Education Support Programme (ESP), in conjunction with its Scholarships Programme, organised a conference in Bangkok aimed at analysing the gaps and challenges in education and education aid in Southeast Asia, and to examine ways that the Open Society Foundations (OSF) can help to address them.

Moreover, the conference also sought to foster closer working relationships between ESP, the Scholarships Programme, scholarship alumni, education civil society organisations, and national and regional organisations.

To unpack the core themes of the conference, participants were invited to share their perspectives on how OSF's education priorities can be explored in Asia based on the following strategic questions -

- What are the most promising locally developed models of critically aware inclusive education practice?
- Could the Open Society Foundations play a positive role in supporting, documenting, and disseminating, or advocating for policy space for such models?
- What are the most significant challenges to good governance in education in the Asia Pacific region?
- Is there a place for global compacts, like the Abidjan Principles or the Safe Schools Declaration, in education advocacy in the region?
- What is the impact of religious education institutions, such as the Buddhist monastic education system and Islamic madrasas, on issues of inclusivity, social cohesion, and quality of education?
- How has international assistance to education in the Asia Pacific affected the quality and governance of education?

The conference sought to foster closer working relationships between OSF's Education Support Programme (ESP), the Scholarships Programme, scholarship alumni, education civil society organisations, and national and regional organisations.



ASPBAE's Helen Dabu delivered the Keynote Address which summed up the progress of SDG 4 implementation in Southeast Asia.

Setting the framework and context of the discussion, ASPBAE's Helen Dabu delivered the Keynote Address entitled '*Pursuit of SDG 4 in Southeast Asia: What's getting ahead and being left behind?*' which summed up the progress of SDG 4 implementation in Southeast Asia. It essentially drew from the CSO Spotlight Reports produced by five education campaign coalitions from the sub-region consisting of Vietnam, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Helen described the process of producing the civil society organisation (CSO) Spotlight Reports, summarised the results, and the outlined the urgent CSO calls which emerged from these Reports. She highlighted that financing the SDGs, including SDG 4, emerges as one of the most critical issues. Most countries have no clear financing strategy and no estimate of the financial requirements needed to achieve the SDG 4 targets. There are mere verbal commitments to generate resources for the SDGs but with limited action, with most countries admitting that

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Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, of VAEFA (Vietnam) and ASPBAE EC Member representing Southeast Asia, shared experiences of VAEFA in engaging with the government on education planning processes and the role of civil society in holding governments to account on commitments to education.

current resources are insufficient to deliver on the promise of leaving no one behind.

Among all global regions, the Asia Pacific has consistently been the lowest education spender in relation to the GDP. Within Asia Pacific, Southeast Asia (particularly Timor-Leste, Myanmar, and Cambodia) is one of the least spenders in education in relation to the total public expenditure and the size of the domestic economy. And while governments in the region have convened SDG-related consultations with stakeholders, CSOs noted that the spaces for meaningful participation and engagement in the SDG processes were limited.

In addition to delivering the Keynote Address, Helen also moderated a panel discussion on Education Sector Planning (ESP) Process which featured inputs from Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, the National Coordinator of Vietnam Association for Education for All (VAEFA) and ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing Southeast Asia, and Jose De Jesus, National Coordinator of Civil Society Education Partnership (CSEP Timor-Leste).

This session shared direct experiences of VAEFA Vietnam and CSEP Timor-Leste in engaging with their governments on education sector planning processes and highlighted the important role of civil society in holding governments to account on their education sector plans and commitment to fully implement SDG 4. In the panel discussion tackling the implications of privatisation in education, ASPBAE's Rene Raya and the National Coordinator of E-Net Philippines, Addie Unsi, provided inputs and advocacy experiences.

Rene gave a presentation on '*Financing and Privatisation Challenges in Education*' which discussed the privatisation drive and trends at the global, regional, and sub-regional levels by looking at the growth in private school enrolments. He also emphasised the clear link between low financing of public education and the growth of privatisation. Further, he raised critical issues on private sector in education around equity, inclusion, transparency, and accountability.

Various panel discussions unpacking the main themes were held throughout the conference and ASPBAE's Executive Council Member representing Southeast Asia, Thein Lwin, representing his organisation, Thinking Classroom Foundation (TCF), also provided input in the panel discussion tackling critical thinking and pedagogy.

The findings and feedback from the conference would be used to help develop a strategy for strengthening the Open Society Foundations' education initiatives in Asia. [\[BACK\]](#)

Jose De Jesus of CSEP Timor-Leste and Addie Unsi of E-Net Philippines participated in the OSF conference highlighting issues such as tackling the implications of education privatisation in their countries.

ASPBAE's EC Member representing Southeast Asia, Thein Lwin, represented the Thinking Classroom Foundation (TCF) and spoke about critical thinking and pedagogy.

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The Asia Pacific hosts the largest concentration of adult illiterates and about half of the world's out-of-school children and youth. Millions of children, youth, and adults continue to be marginalised and left behind based on wealth, location, disability, caste, ethnicity, and residency, among other factors.

ASPBAE conducts workshop series on equity and gender-responsive budgeting

July-September 2019

The Asia Pacific has made significant progress in education, helped in large part by the robust economic performance that saw sharp drops in poverty levels across all countries in the region, and by the commitment of governments to address the gaps in education. But much remains to be done.

A closer look reveals persisting old problems, as well as new challenges that have yet to be addressed. The Asia Pacific still hosts the largest concentration of adult illiterates and about half of the world's out-of-school children and youth. Inequity in education remains a serious challenge. It is even more alarming to note that cross-cutting issues of inequity have widened in a significant number of countries. Millions of children, youth, and adults continue to be marginalised and left behind based on wealth, location, disability, caste, ethnicity, and residency, among other factors.



Achieving the ambitious goals and targets of the SDGs, and SDG 4 in particular, will require much higher, more sustained, and well-targeted public investment.

Achieving the ambitious goals and targets of the SDGs, and SDG 4 in particular, will require much higher, more sustained, and well-targeted public investment. Education2030 sets the education spending benchmark of at least 4%-6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and at least 15%-20% of total public expenditure. Most countries in the region, however, are spending below these international benchmarks. It is not only the size and share of the budget that matter. The lack of sensitivity in allocating resources also perpetuates and widens inequality, adversely affecting children and youth, girls and women, the rural poor, persons with disabilities ((PWDs), ethnic minorities, *dalits*, migrants, and refugees.

It is within this context that ASPBAE and its member education coalitions in the region agreed to intensify efforts on budget analysis and advocacy to ensure equitable and gender-sensitive financing that prioritise those who are furthest behind. From July to September this year, in-country budget advocacy training workshops were organised with coalitions in five countries - the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mongolia, and India. Orientation meetings on budget analysis and tracking were also conducted with coalitions in Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan.



In-country budget advocacy training workshops were organised with coalitions in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mongolia, and India. Orientation meetings on budget analysis and tracking were also conducted with coalitions in Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan.

In October, a regional consultation on the Right to Education and the Abidjan Principles (see article entitled '*Building capacities to strengthen the advocacy on the right to education*') was organised by ASPBAE. The event gathered representatives of 13 coalitions in the region, as well as representatives of UN regional offices in Bangkok. The consultation aimed to strengthen the rationale for increasing the education budget and linked issues of privatisation which exacerbate inequity and gender disparity in education.

E-Net Philippines held its Education Budget Advocacy Training in Manila from 1-2 July 2019. CED Sri Lanka conducted its equity and gender-responsive budgeting workshop from 3-4 August 2019, followed closely by a similar workshop organised by NCE Nepal. AFE Mongolia organised a budget workshop in Ulaanbaatar on 12 September. NCE India also organised a workshop in New

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The workshops aimed to scale up advocacy efforts towards increased and well-targeted budget allocations for education and learning programmes, especially for marginalised and vulnerable groups; for stronger regulation of private actors' involvement in education; and for more robust public education provisioning.



ASPBAE's Rene Raya and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano provided key inputs and steered the workshops in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Rene Raya and ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury co-facilitated the budget workshops and orientation meetings in India, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan.

Delhi on 21 September, which focused on financing challenges in the relatively poor states of India.

The workshops aimed to scale up advocacy efforts towards increased and well-targeted budget allocations for education and learning programmes, especially for marginalised and vulnerable groups; for stronger regulation of private actors' involvement in education; and for more robust public education provisioning.

These capacity building events saw the participation of coalition members at national and local levels, representatives from marginalised groups, and coalition staff and board members. In the Philippines and Mongolia, the workshops also saw the participation of representatives from the youth sector, from disability organisations, and from indigenous people's groups and ethnic minorities. In Nepal, the participants were joined by municipal mayors and other local officials. In India and Mongolia, the participants included academicians who provided important inputs during the workshops.

The workshops provided a space for participants to analyse the education budgets, identify positive attributes, map strategies, and advocate for more equitable financing, using an equity and gender lens. The workshops also sought to increase the understanding of the national and local budget process and to identify the spaces for engagement at different stages of the budget process. Examples of good practices in budget research and advocacy in the Philippines and Nepal were shared, emphasising the need for citizen engagement in the budget process. The in-country workshops and orientation meetings facilitated the sharing of knowledge and experiences among participants. Critical issues that pose obstacles for equity-based and gender-responsive budgeting were discussed.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano provided key inputs and steered the workshops in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Rene Raya and ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury co-facilitated the budget workshops and orientation meetings in India, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan. Apart from ASPBAE resource persons, municipal mayors in the workshop in Nepal discussed local budget processes, while finance specialists from the academe provided inputs on the budget analysis in the workshops in Mongolia and India. In the case of the Philippines, government officials participated in the event and shed light on education budget trends.

Low expenditures on education and inadequate allocation of available funds have contributed to poor access to education of vulnerable and marginalised groups. The lack of transparency in the budgeting processes, lack of understanding of gender budgeting, as well as the lack of sensitivity to budget allocations for marginalised and vulnerable groups are among the key concerns that were discussed.

Beyond identifying the major gaps in financing using an equity and gender lens, participants recognised the need for deliberate education financing choices that reach the underprivileged and marginalised communities, such as *dalits*,

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indigenous people, minorities, persons with disabilities, women, and children, among others.



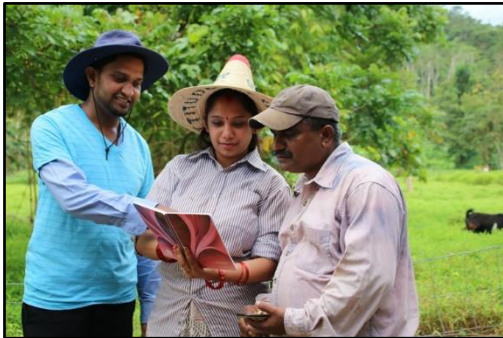
Participants affirmed their commitment to effectively engaging and participating in national and local budget processes and ensuring that the government allocates sufficient budgets to provide inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Workshop participants put forth preliminary plans for the rest of 2019 as well as 2020. These plans will be finalised in consultation with their respective Boards and coalition members. Participants identified local areas that will be covered in the budget engagement. The workshop was a good opportunity to bring together civils society organisations (CSOs), academe, and government representatives to discuss the budget process and identify areas where CSOs could engage and contribute in the budget preparation, legislation, and execution.

The workshops equipped participants with the knowledge and tools needed to review and analyse the education budget through an equity and gender lens. It promoted knowledge-sharing, an exchange of good practices and innovative financing frameworks, and tools on budget analysis, gender-responsive budgeting, and equity-based financing. Participants affirmed their commitment to effectively engaging and participating in national and local budget processes and ensuring that the government allocates sufficient budgets to provide inclusive and equitable quality education for all. [\[BACK\]](#)

Determining the role of adult learning and education (ALE), advocacies, and a brand

14-16 October 2019, Bangkok, Thailand



Participants of the ALE branding workshop met to deliberate on the positioning and the role of ALE; the features of a campaign to promote an ALE 'brand' globally; and a communications plan and rollout in regions and constituencies.

The third and final workshop in the series of branding adult education was organised in Bangkok, led by DVV International. The international group constituted by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International) included representatives from the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), ASPBAE, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), Global Campaign for Education (GCE), Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE), PAMOJA West Africa (an African NGO on literacy), Latin American Adult Education Council (CEAAL), and DVV International (DVVI).

Participants met to deliberate on the positioning and the role of ALE; the features of a campaign to promote an ALE 'brand' globally, with specific advocacy actions to in the different regions; and a communications plan and rollout in the regions and constituencies.

Anja Thoene, Senior Marketing Manager, DVVI, reiterated that Adult Learning and Education (ALE) is neglected in the education sector and one of the reasons for this is that the ALE sector does not have a common narrative. Decision makers, thus, do not have a clear understanding of ALE and its full value. DVVI has been instrumental in building consensus on an ALE brand and the meeting set out to plan more concretely, the ways to promote the brand in 2020, with the intention of using the brand in CONFINTEA 7 (2022) and the mid-term SDG 4 review.

ASPBAE participated in the third and final ALE branding workshop in Bangkok that was led by DVV International.

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Anja Thoene, Senior Marketing Manager, DVVI, reiterated that ALE is neglected in the education sector as decision-makers do not have a clear understanding of ALE and its full value.

Participants engaged in a process to visualise the ALE brand around three characteristics of ALE - Justice, Well-being, and Change. The exercise was rooted in the recognition that promotional campaigns and branding exercises foster recognition of a brand and its value.



The launch and rollout plan for dissemination of the brand would be in April 2020.

Building on the views shared by participants on the importance of branding ALE, Anja emphasised the agreement to distinguish ALE from other education spheres within the wider lifelong learning (LLL). For ALE to have an identity, there is a need to give it a definite and distinctive shape so that it can be universally recognised.

Katarina Popovich, ICAE Secretary General, presented reflections on ALE in global spaces. She stated that the ALE constituency celebrates the variety and diversity of ALE, as well as the adaptability of ALE from individual to local and national contexts. However, when it comes to international spaces, diversity becomes an obstacle to the identity of ALE. She cited the experiences from the CONFINTEA drafting committee and discussion on financing ALE, where it was a struggle to reach a successful outcome. Further, she stressed that ALE is everywhere and nowhere and we lack the identity that is important in advocacy work. While ALE is diverse, there is also much in common and ALE advocates can strive to find these commonalities. Advocates for ALE have to agree that from the point of advocacy, some of the features of ALE need sharper focus, so that it is possible to be more precise and clearer in advocacy demands and messages.

Anja led a discussion stating that there are evidences on the importance of ALE, but what is needed is to better harvest the lessons from successful campaign experiences to advance ALE advocacy. This is where “branding” comes in. Successful promotional campaigns and branding exercises foster instant recognition of the brand and its value with limited explanation needed. Advocates for ALE should be brave to promote an ALE brand without overloading it.

Nadine Rosenkranz, Art Director of “wirDesign” (Berlin), explained that branding is appreciating what exists. It is meant to sell and not to repair what is wrong. For working on the brand, it is essential to consider what is common in ALE. Nadine then led the group through a creative process to visualise the brand, employing the agreements on the three characteristics of ALE - Justice, Well-being, and Change. Based on the clarification and consensus on these characteristics and from the vantage point of key stakeholders for ALE advocacy, an attempt was made to explore and imagine the shape, typography, and colour for the ALE brand.

The workshop concluded with participants deliberating and agreeing on the process and timelines for the branding exercise. It was agreed that the legal ownership of the brand would be with DVVI and a webpage and a tool box would be generated to access the brand based on certain principles and agreement for access and use. The launch and rollout plan for dissemination of the brand would be in April 2020. [\[BACK\]](#)

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CSO representatives from developing countries (CSO2) in the three GPE Board committees (GPC, GEC, and FRC) have been working to keep pace with the review and analysis of committee documents and engaging coalitions to provide inputs from their regional and national context.

Engaging civil society and reviewing policies in Global Partnership for Education (GPE) committees

July-October 2019

By Natalie Akstein, Networks Engagement Coordinator, Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

Following the Board Meeting of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in June 2019 in Stockholm, civil society representatives from developing countries (CSO2) in the three GPE Board committees (Grants and Performance Committee - GPC, Governance and Ethics Committee - GEC, Finance and Risk Committee - FRC) - have been diligently working to keep on pace with the review and analysis of committee documents, engaging coalitions to provide inputs from their regional and national context, and representing their views in committee meetings.

What follows is a summary of CSO2 committee representatives' engagement in committee meetings from July-October 2019.

The agenda of the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) included key decisions on country grant applications and a decision on requirements for accessing a Multiplier Maximum Country Allocation (MCA).

Grants and Performance Committee (GPC), 1-9 Jul 2019, Paris – CSO2 representative (Cheikh Mbow from COSYDEP, the national education coalition in Senegal)

The agenda included key decisions on country grant applications, particularly the Burkina Faso costed restructuring of the Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (ESPIG), the Eritrea ESPIG, the Djibouti ESPIG and Multiplier, Ethiopia Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Multiplier Fund, and also a decision on requirements for accessing a Multiplier Maximum Country Allocation (MCA).



Concerns regarding the pattern of proposals being recommended to GPC which have not met the requirements of the GPE funding model were - credible, endorsed education sector plan; evidence of commitment to the plan and its financing; availability of data or the strategy to obtain data.

Regarding requirements for accessing a Multiplier MCA, rather than authorising the GPC to waive requirements as they wish, the Secretariat was tasked to develop a recommendation for adjustments on requirements for the GPC to consider in its next meeting.

In relation to this, it is worth noting some concerns raised by Cheikh Mbow and Tony Baker (International/Northern CSO or CSO1 representative in the GPC) with regard to the pattern of proposals being recommended to the GPC which have not met the three fundamental requirements of the GPE funding model: (1) Credible, endorsed education sector plan; (2) Evidence of commitment to the plan and its financing; (3) Availability of data or the strategy to obtain data.

The move towards this flexibility at times results in sacrificing not only requirements, but key functions supported in GPE's model (e.g. approving grants with no input from civil society, civil society space threatened/limited in some countries, and conducting business without CSOs in Local Education Groups). Exceptions should be clearly developed rather than the Committee deciding through undefined justifications.

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The Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) discussed a draft paper seeking to define the exceptional circumstances exemptions to the GPE Board June 2019 decision that no GPE funds can be used to support for-profit provision of core education services.

GPE meeting, 21-23 October 2019, Washington D.C.

In this face-to-face meeting, a batch of country Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant (ESPIG) applications were decided by the committee, which included ESPIGs for Kenya, Tanzania, Somaliland (costed restructuring), Puntland (costed restructuring), and Yemen (restructuring).

Additional discussion items included the Private Sector Exceptional Circumstances Exemptions, GPE stakeholder consultation survey and GPE Strategy proposals, increasing efficiency through delegation, and additional funding for emergencies, and Joint Sector Review funding window in Education Sector Plan Development Grants.

On the issue of the Exceptional Circumstances Exemptions, the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) discussed a draft paper which was shared for input of the committee. It was noted that the Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC) would also discuss this paper following GPC feedback. The paper sought to define the exceptional circumstances exemptions to the GPE Board June 2019 decision that no GPE funds can be used to support for-profit provision of core education services, and a framework that identifies appropriate conditions, safeguards, time limits and processes to apply in these exemptions.

CSO2 Board representatives have been focusing much of their energies on this issue, including consulting with national colleagues, academia, and researchers as well. The CSO2 Board representatives, Camilla Croso of CLADE (the Latin America education network) and Maria Khan (ASPBAE), had shared their analysis and requested feedback from CSO2 colleagues ahead of sharing a summary with the GPC CSO representatives. The attempt of the CSO 2 Board representatives has been to ensure that the exemptions have clearly defined limits and conditions, and apply only to truly exceptional circumstances – for instance, where funding to the private sector will only be considered if no other not-for-profit, non-state providers are available. CSO2 also argued for a definite time limit for grants under these exemptions (only one the grant period), with a defined cap on the percentage of total country grants that can be approved within these exemptions' clause.

Regarding increasing efficiency through delegation, the CSO2 position was one of concern as relates to delegating greater grant approval authority to the GPE Secretariat. It was also raised by CSO2 Board representatives that the proposal towards the delegation of greater authority to the Secretariat to approve grants, and thus reduce the volume of applications reviewed by the Grants and Performance Committee, may have adverse impact on the character of GPE as a 'partnership'. A paper has been shared with the Board for decision in December that outlines three options – (1) no change in policy; (2) greater authority to GPC but not Secretariat; (3) greater authority to both GPC and the Secretariat.

Papers on additional funding for emergencies and the Joint Sector Review funding window in Education Sector Plan Development Grants were both accepted and agreed by the committee.

The attempt of the CSO 2 Board representatives - Camilla Croso of CLADE and Maria Khan of ASPBAE - was to ensure that the exceptional circumstances exemptions have clearly defined limits and conditions, and apply only to truly exceptional circumstances – for instance, where funding to the private sector will only be considered if no other not-for-profit, non-state providers are available.



It was raised by CSO2 Board representatives that the proposal towards the delegation of greater authority to the Secretariat to approve grants, and thus reduce the volume of applications reviewed by the Grants and Performance Committee, may have adverse impact on the character of GPE as a 'partnership'.

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The most critical discussion at the Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC) meeting revolved around the GPE Strategic Plan in terms of implications on the GEC workplan.

CSO2 representatives raised a list of 5 common advocacies on the Strategic Plan – (1) Ensure the new Strategic Plan is more fully aligned to the SDG 4 and Education 2030 agenda; (2) GPE must prioritise its essential characteristic of PARTNERSHIP; (3) More attention must be given to domestic financing and tax justice; (4) the Strategic Plan should give more attention to how civil society and education actors are being treated by governments; and (5) More attention needs to be given to fostering teachers' autonomy and academic freedom.



It was observed that there seemed to be a resistance to accommodate adult education/literacy and skills in the full SDG 4 agenda in the funding framework for GPE.

Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC), CSO2 representative (Fotouh Younes)

30-31 October 2019, Paris, Frances

The most critical discussion at the Governance and Ethics Committee (GEC) meeting revolved around the Strategic Plan of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in terms of implications on the GEC workplan. Two presentations were shared with the committee in advance which presented the analysis of the data collected from GPE's stakeholder survey on how GPE should evolve under the new Strategy. The presentations also included a proposal for GPE's Strategic Shifts, which was for input from the committee. The proposed shifts were developed based on evidence collected for the GPE Results Report, country-level evaluations, Effective Partnership Review, Secretariat internal workstreams looking at the key questions in the survey, the Secretariat's grant process review, and the survey output. Prior to this discussion at the GEC meeting, CSO2 GEC representative, Fotouh Younes, called on all CSO2 colleagues to share feedback with her specifically on whether the proposals move the Partnership in the right direction, if there are specific proposals that our constituency would not support, and if there is anything major missing.

CSO2 representatives raised a list of 5 common advocacies on the Strategic Plan which should be reflected in the shape of the Strategic Plan's Strategic Shifts. They are –

1. Ensure the new Strategic Plan is more fully aligned to the SDG 4 and Education 2030 agenda - embracing it as a whole. This includes a more explicit reference to 12 years of free education, dealing upfront with adult literacy and education and an inter-generational perspective, more emphasis in dimensions on equality (beyond equity) and quality with a broader perspective (as envisioned in target 4.7, for example) as well as civil society participation in policy debates and decision-making.
2. GPE must prioritise its essential characteristic of PARTNERSHIP. More than an emphasis on leadership, GPE should value partnership, in coherence with its core constitutive characteristic. In its new plan, GPE should highlight, acknowledge, and envisage the strengthening of all partners and their mandates. Overlaps or possible areas of conflicting mandates should be avoided.
3. More attention must be given to domestic financing and tax justice. The latter should be a core element of the new plan. Furthermore, GPE should revisit how it calculates the 20% of GDP, which currently excludes debt servicing. This alters significantly the results of the indicator. The manner that UIS and other research institutes should be used, which in fact is the manner used in the text agreed by SDG4/E2030. The effects of the Multiplier Fund in fostering indebtedness and loans with the banks should also be analysed.
4. The Strategic Plan should give more attention to how civil society and education actors are being treated by governments, including having a clearer indicator related to civil society participation at all levels, as well as the overcoming the rising trends of criminalisation of education actors.

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GEC committee members reiterated the need for fit-for-purpose governance structures to support GPE's new Strategic Plan.

Concerns about the new Strategic Plan included a reluctance to listen to feedback on new areas/themes that need addressing; a dilution of the strong processes and conditions currently set that offer a greater handle to push governments to stronger public systems reforms; and some of GPE conditions and processes being portrayed as too heavy or cumbersome.



The agenda of the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) meeting included a decision on the financial forecast for GPE, GPE Multiplier request for extension of the Maximum Country Allocations (MCA), 3 lines of defence model, and replenishment surge budget.

5. On teachers, more attention needs to be given to fostering their autonomy and academic freedom, currently under attack in many countries.

Furthermore, it was observed that there seemed to be a resistance to accommodate adult education/literacy and skills within the in the full SDG 4 agenda in the funding framework for GPE.

In addition, based on previous discussions with other committee bodies on the outcomes of the Strategic Plan consultations, other concerns outlined were—

1. A reluctance to listen to feedback on new areas/themes that need addressing, e.g. full SDG 4 agenda.
2. In the name of greater flexibility, differentiation for country contexts, there may emerge a dilution of the strong processes and conditions currently set that offer a greater handle to push governments to stronger public systems reforms and to meet their human rights obligations, e.g. domestic resource mobilisation/allocations to education.

Committee members reiterated the need for fit-for-purpose governance structures to support GPE's new Strategic Plan. It reiterated the need for a continued governance imprint in Board deliberations on the matter from December onwards. As such, it requested the Secretariat to develop two separate timelines for the governance review - one with a June 2020 timeline, and the other with a December 2020 timeline.

Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) – CSO2 representative (Zehra Kaneez)

21-22 October, Paris, France

The agenda of this meeting included a decision on the financial forecast for GPE, GPE Multiplier request for extension of the Maximum Country Allocations (MCA), 3 lines of defence model, and replenishment surge budget. Other items for discussion included an update on the West Bank and Gaza eligibility and lessons learned and Strategic Plan consultations feedback.

Regarding the financial forecast, the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) reviewed the financial forecast which outlined the current and projected financial position of the GPE Fund. Based on the financial forecast, the FRC noted there are a number of recommendations proposed to increase the minimum Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant size, increase resources for the accelerated funding modality, and from the Strategy and Impact Committee, there is a proposal to increase funding for Knowledge and Innovation Exchange.

On recommendations for increasing allocations, the FRC was supportive of the recommendations noting that these are short term actions that would accelerate the timely allocation of funds.

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The FRC noted there are a number of recommendations proposed to increase the minimum Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant size, increase resources for the accelerated funding modality. From the Strategy and Impact Committee, there is a proposal to increase funding for Knowledge and Innovation Exchange.

In the GPE Board meeting to be held in Nairobi in December 2019, CSO2 Board representatives will aim to represent the views of its diverse constituency and count on the support of national and regional colleagues to share inputs on suggested positions to take forward on key Board agenda items.

On the GPE Multiplier request for extension of the MCA, the committee was supportive of the recommendation to extend Multiplier MCA eligibility to 2021. It was also indicated that a strategic issue relevant to Multiplier and Accelerated Funding is how these mechanisms should be considered in the next Strategic Plan given the operations of Education Cannot Wait and the International Financing Facility for Education.

The 3 lines of defense (LOD) model provides an overview of how GPE as a fund and partnership manages risk at different levels. The first line represents the ongoing management of risk, the second line the challenge and oversight functions, and the third line is the independent assurance.

The FRC was supportive of this proposal and feels that the 3 LOD model shows sufficient clarity to be approved, recognising that GPE as a fund and partnership is unlike a traditional entity.

Moving forward, the GPE Board will hold its next Board meeting from 10-12 December 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya, where all recommended decisions and updates to the Board from GPE committees will be put on the table.

CSO2 engagement has been intense and continuous leading to this strategic final meeting of the year. In Nairobi, CSO2 Board representatives will aim to represent the views of its diverse constituency and count on the support of national and regional colleagues to share inputs on suggested positions to take forward on key Board agenda items. All inputs collected will be gathered for inclusion into a CSO position paper to be discussed and finalised at the CSO pre-Board face-to-face meetings happening Nairobi from 8-9 December which will gather CSO1 and CSO3 Board colleagues and other invited CSO representatives. The key decision items in this meeting will be the Private Sector Strategy Exceptional Circumstances Exemptions and the GPE Strategic Plan. [\[BACK\]](#)

Cementing advocacy priorities and identifying areas for action in Vanuatu

14-18 October 2019, Port Vila, Vanuatu



ASPBAE's Peter King visited KOBLE to work with them to cement priorities for the next two years, and to formulate their Education Out Loud (EOL) programme proposal.

ASPBAE's Peter King visited the Vanuatu education coalition, Kolisen Blong Leftemap Edukesen (KOBLE) in Port Vila. The purpose of the visit was to work with the Board and Coordinator and members of the organisation, working with them in their consultations to cement priorities for the next two years, and in formulating their Education Out Loud (EOL) programme proposal.

It quickly emerged that there is plenty of advocacy work for KOBLE, as multiple issues are damaging the government's current push for free and quality basic education for all. Although 15.7% of the budget goes to education, Vanuatu's budget is small, with a low tax base. Grants to schools are inadequate at just VUV 8,900 (US\$80) per primary student and VUV 42,000 (US\$340) per secondary student. As grants are inadequate, schools ask for other fees, and the poorest families are unable to pay. The schools then feel they have little choice but to exclude those children who do not pay.

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Participants identified issues damaging the government's push for free and quality basic education for all. Although 15.7% of the budget goes to education, Vanuatu's budget is small, with a low tax base.

Nevertheless, fee-free education remains a winner with the population, and the government is now planning to extend it so that each child has 10 years of compulsory free education. However, KOBLE's own fee-free effectiveness study conducted in 2018 found many parents were finding difficulties in sending their children to schools due to a 'schools contribution fee' imposed by school councils.

Complicating policy in Vanuatu are divisions between French and English speakers, the use and reputation of Bislama (a form of pijin English), and the existence of 90 vernacular languages in a country with a population of only 275,000. The recent attempt to introduce vernacular early years teaching has become caught up in these divisions, and looks likely to be abandoned.

KOBLE will push to support a proper review of the performance of vernacular teaching at schools. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) supported the policy with considerable resources, and it is a matter of concern how this will fall out in terms of education aid in the future.



KOBLE's youth researchers are currently conducting a survey on safe schools and inclusive education.

During consultations, it emerged that KOBLE is well positioned with good relationships within the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and a place on the Local Education Group (LEG). MoET also seems interested in KOBLE's research abilities, in particular the ongoing youth action research introduced into the country by ASPBAE in June 2019.

KOBLE's youth researchers are currently conducting a survey on safe schools and inclusive education. Youth from Port Vila, the peri-urban Etas settlement and the V-Pride Foundation, assisted by a KOBLE mentor, recently visited 16 schools in Port Vila, two rural Efate schools, and one vocational school, conducting interviews with staff, parents, and students. The youth researchers found little connection between the assumption within MoET that schools were enforcing policy to keep schools safe, and day-to-day practice. It seems that bullying, discrimination, and harassment are a normal part of school culture.



The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) plans to conduct a nationwide survey on inclusivity next year, specifically asking KOBLE for input.

Parents and students requested KOBLE's youth researchers to push for a number of changes - school inspection should be broadened from examining teaching practice in the classroom to over-viewing school policies in this area; curriculum should include modules associated with values, culture, and appropriate behavior and they should be compulsory; a safe schools officer should be appointed in the MoET, who should draw up relevant policies; and schools should have a counsellor to support students, parents, and teachers to address these issues. KOBLE will support youth researchers to present and advocate their findings.

Furthermore, KOBLE was putting the final touches to its inclusive policy analysis, as the 2011-2020 inclusive education policy is lapsing. MoET plans to conduct a nationwide survey on inclusivity next year, specifically asking KOBLE for input. Their report seems very timely.

KOBLE's priorities for the next two years are set. It is looking for a closer alignment of the education policy with SDG 4, and will continue its active participation in the LEG in order to push for this. KOBLE will keep up the pressure

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KOBLE will look for closer alignment of the education policy with SDG 4, and will continue participation in the LEG.

with a review of its 2019 Spotlight Report in 2020, and monitor the take-up by the MoET of KOBLE recommendations. School grant levels are too low, and to give good foundations to the debate, KOBLE will (in partnership with MoET) undertake further research on the issue.

KOBLE will continue to advocate for a disability inclusion working group and influence the current review. It will continue with the support of youth action research into their current targets of disability inclusion, post-secondary opportunities, gender, and sexuality discrimination. KOBLE will also continue in its role on the Literacy, Language and Numeracy Committee, and continue to advocate for the inclusion of youth and adult education in the tertiary division of MoET with adequate funding. [\[BACK\]](#)

PILCD, an ASPBAE member in the Philippines, wins 2019 Okayama ESD Global Prize Award!

By Ramon Mapa, People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development's (PILCD), Philippines



The PILCD project, *Strengthening Capacities of Communities for Inclusive Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction*, is an education and capacity development programme on disability inclusive community-based disaster risk reduction and management.

The project of the People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development's (PILCD), *Strengthening Capacities of Communities for Inclusive Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction*, was one of the two winners for the 2019 Okayama ESD Global Prize Award. The Okayama ESD award was launched in 2015 by the city of Okayama in Japan, with the aim to showcase good practices worldwide and to further advance Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Awards are given to outstanding projects contributing to the promotion of ESD in local communities.

PILCD's winning project is an education and capacity development programme on disability inclusive community-based disaster risk reduction and management. It aims to contribute in the strengthening of disaster resilience of high-risk communities with the inclusion and participation of vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities.

The projects core strategy involved the Multi-Stakeholders Training of Trainers on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk and Climate Change Education; community-based trainings and workshops on climate change and disaster preparedness; and the development of inclusive education materials on climate change and disaster preparedness.

The project was implemented in the cities of Calbaoyg and Catbalogan in Samar, Philippines, from 2015-2018 with the support of Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB) and Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH).

The PILCD project, that won the 2019 Okayama ESD Global Prize Award, aims to contribute in the strengthening of disaster resilience of high-risk communities with the inclusion and participation of vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities.

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The projects core strategy involved the Multi-Stakeholders Training of Trainers on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk and Climate Change Education, and trainings and workshops on climate change and disaster preparedness, amongst others.

The projects results included -

- Training 86 local educators and trainers on disability inclusive community-based disaster preparedness and response who took the lead in organising and facilitating trainings and workshops on climate change and disaster preparedness in 12 *barangays* (administrative divisions);
- Development of hazard maps, early warning system, contingency plans, and formation of village disaster committees that include persons with disabilities, women, and the elderly;
- Development of education materials on climate change and disaster preparedness that include video-based education materials on disaster preparedness and response. The development of these materials involved programme participants from different sectors and organisations.



The project strongly promotes sustainable development by being holistic and ownership-based, with a strong participation and partnership component, including empowering processes.

The project strongly promotes sustainable development by being holistic and ownership-based, with a strong participation and partnership component, including empowering processes. It is holistic as it integrates learning about the environmental and about social, economic, cultural, and political issues, including local and global dimensions of the nature and impacts of disasters. The projects learning activities in the communities facilitated the identification and planning of local solutions to address the vulnerabilities to disasters. It also facilitates the interaction and co-learning among groups of different ages and social and economic backgrounds.

The programme is ownership-based as it builds shared commitments among different stakeholders and groups to sustain the project in addressing the vulnerability of their communities. It is participatory and ensured the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities. It also forged partnerships among different stakeholders to ensure inclusion. The programme is also empowering in that it builds the capacities of the marginalised and most vulnerable groups in addressing their vulnerabilities and strengthening their resilience. [[BACK](#)]



The UNESCO recommendation sets forth the rights and responsibilities of teachers and standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment, and teaching and learning conditions.

Young Teachers: The Future of the Profession

World Teachers' Day

5 October 2019

Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers' Day (WTD) commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. This Recommendation sets forth the rights and responsibilities of teachers and standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment, and teaching and learning conditions.

To complement the 1966 Recommendation, the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel was adopted in 1997 to cover teaching and research personnel in higher education.

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World Teachers' Day celebrated the teaching profession worldwide to take stock of achievements, and to address issues central for attracting and keeping the brightest minds and young talents in the profession.



Several countries report a decline in public perception and respect for teachers, suggesting that families no longer automatically support teacher's authority over their students in the classroom.



Over 69 million teachers must be recruited by 2030 for primary and secondary education to meet the SDG 4 education targets.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on quality education and lifelong learning for all, in particular the dedicated target (SDG 4.c), recognise teachers as key to the achievement of the 2030 Education Agenda.

This year, World Teachers' Day celebrated teachers with the theme, '*Young Teachers: The future of the Profession.*' It provided the occasion to celebrate the teaching profession worldwide, to take stock of achievements, and to address some of the issues central for attracting and keeping the brightest minds and young talents in the profession.

There are, without doubt, considerable challenges to the occupational, social, and legal status of the teaching profession worldwide. Several countries also report a decline in public perception and respect for teachers more generally, suggesting that families no longer automatically support teacher's authority over their students in the classroom.

Teachers and education staff can experience intimidation from their students and family members. In some countries, the public's negative perception of teachers is such that education staff regularly face the threat of violence.

If this weren't enough, prominent academics are urging a rethink of the very notion of 'expertise,' proposing that technology, artificial intelligence, and automation will soon make redundant many human tasks that were once the historic preserve of 'professions'. While teaching and learning will always offer the greatest rewards as a form of social interaction, it is true that technology is significantly changing how everyone works and lives, even as these technologies raise ethical questions about privacy and how humans connect with each other.

Taken together, all of this points to a profession under threat. With large percentages of teachers likely to retire from practice in the coming decade, a major concern is that not enough young candidates are coming in to the profession to replace them. Over 69 million teachers must be recruited by 2030 for primary and secondary education to meet the SDG 4 education targets. Of this number, 48.6 million new recruits will be needed to replace those who are to leave the profession either through retirement or voluntarily. In South and West Asia, and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, acute shortages exist.

World Teachers' Day 2019 was a moment to look at the future of the profession and the role of young teachers in it - taking onboard the changing climate of education and schooling, the need to draw in and retain a new generation of dedicated educators, and to prepare them for the 21st century challenges of 'teaching in diversity' and 'diversity in teaching.'

In a [joint statement](#) marking the occasion, Education International (EI), UNESCO, the ILO and other partners voiced their concern over the status of the teaching profession and its impact on the recruitment and retention of qualified young teachers. The signatories note that the theme is a call to governments "to make teaching a profession of first choice for young people."

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In a joint statement marking the occasion, Education International, UNESCO, ILO, and other partners voiced their concern over the status of the teaching profession and its impact on the recruitment and retention of qualified young teachers.

Given the challenges for attracting, recruiting, and keeping young people in the teaching profession, it is crucial that countries consult with, and take into account, the opinions of their youth, recent graduates and teacher training academy students on how to plan more dynamic recruitment and training strategies, and how to make the teaching profession more attractive overall.

The dialogue might begin with - What kind of incentives might help to attract the most qualified and committed young talents into teaching? What kinds of contractual relationships, remuneration and rewards are qualified candidates looking for, and how do existing policies line up with their ambitions and expectations for career progression? What could be envisaged to generate more flexibility in recruitment, teacher education, and deployment policies to work with young people in meeting the teacher gap? Governments also need to understand the types of incentives and rewards that motivate young teachers in their work and keep driving them forward to make a difference in the classroom.

Without a new generation of motivated teachers wanting to make a difference, the global commitment to “*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*” is clearly under threat.



It is crucial that countries take into account the opinions of their youth, recent graduates and teacher training academy students on how to plan more dynamic recruitment and training strategies, and how to make the teaching profession more attractive overall.

It is for this reason that conversations around attracting and supporting young teachers must go beyond education ministries and international meeting halls to the staff room and social media and involve the next generation of graduates and potential teacher recruits. teacher unions, civil society organisations, Schools Principals, Parent/Teacher Associations, School Management Committees, Inspectors and teacher trainers will also be at the center of discussions to share their experiences in supporting young teachers and promoting the emergence of a vibrant teaching force.

This write-up draws from information appearing on the [UNESCO website](http://unesco.org) and the website of [Education International](http://education-international.org). Education International is a global Union Federation that represents organisations of teachers and other education employees. It is the world’s largest, most representative global, sectoral organisation of unions with more than 32 million trade union members in 391 organisations in 179 countries and territories. [\[BACK\]](#)

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