

ASPBAE's members in India come together to discuss future advocacy efforts in the context of ASPBAE's new Strategic Directions

14-15 December 2017, Nasik, Maharashtra, India



Several ASPBAE's members in India met in Nasik for a national consultation to share learnings from the field, discuss current trends on education for all (with an emphasis on youth and adult education), and strategise on their advocacy efforts.

Representatives of 12 ASPBAE member organisations in India came together in Nasik for a national consultation to share learnings from the field, discuss current trends on education for all (with an emphasis on youth and adult education), and strategise on their advocacy efforts. ASPBAE's member organisation, Abhivyakti Media for Development, hosted the meeting.

ASPBAE is organising similar national conferences amongst its membership in the Asia Pacific with the aim to foster interactions between adult education practitioners and education campaigners to enhance adult education practice and contribute towards evolving a stronger policy reform agenda on youth and adult education. The specific objectives of the national consultation in India were also to

share the outcomes of the recently concluded CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review conference in Suwon, South Korea, and to jointly reflect on participating in the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) follow-up processes at the global, regional, and national level.

Summarising the purpose of the meeting, ASPBAE's Anita Borkar shared reflections, discussions, and assertions of earlier consultations through a presentation on the national consultation held in 2016. This was followed by a presentation on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the education goal (SDG 4) by ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury, where she updated participants on national-level processes on indicator development, voluntary national reviews (VNRs), and state plans to implement the 2030 Agenda. After engaging discussions, participants agreed on the need for disaggregated data to address equity in education policy, the need to articulate the interaction between school education and skills for work, and the need for more participation from participation of education stakeholders (civil society, teachers, parents, learners, to name some) at national, regional and global policy processes.



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ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, updated on the CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review (MTR) Conference, which was held in Suwon, Korea, in October 2017.

The CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review (MTR) aimed to take stock of progress made on the Belem Framework of Action (BFA) and to deliberate on how it can be more strongly aligned with the SDGs. The MTR consisted of various processes such as national reports, development of regional mid-term assessment reports, the 3rd Global Report on Adult Learning (GRALE), and the convening of a Civil Society Forum. However, India was not present at the conference. Maria Khan shared the main findings of the Asia Pacific CONFINTEA VI Mid-term Assessment Report, written by Rangachar Govinda. She also highlighted the main outcomes of the Conference, including planning for CONFINTEA VII in 2021.

ASPBAE members were also updated on ASPBAE regional initiatives covering India.

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ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, made a presentation on the CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review (MTR) Conference.

A research study was presented by Adil Ali from Azad Foundation on '*Financing Options for Skills for Work for Marginalised Women in India*'. This is an ASPBAE-initiated study currently being undertaken by members in India and Indonesia. Adil outlined the international framework governing skills training and decent work. He highlighted the skill gap according to projections for growth of industries and a diminishing demographic dividend (dependency ratios are expected to increase in the next 20 years) and presented the challenges facing the skill training sector. Deben Bachaspatimayum from

the Coalition for Advocacy for Lifelong Learning (CALL) Manipur, expressed the need for the research to be more inclusive and to include the northeastern states of India.

An ASPBAE-initiated study on Youth-Led Action Research (being undertaken in India, Indonesia, and the Philippines) was presented. Abhivyakti, an ASPBAE member, is leading the study in India with support from a research team made up of young women (called *Shodhini's*) from local communities in Maharashtra (Western India). The *Shodhini's* shared their experiences in conducting the research, visiting houses in their communities, and advocating the findings of the research with government representatives. A report containing the demands of the young women has been shared with UNESCO.

Ramakant Rai of NCE India gave a presentation highlighting the education policy in India, with a focus on the Right to Education. He illustrated the situation of primary and secondary education with data focusing on a large number of out-of-school children, and a high proportion of child labourers and of people without basic literacy. Ramakant Rai stressed that the Right to Education remains meaningless without political will and resource allocation, especially for the poorest children. He also shared NCE India's work on these issues by filing Public Interest Litigations in many of the states. The presentation led to discussions on ways to measure quality education, teachers' ability, and caste composition in the education system in the country.



The initial findings of the research study on '*Financing Options for Skills for Work for Marginalised Women in India*' was presented by Adil Ali of Azad Foundation.

ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, shared ASPBAE's Strategic Directions (2017-2020).

Participants deliberated on their plans for the future based on ASPBAE's Strategic Directions. They charted out plans for preparing a spotlight report on the SDGs, and SDG4 in particular, and on their participation in ASPBAE's research initiatives. Participants agreed that given the current political climate and nature of developmental policies which leave out a majority of the population, inclusion and equity could be the dominant themes for the spotlight report. They also recommended that the goals be linked - SDG4 to be connected with other goals such as Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation), Goal 13 (climate action), and Goal 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions); and Goal 4.7 (learning to live together sustainably) with Goal 16 to explore education as a means for achieving peace and justice. They also identified the need to contextualise the relevance of global indicators to the Indian context and critically analyse government schemes, programmes, and indicators to measure their performance.

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Participants of the India national consultation charted out plans for preparing a spotlight report on SDG4 in particular and on their participation in ASPBAE's research initiatives.

Regarding ASPBAE's research initiatives, the participants suggested that key learnings and recommendations from the study exchange on community learning centres (CLCs) that took place in Bangkok in 2017 be synthesized into a policy brief for advocacy. They suggested that youth-led action research could be explored in the Northeastern states of India to develop skills of youth there, especially of girls.

The participants also suggested that ASPBAE advocate for community learning centres to fill the gaps in formal education and that ASPBAE's toolkit on youth-led action research be shared with members. They called on

Abhivyakti's assistance in developing capacities to utilise the toolkit.

A 'market place' was organised for the duration of the meeting for ASPBAE's members in India to share their learnings and innovations. They set up stalls with information about their organisations where they displayed material highlighting their experiences, successes, and challenges in their work on education and lifelong learning.

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