

Agreeing on the roadmap for SDG4-Education 2030 implementation in the Asia Pacific

2nd Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED II)

16-18 November 2016, Bangkok, Thailand



The aim of APMED II was to agree on the SDG4-Education 2030 Implementation Roadmap for Asia and the Pacific.

organisations and agencies such as ILO, IOM, UNEP, UNESCO, UNESCAP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, and the World Bank.

The 2nd Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED II) was held in Bangkok. The overarching objective of this UNESCO-organised event was to agree on the SDG4-Education 2030 Implementation Roadmap for Asia and the Pacific. More than 250 participants were involved, consisting of representatives from 35 member states and 28 national coordinators of SDG4, 21 civil society organisations (CSOs), representatives from 4 sub-regional organisations (ASEAN, SEAMEO, SAARC, PIFS), and numerous multilateral

The event included a meeting of the regional network of national SDG4 coordinators, and provided an opportunity for member states to be updated on the latest global, regional, sub-regional, and national developments on SDG4-Education 2030. The event also was an occasion to share experiences and identify the challenges and opportunities (resources, capacity, infrastructure) at the country level in the implementation of SDG4, and to discuss and agree on the region's implementation strategy, key priorities, milestones, and actions towards the achievement of SDG4.

The participating CSOs included ASPBAE, national education coalitions from Pakistan, India, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nepal, Mongolia, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, along with the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Education International Asia Pacific (EIAP), Action Aid International, DVV International Regional Office for South and South East Asia, the Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), Save the Children, VSO International, ATD Fourth World, Leonard Cheshire Disability, and SIL International.

ASPBAE was pro-active in ensuring that there would be strong participation, influence, and visibility by CSOs in the event. On the day prior to the APMED event (November 15), ASPBAE organised a pre-meeting for CSOs to ensure clarity on common CSO priorities to advocate within the event and to strategise on how to maximise their participation and to discuss key agenda points, by actively engaging with respective national delegations in the working groups and during breaks. ASPBAE's Cecilia Soriano developed a collective summary of CSO priorities arising from the pre-meeting which was a valuable reference tool for engaging in the event.



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ASPBAE President, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, spoke from a civil society perspective during plenary sessions on 'Regional and Sub-regional Updates on SDG4 Implementation' and on the 'Next Steps: the Asia Pacific SDG4-Education 2030 Monitoring Framework', while Cecilia Soriano participated as a civil society representative in the Drafting Committee for the draft Regional Roadmap

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for implementation of SDG4-Education 2030. Coalition representatives from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam also made presentations in plenary sessions.

CSOs were able to promote many of its key advocacy priorities, ensuring that salient matters on education financing were discussed, along with the issues of lifelong learning, literacy, and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults. Concerns were voiced regarding education privatisation and the need to assert the role of the state as the duty bearer to ensure the right to education. CSOs also underscored the need to

avoid narrow interpretations of learning outcomes and highlighted the need to focus on disadvantaged groups and ensure inclusive education. The importance of including civil society as full partners in the SDG4 planning and monitoring processes was also emphasised.

The event produced some valuable outcomes. There was renewed commitment of member states, and for the first time the inter-governmental sub-regional organisations (SAARC, ASEAN, SEAMEO, PIFS) were integrated into the APMED process. Critical challenges and issues, as well as examples of good practices, were identified in aligning the SDG4 targets to national policies and plans. Education financing issues in the region for Education 2030 were also addressed. A regional network of SDG4 National Coordinators was launched with a draft Terms of Reference for the network. Coordinated support to member states was identified in establishing and strengthening capacities for national coordination and aligning national policies and strategies to the regional framework, and for monitoring. Some efforts were made to coordinate and synergise promotion of cross-sectoral advocacy on SDGs – between SDG4 and SDG3 (health), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG8 (decent work and economic growth) in particular through the Thematic Working Group (TWG) mechanism (Regional TWG for Education 2030+).



Ehsanur Rahman, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, and incoming ASPBAE EC member, spoke at APMED II. CSOs promoted advocacy priorities, ensuring that issues related to education financing were discussed, along with lifelong learning, literacy, and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults.

A third Regional Consultation (APMEDIII) was agreed to for 2017, with a focus on SDG 4.7, and the aim of finalising the regional SDG4 framework with the roadmap and monitoring framework. It will also aim to focus on the means to continue support for national consultations within member states and capacity building localisation and integration of SDG4 into national education plans and policies. Finally, APMED III will aim to scale up regional and national advocacy strategies and develop a regional communication strategy.