

Reviewing status of SDG4 implementation and brainstorming on India Spotlight Report

18 September 2018, New Delhi, India



The aim of the India national consultation was to gather suggestions and information from various states of India on the 10 themes related to SDG 4 which will be included in the 'Spotlight Report'. Issues such as elementary and higher education and teachers were discussed at the consultation.

The National Coalition for Education, India (NCE India) organised a national consultation on SDG4 to review the status of SDG4 implementation, discuss policy challenges, and offer recommendations. The objective of the consultation was also to gather suggestions and information from various states of India on the 10 themes related to SDG 4 which will be included in the 'Spotlight Report'.

NCE India is preparing the SDG 4 spotlight report in collaboration with Oxfam India, CBM India Trust, Malala Fund, Save the Children India, All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF), Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI), Nirantar, Public Advocacy Initiatives for Rights and values in India (PAIRVI), World Vision India, Azad Foundation, Action Aid,

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), and Sphere India. The Spotlight report will present civil society analysis and perspectives on the status and implementation of SDG4, especially in view of the 2019 High-level Political Forum (HLPF).

Several issues were discussed at the consultation including Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE), elementary and higher education, equity and social justice in education, teachers and teacher's education, education in emergencies, adult education and lifelong learning, youth and vocational education, and education financing.

Ajay Jha of PAIRVI raised concerns regarding the HLPF, especially related to limited space for inputs from civil society organisations (CSOs), despite the claim by the United Nations that CSOs are indispensable. He suggested different strategies to engage meaningfully in the process, such as reaching out to major groups and other organisations that have strong global presence and creatively occupy existing spaces.



Anil Joseph of World Vision addressing the meeting. World Vision stressed the importance of School Management Committees and healthy teacher-student ratios for quality education.

Alka Singh, from Save the Children India, spoke on the equal significance of education and nutrition during Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE). She identified three groups at risk of being left out - children residing in tribal hamlets or scantily habited areas; children in rural areas who have to travel long distances to reach their schools; and street children in urban settings. She also reflected on the significance of parental and community engagement in ECCE.

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Sanjay Bhattacharya of World Vision discussed secondary education, highlighting various factors responsible for school drop-outs, such as lack of infrastructure, lack of quality education, and lack of a conducive environment for education. He stressed the importance of functional School Management Committees, and healthy teacher-student ratios for quality education.

Anuradha De, of Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD), drew attention towards secondary education's decisive role as a bridge between basic competencies and future opportunities of education, skill, and employment.

Pradeep Choudhury, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), shared his concerns regarding the current situation of public expenditure on higher education. He also highlighted the role of gender, caste, and economic status in determining access to educational institutes.

Satyendra Kumar, from the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI), spoke about equity and social inclusion in education, pin pointing communities historically left out of education, such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, linguistic minorities, religious minorities, and persons with disabilities. He stressed that the skills historically possessed by marginalised communities have not been brought under the ambit of education.



Nupur, of NCE India, speaking during the national consultation on SDG 4 which was held to review the status of SDG 4 implementation, discuss policy challenges, and offer recommendations.



ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury spoke about accountability of SDG implementation.

Speaking about the role of teachers in education, Nisha Caire of the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF) informed that there is a shortage of approximately one million teachers in India. Though training to untrained teachers has been a priority, however filling vacancies has not drawn similar attention.

Vikrant Mahajan of Sphere India elaborated on the links between disasters (natural/manmade/conflict), mitigation, and education in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He stressed that education plays a crucial role in humanitarian assistance during disasters.

Addressing the issue of adult education and lifelong learning, Chittrakshi Vashisht, from Nirantar emphasized the difference between literacy and education, emphasising that education has a wider meaning. She also discussed the need for planning in-depth case studies to understand the context of marginalised communities such as transgenders, nomadic tribes, de-notified tribes, Dalits, and persons with disabilities.

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Amrita Gupta of Azad Foundation spoke of the importance of linking skills and decent jobs. She observed that links between functional literacy and skills merely exists at the policy level.

Protiva Kundu of the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) expressed concern on the availability of finances for realisation the SDGs. She added that only 2.7% of the GDP is spent on education, of which 1.8% is spent on elementary education 0.9% on secondary education. Protiva shared that resources are not spent on teacher training or infrastructure development. However, she observed that spending has increased in various other forms of monetary and non-monetary incentives, such as bicycles and uniforms.

ASPBAE's Susmita Choudhury shared aspects related to accountability of SDG implementation. She highlighted the value of generating awareness among different stakeholders at various levels to hold national governments accountable for achieving the SDGs. Speaking on the role of civil society, Susmita emphasised sharing innovative approaches that can be upscaled to reach the most marginalised.

At the conclusion of the consultation, Arun Kumar, Member of Parliament, released the India report on the Global Campaign for Education's Global action Week for Education (GAWE).

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