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ASPBAE releases Communique No. 2 for 7th General Assembly – [Read more](#)



ASPBAE Executive Council approves budgets and plans for 2016

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ASPBAE holds workshop on education policy advocacy for Central Asia and Afghanistan CSOs

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European civil society demands sustainable development strategy for Europe

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ASPBAE, E-Net Philippines participate in meeting on Right to Education Index Project

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Better government planning needed to strengthen public education in Nepal

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ASPBAE co-organises International Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning

ASPBAE co-organised an International Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning in Mongolia. The event was held amidst the formulation of the National Programme on Lifelong Learning in the country.

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Looking to the future: ASPBAE holds strategic review of its Training for Transformation programme

ASPBAE Executive Council and staff gathered in Ulaanbaatar to contribute to the strategic review of the ASPBAE capacity building approach, the Training for Transformation (TFT) programme.

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Building on the practice: Getting children and youth back to education

The Asia Education Summit on Flexible Learning Strategies for Out-of-School Children was a gathering of government and other institutions united towards solving the problem of out-of-school children in the Asia Pacific.

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Teachers Driving Education 2030 Forward

The Education International Asia Pacific (EIAP) workshop was the first in-depth discussion of teachers' unions in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG4.

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NCE-Nepal organises workshop on gender mainstreaming in education

NCE-Nepal organised a capacity building workshop for its members on 'Gender Mainstreaming in Education'. ASPBAE's Sumedha Sharma and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano conducted the workshop.

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Myanmar education network discusses education reform with ASPBAE President

ASPBAE President, Robbie Guevara, conducted a seminar-workshop for members of the National Network for Education Reform (NNER), Myanmar.

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Member of the Month

Development Services Exchange (DSE), Solomon Islands

Development Services Exchange (DSE) is the national civil society/NGO umbrella body in the Solomon Islands. It was established in 1984 to facilitate and coordinate development services for NGOs and their partners. Currently, DSE has a membership of 65 civil society organisations, including international and local NGOs and Community Based Organisations. DSE aims to strengthen effective CSO/NGO coordination through advocacy, information sharing, capacity building, and enhancing relationships with members and stakeholders. You can visit DSE's [Facebook](#) page to know more.

Photo of the Month



Director of the Strategic Policy and Planning Department, Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, Mongolia Nasanbayar Baavgai (right), giving the opening remarks at the Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on 18 February 2016. Also seen in this photo is Batjargal Batkhuyag, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia.

ASPBAE releases Communique No. 2 for 7th General Assembly

ASPBAE released Communique No. 2 on 29 February 2016 advising on member's accreditation to its 7th General Assembly (GA) to be held at the end of this year. The Communique highlighted the rights of accredited members to - nominate and endorse nominations to elective positions of the ASPBAE Executive Council; elect their respective Country Voting Representatives; and participate in other review and planning activities related to the GA. Accredited members were sent ASPBAE's 7th General Assembly Voting Rules & Nomination Guidelines, Nominations and Endorsement Forms for the ASPBAE President and ASPBAE Executive Council Members, a revised Schedule of the GA activities, Directory of Accredited Members to the 7th GA, and ASPBAE Constitution and By-laws.

9 May 2016 is the deadline for submitting Completed Nomination/Endorsement Forms for all the ASPBAE Executive Council positions. [[BACK](#)]

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ASPBAE co-organises International Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning

18 February 2016, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

By *Batjargal Batkhuyag*, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia, and representative of the Mongolian Education Alliance



The Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning was held at a relevant moment amidst vociferous debate and formulation of the National Programme on Lifelong Learning in Mongolia.

ASPBAE co-organised an International Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning along with the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science of Mongolia and the Mongolian Education Alliance. Representatives from the central and local government, civil society, and international organisations participated in the Forum. The event was held at a relevant moment amidst vociferous debate and formulation of the National Programme on Lifelong Learning (LLL) in Mongolia.



The opening remarks of ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and Nasanbayar Baavgai of the Ministry of Education, Mongolia, emphasised the importance of the Forum in translating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the education goal (SDG4), and the lifelong learning concept to the national context of Mongolia.

ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and Director of the Strategic Policy and Planning Department, Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, Nasanbayar Baavgai, gave the opening remarks at the Forum. The remarks emphasised the importance of the Forum in translating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the education goal (SDG 4), and the lifelong learning concept to the national context in Mongolia.

Nasanbayar Baavgai presented an overview of current reforms of the education sector in the country and the National Programme on LLL to be implemented from 2016-2021. The national programme will be the first to incorporate a policy document to develop a lifelong learning system and culture that supports life-long learners, happy families, and sustainable development. The three components of the programme are – (1) development of the lifelong learning system - curriculum development for various target groups, research, training, and financing, (2) coordination - support to local initiatives, inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration, and (3) validation - accreditation, recognition, and institutionalisation.



Nasanbayar Baavgai of the Ministry of Education, Mongolia, presented an overview of current reforms of the education sector in the country and the National Programme on LLL to be implemented from 2016-2021.

An ASPBAE panel addressed the topic of *'Concretising SDG4 in our policy and practice: Lessons from ASPBAE and its partners'* and was chaired by ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara. Robbie providing an overview of the SDGs and SDG4 and the centrality of the lifelong learning within them. The panellists were then asked to share their experiences of lifelong learning both personally and from the contexts they come from. ASPBAE Executive Council member representing Southeast Asia, Dina Lumbantobing, spoke about what SDG 4 means for work on gender and education from the experience of PESADA (an Indonesia-based NGO working on women's empowerment, ethnic minorities, and children) and the women's movement in Indonesia. ASPBAE Executive Council member representing South and Central Asia, Dominic D'Souza of LAYA (a resource centre for indigenous communities based in southern India), talked about what SDG 4 means for work on equity and inclusion from the experience of LAYA with focus on their work around climate change.

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ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, chaired an ASPBAE panel on 'Concretising SDG4 in our policy and practice: Lessons from ASPBAE and its partners'.



Uwe Gartenschlaeger of DVV International participated in the ASPBAE Panel and talked about learnings from a long tradition of policy experience in Germany and Europe.



Dina Lumbantobing, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing Southeast Asia, spoke about what SDG 4 means for work on gender and education from the experience of PESADA.

Dorothy Lucardie of Adult Learning Australia shared learnings from policy experiences, challenges, and opportunities in Australia. Uwe Gartenschlaeger of DVV International talked about learnings from a long tradition of policy experience in Germany and Europe.

Participants were then divided into 3 groups to brainstorm on issues related to policy, practice, and coordination of lifelong learning. In Group 1, the participants discussed lifelong learning policy. The discussion was facilitated by ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano and ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia, Batjargal Batkhuyag of the Mongolian Education Alliance. Participants raised several issues and made suggestions for the lifelong learning programme in Mongolia. Some points made were -

- Civil society organisations conduct a lot of activities within the lifelong learning framework, but this is not depicted in national statistics. Data and statistics should capture the enormous amount of work various civil society organisations do.
- In considering a lifelong learning programme, it is important to focus on traditional knowledge, and to have a balance of knowledge and skills (not only cognitive skills). Rural/urban disparities need to be considered.
- Capacity of the local community in doing training, research, and other skills should be considered.
- The government needs to support civil society in formulating and implementing the lifelong learning framework. This should not only be financial assistance, but should also extend to coordination efforts. Teacher training and support to educators working in this area is needed.
- There needs to be recognition and validation of lifelong learning.
- The involvement of various stakeholders in policy development is needed.
- The National Programme on Lifelong Learning is a step towards instituting policies on LLL. But for this to be successful, it needs to have funding, and there needs to be coordination and collaboration of various stakeholders and local authorities.

Group 2, facilitated by Bernie Lovegrove of ASPBAE and Tungalag Dondog of the 'All for Education' (AFE) Coalition, discussed the practices and implementation of lifelong learning. The main highlights of their discussion were -

Issues -

- Lifelong learning is not understood, or financed, in rural areas.
- Lifelong learning centres in rural areas are seen only for training out-of-school children and youth, not adults.
- There is still no common understanding or synergy amongst the Ministry of Education, universities, and the National Centre for Lifelong Learning on implementing policies.

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Dominic D'Souza, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing South Asia, talked about what SDG 4 means for work on equity and inclusion from the experience of LAYA with focus on their work around climate change.

- Teachers and researchers lack the capacity to organise lifelong learning training and activities.

Strategies -

- There is a need to change the perception of lifelong learning at all levels, including for the government, municipalities, and individuals.
- Civil society organisations need to define what they mean by lifelong learning to monitor quality standards.
- There is a need to share experiences, expertise, and good practices with civil society organisations and networks in the region.
- There should be incentives for those municipalities that support and promote lifelong learning.
- Collaboration with other sectors and ministries is crucial. The Ministry of Education should lead on this.
- Advocacy and raising awareness amongst citizens and decision-makers should be done in collaboration with civil society organisations.



ASPBAE's Helen Dabu and Bolorsaikhan Badamsambuu of the 'All for Education' (AFE) Coalition facilitated a group discussion on lifelong learning coordination.

Group 3, facilitated by Helen Dabu of ASPBAE and Bolorsaikhan Badamsambuu of the 'All for Education' (AFE) Coalition, discussed lifelong learning coordination. Highlights of the discussions of Group 3 were –

- There is a lack of coordination among government agencies in charge of education, labour, finance, and human development and there is lack of collaboration among different sectors.
- Lifelong learning is understood in a very narrow context – as providing literacy and equivalency programmes to a few groups such as out-of-school children and youth, school dropouts, and convicts.
- There is a lack of involvement in lifelong learning from the academia.



ASPBAE's Bernie Lovegrove (R) and Tungalag Dondog (L) of the 'All for Education' (AFE) Coalition, facilitated a group discussion on the practices and implementation of lifelong learning.

The participations suggested the following to overcome the challenges and increase the effectiveness of lifelong learning initiatives –

- The Government is the primary duty bearer in realising the right to education. Participants proposed to set up a National Council, to be headed either by the President or the Prime Minister.
- The National Centre for Lifelong Learning, currently under the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, should be responsible for coordinating and implementing lifelong learning policies. It should serve as the Secretariat of the National Council providing technical assistance.
- The National Council should consist of representatives of the government, civil society, citizens, local authorities, international development partners, and other donor agencies.

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Members of AFE Mongolia participating in the Policy Forum and ASPBAE staff also discussed wrap-up activities of the coalition associated with the end of Phase 2 of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF).

- The primary responsibilities of the Council should range from the development of policies and programmes, to implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
- It is important for the National Centre for Lifelong Learning to collaborate with civil society and the private sector.

In his closing remarks, Batjargal Batkhuyag expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture and to ASPBAE for co-organising the important and timely event that gathering various stakeholders to share and learn from one another. He also expressed hope that the Forum would raise awareness on lifelong learning, the SDGs, and the right to education and would also lead to action to concretise SDG4 at the national level.

Members of AFE Mongolia participating in the Policy Forum and ASPBAE staff took a moment to also discuss the wrap-up activities of the coalition associated with the end of Phase 2 of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF). [\[BACK\]](#)

Looking to the future: ASPBAE holds strategic review of its Training for Transformation programme

17 February 2016, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

By Dorothy Lucardie, Adult Learning Australia



Dorothy Lucardie of Adult Learning Australia is conducting the review of ASPBAE's Training for Transformation (TfT) programme. The review aims to facilitate a better understanding of the role of the TfT programme in the emerging global and regional contexts and link it to ASPBAE's policy advocacy strategies.

ASPBAE Executive Council members and staff gathered in Ulaanbaatar to spend a full day to contribute to the strategic review of the ASPBAE capacity building approach, the Training for Transformation (TfT) programme. The strategic review will inform discussions of the strategic directions for ASPBAE at the forthcoming General Assembly later in 2016. The strategic perspective adopted by the review aims to facilitate a better understanding of the role of the ASPBAE Training for Transformation programme in the emerging global and regional contexts and to propose ways to link these capacity building programmes with ASPBAE's policy advocacy and membership strategies and processes.

The consultative workshop, firstly, focussed on the past, reviewing the experiences of Executive Council members and staff in the TfT programme, that has primarily been a leadership development and capacity building programme. Robbie Guevara, ASPBAE President, introduced the purpose of the TfT programme as primarily *“Advancing a particular kind of education that is innovative, pro-poor, rights-based, and gender sensitive”*.

Participants in the workshop shared their experience in the TfT and the outcomes that occurred for themselves and their organisations. These outcomes included meeting new friends, establishing networks, and learning about different contexts for adult education. Skills that were gained included creative and innovative approaches to learning

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The workshop began by focussing on the past, reviewing the experiences of Executive Council members and staff in the Tft programme.



Participants of the workshop were challenged to identify what had been Tft's contribution to ASPBAE goals - transformative learning, gender mainstreaming, education sustainability, and education as a right.

methodologies, inter-generational learning, learning about ASPBAE, and the broader global adult education issues. As they reflected on why these outcomes occurred, participants identified many of the components of the programme such as engaging with others, a good balance between theory and practice, and an environment in the programme that was both intellectually stimulating and emotionally engaging.

The second part of the consultation turned to the future and considered whether there is a different set of ideas and ideologies in the present age. What does adult education mean now? What are the mindsets or perspectives of the generations coming? In door stop interviews, participants were challenged to identify what had been the Tft's contribution to ASPBAE goals: transformative learning, gender mainstreaming, education sustainability, and education as a right.

Looking towards the future, Robbie facilitated discussion on what was ASPBAE's 'Theory of Change' as this is the rationale for the capacity building programme for the future. How does the Tft influence or make change? How do we ensure that the change is transformative towards the goals that are at the heart of ASPBAE's work? Participants shared their vision of the future they believe will happen and the future they want to happen. This enabled the identification of the strategies that could be adopted to work towards the preferred future and the advocacy focus required to mitigate against negative futures.

Executive Council members and ASPBAE staff then turned to the Tft programme and considered what it could be through this future lens. What would it look like? Who could be the participants? What would be the content? How could the Tft programme be sustainable?

This consultation workshop is a key step in the review of the Training for Transformation programme. Individual interviews with participants in the programme, with organisations who have sponsored participants, and with individuals from across the world who can contribute to the strategic context of the review are currently being conducted to gather their views of the current programme, the context that both ASPBAE and the Tft programme are now situated and how the programme can be strengthened for the future. [\[BACK\]](#)

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ASPBAE Executive Council approves budgets and plans for 2016

19-21 February 2016, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia



ASPBAE Executive Council members in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

ASPBAE's Executive Council (EC) and staff meet in Ulaanbaatar to review ASPBAE's activities and achievements in 2015 and agree on plans for 2016. This was a significant meeting in many ways. First, it was a space to discuss and plan for ASPBAE's 7th General Assembly coming up in December 2016. Second, it was an opportunity to take stock of the newly-agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and discuss the opportunities and challenges the education community faces, especially related to adult education and lifelong learning in the education goal (SDG4). And third, it was the last Executive Council meeting for several of its EC members as their two 4-year terms on the Board come to an end this year.

The EC meeting followed the review of ASPBAE's Training for Transformation programme (17 February 2016), and the Policy Forum on Lifelong Learning (18 February 2016) held in Ulaanbaatar and co-organised by ASPBAE and the Mongolian Education Alliance. The gathering of the Board and staff was an opportunity to reflect on these 2 events and to report and plan for activities in 2016 in accordance with ASPBAE's core strategies – leadership and capacity building; policy advocacy; building strategic partnerships; and institutional strengthening. Cognisant of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Phase 2 end in early 2016, the ASPBAE staff and Executive discussed lessons from this period of work to inform planning for the next Phase.

ASPBAE's Executive Council and staff were also given an exposure to Mongolian culture which included a visit to the national museum, a musical feast of traditional songs and dances, Mongolian food, and last but certainly not the least, the Mongolian winter of temperatures as low as -31 degrees Celsius!

The next Executive Council meeting will welcome new Board members, including a new President and new representatives from South and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the South Pacific. [\[BACK\]](#)

The gathering of the ASPBAE Executive and staff was an opportunity to report on 2015 and plan for activities in 2016 in accordance with ASPBAE's core strategies – leadership and capacity building; policy advocacy; building strategic partnerships; and institutional strengthening.

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Building on the practice: Getting children and youth back to education

Asia Education Summit on Flexible Learning Strategies for Out-of-School Children

24-26 February 2016, Bangkok, Thailand



The Asia Education Summit on Flexible Learning Strategies for Out-of-School Children was a huge gathering of almost 500 government representatives, UN partners, the private sector, and a diverse group of civil society practitioners and policy advocates, all united towards solving the perennial and increasing problem of out-of-school children in the Asia Pacific.

To increase regional technical and financial cooperation to ensure quality and equitable learning for all in the Asia Pacific, the UNESCO-Bangkok organised the Summit more specifically to -

- Serve as a platform for presenting and disseminating innovative programmes
- Provide an excellent opportunity to build and foster networks and partnerships
- Create technical collaboration and share innovative financing practices
- Develop an online course using information and data derived from the Summit

ASPBAE members participated and presented in the Summit. ASPBAE also moderated a session in the Concurrent Sessions on *Beyond Primary Education: Session on 'Psychology and Mind Preparedness'*.

In the Concurrent Session on Governance, one of the sessions was on *'Collaboration with NGOs'*, where Chanveasna Chin, Executive Director of the NGO Education Partnership (NEP-Cambodia), shared the work of the Cambodia Consortium on Out-of-School Children. What is interesting is the cooperation done by different members of the Consortium, employing different strategies to address the problem at different fronts.



UNESCO Bangkok organised the Summit specifically to, amongst other things, serve as a platform for presenting innovative programmes and provide an opportunity to build and foster networks and partnerships.

To enable access, the Consortium helped in enabling physical and financial access to education as well as provided remedial education for children to catch up and reintegrate into education. The Consortium also collaborated with the school committees and the Council for Women and Children to enhance their capacities to undertake effective enrolment campaigns and vulnerability mapping.

To date, the Consortium has facilitated the enrolment and retention of 33,409 out-of-school children, 46% of whom are girls now in formal and non-formal education.

In the Concurrent Session: Responding to Challenges 2, Bashir Khaliqi, Managing Director of the Afghan Adult Education Association (ANAF AE),

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was a speaker in the Session on 'Education in Emergencies: Conflict Zones'.



ASPBAE members participated and presented in the Summit. ASPBAE also moderated a session on 'Psychology and Mind Preparedness'.

Bashir provided an overview of the innovations being done by different organisations in Afghanistan to help out-of-school children and youth. ANAFEA, along with other NGOs, is implementing the Community-Based Education/Accelerated Learning Courses. This large programme, involving 3,843 community centres, reach out to marginalised communities, providing education where children are. Other innovations include Save the Children's "Girls Learn to Teach Afghan" where girls who graduated from grade 12 are given a 26-week teacher training course to enable them to teach in grades 1-3 in formal schools. Yet another innovation is "Circus for Children" by Mobile Mini-Circus for Children. Its goal is to educate and empower children and youth using creative communication techniques.

For education programmes to be effective, Bashir pointed out that they should be demand-driven and tailor-fit to the needs of marginalised children and youth.

From the experiences of Bunyad Foundation, Vice-Chair, Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rahman presented in the Concurrent Session 'Beyond Primary Education: Session on More Innovations for Youth and Adults'. Shaheen stressed the importance of focusing on education for parents in Bunyad's work on "Involving Mothers in Learning to Promote Retention for their Children." Based on their experience, a literate mother is more likely to ensure that her children, especially her daughters, attend and remain in school. In this sense, therefore, a mother is a change agent. At the same time, Bunyad needs to also address the other learning needs of families - especially in their efforts to fight poverty and live in dignity. In this respect, apart from literacy classes, Bunyad also offers services to women/families such as kitchen gardening, initiatives to help access safe water, facilitating community and religious activities, community libraries, health and daycare facilities, to name some of their many interventions.



Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rahman of Bunyad Foundation, Pakistan, stressed the importance of focusing on education for parents in Bunyad's work on "Involving Mothers in Learning to Promote Retention for their Children".

Through holistic and community-based approaches, there has been increased enrolment and retention of students in school and participation of adults in learning programmes. More importantly, with the community mobilised, the families took ownership and leadership in monitoring and working for the education of the community.

Indeed, the Asia Education Summit on Flexible Learning Strategies has been an important platform -- offering a compendium of excellent practices in addressing the problems of out-of-school children and youth in the Asia Pacific. All these practices, as well as other presentations, can be accessed on the Summit [website](#). [\[BACK\]](#)

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The partner's meeting was organised for sharing initial results of the Right to Education Index (RTEI) that was piloted in the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Chile.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya and Addie Unsi of E-Net Philippines participated in the event. ASPBAE has been involved in the RTEI project since its inception in 2013 and has contributed to the development of the index.

ASPBAE and E-Net Philippines participate in partner's meeting on Right to Education Index Project

22-25 February 2016, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

RESULTS Educational Fund (RESULTS, USA), in cooperation with host NGO HakiElimu, convened a partner's meeting of the Right to Education Index (RTEI) project in Dar es Salaam. The meeting was organised for an internal sharing of the initial results of the RTEI that was piloted in five countries – the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Chile. In attendance, apart from ASPBAE and E-Net Philippines, were partner organisations in the pilot countries, and international and regional networks - Global Campaign for Education (GCE), Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA), Open Society Foundations (OSF), Right to Education Project, Education International (EI), and the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR).

Rene Raya, Lead Policy Analyst, represented ASPBAE in the partners meeting, while Addie Unsi, National Coordinator of E-Net Philippines, represented the coalition in the event. ASPBAE has been involved in the RTEI project since its inception in 2013 and has contributed to the development of the index.

The RTEI is a global index designed to analyse the country's status and progress in fulfilling the right to education based on a set of indicators that measure national performance in the areas of governance and the 4 As - Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, and Adaptability. The index is derived through a questionnaire consisting of indicators explicitly culled from the international right to education framework and completed by civil society respondents using national-level education data and verifiable information. The completed questionnaires were peer reviewed by independent experts from research organisations and relevant government agencies. The index aims to help civil society in their campaign to hold governments accountable to their commitments on the right to education. These campaigns will likewise strengthen the networks of education advocates, and increase public and political support to realise the right to education.



The RTEI is a global index designed to analyse the country's status and progress in fulfilling the right to education based on a set of indicators that measure national performance in the areas of governance and the 4 As - Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, and Adaptability.

Tony Baker and Will Smith of RESULTS oriented the participants on the RTEI and the research process in the pilot countries, and moderated the sessions of the 3-day partners meeting. Representatives from the pilot countries attending the partners meeting presented the highlights of the research process and the resulting index in their respective countries. The rest of the participants who are experts in the fields of education, human rights, monitoring, and indicator systems, discussed issues related to specific themes and indicators, data collection and scoring systems, and offered suggestions on how to improve the content, methodology, and presentation of the index project.

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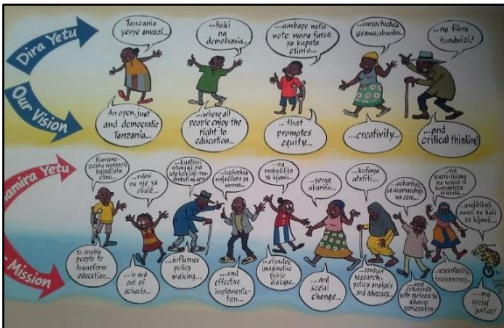
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Participants agreed to finalise country briefs that present results of the pilot studies and to use the index to strengthen advocacy on the right to education at national and global levels.

In the case of the Philippines, the RTEI reveals that while the state had ratified the international treaties and declarations relevant to education, and provides guarantees to free and compulsory basic education, there are serious gaps in terms of availability (lack of schools, classrooms, and teachers) and adaptability (lack of programmes that cater to out-of-school and marginalised groups). Financing of education and data availability were also identified as concerns that impact on the right to education.

After the pilot country presentations, the participants gave a general feedback on the index, and discussed the trainings needed to roll-out the project and the advocacy plans to disseminate the results in the pilot countries. The participants agreed to finalise the country briefs that present the results of the pilot studies and to use the index to strengthen the advocacy on the right to education at national and global levels. There was general agreement to continue and expand the coverage of the next phase of the project to include countries in other regions that were not represented in the first phase. The meeting concluded with a resolution to form an advisory body that will guide the finalisation of the RTEI and plan the roll-out of the next phase of the project.



Participants visited the office of the host HakiElimu, a civil society organisation that works for an open, just, and democratic Tanzania where all children enjoy the right to education that promotes equity, creativity, and critical thinking.

On the last day of the event, participants visited the office of the host HakiElimu, a civil society organisation that works for an open, just, and democratic Tanzania where all children enjoy the right to education that promotes equity, creativity, and critical thinking. Since its formation in 2001, HakiElimu has mobilised a grassroots network of over 35,000 Friends of Education, whose members include community based organisations and individuals who want to make a difference in their local schools and communities. A short meeting followed the tour of the office to brief the delegation on the various programmes being implemented by the organisation. [\[BACK\]](#)

Teachers Driving Education 2030 Forward

Education International (EI) workshop on the SDGs and the Education 2030 Framework for Action

2-4 February 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

The theme of a workshop held in Bangkok by Education International Asia Pacific (EIAP) was 'Driving the Education 2030 Forward'. The event was the first in-depth discussion of teachers' unions in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG4 (education goal). The EIAP members come from Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mongolia, Philippines, Pakistan, and India.

Specific objectives of the workshop were to -

1. Deepen affiliates' knowledge and understanding of the SDGs and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, and their impact on the global education policy landscape as well as national education policies



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2. Develop common advocacy strategies aimed to influence governments, as well as intergovernmental organisations, to ensure full implementation of the new education SDG and targets;
3. Identify channels through which to influence governments and come up with a set of national advocacy actions.



The aim of the EI workshop was to deepen affiliates' knowledge and understanding of the SDGs and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, develop common advocacy strategies aimed to influence governments, and identify channels to influence governments and develop national advocacy actions.

Sashi Bala Singh, Education International Chief Regional Coordinator for the Asia Pacific, articulated the need to work with other civil society and like-minded organisations in the education and other sectors to achieve the ambitious goals of the SDGs, and in particular SDG 4. She said that, *"While the teachers' unions are huge, with the global agenda for education, we cannot do the work alone to achieve the SDGs targets."* At the same time, Sashi raised the huge challenge facing public teachers – with the low investments in public education, there is a trend where parents prefer to send their children to private school and hence, leanings towards privatisation of education.

Antonia Wulff, Education International Coordinator for Education and Employment, in her presentation on the SDGs said that the Agenda 2030 adopted by the United Nations is complicated. She further stated that teachers' unions should start understanding them and analyze what they mean for teachers, agree on their agenda and the implications in education financing as well as strategies in education advocacy and practice.

Among the many issues raised by the teachers were the challenge to universal implementation of the SDGs given the different economic and social contexts of countries. Many delegates also reiterated that it was imperative to link education to development and decent work. Another challenge raised was the non-recognition of teachers unions or limitation in their participation in education governance in many countries.



Tanvir Muntasim of Action Aid (second from right) discussed education financing, in particular domestic resource mobilisation, to generate funds needed for SDG 4. ASPBAE's Thea Soriano emphasised the importance of the work of teachers' unions at the school and community level, advocacy at the sub-national and national levels, and bringing these voices to the regional and global levels.

Indeed, the implementation of the SDGs and governance in education are key concerns raised in the Framework for Action (FFA) of the SDGs. Min Bista of UNESCO-Bangkok said in his presentation said that the FFA is an indicative document that needs to be adopted amidst the complex social, cultural, economic, and political situations in each country. However, Min also said that the SDGs give legitimacy for countries to work together on a common vision and goals and provides benchmarks for approaching development and education.

Reiterating the need for teachers' participation in education governance, the International Labor Organisation (ILO) noted the reality of restricted social dialogue with teachers in many countries as well as the poor working conditions of teachers. It reiterated that education and decent work is a priority agenda expressed by many governments, citizens, and stakeholders during the post 2015 processes, therefore, there is an imperative to work together on this urgent agenda.

Finally, in the strategising part of the workshop, Tanvir Muntasim of Action Aid discussed education financing, in particular domestic resource

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Among the many issues raised by the teachers were the challenge to universal implementation of the SDGs given the different economic and social contexts of countries.

mobilisation, to generate the funds needed for SDG 4. ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano emphasised the importance of the work of teachers' unions at the school and community level, advocacy at the sub-national and national levels, and bringing these voices to the regional and global levels. Participating in regional mechanisms is a platform to push for the agenda of the teachers, students, and the community they work with. It also challenges the processes of decision-making and power-relations in education. [\[BACK\]](#)

European civil society demands sustainable development strategy for Europe

By Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Regional Director, DVV International



As pointed out in numerous statements, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were designed as an agenda for the whole world, overcoming the outdated approach of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were targeted nearly exclusively towards developing countries, addressing the global North solely in its capacity as a donor.

However, to overcome this traditional, deeply-rooted perception remains a challenge. One of those is to ensure that, for example, European governments treat Agenda 2030 as an important reference framework for developing their policies. In a letter to the First Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, leading European civil society networks, including ASPBAE's sister organisation, the European Adult Education Association (EAEA), demanded an overarching Sustainable Development Strategy for Europe based on the Agenda 2030.

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Click [here](#) to access the letter to the European Commission. [\[BACK\]](#)

ASPBAE holds workshop on education policy advocacy for Central Asia and Afghanistan CSOs

25-30 January & 5-8 February 2016, Manila, Philippines



ASPBAE organised workshops on education policy advocacy for its members in Central Asia (25-30 January 2016) and Afghanistan (5-8 February 2016). With the aim to strengthen rights-based perspectives of NGOs from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan on education and equip them with analytical tools to affirm education as a human right, the workshops were designed to engage participants by sharing their contexts and prioritising issues.

The workshops on education policy advocacy were designed to engage participants by sharing their contexts and prioritising issues.

While explaining human rights approaches to education advocacy at both the workshops, ASPBAE's Helen Dabu spoke about the different international commitments and responsibilities of countries to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of individuals. She stressed that a human rights-based approach means being aware of one's own influence and

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power as individuals, civil society activists, and national and international organisations.

As a part of understanding country situations, participants worked in groups to identify the socio-political and economic contexts of their countries, emphasising the education realities. ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano and Susmita Choudhury facilitated sessions at the workshops on prioritising issues for education policy advocacy.



ASPBAE's Thea Soriano and Susmita Choudhury facilitated sessions on prioritising issues for education policy advocacy. Susmita is seen here with a member of the Philippines House of Representatives. The Advocacy workshop involved interactions with government representatives - parliamentarians, civil servants and local government units.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya highlighted the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) processes in relation to education for all, emphasising quality education (SDG 4) and its targets. He explained the key areas of advocacy in SDG 4 that the coalitions can prioritise based on country contexts, underlining ASPBAE's thrust areas of – (a) education financing, (b) equity and inclusion, and (c) quality education.

Rene further spoke about the strategies and the challenges of advocating for education budgets. Adie Unsi, E-Net Philippines, and Nasiruddin Buisan, from Cotabota city, shared experiences of their organisations in education budget advocacy, including advocating in conflict and post-conflict areas of the Philippines.

Participants discussed the key focus areas related to SDG 4 in their countries and identified possible challenges in implementing the agenda. A dedicated session on the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), an initiative of Global Partnership for Education (GPE), focused on the objectives of the CSEF, operational procedures, and roles and operational procedures of the Regional Secretariat, Regional Financial Management Agency, and the Regional Funding Committee. ASPBAE's Helen Dabu detailed out the CSEF funding mechanism along with indicative activities for a new coalition. She also shared experiences related to the formulation of new education coalitions in Vietnam, Mongolia, and Timor Leste.

During the workshop for Central Asia members, participants visited the Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) and the central jail in Caloocan city to observe ALS amongst the inmates. Participants of the workshop for Afghanistan members visited the Alaminos municipality in Pangasinan province to understand the engagement of civil society organisations with the local government in implementing Alternative Learning Systems.

Both the workshops ended with countries planning and detailing goals, objectives, strategies, and activities for the next year. [[BACK](#)]

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Better government planning needed to strengthen public education in Nepal

NCE-Nepal Annual General Meeting

6 February 2016, Kathmandu, Nepal



The inauguration of the AGM saw the participation of NCE-Nepal's members, advisors, networks, government representatives, and ASPBAE's Thea Soriano and Sumedha Sharma.

The National Campaign for Education-Nepal (NCE Nepal) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Kathmandu where its progress in 2015 was reviewed and planning for 2016 was approved by its members.

The inauguration of the AGM saw the participation of NCE-Nepal's members (from over 35 districts), advisors, networks, government representatives, and ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano and Sumedha Sharma. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Khaga Raj Baral, Director General of Department of Education, who emphasised the need for proper planning from the government to strengthen public education in the country. He expressed his commitment to fulfilling the government's education plans and programmes. Mukunda Khanal, coordinator of the School Sector Development Plan, welcomed suggestions from civil society and ensured they will be incorporated in education sector planning.



NCE-Nepal shared findings of the report on 'Education Accountability – Post-Earthquake Scenario' which highlighted the impact of the 2015 Nepal earthquake in the 14 most affected districts.

NCE-Nepal shared findings of the report on 'Education Accountability – Post-Earthquake Scenario' which highlighted the impact of the 2015 Nepal earthquake in the 14 most affected districts. The report provided insights on the post-earthquake scenario, especially on the recovery and rehabilitation process lead by the government and civil society.

The concluding session of the AGM focused on guiding the NCE-Nepal governing body and secretariat on the programmatic, administrative, and financial operations for 2016. Proposed amendments to the NCE-Nepal constitution were approved.

ASPBAE staff participating in the meeting used the occasion to discuss with NCE-Nepal, the wrap up activities associated with the end of Phase 2 of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF). [\[BACK\]](#)

NCE-Nepal organises workshop on gender mainstreaming in education

6 February 2016, Kathmandu, Nepal

By Ram Gaire, Programme Manager, NCE-Nepal



ASPBAE's Sumedha Sharma (seen in photo) and Thea Soriano conducted a gender workshop for NCE-Nepal.

NCE-Nepal organised a capacity building workshop for its members on 'Gender Mainstreaming in Education'. ASPBAE's Sumedha Sharma and Cecilia (Thea) Soriano conducted the workshop where they shared learning materials and researches relevant to enhancing understanding of gender mainstreaming in education. NCE Nepal's members from over 35 districts participated in the workshop that aimed to forge an appreciation of the gaps in practice at the individual and organisational level.

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ASPBAE's Thea Soriano addressing participants of the gender workshop. The workshop was held to self-assess NCE-Nepal's policies on gender mainstreaming, build capacities for mainstreaming gender in all organisational interventions, and formulate an action plan for mainstreaming gender in policy advocacy initiatives.

The 3 main objectives of the workshop were – (1) self-assessing NCE-Nepal's policies and practice on gender mainstreaming, (2) building capacities for mainstreaming gender in all organisational interventions, and (3) formulating an action plan for mainstreaming gender in policy advocacy initiatives.

While brainstorming on an action plan for mainstreaming gender in advocacy, NCE-Nepal and its members focused on prioritising developing and implementing a gender policy in their organisations. They also took stock of their organisational structure and agreed to consider recruitments with a gender lens. Some of the plans agreed by the members were to budget for gender sensitive programmes, build capacities of staff on gender mainstreaming, conduct research and produce publications with a gender perspective, and have a campaign on gender equality.

The workshop was an important initiative for NCE-Nepal and its members who also agreed to conduct the workshop amongst the larger membership.

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Myanmar education network discusses education reform with ASPBAE President

4 February 2016, Yangon, Myanmar



NNER's Thematic Working Group members met with ASPBAE President, Robbie Guevara, and engaged in discussions that explored the role of civil society in education reform and the need to develop local strategies to engage with different stakeholders.

"It is important that as a network you have the opportunity to debate and agree on the education priorities within Myanmar as it relates to the SDG Goal 4: Equitable and Inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all". This was the key message of ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto Guevara when he conducted a seminar-workshop for the members of the National Network for Education Reform (NNER), Myanmar, at the Thinking Classroom offices located at the campus of the Myanmar Institute of Christian Theology in Insein.

More than 25 participants from NNER's Thematic Working Group members actively engaged in the discussions that explored the role of civil society in education reform and the need to develop local strategies to engage with different stakeholders and advance education advocacy linked to the education goal (SDG4) within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Participants included representatives of student unions, teachers' unions, and NNER's Policy, Research, and Advocacy Working Group. Robbie Guevara was in Myanmar to lead a study tour of RMIT University students on community development. [\[BACK\]](#)

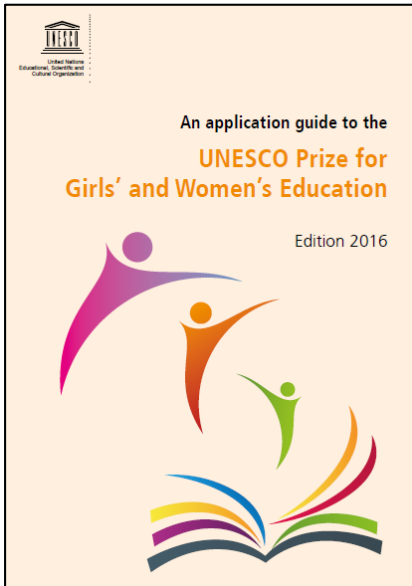
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education – call for nominations by 20 April 2016

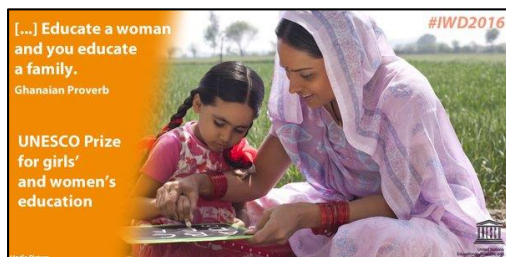


UNESCO invites NGOs to submit nominations for the first edition of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education, funded by the Government of the People's Republic of China.

The aim of the Prize is to reward the activities of individuals, groups, organisations, or centres that promote girls' and women's education, in keeping with UNESCO's policies and aims in the field of inclusive education. Nominations may be proposed by the governments of member states, as well as by NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO.

The prize winners will be designated on the basis of the proposals submitted by an international jury consisting of highly qualified professionals in the field of girls's and women's education from different geographical regions.

The Prize shall consist of a diploma and a sum of USD 50,000 each for two prize winners. Candidates must have distinguished themselves through outstanding activities that have contributed to promoting education for girls and women. You may wish to refer to the enclosed submission form and application guide for further information regarding the Prize. Once completed, nominations should be sent to the following address, no later than 20 April 2016.



UNESCO
Section for Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality
Division for Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development
Education Sector
7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

Tel: +33 45681173

Email: gender.ed@unesco.org [BACK]

UNESCO calls for nominations for 2016 Prize on Education for Sustainable Development – deadline for submission 30 April 2016



The Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, has launched a call for nominations for the UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). This Prize is endowed with USD 50,000 for each of the three recipients, honouring and showcasing outstanding efforts of individuals, institutions, and organisations engaged in ESD.

The annual UNESCO-Japan Prize is funded by the Government of Japan and was established in 2014 within the framework of the [Global Action Programme on ESD](#) (GAP). It was [awarded for the first time in November](#)

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[2015](#) to three organisations from Germany, Indonesia, and Guatemala and El Salvador.

UNESCO is now inviting the Permanent Delegations of all Member States as well as NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO to submit up to three nominations each for the 2016 edition of the Prize. The deadline for submission is **30 April 2016** (midnight Paris time).



Nominations must be submitted in English or French and need to focus on a specific ESD project or programme of the candidate. They will be assessed by an independent jury of five international experts on the basis of their potential for transformation, integration, and innovation. In addition, projects must already be running for at least two years, show evidence of a high impact, be easily replicable and scalable, and contribute to one or more of the five Priority Action Areas of the GAP (advancing policy; transforming learning and training environments; building capacities of educators and trainers; empowering and mobilising youth; and accelerating sustainable solutions at local level). Self-nominations are not accepted. The nomination process takes place online via a platform which will be accessible through UNESCO's website from 18 January to 30 April 2016 [here](#). The three laureates will be announced in September 2016.

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