

Civil society education advocates call for action to prioritise education on political agendas

9th Global Meeting of the UNESCO CCNGO Education 2030
2-5 December 2019, Tunis, Tunisia



The CCNGO2019 meeting aimed to build on the experiences of civil society organisations and strong commitments to strengthen collective initiatives towards the realisation of the SDGs and education related targets.

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The meeting provided a space for discussion on where civil society stands since the last CCNGO Global Meeting (May 2017), activities undertaken, key challenges encountered, progress achieved, and opportunities identified for the way forward.

The focus and major theme of the meeting was the role and engagement of civil society organisations in supporting equity and inclusion in the implementation of SDG 4-Education 2030 at national, regional, and global levels.

Opening remarks were given by Stefania Giannini, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education; Refat Sabbah, GCE President and General Director and Founder of the Teacher Creativity Centre; and Hatem Ben Salem, Minister of Education, Tunisia.

Six plenaries were held on – inclusion imperative; meeting our commitments; report of the CCNGO-ED 2030 Coordination Group; joint initiatives; outcome debate and recommendations; and elections of the coordination group. Eight parallel sessions were organised on - (1) The right to quality education; (2) The provision of education in conflict or crisis; (3) Teachers, curriculum, assessment, and learning environments; (4) Adult learning and education for active citizenship decent work and sustainable development; (5) Effective governance, accountability, democratic participation, minimising fragmentation through partnerships, and cross-sectoral collaboration; (6) Advocating for increased, effective, innovative, and accountable financing; (7) Data collection, research, review, monitoring, and reporting; and (8) Changing mind sets - eliminating cultural and social barriers to quality education, advocating, and raising awareness.

The 9th Global Meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CCNGO2019) was organised by UNESCO in Hammamet and hosted by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), alongside the Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEA) and the National Association of the Right to Education (ANDET).

The Global CCNGO2019 brought together 131 participants, including international, regional, and national civil society actors from 85 organisations, including the teaching profession and student organisations. The CCNGO2019 aimed to build on the experiences of civil society organisations



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ASPBAE led on the session on *'Making lifelong learning a reality: Adult learning and education for active citizenship, decent work, and sustainable development'* during the meeting. ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, participated as a panellist and ASPBAE staff, Bernie Lovegrove, was the moderator of the panel. The session focused on the barriers to achieving adult education and lifelong-learning, given the specific impact of labour market changes on jobs and the demand for skills. It also discussed policy measures and solutions that can simultaneously equip the current and next generation of the workforce with the skills they will need for a not-yet-imagined future. Key messages emerging from the



Refat Sabbah, GCE President (above), Stefania Giannini, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, and Hatem Ben Salem, Minister of Education, Tunisia, delivered the opening remarks.

session were – (1) Public education must strengthen adult and lifelong learning opportunities, e.g. literacy, numeracy, analysis, synthesis, critical thinking, problem-solving, promoting citizenship, leadership, values and ethics; and (2) Enhancing CSO capacity for generating grassroots evidence and data, analysis of budget and tracking resource utilisation, power mapping, and advocating for the right to education covering the full SDG 4 agenda including lifelong learning is critical.

ASPBAE's Rene Raya participated as a panellist in two sessions at the event. In the plenary session on *'SDG 4-Education 2030: Meeting our Commitments'*, Rene spoke about the Spotlight Reports prepared by national education coalitions in 16 countries across the Asia Pacific. He emphasised financing and equity as the critical gaps in the rollout of SDG 4 in the region.



ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni, participated as a panellist in a session on *'Making lifelong learning a reality'*, with ASPBAE's Bernie Lovegrove moderating.

In the parallel session on *'Inclusion, make it known – Data collection, research, review, monitoring'*, organised by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Bangladesh, and moderated by its Executive Director, Rasheda Choudhury, Rene noted that in many countries in the region, there is hardly any culture for data, and that education plans are not based on robust studies which present clear evidence for decision-making. He shared that ASPBAE and its members have been doing studies which provide valuable insights, particularly on marginalised sectors, including youth and adults who have limited access to literacy and other adult learning programmes.

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ASPBAE's Rene Raya participated as a panellist in a session on 'SDG 4-Education 2030: Meeting our Commitments' and 'Inclusion, make it known – Data collection, research, review, monitoring', highlighting that many countries in the region do not have a culture for data, and that education plans are not based on robust studies.

Bernie Lovegrove was also part of the final plenary session which appraised the different CSO approaches at national, regional and global levels to advance inclusion in education through political mobilization, linkages between social sectors, advocacy and peer learning, drawing from the outcomes of the 8 parallel sessions of the assembly.

A number of ASPBAE members attended the Meeting: Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Bangladesh, National Campaign for Education for All (NCE) Nepal, All for Education (AFE) Mongolia, and the National Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education (NRCE-NFE), Nepal.

Noting the education crisis, participants called for strengthening the critical role of civil society in ensuring the right to education for all. They affirmed that this requires the setting up of institutionalised mechanisms for meaningful civil society participation at national, regional, and international levels, including in the global education architecture, leveraging collective dialogue and action.

Participants further called for protecting and advancing the right to full participation of students, youth, teachers and parents associations, communities, and civil society organisations in education policy making and monitoring, with particular attention to involving marginalised groups.

CCNGO members committed to building the capacity of civil society organisations to engage with different stakeholders and lead collective action to defend the right to education as a human right, public good, and State responsibility. They expressed deep concern about the growth in education privatisation and commercialisation and affirmed that all private provision must be well regulated and aligned with human rights principles. They stressed the need to strengthen partnerships with other social sectors, parliamentarians, and the media to promote inclusion and equity. They also highlighted the importance of building the capacity of civil society actors to collect and analyse evidence-based data on the most marginalised groups.



Rasheda Choudhury of CAMPE Bangladesh participated in the CCNGO meeting. Other ASPBAE members who participated were NCE Nepal, AFE Mongolia, and NRCE-NFE Nepal.

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Wolfgang Leumer of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) speaking at the CCNGO meeting where participants called for strengthening the critical role of civil society in ensuring the right to education for all.

The [Outcome Statement](#) of the 9th CCNGO was adopted on 4 December 2019. ASPBAE was represented in the Drafting Committee by Bernie Lovegrove.

Over the next biennium, the CCNGO, supported by its Coordination Group and UNESCO, will draw up a road map which will involve consultations and submissions, advocacy efforts (campaigns and events), and community building through an online space.

The CCNGO will call for social and political action for education through the 7 priority areas agreed upon at the Global CCNGO meeting – (1) Strengthen evidence-based

policy dialogue to raise awareness and influence government policy through dedicated mechanisms; (2) Ensure that legal, policy and planning frameworks adopt an inclusive rights-based approach; (3) Guarantee education and psycho-social support for refugee, displaced and migrant children, and ensure that teachers are trained to be sensitive to their cultural identities; (4) Support teachers with training to promote a culture of inclusion and to help students open their minds through critical pedagogies. Adequate salaries, decent working conditions and more autonomy are essential to support and value the profession; (5) Allocate dedicated budgets to adult learning, the least supported part of the lifelong learning; (6) Invest in disaggregated data to capture the full reality of exclusion and to hold governments accountable; and (7) Encourage citizen monitoring of public budgets on education to ensure resources are directed to support equity and inclusion.



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This write-up draws from a report of the meeting compiled by UNESCO and GCE. [END]