



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

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

24-26 February 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

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

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

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



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



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

reintegrate into education. The Consortium also collaborated with the school committees and the Council for Women and Children to enhance their capacities to undertake effective enrolment campaigns and vulnerability mapping.

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

To enable access, the Consortium helped in enabling physical and financial access to education as well as provided remedial education for children to catch up and

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

In the Concurrent Session: Responding to Challenges 2, Bashir Khaliqi, Managing Director of the Afghan Adult Education Association (ANAF AE), was a speaker in the Session on *'Education in Emergencies: Conflict Zones'*.

Bashir provided an overview of the innovations being done by different organisations in Afghanistan to help out-of-school children and youth. ANAF AE, along with other NGOs, is implementing the



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

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



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

help access safe water, facilitating community and religious activities, community libraries, health and daycare facilities, to name some of their many interventions.

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

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



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