ASPBAE’s members and partners gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, for an Asia Pacific Regional Consultation for Education Advocates held from 2-5 September 2018. The Regional Consultation, hosted by the Coalition for Educational Development (CED) Sri Lanka, aimed to offer an arena to strengthen capacities and share experiences on the work of Asia Pacific advocates to advance the right to quality basic, youth, and adult education, especially within the spaces provided by the SDGs and SDG 4 policy processes, with particular attention to:

- Strengthening the student and youth constituency within the movement, advancing the right to education and the SDG-SDG 4 agenda with a special focus on involving marginalised youth.
- Promoting marginalised women’s education and empowerment agenda.
- Concretising SDG 4.7 in policy and programmes.
- Developing civil society organisation (CSO) analysis and positions to respond to emerging innovative financing instruments for education.
- Emergent issues and initiatives identified by the participants.

The Consultation also aimed to provide a platform for ASPBAE’s members and partners to update on ASPBAE advocacy plans and strategies (2017-2020) and plan for coordinated action. More specifically:

- Review and affirm campaign plans for the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and its preparatory processes, including preparations for CSO Spotlight Reports and engagements around SDG Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).
- Sustain engagement with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), especially through CSO representation at the GPE Board to inform key GPE agenda and processes.

Furthermore, participants at the Consultation had the opportunity to discuss strengthening engagement in the global education movement, especially related to preparations for the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) World Assembly as well as the Asia Pacific advocacy agenda and issues to feed into GCE plans/strategy.

Lastly, the Consultation offered a space to discuss Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) end-of-phase III reporting, stock-taking, and future planning, including –

- Preparing for CSEF 2018 year-end reporting.
- Phase III documentation of good practices and lessons learnt – communicating effectively policy wins and learnings.
- Reflections on finance reporting and management systems needing strengthening.
- Updates on CSEF funding and proposal preparations for the next phase (2019-2021).

Apart from the Asia Pacific region, representatives from the Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA), Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE), Arab Campaign for Education (ACEA), International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) also participated in the Regional Consultation.
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ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni lighting the inaugural lamp to commence the Regional Consultation in Colombo.

ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, welcoming the participants to the Regional Consultation.

Chairperson of the Board CED Sri Lanka, I.M. Chandana Bandara, addressing participants at the Consultation during the opening session.

Secretary, Ministry of Education (Sri Lanka), Sunil Hettiarachchi, delivering the Keynote Speech at the Regional Consultation in Colombo held from 2-5 September 2018.

ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing Southeast Asia, Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, taking part in a group session.

The Regional Consultation was also geared towards those who are differently abled. Here, a representative of the Vietnam Association for the Deaf (R) translates the proceedings in sign language.
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Noopur, Executive Director, National Coalition for Education, India, leading a group discussion.

ASPBAE’s Cecilia (Thea) Soriano, participating in a panel discussion on ‘Reviewing and affirming campaign plans for 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and its preparatory processes’.

Refaat Sabah, of the Arab Campaign for Education (ACEA), shares of key plans on HLPF 2019 engagements from the Arab region.

Immediate Past President of ASPBAE, Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara, leads a session on ‘Concretising SDG 4.7 in Policies and Programmes’.

The ASPBAE Team in Colombo!
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Zehra Arshad, of the Pakistan Coalition for Education (L), with ASPBAE’s Rene Raya (R).

ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing East Asia, Eri Yamamoto, engaging participants at the Regional Consultation.

Ricarda Motschilnig (standing), of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), taking part in group discussions at the Regional Consultation in Colombo.

Solange Akpo, of the Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA), sharing of key plans on HLPF 2019 engagements from the Africa region.

ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing the South Pacific, Kilala Devette-Chee (centre), taking part in discussions in Colombo.

Participants engaged in collective brainstorming at a session during the Regional Consultation.
Tanvir Muntasim, of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), talks about private sector engagement strategy.

Laura Giannecchini, representing the Latin America region (CLADE), engages in deliberations at the Consultation.

Addie Unsi of the education coalition in the Philippines, (E-Net Philippines), actively involved in proceedings.

ASPBAE’s Helen Dabu, leading a plenary discussion on engagements with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

Participants taking the #ColomboPledge – committing to more efficient and effective use of social media.

ASPBAE President, Nani Zulminarni (R), presenting Robbie Guevara (L) with a parting gift as he bids farewell to ASPBAE after 2 terms as ASPBAE President.
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Participants of the Regional Consultation in Colombo.