



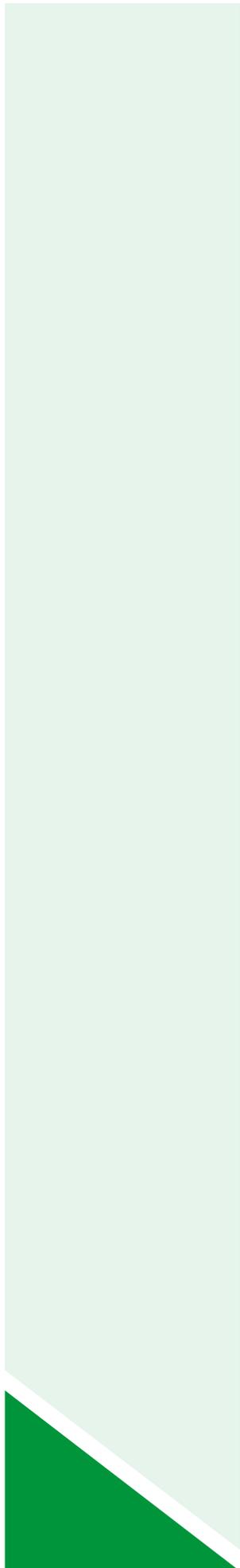
Asia South Pacific Association
for Basic and Adult Education
Learning Beyond Boundaries



ASPBAE
ACTIVITY
REPORT

2015

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THE CONTEXT OF OUR WORK }



2015 was an important period for education and development. In this year, the international community forged agreement on a new education and development agenda which will have a deep bearing on education and development policies for years to come. This agenda was crafted and shaped in the midst of a very volatile context globally – rather different from when the Monterrey consensus, EFA, and the MDGs were agreed in 2000. These developments and trends have influenced the aspirations contained in the new agenda – and the ability as well of the whole international community to deliver on the commitments made for transformation, peace, well-being, dignity, and human rights in the periods to come.

War, conflict, economic want, and persecution displaced millions of people around the world in record numbers in the last year. According to the UNHCR, the global refugee total, which in 2014 was 19.5 million, had as of mid-2015 passed the 20 million threshold (20.2 million) for the first time since 1992. In a global context, that means that one person in every 122 has been forced to flee their home. One of the world's

major displacement producing regions, the number of refugees and internally displaced people in Asia grew by 31% in 2014 to 9 million people. Continuing displacement was also seen in and from Myanmar, including of Rohingya from Rakhine state and in the Kachin and Northern Shan regions. Iran and Pakistan remained two of the world's top four refugee hosting countries. Decades-old instability and conflict in Afghanistan meant that millions of people remained on the move or – as is increasingly common – stranded for years on the edge of society as long-term internally displaced or refugees.¹

UNHCR has underscored that, *“One of the most recent and highly visible consequences of the world's conflicts and the terrible suffering they cause has been the dramatic growth in the numbers of refugees seeking safety through dangerous sea journeys, including on the Mediterranean, in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, and in Southeast Asia.”*² This is one of the hard realities Europe in particular has woken up to – playing out in their neighbourhoods, and in their lives. The impact of this crises will be seen in Europe's education, social, and aid policies in the months to come.

2015 also witnessed the continuing

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- ¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/558193896.html>
- ² Ibid

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trend of rising violent extremism, and sectarian violence - demonstrated in many forms, such as in attacks against civilians, schools and universities, and communities. These pose an almost daily threat to peace and social cohesion in many parts of the region. ASPBAE, like many others, lost dearly to the spiral of violence - Martha Farrell, Director at PRIA India, an ASPBAE member, perished in a terrorist attack in Afghanistan in May 2015. She was simply in the country contributing what she and PRIA could do for the country's rebuilding - organising a series of training workshops on gender.

Young people are known to have been easy targets and prey to a narrative of terror justifying violence - efficiently and widely spread by social media - in the failure of societies to address underlying grievances, a deep sense of alienation and even persecution.³ Gender-based violence remained a defining feature of conflict.

Democratic spaces for civil society remained challenged in many parts of the region with legitimate civil society protests on issues of land, social welfare, and human rights being met with state-based reprisal. Civil society movements have, nonetheless, thrived in the region despite threats - powerfully advancing the cause of good governance such as in the anti-corruption movement in Malaysia and in the impact of the pro-democracy movement in Myanmar in the national election results.

Maritime territorial disputes between China, the ASEAN nations, and Japan continued through the year. Using the increased concerns over China's more assertive military presence and North Korea's nuclear programme, Japan had controversially revised its post-World War II pacifist military stance, despite

massive protests from civil society.⁴ Overt and covert border tensions ignited in different ways between countries in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) and South Asia (notably India, Pakistan, and Nepal).

Natural disasters of many types continued to kill thousands of people and wreak vast economic destruction in the year. Over the period 2005-2014, the Asia Pacific region had 1,625 reported disaster events. Approximately 500,000 people lost their lives, around 1.4 billion people were affected, and there was \$523 billion worth of economic damage. The earthquakes in Nepal in April and May 2015 alone resulted in more than 8,000 deaths with hundreds of thousands of people rendered homeless. Drought conditions crippled vast swaths of the Asia Pacific region. Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency reported that, by the end of August 2015, there were drought conditions in 84 provinces affecting some 22 million people.⁵ Papua New Guinea faced the worst drought in nearly two decades and frosts in the country's highlands destroyed critical harvests. Local communities have reported both adults and children dying of starvation due to food shortages arising from these.⁶ Climate change exacerbates the impacts of natural disasters - with risks of sea level rise, greater storm intensity, higher wind speeds, greater wave action, and higher sea surface temperatures.

The outcomes of the UN Conferences of the Parties (COP 21) in Paris were thus awaited with great expectation as it offered the hope of agreement on a legally binding treaty that sets in place a plan to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. In practice, that means getting the world on track to keep

3 <http://www.gcsp.ch/News-Knowledge/Publications/Asian-Conflicts-Report-The-Geopolitics-of-Extremism-ISIS-in-Asia>

4 Ibid

5 <http://www.irinnews.org/report/102140/el-nino-brings-drought-hunger-to-indonesia-and-south-pacific>

6 <http://www.circleofblue.org/waternews/2015/world/el-nino-droughts-take-toll-in-africa-asia-and-the-pacific/>

global warming below 2°C – the agreed threshold that the planet’s warming should not exceed if humanity is to avoid catastrophic effects of climate change.⁷ Civil society reactions to the outcomes of COP21 have, however, been cautious and mixed. While many recognise that a new temperature limit of 1.5 degrees is positive and that the Paris Outcome sends a strong message against the fossil fuel industry, the measures defined to meet the agreements are too weak, the emission targets are too low. According to APWLD, *“Climate justice is not served by the outcomes of COP 21: Justice requires accountability, responsibility, remedies, and action by the perpetrators. Polluters got another unwarranted good behaviour bond and more opportunities to profit from climate change.”*⁸

A slowdown in economic growth characterised the region’s economies in 2015. Developing economies in the Asia Pacific region grew by an estimated 4.5% in 2015, the lowest rate since 2010, and only a modest rebound to 5% growth is forecast for 2016. Growth in the Pacific island developing economies, some of which are recovering from the impact of natural disasters, is expected to remain moderate.⁹ The recovery in high-income economies remains gradual, global trade is growing at its slowest pace since 2009. The decline in demand from China is another major factor contributing to reduced growth in the region.¹⁰

According to ILO, continuing high rates of unemployment worldwide and chronic vulnerable employment in many emerging and developing economies are still deeply affecting the world of work. In 2015, total global unemployment stood at 197.1 million – 27 million higher than the pre-crisis level of 2007.

The final figure for unemployment in 2015 is estimated to stand at 197.1 million and in 2016 is forecast to rise by about 2.3 million to reach 199.4 million. An additional 1.1 million jobless will likely be added to the global tally in 2017.¹¹ Young workers aged 15-24 are particularly hit by the crisis, with a global youth unemployment rate of almost 13% in 2014 and a further increase expected in coming years. In some areas such as South Asia, more than 70% of workers are in vulnerable employment.¹² Youth and women account for a disproportionate share of vulnerable and informal employment and unemployment.

ESCAP underlines that reviving economic growth will be critical to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹³ Civil society organisations contend that equality, not just growth should front the world agenda for change. According to the recent study of Oxfam, ‘An Economy for the 1%’, the combined riches of 62 of the world’s wealthiest individuals in 2015 equalled the wealth of 3.5 billion people – the bottom half of humanity. Since 2010, the wealth of the richest 62 people increased 44% to \$1.76 trillion, the report found. Over the same period, the wealth of the world’s poorest half fell over a trillion dollars or 41%.¹⁴ Oxfam has called for urgent action to tackle the extreme inequality crisis which threatens to undermine the progress made in tackling poverty during the last quarter of a century. As a priority, it is calling for an end to the era of tax havens which has seen the increasing use of offshore centers by rich individuals and companies to avoid paying their fair share to society. This has denied governments valuable resources needed to tackle poverty and inequality and to resource quality public education and health.¹⁵

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- 7 <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/Blogs/makingwaves/what-is-COP21/blog/54713/>
- 8 <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/Blogs/makingwaves/cop21-climate-talks-paris-negotiations-conclusion/blog/55092/> and <http://www.catchnews.com/social-sector/cop21-this-is-how-green-groups-reacted-to-the-climate-deal-1450004682.html>
- 9 *Economic and Social Survey of the Asia Pacific 2015: Year-end update, ESCAP January 2016*
- 10 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eap/publication/east-asia-pacific-economic-update>
- 11 http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_443500/lang-en/index.htm
- 12 http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_336884/lang-en/index.htm
- 13 *Economic and Social Survey of the Asia Pacific 2015: Year-end update, ESCAP January 2016*
- 14 <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2016/01/17/oxfam-wealth-inequality-report-davos/78929370/>
- 15 <https://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2016-01-18/62-people-own-same-half-world-reveals-oxfam-davos-report>

EDUCATION FOR ALL IN 2015

On the year of the Education for All (EFA) deadline, the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) offered an assessment of the Achievements and Challenges of EFA in its 2015 annual edition.

Key points from the assessment of the GMR 2015 on each of the goals are as follows:

GOAL 1 – EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION



In 2012, 184 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education worldwide, an increase of nearly two-thirds since 1999.

- In 2012, 184 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education worldwide, an increase of nearly two-thirds since 1999;
- An evolved understanding of childhood needs has come about (safe spaces, culturally sensitive education models, cognitive stimulation); different methods to improve access have been tried – abolishing fees, cash transfers, mobile kindergardens;
- However, in 1/5 of countries, less than 30% will be enrolled in 2015. Further, ECCE provisioning is beset with issues of low quality with a dearth of trained teachers and carers;

- There has also been a rise in the number of children enrolled in private schools since 1999.

GOAL 2 – UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION



Between 2000 and current period, the percentage of children who have never been in school fell in a vast majority of countries.

- Net enrollment rates increased from 84% in 1990 to 91% in 2012, even in low income countries. Sterling examples from Asia include Nepal, Laos, and Bhutan;
- Between 2000 and current period, the percentage of children who have never been in school fell in a vast majority of countries;
- Primary school completion increased in the vast majority of countries – some by more than 20%, such as Cambodia and Nepal from Asia; however, 34 million children still leave school early every year;
- Nearly 58 million children were out of school in 2012, and progress in reducing this number has stalled; 25 million of these children will never go to school;
- By the 2015 deadline, one in six children in low and middle income countries – or almost 100 million – will not have completed primary school. The goal of universal primary education would not have been met in 2015.

GOAL 3 – YOUTH AND ADULT SKILLS



There has been a chronic neglect of formal and non-formal opportunities for second chance learning of youth and adults and for continuing education opportunities.

- Participation in secondary education has increased since 1999 to 2012: Gross enrolment ratios grew from 29% to 44% in low income countries and from 56% to 74% in middle income countries;
- The abolition of school fees has contributed to increased secondary enrolments: Out of 107 low and middle income countries with data, 94 have legislated free lower secondary education. The rising rates of primary education completion have also contributed to increased enrolment in secondary schools;
- However, 63 million adolescents were out of school in 2012; the number of working youth has not decreased;
- There has been a chronic neglect of formal and non-formal opportunities for second chance learning of youth and adults and for continuing education opportunities;
- Neglect in attention to this Goal has been attributed as well to the lack of clarity on the targets and outcomes of this goal. 'Life skills' for example is understood and interpreted in many

different ways, making policy making and tracking difficult.

GOAL 4 – ADULT LITERACY

- Adult illiteracy rates fell from 18% in 2000 to a projected 14% in 2015 – hence a fall of 23%, way below the target of 50%;



781 million adults have no access to literacy skills; 65% are women – which represents no change or progress since 2000.

- Only Central Asia and Central and Eastern Europe would have reached the target in 2015 of halving the rates of adult illiteracy;
- 781 million adults have no access to literacy skills; 65% are women – which represents no change or progress since 2000;
- Progress has been slower in meeting this goal relative to other goals;
- Causes for poor performance cited are ambiguous global commitment to adult literacy; ineffective literacy campaigns (unrealistic expectations, do not cater to diversity); limited use of mother tongue; and that changes in daily life have not led to an increase in a strong demand for literacy;
- However, there has been a positive trend towards seeing and measuring

literacy as a continuum; also a trend to measuring 'levels' of literacy.

GOAL 5 – GENDER EQUALITY



Although the targets have not been met, there has been substantial progress in improving gender parities in primary education since 1999 – and in the countries where girls faced most disadvantages.

- The target of meeting gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 was not met;
- It is projected that in 2015, 69% of countries (with data) would have met gender parity in primary education by 2015 and 49% of these countries in secondary education. The performance in gender equality – a far more complex notion and ambitious target – needs better appraisal;
- Although the targets have not been met, there has been substantial progress in improving gender parities in primary education since 1999 – and in the countries where girls faced most disadvantages. Between 1999 and 2012, South and West Asia have registered remarkable improvements in reducing gender disparities in primary school enrolments – but these mask wide variations in performance among countries in the region. While Bhutan, India, Iran, and Sri Lanka have achieved gender parity, in Afghanistan (despite

progress), only 72 girls are enrolled for every 100 boys. Previous gains in Nepal have been reversed with more boys than girls enrolled in schools by 2012;

- Gender disparities in secondary education is lessening: Among 133 countries with data, there were 30 countries with less than 90 girls enrolled for every 100 boys in 1999 and only 19 countries in 2015;
- Progress in tackling severe gender disparity has been made. Between 1999 and 2012, the number of countries with fewer than 90 girls enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys fell from 33 to 16.

GOAL 6 – QUALITY OF EDUCATION



While there has been impressive progress in many countries in education access since 2000, improvements in education quality have not kept the same pace.

- While there has been impressive progress in many countries in education access since 2000, improvements in education quality have not kept the same pace;
- There have however, been successes. Pupil/teacher ratios declined in 83% of the 146 countries with data at the primary education level between 1999 and 2012;
- Some countries have put in place measures targeted to improve education quality. Nepal's efforts have reduced pupil/teacher ratios

to 28:1 in 2013 from 260:1 in 1999. Targeted social protection programmes have also helped improve education quality;

- The teaching gap remains, estimated at 4 million teachers between 2012 and 2015 for primary education alone;
- In 1/3 of the countries with data, less than 75% of primary school teachers were trained;
- There is also an acute shortage of textbooks and teaching/learning materials, or safe and conducive learning environments;
- Many children are not learning in schools;
- There is almost no evidence that private schools, which have proliferated since 2000, offer more innovative ways to improve education quality.

The EFA Framework for Action also called for mobilising strong national and international political commitment for education for all, develop national action plans, and enhance significantly, investment in basic education.

In 2006, the EFA High level Group meeting proposed that governments should allocate 4-6% of GNP to education and within government budgets, 15-20% should be allocated for education. The overall global average by 2012 of allocations to education as a share of GNP was 5%. Of 142 countries with data, 96 spent 4% or more of GNP on education (inclusive of 14 low income and 18 lower middle income countries); 39 of these 96 countries spent 6% or more on education. This is an improvement in 1999 performance where only 18 countries of 116 with data spent 6% or more of their GNP on education.

The global average by 2012 of the share of government spending on education was 13.7% - hardly any change since 1999. Sub-Saharan Africa is where countries have allotted the highest share of government expenditure to education at 18.4%, followed by East Asia and the Pacific at 17.5%. South and West Asia allocated 12.6%.

Corruption continued to be a drain on resources. There have also been issues of inequitable spending and allocation of education resources. In 2012, on average, low income countries spent 11 times more per tertiary education student than primary education; while high income countries spent only 1.3 times more.

While aid to basic education grew by 6% a year on average from 2000 and peaked over 2009-2010, between 2010-2012, aid to basic education dropped by 15%. As a share of total disbursements to basic education, aid to basic life skills for youth and adults and to ECCE had fallen. On average, they were at 10% and 3% respectively in 2002-2004 but fell to 6% and 2% in 2010-2012.

Overall aid to education increased steadily until 2010 and then dropped by 10% between 2010-2012. The share of total aid disbursed to education, however, did not change and never exceeded 10% from 2000-2010 (by contrast, it increased for health from 9% to 14%).

Financial support from donors and national governments for other EFA goals has been negligible.

In summary and in conclusion, the GMR 2015 characterised EFA as a 'qualified success'. Without doubt, there were many achievements to be cited – in some areas, notably in

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SDG 4 represents a significant improvement from the education MDG. It addresses the unfinished business of EFA and the more contemporary challenges and issues in education. It upholds the right to education – education as a public good and states as duty bearers in ensuring education rights. It adopts a lifelong learning framework, and is for universal application in both richer and poorer countries.

primary education, progress may not have been as strong if not for EFA. 34 million more children have gone to school for the first time who would not have done so if not for the EFA goals. There were laudable achievements in gender parity, especially in countries where girls and women face the most severe challenges in education access. Many low income countries have responded to the global call to prioritise education in their national budgets, although overall, much more needed to be done. While the extent to which national policies, programmes, and practice have been recast or influenced by global commitments is subject for debate, it is widely recognised that EFA has had some bearing and hearing in national decision-making processes for education. Donors too heeded the call for aid provisioning in education with aid to basic education rising from 2000 to its peak in 2010 – when the decline began. The disbursements were, however, inadequate to meet the full financial requirement needed to close the EFA gaps.

Clearly, the EFA agenda is unfinished with none of the goals having been met. When the MDGs became the dominant development agenda, the narrow targets for education resulted in an over-emphasis in universal primary education at the expense of all other goals.

But the new agenda, post 2015, begins from a wealth of experience and lessons to build on - in a greater appreciation for equity as a key feature for quality and access; in the affirmation of the indivisibility of the EFA agenda and value of adopting a lifelong learning framework; in the need to focus on education quality in all its dimensions and in all aspects of education – formal, informal, non-formal; in conceptual

shifts having taken greater root – such as seeing adult literacy as a continuum – auguring well for more effective future programming and strategising; in realising the need for clearer targeting and a ‘data revolution’ that is premised on measuring the full intentions of agreed goals and targets, and in building the capacities at all levels to make this happen. And as the GMR 2015 underscores, “*while technical solutions are important, political influence and traction are more so, and are essential for realising the scale of reform and action required to achieve EFA.*”

OUTCOMES OF THE POST-2015 PROCESSES

After a long, eventually broad-based and consultative process, by the end of 2015, the new development education agenda was agreed with education as a stand-alone goal within the development agenda (SDG 4). The new education agenda is codified as SDG 4: ‘*Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong learning opportunities for all*’ by 2030. SDG 4 is further elaborated in 7 targets and 3 means of implementation. A Framework for Action for Education 2030 was also agreed by the broader education constituency – articulating in greater depth, the aspirations within each of the SDG 4 targets, and setting out the implementation modalities and architecture for follow-up of the agreed agenda. A draft set of global and thematic indicators for SDG 4 would have also been developed by 2015-end, for adoption in March 2016.

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– education as a public good and states as duty bearers in ensuring education rights. It adopts a lifelong learning framework, and is for universal application in both richer and poorer countries. It sets out a more ambitious agenda for education access than earlier – 12 years of free, publicly-funded primary *and* secondary education of which 9 years are compulsory; at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education; equal access to tertiary education while retaining attention to adult literacy, skills for decent work and TVET. It promotes a wider appreciation of education quality at all levels and settings of education, including adult and non-formal education, and is deemed essential to the full meaning of education equity and inclusion. Education quality is also understood as being oriented towards the full development of individuals and recognises education for sustainable development, global citizenship, human rights, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence as inherent features. It, of course, remains to be seen if the global and thematic indicators, still under discussion, will adequately capture the full intentions of each of the SDG 4 targets.

The financing commitments, however, have not kept in step with the agreements on wider ambitions for education 2030. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as agreed by the 3rd Financing for Development Conference, completely ignored financing commitments to target 4.6 on youth and adult literacy and on non-formal education for adults. Donor appetite remained very low, pushing attention to the private sector, South-South cooperation, and domestic resource mobilisation to fill funding gaps. CSO advocates fear the misplaced optimism on private finance

will significantly undermine education equity and even quality. Campaigners for lifelong learning fear the commitment to a lifelong learning framework will go nowhere with no financial resources committed to back these up.

The agreed Framework for Action Education 2030 however advanced stronger commitments and strategies on education financing. It reaffirmed the spending benchmark of ‘at least’ 4-6% of GDP and 15-20% of total expenditures to education. It called for innovative financing efforts to be directed towards strengthening public education, and for equity, inclusion, and quality. It called for orienting private financing towards those most in need, and to reinforce education as a public good. It emphasised the need to increase financing for adult learners and illiterate children, youth, and adults. The Framework for Action also reiterated governments’ roles as the primary drivers for the new agenda and as duty bearers for ensuring the right to education. Civil society is recognised as a full partner and as part of the new global architecture that will offer strategic support and guidance to the overall effort to achieve SDG 4 and its targets.

ASPBAE was an active player in the historic processes shaping the post-2015 education and development agenda - in a global and regional context presenting a myriad set of challenges as well as opportunities.

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Through its membership as one of the three (3) civil society representatives in the global EFA Steering Committee (2014-2015), ASPBAE was able to directly influence the global and regional processes shaping the new education agenda. ASPBAE was in the **Drafting Committee of the Incheon Declaration**, the outcomes document of the World Education Forum 2015; and in the **Drafting Committee** as well of the **Education 2030 Framework for Action**.

The following section outlines ASPBAE's main achievements in this period.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2015

1. ASPBAE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE PROCESSES SHAPING THE NEW EDUCATION AGENDA

There is little doubt that civil society played a direct, significant role in securing a strong education agenda. And ASPBAE played an active and leading role in this regard.

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and national processes to concretise, monitor and coordinate efforts to implement the new agenda.

It has to be noted that these advocacies were borne of sustained, broad-based, and wide consultation processes undertaken by ASPBAE with its members, partners, and constituents in the Asia Pacific region. In playing its role as civil society representative, ASPBAE knew too well that building ownership and channels of accountability are essential for the new education agenda to take root and to stand any chance of success.

ASPBAE was part of the 1,500-strong and high-level contingent that participated in the **World Education Forum 2015** (WEF 2015) convened from 19-22 May in Incheon, Korea.



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Five (5) members of the ASPBAE Executive Council were represented in WEF 2015: the ASPBAE President, Secretary-General, and Executive Council members from East Asia and the South Pacific. Four (4) members of ASPBAE staff and at least seventeen (17) ASPBAE member organisations participated and were active in the different workshop, side events, and working groups. During the WEF, ASPBAE co-organised, with ICAE, a workshop on the 'New Power of Youth

and Adult Education - contribution to the post-2015 development agenda' and a workshop on Education Under Attack with the GCE. ASPBAE was also a plenary speaker in the panel on 'Global and Regional Coordination and Monitoring Mechanisms'.



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As a member of the Coordination Group of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA, ASPBAE also played a leading role in organising the **NGO Forum** – an integral part of the WEF 2015. The NGO Forum gathered almost 300 delegates representing varied civil society organisations, “to provide a space for NGOs to meet among themselves and agree on a collective civil society vision for education post-2015, as well as reflect on strategies for civil society engagements in the post-2015 education agenda”. The assembly agreed the ‘2015 NGO Forum Declaration: Towards the Right



L-R – Naomi Kamijo, ASPBAE Executive Council Member; Anne Pakoa, VEPAC Vanuatu, and Sandy Morrison, ICAE President, at the NGO Forum in Incheon.

to Inclusive Quality Public Education and Lifelong Learning Beyond 2015’ – offering a reference point for CSO lobbying and advocacy during the official processes of the WEF 2015. ASPBAE was part of the Drafting Committee of the NGO Forum. ASPBAE was represented in the Opening Panel of the NGO Forum by its Secretary-General and by a youth representative from its member organisation, E-Net Philippines.

ASPBAE was one of the five (5) civil society representatives in the **High level Meeting on the Education 2030 Framework for Action**, 4 November,



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto Guevara, represented ASPBAE at the High level Meeting on the Education 2030 Framework for Action which adopted the Framework for Action Education 2030.

in UNESCO, Paris. The ASPBAE Secretary-General and ASPBAE President represented ASPBAE in this event which adopted the Framework for Action Education 2030.

ASPBAE was also a leading CSO player in the Asia Pacific regional processes crafting and rolling out the new agenda. As an active member of the **EFA Thematic Working Group** (TWG) steered by UNESCO Bangkok, ASPBAE directly influenced the regional processes concretising the roll out of SDG 4 in the Asia Pacific. ASPBAE was

As an active member of the **EFA Thematic Working Group (TWG)** steered by UNESCO Bangkok, ASPBAE directly influenced the regional processes concretising the roll out of SDG 4 in the Asia Pacific. ASPBAE was a key player in the drafting of the Asia Pacific EFA Thematic Working Group’s paper “Assessing the Effectiveness of Partnerships to Promote Education for All in Asia-Pacific.”

The APMED 2030 outcomes document explicitly recognises civil society as integral part of the architecture and processes rolling out Education 2030 in countries and in the region.

a key player in the drafting of the Asia Pacific EFA Thematic Working Group's paper "Assessing the Effectiveness of Partnerships to Promote Education for All in Asia-Pacific." ASPBAE presented the paper on behalf of the EFA TWG at the UKFIET International Conference on Education and Development (15-17 September, Oxford) as well as in the Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030. This evaluation was crucial as it put forward recommendations for the Education 2030 architecture in the region – which is integral to the Framework for Action. Key positions of ASPBAE that were incorporated in the evaluation paper: (1) Monitoring equity by Member States by improving data systems and setting standards; (2) Regional/sub-regional targets on specific issues of marginalised sectors, such as education for migrants, stateless people, education in post disaster/conflict; (3) Transparency and accountability in education governance; (4) Institutionalised participation of CSOs in the regional and Asia Pacific levels.

In the first regional meeting to discuss how to begin implementing Education 2030, the **Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED 2030)**, ASPBAE pushed for the participation of CSOs in the full cycle of education

governance from planning to policy development to implementation and monitoring/evaluation. To address the targets on equity and inclusion in education, ASPBAE asserted that CSOs' reports and researches should be recognised as credible and complementary/alternative data that can inform education sector planning. The APMED 2030 outcomes document explicitly recognises civil society as integral part of the architecture and processes rolling out Education 2030 in countries and in the region. The ASPBAE President led the ASPBAE delegation to the meeting. It was represented in two plenary sessions and was a member of the APMED 2030 Drafting Committee. Through ASPBAE's facilitation, 15 ASPBAE members were represented in APMED 2030, ensuring a strong, credible civil society presence. During the meeting, government representatives from Nepal, Indonesia, Vietnam, Mongolia, Cambodia, the Philippines, Timor Leste, and Bangladesh acknowledged the work of civil society organisations and the national coalitions in their countries in the EFA processes and the important role they can play in the upcoming Education 2030 implementation.

ASPBAE was likewise active in the **UN-led processes on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** on its own and through GCE and ICAE. ASPBAE participated in the **3rd International Conference on Financing for Development** (13-15 July, Addis Ababa) and in the **UN Summit on the SDGs** (25-27 September, New York). ASPBAE was one with the other civil society representatives, who expressed immediate disappointment and reservations on Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), the final outcome document for failing to substantially

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For advocates of lifelong learning, the Addis outcomes most glaring omission was on adult education and learning, which left out reference to financial commitments for adult literacy, adult education, and lifelong learning.

address international systemic issues in macroeconomic, financial, trade, tax, and monetary policies, while also failing to scale up existing resources and commit new financial ones. It criticised the Action Agenda for being almost entirely devoid of actionable deliverables and undermines earlier agreements as contained in the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration. For advocates of lifelong learning, the Addis outcomes ‘most glaring’ omission was on adult education and learning. The paragraphs on education in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda i.e. paras 78 and 119, leave out reference to financial commitments for adult literacy, adult education, and lifelong learning.

ASPBAE actively participated in online consultations of the **Inter-Agency Expert Group on the SDG Indicators (IAEG SDGs)**, lobbying to ensure that the global indicators for SDG 4 fully capture the full intentions of SDG 4, all its targets and means of implementation. It also pushed for stronger indicators on financing and governance. As a member of the EFA Steering Committee, ASPBAE also dialogued with the **Technical Working Group (TAG) on SDG 4** indicators, and in the processes developing the thematic indicators.

While the post-2015 policy processes provided the main platform for ASPBAE’s advocacy work in the period, it sustained its engagements in other policy arenas – lobbying within these spaces to better align the policy debates and agreements therein with the emerging consensus around ‘ensuring equitable, inclusive, quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all’ and ASPBAE advocacies in this regard. For example, ASPBAE’s Executive Council member from East Asia, who participated in the UNESCO Education Commission Meeting organised within the 38th General Conference, advocated for support to the proposed ‘Revision of The 2001 Revised Recommendation Concerning Technical And Vocational Education’ in its attention to equity and quality and in greater priority to the learning needs of the informal sector of labour in TVET. ASPBAE’s Executive Council Member for the South Pacific argued for priority to adult and community education and its role in achieving equitable outcomes and responsible development during the 19th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM), 22-26 June, Bahamas and the Civil Society Forum preceding it.

Some of these different policy fora ASPBAE participated in are as follows:

- Japan Education Forum, February 5-6, Tokyo;
- Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Forum on Lifelong Learning, 9-12 March, Bali;
- UIL International Workshop on Participatory Action Research, 24-26 March, Hamburg;
- Global Partnership for Education Board Meeting, 22-23 May, Seoul;
- UNESCO EFA Thematic Working Group Meeting: Asia Pacific EFA

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- Development Partners Working Group Meeting, 29 May, Bangkok;
 - UN Human Rights Hearings on the Right to Education, 8-12 June, Geneva;
 - CSO Forum on Education and Sustainable Development in Small States: the Quality and Equity Imperatives, 20-21 June, Bahamas;
 - 19th Commonwealth Countries Education Ministers (CEEM) and CEEM Stakeholders Forum, 22-26 June, Bahamas;
 - Bahamas Ministers Regional Caucus, 23 June, Bahamas;
 - Making Skills Development Work, UNESCO Asia Pacific Conference on Education and Training, 2-5 August, Kuala Lumpur;
 - Asia Multilingual Education Working Group, 24 August, Bangkok;
 - UNESCO Futures Literacy Workshop, 2-4 September, Bangkok;
 - UNESCO Global Meeting on Literacy and Sustainable Societies, 8-9 September, Paris;
 - 2nd International Learning Cities Conference, 28-30 September, Mexico City;
 - UNESCO EFA Thematic Working Group Meeting: Reflections/Retreat on the SDG 4 Architecture, 15-16 October, Bangkok;
 - UNESCO Education Commission Meetings, 38th General Conference, 4-7 November, Paris;
 - UNESCO Experts Meeting to develop Asia Pacific Regional CLC Standards and Adult Competency Frameworks, 19-20 November, Bangkok;
 - UNGEI Meeting, 14 December, Bangkok;
 - UNESCO International Forum for Partnerships on the Qingdao Declaration on leveraging ICT to achieve Education 2030 Agenda, 20-21 December, Qingdao.
- In all these processes, ASPBAE, as a regional organisation, played a strong interlocutor role - facilitating greater interaction between global, regional, and national advocacy processes - ensuring that national/local perspectives inform global policy debates and that information on critical policy processes and debates globally inform CSO strategising and planning at various levels of work.



ASPBAE Executive Council Member, Batjargal Batkhuyag, and ASPBAE's Sumedha Sharma participated in the UNESCO International Forum for Partnerships on the Qingdao Declaration on leveraging ICT to achieve Education 2030 Agenda held from 20-21 December in Qingdao.

STRENGTHENING CSO CAPACITIES TO ADVANCE SDG 4 AND THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING



The 2015 Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC), held from 17-22 November in Ho Chi Minh City, was themed on SDG 4 to begin the process of broadening awareness and deepening understanding within ASPBAE's membership on the elements of the new education agenda.

AWARE that a more ambitious, broader education agenda advancing lifelong learning will require greater capacities among the different stakeholders in education, including civil society, if the new collective aspirations are to be met, ASPBAE invested a lot of its energies in the year in capacity building to serve the twin purposes of – (1) securing a strong agenda for education, post 2015; and in (2) advancing the new agenda. In these arenas, practitioners and advocates of education and lifelong learning in ASPBAE's membership found common ground for interaction, exchange, and joint planning.

ASPBAE's flagship programme for capacity building, the **2015 Basic Leadership Development Course (BLDC)** (17-22 November, Ho Chi Minh City) was themed on SDG 4 to begin the process of broadening awareness and deepening understanding within ASPBAE's membership and constituency on the elements of the new education agenda, and the opportunities these offer to advance lifelong learning, especially equitable, quality, youth, and adult education in all its modalities. Its partnership with

the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning (SEAMEO CELLL), which hosted the event, is envisaged to further ASPBAE's linkages with ASEAN and SEAMEO mechanisms to promote robust lifelong learning policies.

ASPBAE also piloted a **Regional Study Exchange on Adult Education and Lifelong Learning** in the Philippines (6-11 July) to offer another arena to enhance capacities on LLL policy and practice, drawing from the rich experience of CSOs, community organisations, and local governments in the Philippines. One of the winners of this year's UNESCO Learning Cities Award, Balanga City, hosted this Study Exchange. A **Regional Workshop on Gender, Education, Skills and Work** (26-29 October, Gurgaon)



ASPBAE piloted a Regional Study Exchange in the Philippines from 6-11 July to offer an arena to enhance capacities on lifelong learning policy and practice, drawing from the rich experience of CSOs, community organisations, and local governments in the Philippines.



A Regional Workshop on Gender, Education, Skills and Work, held from 26-29 October in India, was organised to widen ASPBAE's women's network in the region, addressing issues of decent work and empowerment; and deepening capacities on the area of education, skills for work from a clear rights and gender justice perspective.

An important thrust of ASPBAE in its capacity building work for the period was in strengthening the youth constituency within ASPBAE. In particular, ASPBAE was keen to expand participation of young people in ASPBAE programmes; and to reinforce the voice and presence especially of marginalised youth in processes that are designed to address their learning needs and aspirations.

was also organised in the year to widen ASPBAE's women's network in the region, addressing issues of decent work and empowerment; and deepening capacities as well on the area of education, skills for work from a clear rights and gender justice perspective. The workshop offered a platform for education practitioners, providers, and advocates for women's education for empowerment to learn from each other's experience and jointly strategise future advocacy and capacity building approaches that ASPBAE may pursue.

These various regional ASPBAE trainings in AE and LLL led to building capacities of 102 leaders and trainers in AE and LLL from 24 countries, representing 35 ASPBAE member organisations and strategic partners, of these, 63% were women.

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especially of marginalised youth in processes that are designed to address their learning needs and aspirations. 38% of the participants in ASPBAE regional workshops on AE and LLL were young people. ASPBAE also organised two workshops in the year dedicated to building capacities of youth educators, activists, and organisers. ASPBAE organised an **Australian Indigenous Youth Education Advocacy Training** (17-18



ASPBAE, along with Azad Foundation, held a Regional Workshop on Youth, Gender and Skills in India involving young people from India, Timor Leste, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, Australia, and Indonesia to share experiences and learnings in youth initiatives and advocacies around gender and decent work.

October, Canberra) which culminated in the decision to establish the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) focused on advocating for quality, equitable education for all. On 25 October, ASPBAE also organised a **Regional Workshop on Youth, Gender and Skills** in Gurgaon, India involving young people from India, Timor Leste, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, Australia, and Indonesia to



ASPBAE organised an Australian Indigenous Youth Education Advocacy Training from 17-18 October in Canberra which culminated in the decision to establish the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) focused on advocating for quality, equitable education for all.



Two youth representatives from the Philippines and Indonesia were endorsed by ASPBAE to participate in the WEF 2015. Carol Doyanan (L) was a youth speaker in the NGO Forum and spoke on education oriented towards marginalised youth. Sifa Humaeroh (R) also actively contributed to the discussions in the NGO Forum.

share experiences and learnings in youth initiatives and advocacies around gender and decent work. ASPBAE also participated in the ‘Learning-Planning Workshop Promoting Skills for Youth and Strengthening Partner Organisations’ from 20-24 April in New Delhi, organised by DWI and PRIA as a means to facilitate collaboration and complementation of efforts on youth work among ASPBAE, PRIA, and DWI.

Two youth representatives from the Philippines and Indonesia were endorsed by ASPBAE to participate in the **WEF 2015**. One was a youth speaker in the NGO Forum. A literacy worker in the indigenous Ayta community, she spoke on education oriented towards marginalised youth and the importance of engaging the youth in the education processes. In **APMED 2030, two (2) youth representatives** from ASPBAE members spoke in the plenary session and shared how marginalised young women are empowered through learning programmes and other interventions that break gender stereotypes and develop women’s literacies, skills, and participation. A youth leader and member of ASPBAE staff represented ASPBAE in the **2nd International Learning Cities Conference** (28-30 September, Mexico City) and in the **RMIT ASEM Conference on Engaging Young People in Lifelong Learning – Asia and European**



A youth leader and member of ASPBAE staff, Hayley MacQuire (extreme right), represented ASPBAE at the 2nd International Learning Cities Conference held from 28-30 September in Mexico City. Photo courtesy – ICAE.

Policies and Practices (30 November, Melbourne).

ASPBAE also organised a **mapping exercise** of its member organisations doing youth work as part of the effort to ascertain the existing capacities in the network to advance capacity building for marginalised youth and the existing pool of youth organisations within ASPBAE. The exercise revealed a high number of ASPBAE members doing youth work in varied ways. Through the year, ASPBAE remained in dialogue with UIL on a planned collaborative action research on youth, postponed to 2016.

At the final year of its second phase, the **Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)** remained a major vehicle for capacity building in education advocacy in the region. ASPBAE worked with national education campaign coalitions and other CSO networks in 16 countries¹⁶ in this initiative, offering national and regional level demand-led, context-based capacity building support as CSEF Regional Secretariat for the Asia Pacific. ASPBAE organised **civil society preparatory meetings** for Asia Pacific CSOs at the front end of major post-2015 policy processes: the World Education Forum 2015 (May, in Incheon, Korea) and APMED 2030 (November, in Bangkok, Thailand). These offered spaces for joint planning and strategising of civil society on its lobbying efforts in these major policy spaces – ensuring a well-coordinated, well-prepared, and dynamic civil society contingent.

ASPBAE also worked with 15 national coalitions and networks who are partners in CSEF in their **country-level efforts to lobby their representatives to the WEF 2015 and the NY SDG processes** in the year, notably the inter governmental negotiations and the UN Summit on the SDGs.

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¹⁶ India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Myanmar, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.



At the end of the year, ASPBAE convened a Regional CSEF Consultation of Coalitions from 9-11 December in Siem Reap to offer a space for shared reflection on the post-2015 campaign, the outcomes of the process, and the strategies to rollout SDG 4 in countries and in the region from 2016.



The Regional CSEF Consultation of Coalitions offered the opportunity for planning on the new phase of the CSEF programme.

The Global Partnership for Education Board approved CSEF Phase 3, offering funding support for 3 years (2016-2018) in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. ASPBAE participated in the **GCE CSEF International Partners Meeting and related CSEF coordination meetings** (22-25 October, London) to plot out the implementation and start-up of CSEF 3.

At the end of the year, ASPBAE convened a **Regional CSEF Consultation of Coalitions** to offer a space for shared reflection on the post-2015 campaign, the outcomes of the process, and the strategies to rollout SDG 4 in countries and in the region from 2016 (9-11 December, Siem Reap). There were dedicated sessions on the SDG 4.7 aspects of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED); and on Gender, Skills and Work (SDG 4.4, 4.5) and on education in conflict and emergency situations to deepen appreciation and analysis of CSO advocacies in these areas. South-South exchange and solidarity was fostered with the participation of the Arab Campaign on EFA (ACEA) in this Consultation. The consultation also offered the opportunity for planning on

the new phase of the CSEF programme.

Through the year, ASPBAE worked hard with GCE to ensure sustained funding support for CSEF coalition partners in the region with a costed extension of CSEF Phase 2 approved by the GPE Board for 2015. ASPBAE organised the **Regional Funding Committee meeting** (1-2 May, Manila) to approve coalition plans and budgets and ensure uninterrupted support for country level education work. After a prolonged process of proposal development and review, the Global Partnership for Education Board approved CSEF Phase 3, offering funding support for 3 years (2016-2018) in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. ASPBAE participated in the **GCE CSEF International Partners Meeting and related CSEF coordination meetings** (22-25 October, London) to plot out the implementation and start-up of CSEF 3.

ASPBAE organised an **ESD Working Group Meeting** (7-8 December, Siem Reap) at the end of the year to offer a forum to analyse the policy context for ESD at the close of COP 21, agreement on the SDGs, and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, and to chart ASPBAE's advocacy and capacity building strategy for the next period. As planned, the key elements of a basic curriculum to mainstream ESD in ASPBAE advocacy and capacity building work were crafted in the meeting. A draft **policy paper** to guide advocacy work **on ESD** was discussed and refined in the process as well. Following this meeting, ASPBAE led a campaign among its coalition members to participate in an online consultation process called by the IAEG SDGs on a host of SDG indicators that remained in dispute, notably SDG target 4.7 which

involves education for sustainable development and global citizenship education. ASPBAE argued for the adoption of an indicator that tracks mainstreaming of ESD, i.e. “Extent that GCED and ESD are mainstreamed in education policy, curriculum, teacher training, and student assessment.” The indicator being proposed was very narrow – seeing ESD and GCED merely as school subjects.

In the year, ASPBAE sustained a strong effort in capacity building oriented specifically to **education financing**, through a partnership with the Open Society Foundations (OSF). ASPBAE worked with national coalitions in 8 countries on capacity building and research activities to enhance analytical capacities of coalitions in challenging the privatisation push and to offer evidence of how privatisation and PPP experiences undermine equity, quality, and good governance in education. **Seven country studies on education privatisation and PPP** were completed with ASPBAE support in 2015: on low fee private schools in India; education voucher system in the Philippines, Indonesia and Mongolia; on corporate social responsibility in Cambodia; and PPP initiatives in education in Nepal and Pakistan. ASPBAE also led on a **regional mapping of policies on education PPPs** in the region as promoted by governments, multilateral development banks, and donors. The results of these studies were presented in **national forums, policy dialogues**, and high-level meetings, and in regional conferences and international advocacy events, such as the UNHCR Geneva advocacy events around the issues of education privatisation and human rights.

During the period, ASPBAE and coalition members also started to engage the

HR treaty bodies to strengthen its advocacy to counter the privatisation push regionally and, in select countries, through the use of HR tools and mechanisms. ASPBAE supported the preparation of the parallel reports on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Nepal and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) review of the Philippines. It cooperated with GCE, the Privatisation of Education Research Initiative (PERI), and several INGOs in launching a coordinated international lobby to thwart the privatisation push in the education sector. ASPBAE participated in the **development of the Right to Education (RTE) Index**, facilitating the application of the index in the Philippines as one of five pilot countries selected globally.

ASPBAE also organised **two (2) regional workshops on education financing** in the year (25-27 August, in Bangkok, and 7-8 December, in Siem Reap) to jointly strategise on the ongoing advocacy efforts on education financing, especially on challenging education privatisation; and to enhance capacities in the uses of the UN human rights mechanisms to advance work on education rights and state responsibility in education.

ASPBAE also sustained work with coalitions in donor countries of the region for coordinated efforts on



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ASPBAE played a strong facilitating and capacity building role in incubating an education coalition in Korea – to enable a coordinated voice of Korean civil society during the WEF 2015.

education financing advocacy within the post 2015 processes, notably with **JNNE-Japan, and ACED, Australia**. ASPBAE Australia has anchored the work of ACED in the period, and along with RMIT, Melbourne, has been instrumental in convening three meetings of ACED in the year, including negotiations with GPE.

ASPBAE also played a strong facilitating and capacity building role in incubating an education coalition in Korea – to enable a coordinated voice of Korean civil society during the WEF 2015. The effort is hosted by the Korean Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation (KoFID). The **KoFID Thematic Working Group on Education** counts 14 Korean CSOs active in education and development work. They had a strong and highly visible presence during the WEF 2015, within the Conference and outside. Student and teacher union groups used various creative means (colourful

banners, street plays, exhibits) to raise awareness about some of the problems within the Korean education system, including the high suicide rate of students in the country. Discussions are underway to move towards formalising their association into a national education coalition, possibly themed around global citizenship education.

REINFORCING/ DEEPENING ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS AND FORGING NEW ONES



Participants of GCE's World Assembly, convened from 23-26 February in Pretoria, discussed strategies to better influence the then upcoming WEF 2015.

ASPBAE continued to work strongly with **national education coalitions or civil society networks** advancing the right to education in **20 countries in the Asia Pacific**¹⁷, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA, and DVV International in the year-long post-2015 campaign and capacity building efforts in this regard.

For both ICAE and GCE, who convened their World Assemblies in 2015, these meetings offered important platforms for civil society joint planning and strategising on the unfolding post-2015 agenda setting processes for education and development. Participants of **GCE's World Assembly** convened from 23-26 February in Pretoria, South Africa, discussed strategies to better influence the then upcoming WEF 2015. The **ICAE World Assembly**, organised in Montreal from 11-14 June, offered an opportunity for advocates of the right to adult education and LLL to chart out ways to influence the 3rd International Conference for Financing and Development, the processes defining the Education 2030 Framework for



The ICAE World Assembly, organised in Montreal from 11-14 June, offered an opportunity for advocates of the right to adult education and LLL to chart out ways to influence the 3rd International Conference for Financing and Development, the processes defining the Education 2030 Framework for Action, and the final SDG agreements.

Action, and the final SDG agreements. ASPBAE was actively involved in organising these events, being part of the leadership in both organisations, and were well-represented in these global meetings.

In the elections that took place in these Assemblies, ASPBAE was re-elected as one of the two Asia Pacific representatives in the GCE Board. ASPBAE was also re-elected as Vice President for the Asia Pacific of the ICAE Executive Committee. Additionally, ASPBAE's nominee was successfully elected as President - former ASPBAE President, Sandy Morrison, is the new President of ICAE.

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¹⁷ India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, East Timor, Myanmar, the Philippines, PNG, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Australia

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Additionally, ASPBAE's nominee was successfully elected as President - former ASPBAE President, Sandy Morrison, is the new President of ICAE.

ASPBAE remained an active member of the Coordination Group as Regional Focal Point for the Asia Pacific. The Framework for Action Education 2030 provides for the continuation of this CC NGO mechanism as an integral part of the new global architecture to advance SDG 4.

ICAE and GCE in the lobbying efforts in the SDG processes in New York, especially during the intergovernmental negotiations and indeed, during the UN Summit on the MDGs. ASPBAE participated in the Reflection and Strategising Meetings organised by GCE to assess the outcomes of the post-2015 campaign and plan for the future - 24 September in New York and 3 November in Paris.

The **Coordination Group of the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA** was the fulcrum for CSO involvement in preparing the NGO Forum for the World Education Forum 2015 and for participation in the WEF 2015 itself. It was an institutionalised mechanism as well for global CSO consultations on the outcomes document for the WEF 2015, the Incheon Declaration, and the Framework for Action of Education 2030. ASPBAE remained an active member of the Coordination Group as Regional Focal Point for the Asia Pacific. The Framework for Action Education 2030 provides for the continuation of this CC NGO mechanism as an integral part of the new global architecture to advance SDG 4.

ASPBAE forged new linkages with other civil society networks involved in advocacy within the SDG processes operating in the Asia Pacific region. Several were affiliated to the different global and regional CSO formations involved in the post-2015 campaign - Beyond 2015, GCAP, the Asia Democracy Network, to name some. These linkages have also led ASPBAE to explore formal membership in the official mechanisms for NGO participation in the SDG processes, specifically through the **Major groups and other Stakeholders** as they operate in the Asia Pacific UN processes. This will be pursued further in 2016.



ASPBAE jointly organised, with DVVI, a Regional Consultation on Sustainable Development and Lifelong Learning, held from 12-14 February in Vientiane, on the occasion of the ASPBAE Executive Council Meeting in Laos.

ASPBAE jointly organised, with DVVI in the year, a **Regional Consultation on Sustainable Development and Lifelong Learning** (12-14 February, Vientiane) on the occasion of the ASPBAE Executive Council Meeting in Laos. ASPBAE, DVVI and RMIT, Australia, started a partnership on **Training Master Trainers** as part of



ASPBAE, DVVI and RMIT, Australia, started a partnership on Training Master Trainers as part of the effort to shore up capacities of the Department of Non formal Education, Ministry of Education in Laos. The initiative was launched in 17 December in Vientiane.

the effort to shore up capacities of the Department of Non formal Education, Ministry of Education in Laos. The initiative was launched in 17 December in Vientiane. ASPBAE continued to be represented in the **Editorial Board** of DVVI's journal, **Adult Education and Development (AED)** in 2015.

ASPBAE sustained its partnership with the **Open Society Foundations** on work on education financing. They

also supported the ASPBAE efforts to help build a national education coalition in Korea. Several consultations were organised with OSF in the period – optimising the occasions of being together for important global events since as the WEF 2015 and the GCE World Assembly. OSF attended the ASPBAE Regional Workshop on Education Privatisation in Bangkok and ASPBAE participated in the OSF-organised International Conference on Strategic Litigation (16 September in New Delhi).

ASPBAE joined the newly formed international **consortium on education privatisation and human rights** led by RESULTS, Action Aid International, GCE, Education International, the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Right to Education project, among others. The Consortium was launched in October 2015 in London, culminating a series of events and meetings mapping different advocacy initiatives and strategies countering the push towards the privatisation of education. These were organised around the launch of a report challenging the UK government for its aid to private schools in Africa, exposing the adverse impact of this on the right to education. The Consortium is envisaged to offer a common front to counter the privatisation drive towards building a movement critical of the privatisation and commercialisation of education.

As indicated in ASPBAE's 2015 Plans, the last General Assembly called for the expansion of ASPBAE's **linkages with universities** - as stakeholders in lifelong learning and to forge a stronger interface of research, community-based practice and policy in education and LLL. From 29-30 January 2015, ASPBAE collaborated with the UN Girls



ASPBAE collaborated with the UNGEI, the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) of the Tata Institute of Social Studies (TISS) in India, and the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE) in organising a Writers Workshop to build capacities of young academicians, researchers, and practitioners in writing for academic journals.

Education Initiative (UNGEI), the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) of the Tata Institute of Social Studies (TISS) in India (an ASPBAE member) and the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE) in organising a **Writers Workshop** to build capacities of young academicians, researchers, and practitioners in writing for academic journals. ASPBAE sustained its communication and engagement with several of the researcher-writers involved in this Workshop through the year. ASPBAE again partnered with BAICE and UNGEI in mobilising writer-researchers, mainly from South Asia, to participate in the 2016 COMPARE Writers Workshop organized from 27-26 January in Manila, Philippines.

The CLL of TISS once again hosted an ASPBAE event in their campus in August: the TtT Review Meeting and the BLDC Directors Meeting. Alongside these, TISS and ASPBAE jointly organised interactions between **ASPBAE and TISS faculty and students**: the ASPBAE President and Executive Council Member for East Asia spoke in a forum organised by students



TISS and ASPBAE jointly organised interactions between ASPBAE and TISS faculty and students. ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto Guevara, and Executive Council Member for East Asia, Naomi Kamijo, spoke in a forum organised by students of the TISS Policy Research Group.

of the TISS Policy Research Group and the ASPBAE President spoke in an interactive session with the Centre for Lifelong Learning of TISS.

2015 was the first year of cooperation of ASPBAE and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). ASPBAE and SDC have been working closely on the post 2015 campaign since 2014, jointly advocating in their respective spheres for the importance of quality non formal, youth, and adult education. ASPBAE is in discussion with SDC on sustaining this partnership.

ASPBAE sustained its work and partnership through the year with UNGEI, UIL, UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMEO CELLL, ASEM, and offices of

ASEAN and SEAMEO.

It worked closely with partner regional education networks in Latin America (CLADE and CEAAL), Africa (ANCEFA), the Arab region (ACEA) and Europe (EAEA).

AN INSTITUTIONALLY ROBUST ASPBAE – PREPARING FOR ITS 7th GENERAL ASSEMBLY



THE ASPBAE Executive Council continued to play and active leadership role in the organisation. It was further strengthened in the year with the cooption of a new member representing South East Asia in May 2015, Thein Lwin of the Thinking Classroom Foundation, Myanmar.

The EC convened in its annual meeting from 8-11 February in Vientiane, Laos to - (1) review ASPBAE's overall work in 2014, notably the 50th anniversary commemorative activities, set within ASPBAE's post 2015 campaign initiatives; (2) deliberate on and agree the plans and budgets for 2015; and (3) plan ASPBAE's 50th General Assembly.

ASPBAE General Assemblies are vital processes for the organisation's consolidation and renewal. The **7th General Assembly** represents an important moment in ASPBAE's life and history as it will be convened as the international community prepares to roll out the new agenda for development and education. It is also the first General Assembly after ASPBAE celebrated 50 years of its life and work, and where the membership dedicated its efforts to see a strong, relevant ASPBAE – “daring to persist” beyond 50. The 7th General Assembly will debate how to best concretise and realise this.

In its annual Executive Council meeting in February 2015 (Vientiane), ASPBAE's leadership agreed the contours of its 7th General Assembly in 2016. It is envisaged as a moment for joint review and planning on the new roles for civil society in the current context, strengthened in their abilities to advance the right to quality education and lifelong learning for all children, youth, and adults, and the strategic directions of ASPBAE's work in this regard. The Executive was also cognisant of the fact that the 7th General Assembly will elect an almost all-new Executive Council and agreed measures to ensure a healthy and effective turnover, confident that the organisation has a deep bench of leaders to ensure continued strong governance in the years to come. The First Communique of the 7th General Assembly was released on 13 November 2015, signalling the start of this important process.

The Executive Council also agreed to launch an internal **Strategic Review of the Training for Transformation** (TfT) programme of ASPBAE in 2015 – designed to offer important contributions to the thinking and debates within the 7th General Assembly to define ASPBAE's future course. A planning meeting for the internal review of the

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Training for Transformation programme was convened from 11-12 August, involving the Tft team and members of the Executive who have been active in the programme. The framework, scope, and focus of the review were agreed in the meeting and subsequently approved by the Executive. A consultant for the Tft Review has since been engaged and the review of secondary data has begun. The final report of the Tft Strategic Review is expected in May 2016.

ASPBAE maintained its efforts in the year to remain a vibrant network, relevant to its members and the movement for the right to education and lifelong learning in the Asia Pacific region. Its **Information and Communications work** and programme had always been primarily oriented to this vision.

The **ASPBAE Plans** for the year were released on 10 March 2015. The **ASPBAE Activity Report 2014** was released in June 2015. Twelve (12) issues of the **ASPBAE Bulletin** were released in 2015 (inclusive of a WEF 2015 special issue and a combined March-April issue). The Bulletin remained an important channel for information sharing to ASPBAE members and partners on updates, the status of the post-2015 processes, and the advocacy efforts leading up to the World Education Forum. Three (3) issues of **ASPBAE Ed-lines** were released in 2015 themed on 'Youth: Skills for Work and Life'; 'Education under Attack'; and the 'Context for Education & CSOs: SDG 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action'.

The **ASPBAE website** was also revised to be more user-friendly. Several links deemed redundant were deleted, relevant materials on the ASPBAE 50th anniversary sub-site were shifted under the 'Resources' link, Facebook

and Twitter icons were added to the website, and a 'subscribe' option was added to the newsletter, *Ed-lines*.

ASPBAE's presence on **Facebook** continued and grew. ASPBAE provided regular updates, live feeds, and blogs during the WEF 2015, APMED2030, the High-Level Meeting on Education 2030, and other events. ASPBAE continues to post regularly on Facebook. ASPBAE initiated its presence on Twitter and utilised the new platform to post updates, blogs, and links related to the WEF and other events. ASPBAE continues to post regularly on Twitter.

ASPBAE's **membership** stood at **152 member organisations and 99 individual and life members** as on end December 2015. ASPBAE has expanded connections in Korea, especially through the WEF 2015, and intends to translate those connections to formal membership to ASPBAE. ASPBAE successfully lobbied the inclusion of Myanmar, Afghanistan, Samoa, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan in Phase 3 of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) initiative, auguring well for membership expansion in these areas. A remaining challenge is membership renewal and expansion in China, where a very thin civil society has been an impediment to ASPBAE's efforts.

ASPBAE's **gender mainstreaming efforts** continued in the period. In all ASPBAE organised events, conscious efforts were made to have equal representation of men and women, both as participants and resource persons. Dedicated sessions on gender were organised in four major regional capacity building events in the period - the ASPBAE-DWI Regional Consultation on Sustainable Development and Lifelong Learning, in the ASPBAE Study Exchange on Adult Education and Lifelong Learning,

the ASPBAE Basic Leadership and Development Course, and the CSEF Regional Consultation of Coalitions. ASPBAE's main effort on Skills and Decent Work was dedicated to gender in 2015. Ongoing consultations were carried out with education coalitions to mainstream gender in their institutional processes and programmes.

ASPBAE persisted in its efforts to maintain ASPBAE's sustainability through continued **resource mobilisation** efforts in the year. ASPBAE worked hard with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) in developing the proposal and successfully lobbying for the approval of the third phase of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). CSEF funding has been secured for the 3-year period of 2016-2018.

In 2015, ASPBAE and the Open Society Foundations (OSF) renewed its partnership on work related to education financing for 2016. While ASPBAE has been fortunate to meet some successes in its resource mobilisation efforts, the current general climate of reduced ODA for education and the Asia Pacific in general, creates ongoing difficulties and challenges.

ASPBAE was able to maintain a **strong staff complement** once again in the year, although it had to deal with continuing challenges of staff turnover. ASPBAE's CSEF South Asia Capacity Support and Advocacy Adviser (CSA) resigned unexpectedly early in 2015, on account of serious health issues. The post was filled in December 2015. A new South Pacific CSA joined in January 2015 but resigned after a year due to personal, family reasons. A recruitment process for the post was launched and a new South Pacific CSA joined in May 2016. These, however, did not deter ASPBAE from carrying on its targeted efforts in this crucial period for education and civil society. Tighter coordination and shared work facilitated ASPBAE's ability to cope with periods of being understaffed. Three (3) face-to-face all in staff meetings were organised in the year - one stand-alone and two other coinciding with planned regional events. Several team meetings were also organised in the year. ASPBAE's staff complement stood at 9 programme staff and 5 admin and finance staff in end December 2015.



The ASPBAE Activity Report 2014 was released in June 2015.



ASPBAE Bulletin Twelve (12) issues of the ASPBAE Bulletin were released in 2015



ASPBAE Ed-lines Three issues of ASPBAE Ed-lines were released in 2015 themed on - Youth: Skills for Work and Life; 'Education under Attack'; and the 'Context for Education & CSOs: SDG 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action'.

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PROVISIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31.12.2015

	(Amount in US \$)	
	Provisional ¹ 31.12.2015	Audited ² 31.12.2014
SOURCES OF FUNDS		
Capital Fund	626,376.12	706,601.83
Add: Surplus carried from Income & Expenditure A/c	(38,900.08)	(80,225.71)
Total	587,476.04	626,376.12
APPLICATION OF FUNDS		
Fixed assets	362.70	563.05
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash & Bank Balances	526,484.52	833,193.59
Loans & Advances	62,771.14	118,510.60
	589,255.66	951,704.19
LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Sundry Creditors	21,402.47	10,827.69
Expenses Payable	17,233.05	11,559.42
Balance Grants	36,493.20	303,504.01
	2,142.32	325,891.12
Net Current Assets	587,113.34	625,813.07
Total	587,476.04	626,376.12

Notes :

1. Provisional Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Statements for 2015 were prepared on the basis of financial statements submitted as on 31st January 2016 by the staff, partners, and coalitions pertaining to the year 2015 and advances on the basis of funds transfers to the concerned parties and liabilities on the basis of statements provided by the participants of the workshop and/or Individual staff / members to the Secretary General
2. 2014 Accounts were audited by M/s. Mahesh Chandra & Associates, Mumbai, India.
The Audited Report is dated 25th November, 2015

PROVISIONAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.12.2015

(Amount in US \$)

	Provisional 31.12.2015	Audited 31.12.2014
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INCOME

Grants received

dvv international Funds	204,227.86		272,027.76
Other Funders	633,134.30	837,362.16	697,050.47

Other Incomes

Bank Interest	3,305.69		2,681.94
Exchange Rate Gain / (Loss)	(22,562.24)		(24,617.85)
Registration Fees Recd	3,000.00		-
Membership Fees	8,050.00	(8,206.55)	1,901.03
		829,155.61	949,043.35

EXPENDITURE

Education/training, Research & Evaluation

1) dvv international	136,206.70		200,442.23
2) Others	932,200.70	1,068,407.40	562,945.50

Partners Infrastructure, admin. & running costs

1) dvv international	43,346.85		47,170.14
2) Others	39,906.41	83,253.26	40,245.20

Equipment Purchase & Maintenance

		1,015.50	-
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Partners Personnel/Salaries

1) dvv international		18,983.21	20,246.34
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Audit fees & expenses

		5,700.00	5,618.00
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		1,177,359.37	876,667.41
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Surplus carried forward to

Balance Sheet		(38,900.08)	(80,225.71)
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Surplus/(Deficit) C/F to Balance

Grants account for 2015		(309,303.68)	152,601.65
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**ASPBAE WISHES
TO THANK THE
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DVV International, Germany

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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
(SDC), Switzerland

British Association for International and Comparative
Education (BAICE), United Kingdom









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Learning Beyond Boundaries

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