



Asia South Pacific Association
for Basic and Adult Education
Learning Beyond Boundaries

Azād Foundation

Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Gender, Education, Skills and Work

**26 – 29 October 2015
The Hilton Garden Inn, Gurgaon, India**



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Executive summary

Over the four days Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Gender, Education, Skills and Work, co-organised by ASPBAE and Azad Foundation in Delhi in October 2015, thoroughly analysed education, skill development and work in the Asia Pacific region through a gender perspective. Over 50 delegates from ASPBAE member organizations and policy-making bodies interacted and discussed policies, new global development agendas, realities and challenges, lessons from the field, and future plans. They also had the opportunity to visit three Delhi-based organisations focusing on skill development. The key aim of the workshop was to equip civil society organisations with the understanding and analysis needed on gender, education, skills, and TVET to influence emergent government plans and programmes contextualising the new education agenda 2030, and particularly for South East Asia, the ASEAN 2015 plans.

Day one explored the global, regional and sub-regional context of gender, education and lifelong learning and work, as well as analytical frameworks to understand gender, skills and work. The sessions of the first day looked at participation of women in labour force across the region and the underlying factors affecting these trends, as well as gender disparity in education and labour and the links between the two. In the afternoon, delegates discussed in sub-regional groups realities of gender, education, skills and work in their sub-region.

All these sessions uncovered common factors across the region that affect education attainment of women and work realities women face. Cultural factors restricting women's mobility and decision-making and norms such as early marriage significantly limit women's education and livelihood opportunities. Gendered education systems influence women's aspirations and career choices. Economic factors create gaps in education, further disadvantaging the marginalized sections of the population. Across the region, education does not adequately equip young people with the skills needed for the job market. Lack of implementation of policies on country level, migration and gender-segregated workforce are realities in many countries in Asia Pacific. Since the issues and challenges faced by women are multipronged, the delegates deliberated the need for holistic interventions.

The first half of the second day focused on work realities experienced by women in China and Hong Kong, migrant workers and young people across the region. Women in Asia Pacific region are often denied their rights, and severely marginalized on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, caste, class and geography. We have learnt about the work of unions and co-operatives in China and Hong Kong and Migrant Forum Asia – organisations supporting women to claim their rights, get treated fairly and avoid violence and abuse. In the afternoon, the context of India has been explored in a greater depth. With the need to create 10 million new jobs ever year, a vast informal sector, structural inequalities and persistent discriminatory cultural norms affecting women's lives, India faces multifaceted challenges. Government initiatives such as 'National Skills Mission' aim to address the issues, however the presenters and participants conferred that there is a need for a stronger focus on gender sensitive approaches addressing the barriers to education and labour participation and access to non-traditional livelihoods for women.

The third day explored the work of innovative organizations – Azad Foundation, which provides technical, empowerment and self-development training for resource-poor women in Indian cities to become professional drivers; PEKKA working with women headed households in Indonesia; FRIEND in Fiji providing skill training and support to marginalized people to create sustainable livelihoods and improve health; and Dhaka Ahsania Mission in Bangladesh

that is skilling up women working in the garment factories to enable them to gain higher employment and social status. The issue of illiteracy across the region, lack of financing for literacy education to date and financing of the new Education 2030 agenda, and private sector interventions for skill development were debated in the afternoon. This was followed by an exploration of formal, non-formal and informal types of education, with a closer analysis of community learning centres and concepts of lifelong and life-wide learning. Group discussions have exposed commercialization and corporatization of the education and skill development sector are amongst the key concerns of civil society and the need to focus our advocacy efforts towards this agenda.

During the last day, the workshop participants reflected back on MDGs and EFA and looked more closely on the new sustainable Development Goals, Incheon Framework for Action and other plans for implementation and the role of ASPBAE and UNGEI going forward. Involvement of civil society in indicator setting for SDGs has been emphasized as this process will determine national agendas on and commitments for education, skill and labour development and gender equality.

Day One: Monday 26 October 2015

1. Welcome and introductions

Meenu Vadera, Azad Foundation, India

Meenu opened the workshop with a warm welcome to all participants, noting:

'We have attendees from 18 countries here and 27 NGOs from four regions of ASPBAE. It is great to have such a great diversity of cultures, faith, political ideology and of the work we are doing, and to have the opportunities to share all of this.'

Saloni Singh, Didibahini, Nepal and ASPBAE Executive Council Member

Saloni Singh in her opening note referenced now is the important time to discuss the issues of gender, education and skills that are key to our work:

'Gender has been an important and priority issue within ASPBAE. We have been trying to mainstream gender into all our work. I would like to invite all of you to have on your gender lens when discussing our work. This is not a new thing, but a new initiative to consider all these things together.'

'We need to create a strong forum to advocate on this issue. We hope this workshop will take us into a very different direction as a collective forum of ASPBAE and we will have good outcomes to take home.'

'We need to look at context of women and also focus on informal sector. We need to discuss what it means from our country perspective, regional and global perspective, so we can contribute to the global forum and be able to implement in our specific areas.'

2. Workshop overview

Sumedha Sharma, ASPBAE, India

Rationale

- Deepen understanding on gender sensitive responses to skills provisioning for decent work of youth and adults;
- Review experiences of civil society organisations and of publicly provided and organised skills for work; programmes for women in different countries in the Asia Pacific;
- Review policies on TVET and skills and appraise how these attend to the learning needs and contexts; especially of marginalised women.

Within ASPBAE we have been working on education, skills and TVET, but we also felt that there is the need to look at this from the gender lens and perspective. Within our countries, government and civil society programmes, whatever is happening around us.

We wanted to review the experiences of our organizations, what skills are being given to women, are they different to those given to men and what is the impact. Because the educational skills that you get also affect livelihoods you carry forward.

Also, what are the learning needs of marginalised women and are we able to cater to those.

Objectives

Equip civil society organisations with the understanding and analysis needed on gender, education, skills, and TVET to influence emergent government plans and programmes contextualising the new education agenda 2030, and particularly for South East Asia, the ASEAN 2015 plans.

- Deepen understanding on the development and policy environment and context for education, TVET, and skills for life and work in the Asia Pacific region from a gendered and human rights perspective.
- Build a shared understanding of the barriers that affect women's participation in TVET and other skill building programmes and in the workforce.
- Broaden appreciation of innovative practices on gender, education, skills and work, including non-traditional and decent work options for women and how existing practices and policies can include them and scale up
- Provide a platform for learning and exchange among practitioners and advocates of gender equality in education and decent work.
- Develop a shared agenda for the future and identify how ASPBAE can play a capacity building and shared advocacy role in influencing policies and practice to have a gendered approach in education, TVET programmes, and other skill building programmes across the region.

We have an example of an organization that breaks gender stereotypes here with us. [Azad Foundation](#) is one of the examples of how gender stereotypes related to work are broken and many of you have been picked up by Azad-trained drivers working as commercial drivers with Sakha Cabs.

3. Reading the reality: The Global and Regional Context of Gender, Education and Lifelong Learning, Decent Work and Sustainable Development

Rebecca Gaddi, University of Philippines

Ms. Rebecca Gaddi has been an Assistant Professor of the University of the Philippines. The subjects she taught include labor and the economy, theories in industrial relations, research methods, work and organisations, human resource development at the national level, training design and administration.

Rebecca is also a Gender Specialist, associated with PRRM, a member of ASPBAE. She has been involved with other causes like women's empowerment, children's rights and welfare, reproductive health & rights, women's literacy, women's role in sustainable agriculture.

She has also been associated with Education Network Philippines, National Coalition of Rural Women, Save the Children Fund, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Development Academy of the Philippines, Philippine Coconut Authority and Philippine Women's University.

Rebecca is the author of many publications and papers mainly on topics of Gender, Work, Feminist Research and Ethnography and women and literacy. Rebecca is a Ph.D. in Philippine studies, focusing on Society and Culture, Gender and Women Studies and Social Psychology.

Key points of the presentation:

Gender lens

Through gender lens you suddenly see things that were not there before you used this lens. It is a tool to look at things in a different way. It might be even different for each of you; even as feminists you might have different perspectives. There are different streams of

feminism – from radical to liberal feminist, being out of the rules, culture and norms. This is fine as long as you are not hurting people but helping them.

Post-structuralism / post-modernism

Many feminist use post-structuralism (J Derrida) and deconstruction to understand feminist views. When you use deconstruction you use the critique to show inconsistencies such as why are women poorer than men, why are they doing so much work and longer hours. Specifically:

- **Incoherence of meaning (eg. formal and informal education)**
For example people who go to formal education are more privileged, there are also elite schools attended by rich people
- **Privileging of concepts (productive and reproductive work)**
When you are being paid for your work you are in the job market, but when you go home and do the washing and take care of kids, you are not being paid for it. Most of the women belong to this group who is doing both – paid and unpaid work. Paid work is associated with productive work. Reproductive work is the term for household work. Why do we call it like that? It is linked to reproducing another human being, and only women can do it, and often are not paid for it.
- **Conceptual oppositions (public and intimate sphere)**
Public and intimate sphere: we mostly see men in the public sphere and women are mostly inside the home, in the intimate sphere.

Global context of gender

Women's work contribution has always been gendered – they perform both productive and reproductive work, whether in developed or developing countries. By reproductive work we don't mean just having children, any work that reproduces society and another labour force.

Socialist vs. rich vs. developing states

In socialist states women are working, but that does not mean they are rich. Women are forced to do additional work in addition to house work, they are forced to do paid labour or go to sell at a market as there is not enough income in the household.

It is dangerous to conclude that in rich countries women should not work because they are rich already. E.g. in rich countries in Middle East less than 50% of women are participating in formal work. However in developing countries there is a high participation rate of women as women need to work as they lack money.

Even in very developed countries like Singapore, South Korea and Japan, women's participation is low due to persistent cultural norms. Women still face discrimination and are expected to do all the housework. Although, for example in the Philippines there is strong advocacy amongst women for men to participate in household chores and women are also participating politically.

Low participation of women in employment negatively impacts economy

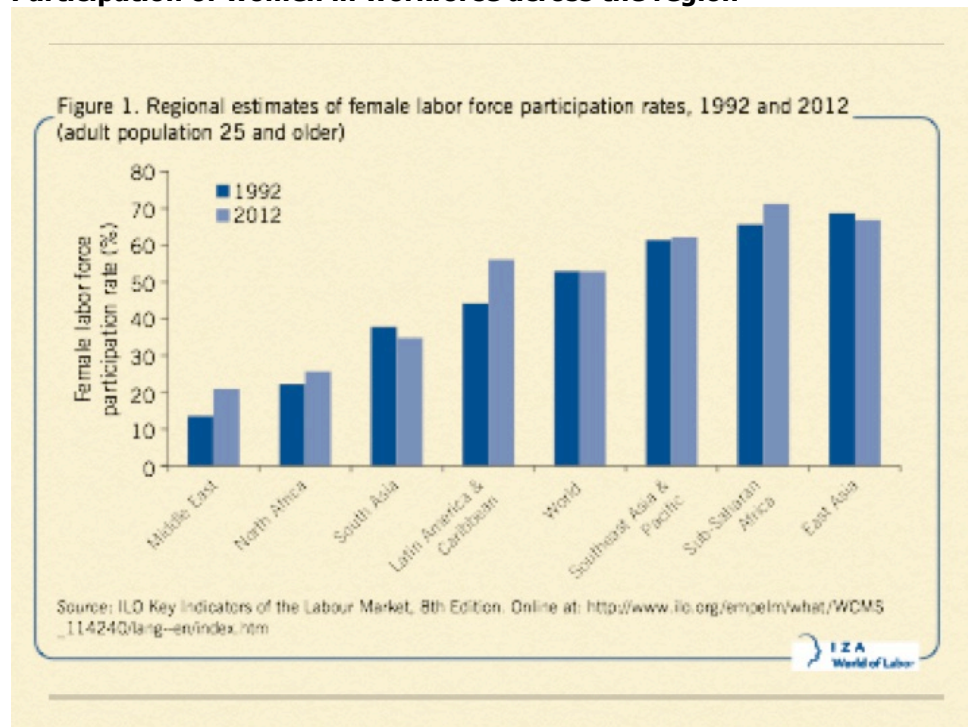
The Asia and Pacific region is losing US\$ 42 billion to 47 billion annually because of women's limited access to employment; and US\$ 16 billion to 30 billion, as a result of gender gaps in education.

Asia-Pacific context

Studies show that poverty in the region has been reduced to a certain extent, however inequality remains, as do issues in governance. There is a range of political systems within the region.

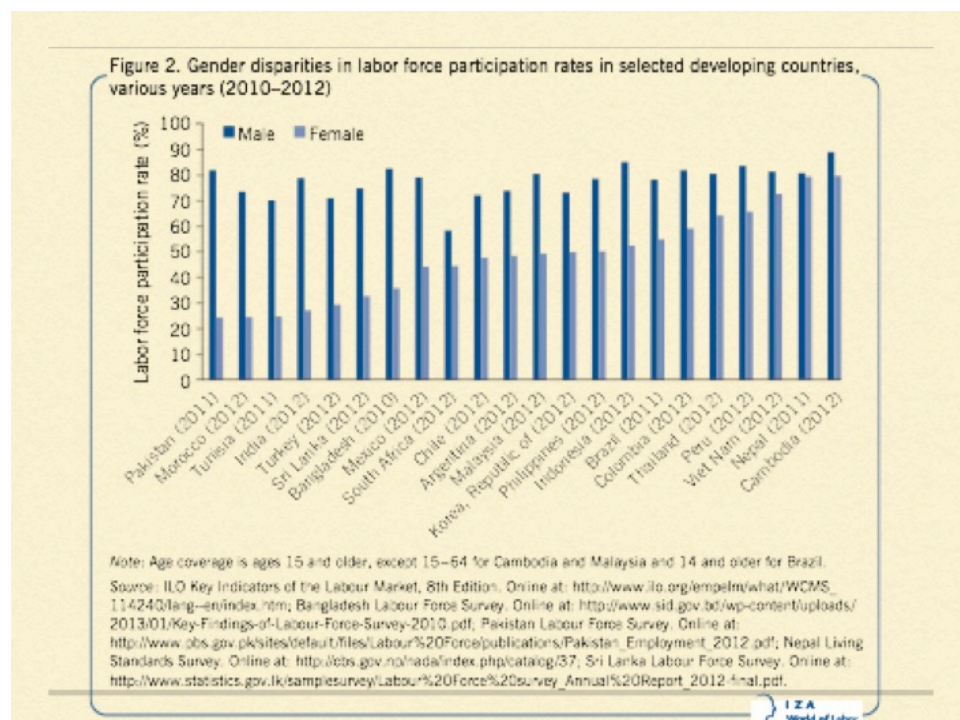
Economically the region is growing, in terms of production GDP is higher than GDP of EU and the US. Our economy is stable and robust, with 5.6 percent growth in 2015 and 5.5 percent growth in 2016 (Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and Pacific, published on May 7, 2015.)

Participation of women in workforce across the region



- East Asia: high GDP and small population
- Middle East: there are rich countries; the low participation rate of women is mainly due to cultural and economic reasons
- South Asia: participation of women is below 40%.
- When you look at the world through the gender lens, you see that The Philippines has higher participation rate than Saudi Arabia, but that does not mean people there are richer. That's how complex the world is when you look through a gender lens.
- There economic and political reasons, but mostly due to cultural reasons. Using the cultural aspect can divide the world differently if you are looking through gender lens.

Fig 2 (likely to include both formal and informal labour force, however each country has slightly different way of capturing this data for ILO)



Nepal and Cambodia are not First World countries, but women need to work. Both countries are still quite agricultural and women participate in that sector.

Question whether agriculture is considered formal or informal sector remains. The extent of capturing the informal sector is rather tricky.

Differences between participation rate of women:

- Pakistan still lacks education and training for women
- In Nepal, women are mainly in subsistence agriculture but are less restricted by cultural norms
- In Bangladesh, there has been a rapid increase in women's participation, because of rapid factory industry growth, mainly in garment sector
- In Sri Lanka – stable and low participation of women due to discrimination
- In India – economy is moving fast, but female participation rates have declined. This is the only country in the region that has seen this. Research showed, increased school enrolment of girls and young women and lack of job opportunities for women to the income effect and mis-measurement of female labor force participation (ILO 2013)

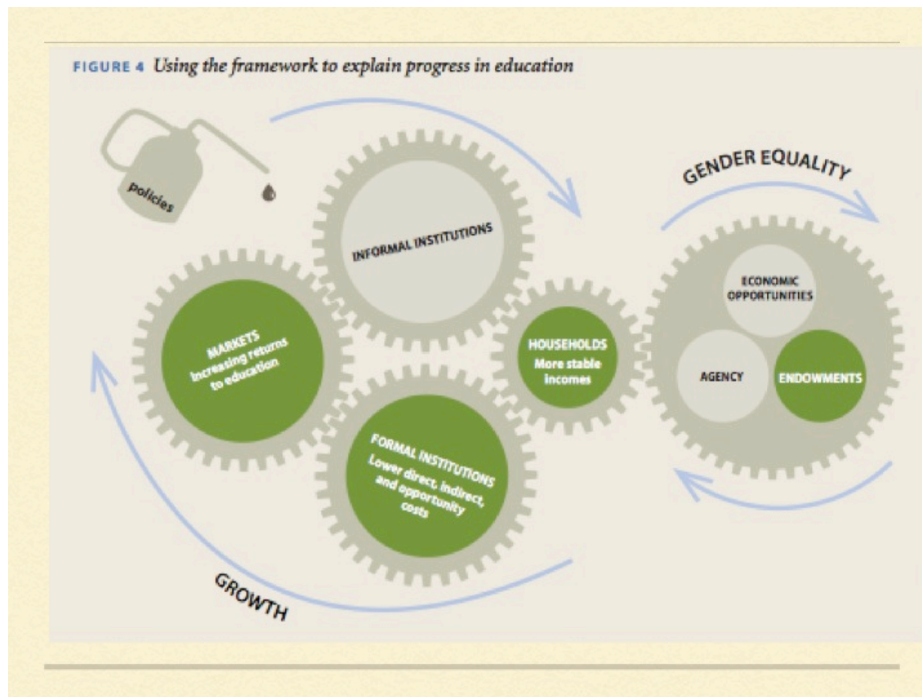
Gender wage gaps



- Highest in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, exceeding 45 percentage points.
- Southeast Asia and the Pacific it also ranged from 25-40 percentage points.
- Positive development since 2005 the male-female gap has fallen in most economies, notably in Bangladesh (11.1 % points) and Cambodia (4.8 percentage points) where export-oriented garment industries have created new job opportunities.
- India's FLFPR decreased => enrolment, declining opportunities for women, unequal access vis-a-vis me

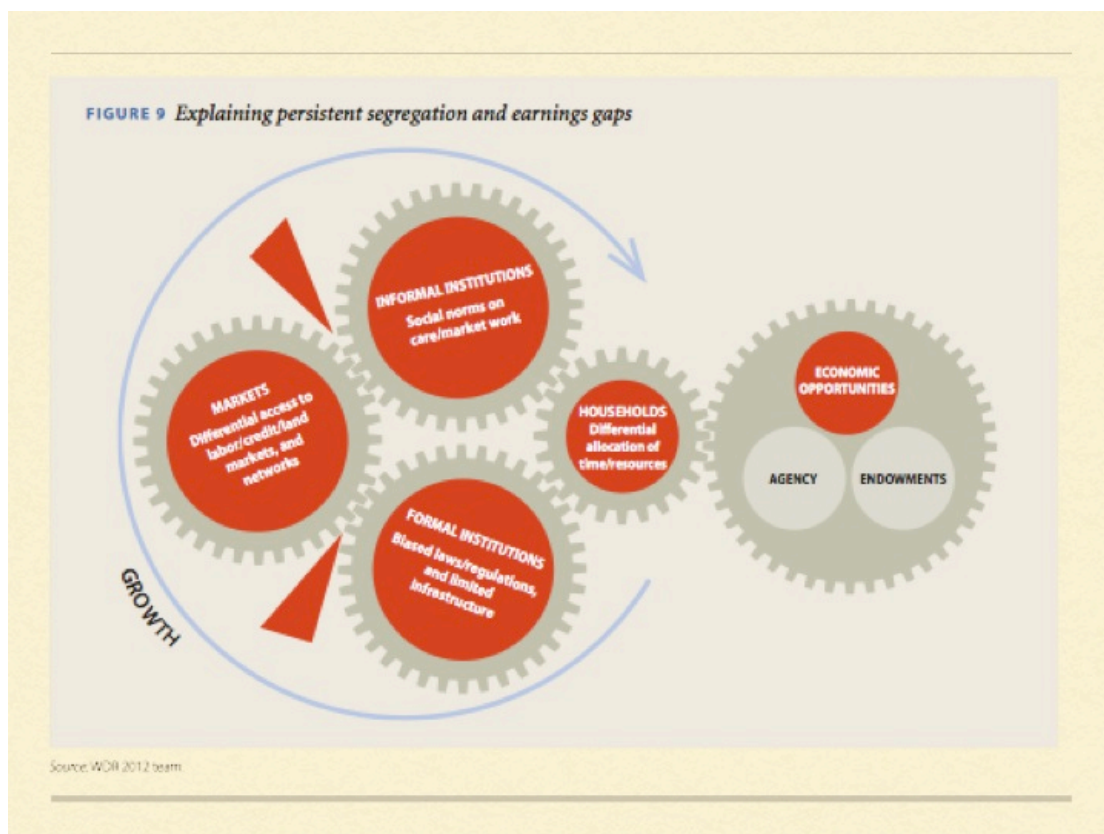
Women wages are lower than men's: women earn 75-80% of men salaries – even in developed countries.

Education as intervention



The figure above outlines different factor affecting gender equality.

Household decisions affect the growth rate of a country, as they determine if boy or a girl go to school. Classical economy does not consider household decisions but modern economy does.



If the four wheels on the left work well – there is positive gender equality and economic opportunities for women are open. If they don't work well there is gender inequality.

Gender segregation in economic activities resulting in wage/ earning gaps

1. Gender differences in time use (women even if they work still come home and do reproductive work), access to assets and credit, and in treatment by markets and formal institutions (including the legal and regulatory framework) all play a role in constraining women's opportunities.
2. Differences in human and physical endowments (including access to assets and credit). Despite increases in women's education, there are still differences in human capital between women and men.
3. Market failures and institutional constraints: labour markets often do not work well for women, especially if their presence is limited in some sectors or occupations (STEM).

Education in Asia Pacific

Education in the region is dynamic and dispersed, and there is a huge disparity in terms of access and quality.

Education participation in the region is higher than the average for the world, but why is this not reflected in the labour force?

- More women working drives economic growth and development.
- Women's decision to work in developing countries is a buffer from shocks.
- Women's propensity to join the workforce is a result of both macro and individual factors.
- Access to quality education improves women's chances to better employment.

BUT

- High female labour force participation rate in developing countries signals poverty.
- Women's wages are less than men.
- Women are more prone to be in vulnerable jobs.
- The reservation wage and expectation of women rise with increasing educational level, for as long as jobs are available.
- Women's work participation is most often unaccounted for, resulting in data gaps in the national income accounts.

TVET

- This is typically limited to traditional female tasks in the garment, food, health and service sectors.
- Low productivity activities
- Low wage/ unpaid family work
- Entrepreneurship > small and medium scale

However women trained and working in welding can earn more, especially in microchip and ship industry.

Barriers affecting women's participation in TVET

- Lack of a social acceptance for women to work alongside men
- Off-limits to women: technical, mechanical or engineering roles
- Lack of basic facilities accommodating women (like separate washrooms, a safe and tolerable environment, additional transportation and female trainers and teachers)
- Living conditions of women, support for child care, etc
- Lack of training and investments on professional development of teachers and trainers; particularly in technical fields
- Lack of legislation against discrimination and for supporting equal opportunities
- Time for TVET institutes to define their own missions and goals relating to gender equality, and to involve them in the continuous processes of monitoring and evaluation.
- TVET institutions have to identify appropriate indicators, tools, and processes for internal monitoring and the frequent evaluation of gender-related activities progress
- TVET should have a separate assessment, accrediting and controlling system of its activities

Improvements

- Teacher reform in Indonesia, Lao PDR and Vietnam
- Indonesia's Teacher's Law in 2005, which raised teacher quality, after the doubling of their salaries
- PISA and TIMSS: Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong, top places in international assessment results, although results have been mixed for middle income countries.
- Vietnam, recent performance in PISA 2012, better than two thirds of participating countries including several OECD countries.

What can be done?

- Policy support to ease women's participation in TVET, e.g., scholarships for women, finances
- Societal support - awareness and breaking stereotypes
- Support by TVET institutions - women friendly facilities, courses, safe and secure environment for women,
- Practical support -> additional pre- or post-training courses, promoting, initiating self-help groups and cooperatives
- Need for Female teachers, trainers
- Employers support and other stakeholders
- Entrepreneurship tailored for women

Skills needed for 21st century

- Workers need to have professional skills such as resilience, partnership development, communication skills, customer care skills – also called transversal skills

What needs to be done

- **Life skills and function-specific skills** for adult education (include information on workers' and human rights; gender orientation; gender and development, etc.)
- Setting **opportunities & mechanisms** for transition to work, i.e., mechanisms to facilitate matching supply of labour with demand, quantity and quality
- Incorporate in **national and local government development plans** (South Korea)
- **Systematic monitoring** towards scaling up and relevance to existing and future economic and socio-political and cultural situations
- **Protection and social support** for informally engaged workers, entrepreneurs
- Demand for **due diligence from the private corporations**, especially those using/hiring low-skilled workers, to set up community-based educational facilities (libraries, sports centre, arts and crafts, etc.)

3.1 Open forum

Summary of key points from the first presentation:

Factors affecting gender, work and skills include:

- Productivity and access to labour market
- Reproductive responsibilities, which through cultural norms impact on women's access to mobility, resources and education
- Education disparity and the need to develop TVET within the gender perspective

These issues are related to productivity and reproductive work, but are there any other issues that should be considered across our region?

Healthcare and reproductive health

- Across countries there is an issue around access to health and reproductive expectations on women and men.
- The Philippines have universal healthcare, which was mainly pushed by women groups, mainly because reproductive health is central to healthcare and health is a human right.

However, implementation will take a while. For example, women involved in sex work are being registered and taking care of sex workers is a part of the public health, although prostitution is not legalized.

- Disparity in access to healthcare for women and men remains, especially in remote areas, due to responsibilities at home, etc.
- In Nepal, during 1990s maternal mortality rate has been very high, approx. 850 per 10,000 births. We have achieved remarkable decrease of 170 per 10,000 births by 2010; it is 80% lower than earlier. However, limited access in mountainous areas is an issue, as are other factors such as early marriage and caste system.
- Measurement of access to reproductive health is sometimes simplified to access to contraception. We should also consider access of resource poor women to obstetric and gynecology services and women's and men's access to information on reproductive health.

Early marriage

- Women's sexuality also influences access to education and work and the link between the two. In the region there are so many well-educated women, but they marry young and then the life for them is just the marriage. They increase their understanding of life but not awareness. Also, education has a meaning - if a girl studies at least for two years at a university, it increases her 'bride price'. This is another 'market' that should be discussed.
- Expectations around early marriage have been mentioned at the youth workshop as one of the key issues faced by youth. This leads to limited options for girls and boys. Are there any data on early child marriage across the region and how does this affect access to and participation in education and work of both men and women?

In Bangladesh

- Early marriage rate is 66% as per UNICEF report from 2013.
- There is now an early marriage prevention law being discussed. Currently, the minimum age is 18 years for women and 25 for men, but our government proposes to lower this to 16 for women and 18 for men – civil society organisations are advocating against this. (Based on discussions, it might be 18 for women and 21 for men).
- We have Women Development policy and Skill Development policy including skill/TVET development for women. We have strategy for gender action plan to encourage both women and men into TVET sector. But, many women work in public sector and they lose their jobs when becoming pregnant. Our government and civil society are actively working on overcoming these challenges.

'Part of our work should be to also look at retrogressive policies in the region; some laws contradict conventions signed by our governments.'

In the Philippines

- There is a tribe called Teburai that practices early marriage from the age of 10. Women groups were able to push for change in this practice through policies.

In India

- Legal age for marrying is 18 for women and 21 for men. In the context of rape or sexual harassment, from 16 onwards woman can have consensual relationship with men. But under the age of 16, if a woman has relationship with a man, even if it is consensual, the man can be charged with rape and kidnapping. This law is sometimes being used by parents, especially in case of inter-caste marriages, to put

the husband behind the bars, dissolve the relationship and force a woman into a different marital relationship. So laws can be used in different ways.

- We should also consider why sometimes young woman want to get married early, run away with a man. This is mainly because the space of intimacy is only legitimized in the marriage, especially in rural and suburban areas. Marriage is the only option left for them. Many women feel very constrained in their parental home, and the idea of marriage is a solution for them.
 - A study conducted by an Indian based NGO Nirantar looking at early child marriage from a feminist perspective showed that we should not only be looking at age but also factors impacting choice. Even if a girl or even boy gets married at 18, does it mean they have decision-making power? Only limiting the age is a simplistic approach for a much deeper issue. By only analyzing drop off from schools due to early marriage – which of course is an important issue - we put formal education above informal. We need to talk about informal learning spaces for people who get married early.
- Lack of education opportunities for young women who are married and have children was also discussed at the youth meeting that took place prior to this workshop. We should look at education systems across the region, and how they are responding to needs of young people married early.
- In central Asia, there is a new trend – not only protect woman during marriage but also divorce. Due to migration, men can find a new wife and can divorce a woman through a text message.

This raises a very important point about single parents, what is the protection for a woman if a man runs away.

Religion

- When considering culture and norms, we should look at religion separately. Interpretation of holy books creates different understanding of how women should work, for example this is the case in Indonesia. We could explore fundamentalist notions and norms.

In Indonesia:

- The minimum age for marriage is 16 years.
- Constitutional court refuses to change the minimum age for marriage as it is against the Islam religion, despite Indonesia being a secular country.

Sexual harassment and caste discrimination

In Nepal, sexual harassment in schools and caste system are important issues to be considered.

Climate change

This is another thing to consider – how does this affect access to work and labour market.

4. Frameworks for Understanding Gender, Work and Skills

4.1 Gendered view on work

Sujata Gothoskar, India

Ms. Sujata Gothoskar has been working as a researcher on issues of gender, work, and organizational processes, communalism, among others. She has also been involved in

campaigns with the women's movement and the labour movement for over 40 years now. Sujata has written in over 70 popular magazines, journals and newspapers in several languages, and continues to do so.

She has been part of the training of lecturers in the Geography, Economics and Sociology departments of the Bombay University and Tata Institute of Social Sciences in early 2000.

She has been involved in the activities of several organizations and is involved in the training of workers, women and activists of unions, groups and non-governmental organizations. Some of these include The Bombay Slum Dwellers' United Front, the Union Research Group, and the Workers' Solidarity Centre, the Women's Centre and the Forum Against Oppression of Women in Mumbai, the Committee for Asian Women, Bangkok, the International Union of Food Workers among others.

The not so colorful kaleidoscope that is women work

Women's work is a kaleidoscope but often black and white. We need to situate women's work and employment in today's world economy to see where we are going, and to map out the interconnections between education, skills and work in the context of gender.

Global context

- The capacity of the world economy to create jobs has been steadily declining since the early 1990s.
- Global unemployment increased by 5 million people in 2013.
- Almost 202 million people were unemployed in 2013.
- Global unemployment is expected to increase by 3 million this year and by a further 8 million in the coming 4 years.
- According to the IMF, in 35 countries of about 100 for which data were available, unemployment in 2012 was above 9%.

People cannot afford to be unemployed. If you eat, you have to work. There is actually a trend of underemployment.

Unemployment figures are always very underestimated. There are many reasons why there is increasing unemployment despite increasing use of technology and productivity.

Reasons why

- Aggregate output growth globally has not been accompanied by similar increases in employment.
- Recent increases in 'self-employment'.

The only increase has happened in the category of self-employment, but this is a very vague category. It could include people selling food on the side of the road as well as a start up.

- Recent 'development' at the expense of other livelihoods, destruction of land, water, air and masses of livelihood options.

There might be a big factory, or oil establishment, where before it used to be field or forest with related livelihoods. This new employment is created on the expense of the environment and often destruction of existing livelihoods.

- Earlier phase of industrialization – more labour intensive.
- This phase more capital and skill intensive.

When you look at early industrialization, it was very labour intensive. At the moment it is technology and capital intensive. Every unit of capital creates smaller units of employment as industrialisation progresses.

- Also, dominance of finance capital, emergence of new trade links and the expansion of global production chains based on the fragmentation and dispersal of production

processes across countries and continents radically changed the production process and labour markets.

There has been a dominance of finance capital and expansion of global production chains.

Lower wages and higher wage inequality

- Difference in wages increased from 51 times to 821 times from 1965 to 2005.
- Every phase of industrialisation has different ways how the top and bottom wages are faced. For example, based on US data but also applies to many other countries the difference between CEO and a standard category of worker was 51 times in 1964; this has increased to 821 times. And continues to increase.
- The financial crisis happened because wage of majority of people, who buy regular wage goods, has either stagnated or plunged and they have less money to buy things.
- Wage inequality is not only economical but also political and social issue.
- This is the background for us to understand greater disadvantages faced by women.

Youth unemployment increased

- ASEAN region: 13.1% in 2014
- Indonesia – 21.6%
- The Philippines – 16.6%
- Poor job quality and vulnerable employment – almost all jobs – new and existing.
- This gives rise to 'discouraged worker effect' – especially women but also men try and try and then give up. We need to look at disastrous consequences of this.

Gender disparity

- Women have a higher unemployment rate than men and the gap has widened since 2009.
- Women have low labour force participation rates across ASEAN.
- In 2013, general unemployment across ASEAN was 4.2%;
- Among young men it was 13.1% and among young women it was 13.4%

Labour market pronounced disparities

- Between 2010 and 2013 in the ASEAN region, labour force participation rate was 70%.
- For men it was 82%
- For women 59%
- Gender gap in the ASEAN is 23%.
- In countries like Malaysia and Indonesia – 30%

Women

- Flexible source of labour – large proportion in vulnerable employment, especially contributing unpaid family labour

Whether it is in shops or farms, women contribute to family business but the money goes to men, even if she might contribute more.

- The number of vulnerable workers increased by nearly 150 million between 2000 and 2011, mostly women (this is data for the majority of Asia)
- Women – time-related underemployment and involuntary part-time work.

It is well documented in Japan, where large proportion of women go part time but this does not necessarily mean they work part time, but they get paid part time.

- Contract labour from 14% to 34% from 1995-96 to 2010-11

Largely workers in large factories on contract employment / daily wage.

- New recommendation in the ILC:

'Transition from the informal to formal economy'

- Clever use of life-cycle changes by the State and by employers.

Because of how work is structured in formal and informal space, for example when women are having children they cannot manage and need to take time off, they are perceived as unreliable worker. This is facilitated by the fact that the state is not provisioning for good childcare, for various things women need in particular life-cycles. It is an unwritten contract between the state and employers to give women the image of an unreliable worker and give all the responsibility for this to women and families.

Contradictory trends

In some countries, simultaneous increase in the incidence of:

- Paid labour
- Underpaid labour
- Unpaid labour and
- Open unemployment

The first three trends persist simultaneously, especially at a time of a crisis such as a family member getting ill.

Control over women's labour

- Control over women's labour – dual aspects

Control is on the side of the employer in terms of who they employ and when, on the other side on the side of the families in terms of mobility, control over her body, etc

- One response – migration. Women over-represented in outmigration.

Migration is one of the coping strategies.

- ILO 2014 document: 10.2% of skilled women and 6.3% of skilled men from low income countries migrated in 2000s due to the lack of economic opportunities for women in their own countries.
- Between 1990 and 2013, intra-ASEAN migration increased from 1.5 million to 6.5 million.

Gender wage gap

- Women in Cambodia and Singapore earn a quarter less than men.
- Almost all Asian countries women earn less.

Reasons:

- Differences in education and training
- Work experience
- Working time
- Differences in access to good jobs
- Plain discrimination – similar job titles but differences in wages.

Occupational segregation

- Crucial feature of labour markets.
- Vertical and horizontal segregation.
- Sectoral segregation
- Often these linked to gender gap in wages
- Scenario – devised to study impact of occupational segregation – female employment in India would have grown by 29.3 million between 1994 and 2010, 20.7 million more than the actual female employment growth of 8.7 million.

These are often related to wage gap but often exacerbate it.

Barriers also in

- Education
- Skill Training
- Families less willing to invest in girls' education

- Accumulation of educational disadvantage
- Gender stereotypes circumscribe opportunities
- Yet for women, higher skills do not necessarily mean better jobs or wages.
- In low income countries, more women likely to be NEET
- Women face barriers as entrepreneurs – time constraints, lack of access to assets, networks. Not in old boys club.

Changes in labour market

- Growing incidence of working poor,
- Hunger and malnutrition,
- Poor health,
- Lower school attendance,
- Higher incidence of child labour,
- Unsupervised and abandoned children,
- Increased vulnerability to future shocks,
- Wage scars,
- Domestic violence,
- Social instability among others

McKinsey Global Institute report

- If there were parity between men and women in labour markets, as much as \$US 28 trillion or 26% could be added to global annual GDP by 2025.
- Gender stereotyping through curricula and textbooks persists.
- Women – less than 30% researchers in STEM fields. Women only 14% of engineering workforce in 2011.

Women's work

- Employment then becomes a subset of work.
- This is even more true in case of women as the oft-quoted line goes: Women's work is never done.

Women and their work often do not get included in statistics. For example, in NSS in India, the broad category 'neither working nor available for work' includes:

- people who are involved in domestic duties
- people who attend to domestic duties and also those engaged in free collection of goods (vegetables, roots, firewood, cattle feed etc.), sewing, tailoring, weaving etc. for household use
- prostitutes etc.

These three categories include people who work, though are not in employment.

- In all these categories, women far exceed men. Time-use studies in most countries indicate that less than 1% of men in both urban and rural areas are involved in domestic work as usual principal activity, while more than 60% of the women are involved in domestic work as usual principal activity.
- With the inclusion of these, female work participation is estimated at 86.2%, while that of men at 79.8%.

On one hand there is no recognition of women's work, on the other hand there is non-recognition of women's skills and de-skilling of all work that resembles 'women's work'. As their work is considered unskilled, women are seen as inferior bearers of labour. Their presence in any significant way within an occupation signals that it is of low status, requiring equally low financial rewards.

This logic may further be extended as third world women, black women, Dalit women etc. are further devalued in the labour market through the prism of race, caste, class etc.

Culture is deeply embedded in social structures that regulate social interactions in every day life as well as in the economy. It is this loop and these social structures that need to be

confronted and challenged and alternatives created which is what all these attempts are all about.

4.2 A gendered view on skills and education: Findings from UNESCO Bangkok regional studies

Aliénor Salmon, UNESCO Bangkok

Aliénor Salmon is a Programme Officer at the Education Policy and Reform Unit at UNESCO Bangkok's Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. She has worked on projects related to peace and gender issues within the context of the quality of education and learning, namely authoring regional studies on 'Learning to Live Together' (2014) and on girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (2015). She is currently coordinating the Happy Schools Project, which focuses on learner wellbeing and holistic development. Prior to joining UNESCO, she conducted field research on education for Myanmar migrant children in Thailand as well as on the education system in Mongolia while working for VSO. In London, Aliénor also worked in advocacy and policy research for a research consultancy and international NGOs. She holds a Master's degree in War Studies from King's College, London where she specialized in diplomacy and conflict resolution.

UNESCO Bangkok Research

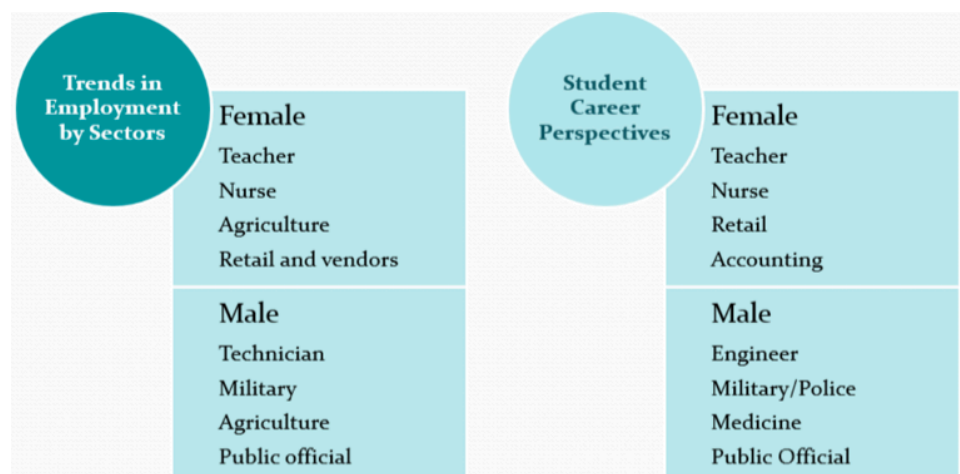
- Aim was to look more into gendered dimensions of learning, quality of education and linking educational and labour outcomes
- Two comparative analytical studies conducted in Partnership with the Korean Women's Development Institute from 2013-2015:
 - 2013 Study: Girls' Career Perspectives and Choices
 - 2014 Study: Girls' Learning Achievement in Mathematics and Science

Research 1: Gender, jobs and education

Research overview

- Objective: Explore factors influencing girls' and boys' career perspectives and choices
- Themes: Education policies and practices, Labour market structures, Career Guidance
- Scope: Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal and Vietnam.
- Timeline: filed research from May to September 2013, published and launched in January 2014
- Focus on 15 years old students

Summary of findings



Influential factors

Sociocultural:

- Gender roles in society
- Norms and attitudes towards women in the workplace
- Perception of 'gender characteristics'

For example in Vietnam, we came across notions like 'silver tongue', i.e. women are good at talking therefore good at selling; 'slender fingers' – their hands are too delicate to do certain types of jobs.

Labour market structures:

- High rate of women in 'vulnerable employment'
- Women receive lower wages
- Proportion of male employers double that of female employers

Education practices:

- Gender stereotyping through curricula and textbooks
- Low frequency of female characters in stories and illustrations
- Lack of pre- and in-service training on gender-sensitive pedagogies

In subjects like history, heroes portrayed in textbooks are always male.

Career guidance:

- Students more influenced by parents than teachers or careers guidance services
- Students perceive professions as better suited to a certain gender
- Girls and boys report career expectations and choices in line with current labour market structures and perceived gender roles

Already at the age of 15 some students had notions on what is a suitable job for a woman and men.

Not every education system can afford to provide career guidance, and students were more influenced by parents than career advisors.

Recommendations

National policies

- Dedicated policies to gender equality in education
- Monitoring and evaluation of implementation: monitoring needs to be aggregated by sex
- Inter-ministry collaboration: need for a bridge between ministries of education and labour and their collaboration on employability schemes
- Employability schemes

Education policies and practices

- Curriculum review and textbook analysis
- Pre-and in-service teacher training
- School resources on career guidance

Career guidance

- Gender-equality training for school career counsellors
- Accessible career guidance services
- Parental involvement in career-related initiatives

Career guidance is in some case provided by private sector, hence only accessible to richer people. There is also a need to improve the work with parents since they are the key influencers.

Research 2: A complex formula



'How to get more girls interested in science? Instill curiosity and encourage them to ask questions.'

Research overview

- **Objective:** Explore factors causing low participation of women in STEM as well as what can be done to attract more girls and women in STEM
- **Themes:** Educational, Psychosocial and Labour Market Factors
- **Scope:** Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Republic of Korea and Vietnam
- **Timeline:** Field research conducted from May and September 2014, published and launched in March 2015

Summary of findings

Learning achievement at 15 years (see table 1)

- Boys continue to outscore girls in maths and science in most countries, with girls increasingly catching up in science.
- The gender gap in science is narrowing but it is still very much there
- However there is a reverse gender gap in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand

Table 1: Learning achievements at 15 years

Country/Jurisdiction	Mathematics			Science		
	Average Score		Difference	Average Score		Difference
	Female	Male		Female	Male	
Australia	498	510	+12	519	524	+5
Hong Kong- China	553	568	+15	551	558	+7
Indonesia	373	377	+4	383	380	-3
Japan	527	545	+18	541	552	+11
Kazakhstan	432	432	0	429	420	-9
Macau- China	537	540	+3	521	520	-1
Malaysia	424	416	-8	425	414	-11
New Zealand	492	507	+15	513	518	+5
Republic of Korea	544	562	+18	536	539	+3
Shanghai- China	610	616	+6	578	583	+5
Singapore	575	571	-4	552	551	-1
Thailand	433	419	-14	452	433	-19
Turkey	444	452	+8	469	458	-11
Viet Nam	507	517	+10	528	529	+1

- There is a lack of female participation in the International Olympiad in Informatics. Since girls are not represented, there are no female role models.

Higher education

- The proportion of women enrolled in STEM varies by country
- Yet, women are concentrated in science-based disciplines as opposed to maths-based disciplines, with few progressing to the highest academic levels
- The higher level of education, the lower participation of women

Influential factors

- **Educational factors:** education policies, student-teacher relationship, teaching strategies, teaching and learning materials, private tutoring, career counseling, scholarships, mentoring.

An example of how gender stereotype is perpetuated in teaching materials:

Figure 18 Grade 9 science textbook illustration on the central nervous system in Cambodia



- Male icons used for running, thinking and listening
- Female icons used for seeing, tasting food and smelling flowers
- **Psychosocial factors:** negative stereotype threat, growth mindset, subject preferences, perceived performance, student attitudes, teacher and parent encouragement

Negative stereotype threat: if there is a negative stereotype associated with a group one belongs to, a member of that group might get so scared of confronting the stereotype that they end up conforming to it.

A study showed that there is a plasticity of the mind, hence anybody has capability to be good at math but these psychosocial factors influence people's ability.

- **Labour market factors:** female labour participation, wage differences, female STEM professionals, female role models, job stability

Some of the STEM related jobs require loads of lab work and many women might feel it is not an appropriate job if they want to have a family.

How can education contribute?

1. By **stimulating interest** among female students in STEM-related subjects.
2. By ensuring that educators are equipped to take more **gender-responsive approaches** and encourage female students to pursue STEM fields, and
3. By taking **policy measures** that are conducive to increasing the number of women in these fields.

4.3 Open discussion

Hierarchy between STEM and social sciences

- *From other point of view, are there any other studies focusing on law, social sciences, etc. I get an impression that we value STEM higher than other sciences and fields.*

It is very interesting to see how we value different sciences. We have more women in social science, and that is considered of lower importance than STEM, however social science is very important. It would be interesting to understand why more women are interested in social science and what influences their choices.

It is true that STEM tends to be valued higher. For example, in Nepal any high performing student is identified for STEM.

The reason why it is important to encourage girls and women to study STEM is that there is a global shortage of people in this field and women are half of the global population. Also, if women are not involved in developing new technologies, e.g. new mobile apps, they might not cater for them.

There is a study on comparing performance on science, math, and reading, which showed that girls significantly outperform boys in reading and do less well than boys in maths and science. Another thing that came out of this research is that the reason why women prefer certain fields is that they might be more motivated by professions that are more altruistic and help others.

It is definitely something that needs to be explored more.

- *Bombay University has done a study looking at women scientists working at high level in neurobiology and their slightly more intuitive rather than rational understanding of reality. If we want to include women in these fields, we need to include other ways for understanding science.*

If STEM fields have been male dominated for years, then there is a masculine way of understanding of those sciences. How do we tackle that?

If half of population is women there needs to representation of women in these fields so it is accessible and relevant to half of the population.

Engineering does not need to be something masculine. When we launched the study we had a panel of successful women in STEM that came to talk. We had a lady from Australia who is a mechanical engineer in petrochemical industry. The reason she chose this field was because she was given freedom to build and construct, but not in a masculine way. As a child, she wanted to create her own machine to do fizzy drinks and that's how she got into engineering. She found that loads of teaching is based on male objects, for example around how to build a car. So this relates back to teaching methodologies.

We should not force women to go into STEM if they don't want, but if they do we should encourage them and ensure gender stereotypes are not making them to think it is not possible for a woman.

- There are two things to consider. One is inclusion and representation; the other how we change the masculine dominated knowledge systems, e.g. rewriting history and science from a gender perspective.
- Changes in the global economy are focusing us on STEM globally. A study in Australia has shown that girls need to be exposed to science from about grade 5, career decisions start from grade 6 and therefore teachers are really important. So mentors and role models are important.

We have low participation of women studying STEM in universities, and although they are successful at studies, once they get into work they don't last, as the work places in these fields are not women friendly, the culture is misogynous. This is a big problem.

- We should be talking about STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). What STEM is doing is that it pushes a false binary between arts and social sciences and science. They both need each other to gain the full potential.
- There are not enough positive stories of women in STEM subjects – and stories that do come out are always about a woman struggling in male's world. So the messages we are giving are that they are not welcome in those fields and that it is a hard place to be. The focus should be on women alongside men. Also, men need to also understand it is normal to have women in these fields.
- We need to consider that women have different body type and we go through different things biologically. So there is nothing wrong with women choosing an easier job as they need to attend to children every morning, etc.
- Girls might be interested in STEM but even from childhood we are given different toys than boys. As a girl, you for example get a doll to take care of someone rather than a car to inspect what it consists of.

Initiatives to address the issues

- Despite all the discourse on women's unpaid work not being counted or their work in agriculture not being recognized, not much is changing. Reality is we cannot change this overnight. How about introducing incentives such as joint bank account so the income

from agriculture goes to both. Even in cases women chose to stay at home, could money go straight into her bank account to start giving value to this work?

- There are few positive initiatives:
 - a) Huffington Post has a page dedicated to girls in STEM.
 - b) Google's Made with code – it is girl friendly website for the girls to learn how to code, using female objects
 - c) Intel's Make hers – competition where girls can compete with technological inventions, these are often relevant gadgets women need
- On the ground there were many creative changes happening for example creative teaching approaches and alternative textbooks. Including insistence that arts is not a feminine subject, making more of the market context. There are much more varied job choices for arts students than there were before.

Change is slow, but it is there. However there are structures that limit change and they need to be challenged too.

- L'Oreal UNESCO Award for Women in Science is another initiative, which gets loads of media coverage.

Negative relationship between education attainment and employment

- Some studies in India are showing negative relationship between education attainment and employment. The reason being that the greater education you achieve, the less likely you are to go into professions that involve manual/unskilled labour. So even if people from poor communities go into higher or more skilled education, there is likelihood they may stay underemployed or unemployed.

In the context in South Asia, for example in families involved in building trade, if children attain higher level of education, they do not want to get involved in those trades, and there are few jobs that cater to graduates. The labour market has been very restricted and very specialized and technologically orientated. That's why many people involved in trades, fishing, etc say they don't want to get their children educated as then they just sit around.

Closing remarks of the discussion

For a long time, we have been looking at these issues from a specific perspective. Unless we start looking at this holistically including media, the world of work, market economy, etc - we won't bring about a real change. It is the political economy that governs; it also governs the cultural norms.

'Unless we have everyone on board we cannot make the desired changes. Structures at all levels need to come together and we need a collective holistic effort.'

5. End of day synthesis

In sub-regional groups, the participants were asked to represent two key ideas discussed on the first day of the workshop that stood out for them.

South East Asia

- Deconstruct and reconstruct

South Asia

- Women segregation is universal across the world
- Response to the discussed issues needs to be dynamic

South Pacific

- Holistic nature of these issues and how they are interconnected: for example a woman in Solomon Islands who was facing domestic violence was going to work. But in the end she lost her job because she was missing loads of days because of injuries.
- When we focus on similarities across countries, we can build the momentum and work towards change together

East Asia

- Education, skill, work – we can't think about these separately and need to think about the continuity.
- Gender gap is everywhere and need to be addressed in government policy.

South Asia

- Women are participating more in work because of men in rural areas in Nepal are going to Gulf states for work so development and gender disparity should not be seen in an isolation



Day two: Tuesday 27 October 2015

6. Sub regional contexts

The 2nd day started by sub-regional groups of delegates reporting back on what they discussed in last session on the previous day. During that session the sub-regional groups looked more closely at the realities of gender, education, skills and work in their sub-region. They were also asked to bring into focus the sub-regional context on gender, education, skills and work as well as the main issues in their countries.

6.1 South Asia

Education

- In Bangladesh, informal spaces are facilitated by NGOs and women join formal primary education but drop out of secondary

Skills

- In Afghanistan, there is a huge gap between the hard skills and the job market. There is a lack of soft skills such how to interview and customer skills. Only 33% of women attend centres providing these skills.

Gender

- Barkha CDs in India is an attempt to make textbooks more gender sensitive. Similar initiative exists in Bangladesh.
- Textbooks are only as good as teachers, and there is not enough investment into changing teachers' mindset to make it more gender sensitive.
- Schools overall are not gender responsive hence girls drop out.
- Giving skills is not enough; investment into women education is still very little.

Work

- In Bangladesh, working environment does not cater well for women workers. Although employment in factories is high, women are not equipped with any skills, so if they leave their job, they do not have any other skills other than to operate a machine.
- Also the work environments are vulnerable spaces for women. Workshops are often too far and it is not safe for women to travel to them.
- In India, even if women develop skills, there is a need to break social barriers, such as enabling them to access public spaces.
- In Nepal, women participation in work is high because many men migrate. High participation is not because there are no social barriers to participation but because there are no men available to do the work.
- In Nepal, there are many interventions for women to access school, they managed to integrate lot of gender into education, but none of this translates into actual skill and work. This is the gap that needs to be bridged.

6.2 Central Asia

This sub-regional group included Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The countries are similar but there are differences in rural areas.

We looked at four aspects of women lives in our countries:

- a) Education – compulsory education for women is up to year 11-12, afterwards it is not required for women. Higher qualification is not of good quality. There are opportunities in technical, but not in business education. There not universities providing these subjects, and there are no working places available, even if women study these subjects abroad and return.

- b) Economy – 45% of the labour force are women, and 70% of women are unemployed. Entrepreneurship is very developed, as there are many organisations that enable women to develop skills related to entrepreneurship.
- c) Politics – many ceremonies, such as high price for brides
- d) Social – family attitudes

Statistics:

- 48.5% women vs. 51.5% men in general education
- 44% women vs. 55.2% men in secondary education
- 38% women vs. 61% men in higher education
- 42% women vs. 57% men in post graduate education

Student distribution in higher education by specialisation:

- Industry and construction – 16% women / 83% men
- Transport and communication – 10% women / 81% men
- Agriculture – 70% women / 82% men
- Economics and law – 19% women / 80% men
- Education – 52% women / 47% men
- Healthcare, physical education and sport: 43% women / 57% men

6.3 East Asia: Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea and parts of China

This sub-region faces different kinds of issues in terms of gender equality. Similarly to other sub-regions, education is too expensive especially at high school and university levels. Education policy is too much market driven and productivity orientated.

When analysing these two issues through the gender lens, in Japan and Hong Kong single mothers are not making enough money to send kids to high school and university; hence victims are children of single mothers.

In China, girls do not have a chance to get into high school or higher education because parents prefer to send sons to learn rather than girls.

6.4 South East Asia

5 key issues for action

1. Policies on women protection are not being implemented well if they are available, or they are not available at all. There are many migrant workers and we need to look at policies for migrant workers, and also at policies on domestic workers. Since we are transcending into ASEAN integration this year, we discussed how will all the countries go into this new platform.
2. Cultural issues around household division, women are mainly involved in household work and hence miss out on work outside home. Also, there is prevalence of child marriage, for example in Indonesia.
3. Religion – there are many different religions and some religious leaders are very fundamentalist and promote fundamentalist ideas preventing women from doing things.
4. Access to economic resources, women are still not able to own land for example, and have less access to information technology.
5. Sex education: how do we entice men to be educated on gender equity? Men are perpetrators of women rights, so it is important to involve them in learning. Also, there is a need to engage with the LGBT community in the region.

6.5 South Pacific

There are regional differences in experiences of Australians and New Zealand and in islands (Big Ocean States – BOS – we decided to change the name from SIDS – Small Island Developing States – since they look after a big part of the ocean).

Some of the common issues are:

- Gender based violence
- Gender segregated workforce
- Extractive industries both in Australia and BOS states, e.g. mining causing environmental impact, some countries are overfishing BOS' seas. Some countries need to use mining to get money for basic services.
- Migration is often of unskilled migrants, enforced by trade agreement that lacked transparency. There was unequal power balance in those agreements.
- Dealing with post colonial legacies
- Very diverse populations – some of the highest language density per capita in BOS states and indigenous population in Australia
- Aid and political control through aid

7. Gender and Work in the Real World

7.1 Opening remarks

Elaine Butler, WAVE

Day one sessions focused on global & regional frameworks and perspectives on gender, education & lifelong learning, & decent work. Those sessions reminded us of changes that are happening globally and that despite our differences impact on each and all of us. We were also reminded how glacial change seems to be around gender issues – so often it seems like we are taking 'two steps forward and one and half step back'. But we ended in optimism, knowing how the collective that is ASPBAE provides us with opportunities to work collaboratively to bring about change.

This morning's session grounds us in a number of 'real worlds, bringing narratives from Hong Kong, the Philippines, PRC and Australia and its neighbours. It provides perspectives from a labour NGO in China, migrant workers, marginalised youth and the informal sector.

7.2 Trade Union

Choi Suet Wah, CWWN, Hong Kong

Choi Suet Wah has been working with the Chinese Working Women Network (CWWN) as Chief Coordinator since 2006. As a coordinator of the organization, she oversees and implements the workers and women rights projects in China. She also acts as a trainer on gender and labor rights in different occasions, which are targeted at labor NGO workers, feminists, university students. Prior to joining CWWN, she worked with different Hong Kong NGOs as well as international human rights organizations and played a part in the social movement. She also actively participated in student activities during her undergraduate study. Suet Wah received a degree from the Chinese University of Hong Kong (BA, CUHK) and masters degree in Cultural Studies with distinction from Lingnan University in 2005.

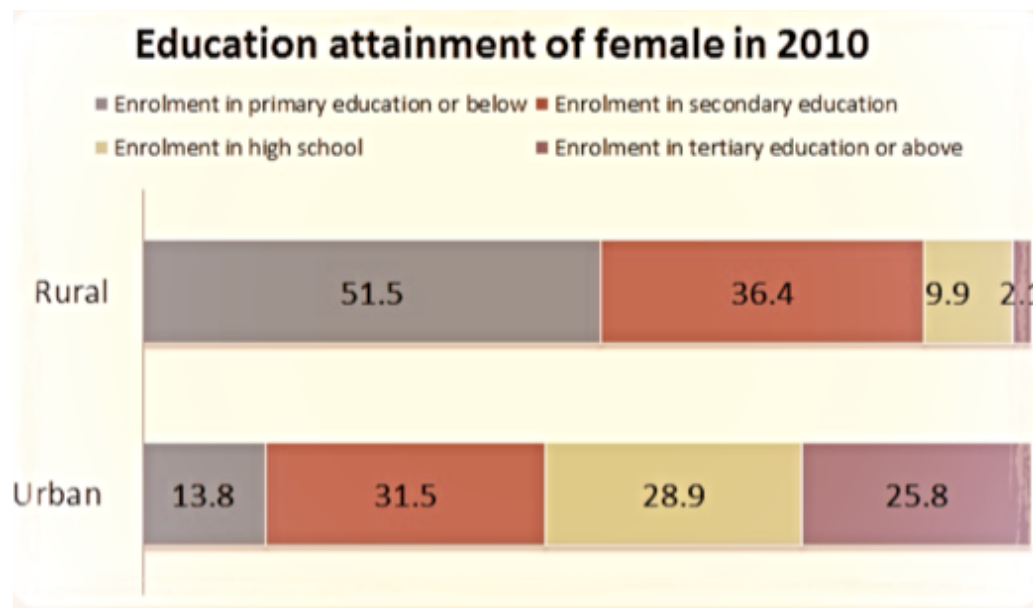
Chinese Working Women Network in China

All the work of the organization is conducted in China

- In China gender inequality starts from the birth, as many people go for abortion when they find out they are expecting a baby girl. This is of course because of the one child policy.
- Education resources go to boys because of cultural issues. There are still notions that men should take charge of the economy for the family in the future.
- Citizen registration in China – means that if you are born in rural areas, you enjoy different welfare as the city born people. There are two welfare systems in one country.
- Economy is developing; government invests loads into cities and coastal areas but not in Western China.
- Marketization of the education system leads to schools being expensive. First class universities in cities are cheaper than universities in rural areas. Girls are having less chances of getting higher education; instead they get vocational training to become factory workers.
- Many women workers continually study hard after work for example beauty therapy, hospitality, travel industry, so they can leave factory, as it is not a decent work. However jobs are limited, and it is very expensive to study these vocational skills.

Marketization of the education system

- Disparity between rural and urban areas
- 25.8% of urban female population study at a university or college, however only 2.1% of women do in rural areas



Migrant women workers

- These are integral migrants, as they don't enjoy city welfare 'Hukou' although they live and work there
- They do not have the same social protection as the city people
- They need to marry, as patriarchy still influences notions that woman needs to marry, have children and family early
- Oppressions from production area: They work long hours, for low wages and there are many occupational health hazards
- Their basic labour rights are violated as they do not have rights to organize, strike and exercise collective bargaining

Unions

- There is only one recognized trade union – ACFTU - that often does not function effectively and ignores women workers' rights

- There is also ACWF – government recognized women’s union. Originally, it was supposed to advocate on rights of women, but due to cultural reasons they don’t touch these issues and instead focus on ‘social harmony’, which is a political task enforced by the government.

What do labor NGOs work on?

- Conduct training and education on OSH, labour rights, women’s health and gender consciousness in industrial zones
- Provide a learning and sharing platform for workers
- Provide support to workers who are defending their rights individually and collectively

NGOs are perceived as making the country as unstable. Therefore many NGOs are shut down and need to reopen, then they are closed again etc. and the situation is getting from bad to worse.

Summary

There is a loop:

- Girls have lesser opportunities to achieve higher education than boys
- This leads to a wage gap and fewer job opportunity
- No income gives women limited choices and lack of self-autonomy
- There is not enough support from government and society for women workers.
- So their voices are not being heard, hence they cannot influence policy that affects them.
- Therefore situation for the next generation of women does not change.

7.3 Migrant workers

Raxiey Asolfo, MFA, Philippines

Raxiey Adolfo is a program assistant at Migrant Forum in Asia. As a program assistant, he provides support to the MFA Regional Coordinator and program officers in coordinating MFA programs particularly in the areas of documentation, report writing, liaising with members and partner organisations and providing logistics support. Currently, he is involved in the following programs- Lawyers Beyond Borders, ASEAN, recruitment reform and post-2015 development agenda.

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) is a regional network of non-governmental organisations, associations, trade unions and advocates, working together to promote the protection and rights of migrant workers. MFA was conceived in 1990 in a meeting of migrant workers' advocates in Hong Kong and was formally established in 1994 in a forum held in Taiwan (China), entitled 'Living and Working Together with Migrants in Asia'. MFA is active in key inter-governmental regional consultative processes (ASEAN, Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue and SAARC). At the global level, it engages with the UN Human Rights Mechanisms, Treaty Bodies and Special Mandates and the International Labour Conference to highlight migrants' rights concerns in the region.

Raxiey is a graduate of BS International Relations Major in Diplomacy from the Mindanao State University. Being an active youth leader of the Philippines, Raxiey has been very active in social reforms, human rights advocacies and youth empowerment programs in the country.

Migration in Asia

- Every year, 2.5 million Asian workers leave their countries to work abroad. More than half of Asia’s migrant workers are women. If we were to include the irregular migrants and the undocumented, statistics would even be higher.
- Migrants face various situations and issues: many enter a country without going through the formal channels, many overstay, their work permits do not correspond to the terms of their employment contracts, the job promised to them is non-existent, their employers fail to register them. Those whose visas are tied to their employers and decide to run

- away become undocumented for lack of identity and travel documents.
- Women now move as economic, temporary and independent migrants largely to survive.

Issues underlying women migration

- Women migrant workers face unique challenges because of the sex- and gender- based discrimination and abuse they encounter throughout the migration cycle.
- They also experience intersecting forms of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, cultural particularities, nationality, language, religion or other status that may be expressed in sex- or gender-specific ways.
- There is a lack of access to safe, legal, low-cost migration schemes, and denial of labour and social protection in the informal economy leads to exploitation, abuse, and human rights violations, especially sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Domestic workers

- Most women migrant workers in South and South East Asia are domestic workers.
- Those who are documented migrate via Temporary Foreign Workers' Program (TFWPs) where their visa is often tied to their job and employer.
- They often pay recruitment fees to employment agencies that may be high enough to amount to extortion and exploitation.
- Women who are most at-risk include those who may become undocumented if they lose their contract, especially if they escape abusive or exploitative employers or are unfairly dismissed.
- Some women also become trapped by "fly now, pay later" schemes which leave them in debt bondage to agencies, or their employers, if the debt is transferred to an employer who may also hold their visa. This problem persists even when agencies operate legally, because the industry is unregulated and privatized.
- Women are more likely than men to borrow from family, friends, or at higher rates from money-lenders.
- Undocumented migrant domestic workers, many of whom migrate in cross-border regions, may also pay excessive fees to illegal employment agencies and intermediaries, and in the worst cases, traffickers and migrant smugglers. They are at heightened risk of violence.
- Women who are undocumented migrants, or who lose their documented status, risk criminalization, detention, and deportation.
- Domestic workers are also denied labour and social protection, because domestic work is largely relegated to the informal economy and low value is attached to unpaid care work.
- The ILO reported in 2010 that 40% of countries excluded domestic work from their labour laws worldwide.

Gender responsive labor and social protection for women migrant workers

There is a need for gender responsive labor and social protection for women migrant workers as:

1. Social protection is a right and it is an entitlement of everybody including women migrant workers.
2. Gender inequalities mediate the differences in the way men and women experience crisis and respond and cope with the crisis.
3. It would optimize poverty reduction and development potential of migrant women. In addition, as data show women invest more responsibly than men, they invest their income and remittances in food, clothing, child care, healthcare, education. This builds human and social capital and has positive inter-generational impact.
4. It would catalyze changes in gender relations and women's empowerment. There is evidence of women being more comfortable negotiating in their households and public spaces when they have a positive migration experience with social protection.

About Migrant Forum of Asia (MFA)

- MFA is a regional network of non-government organizations (NGOs), associations and trade unions of migrant workers, and individual advocates in Asia who are committed to protect and promote the rights and welfare of migrant workers.
- It is guided by a vision of an alternative world system based on respect for human rights and dignity, social justice, and gender equity, particularly for migrant workers.

- MFA acts as a facilitator, a regional communication and coordination point between member-organizations and advocates, forging concerted action to address discriminatory laws and policies, violence against women migrants, unjust living conditions, unemployment in the homeland and other issues affecting migrant workers.

MFA is committed to working on the following:

1. Capacity Building
2. Policy-Advocacy: together with its members MFA advocate for the furtherance of the rights and welfare of the migrant workers despite the fact that there are international migrant conventions and policies that protects them.
3. Networking

MFA's programmes

- **Step it up: Dignity, Rights, Development** global campaign launched by MFA and affiliated civil society organizations, trade unions, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and ILO, which highlights the significance of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW / UN Migrant Workers Convention).
- **Recruitment reform:** is an initiative of Open Working Group on Labour Migration and Recruitment, which was set up in May 2014 by MFA and the Global Coalition on Migration (GCM) and other civil society organizations. Campaign priorities include:
 - Zero Fees for Migrant Workers
 - Zero Tolerance for Contract Substitution
 - Support for Ethical Recruitment
 - Human Rights in Government to Government Agreements
 - Data Collection & Research
- **Asian parliamentary caucus for labour migration** aiming to promote the cause of migrant workers in our respective national parliaments; to collectively engage at the regional and international levels in the development of agreements and legislation; and to acknowledge the need to consider national, economic, and human security in the management of migration issues
- **#OURHANDS campaign:** aims to inform domestic workers of their rights as enshrined in ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, a landmark instrument that recognizes domestic work as work and that domestic workers are workers who have the same rights as all other workers.
- **Lawyers beyond borders:** Lawyers Beyond Borders is an international network of legal experts interested in advocating for the rights of migrant workers, brought together by MFA.
- **Migrant rights violation-reporting system (MRVRS):** an online reporting system for migrant rights violations owned and managed by MFA. It is designed to document cases from members and partners that they have handled and worked on to be used in advocacy.

7.4 Marginalized youth

Hayley McQuire, ASBAE and Dili Ram Subedi, NCE

Hayley McQuire is a young Aboriginal & South Sea Islander Australian who works with ASPBAE Australia as a capacity support and advocacy advisor. Prior to joining ASPBAE she worked in indigenous affairs and education. Her passion is working with Indigenous youth from around Australia

Dili Ram Subedi is the Secretary of National Coalition of Education (NCE) Nepal, which has 286 members. He participated in ASPBAE's 2013 BLDC – 'Youth voices of Education, and represented NCE Nepal on the National Working Committee of Education- Beyond 2015.

A day before this conference started, ASPBAE and Azad Foundation organized a youth forum to get a sense of experiences of the marginalized youth in Asia Pacific region in terms of education, work and gender.

- Why are youth so important? In our region, we have 750 million youth; this constitutes 19% of our population. They are important stakeholder in the decisions that are being made in the region and the world.
- Sometimes there is a perception that any young person can represent youth. Within the youth population there are different experiences. If you don't come from a well-resourced background, if you come from rural area, if you are a woman – your experiences are different to those young people who are growing up in an urban area and in a well-resourced family. There are marginalized youth and their voices often get unheard. The workshop provided space for the marginalized youth to interact and raise issues they face around education and work.

Common challenges

- Access to job market
- Lack of autonomy and being able to make own decisions
- Access to opportunities and getting support to act on them

Why is youth engagement important?

- Family structures and attitudes are not youth friendly, especially young women from marginalized communities are not getting access to education and work
- Access and quality of education is crucial to development of youth, most of the countries achieved remarkable achievements in accessing primary education
- Youth is not only for the future, we want to be partners for today
- Job market is not youth friendly especially for marginalized youth, as the skills they have are not linked to job market
- Parents make decisions about education on behalf of their kids, for example what they should study
- Youth don't have autonomy to decide on marriage and on work, i.e. whether they should work or not
- Women cannot go out independently
- Opportunities in education for marginalize youth need to increase by making more scholarships available
- There is also need for counseling for marginalized youth who are not getting support from family
- Young people cannot claim their sexual health rights
- Due to cultural and religious norms they need to deal with issues such as early marriage, dowry system, seclusion during menstruation which prevents girls from going to school
- Caste system makes it difficult for Dalits to go to schools, particularly in India and Nepal

7.5 Informal sector

Wu Mei Lin, HKWWA, Hong Kong

Wu Mei Lin worked in an electronic factory for 7 years before she joined a labour group in 1985 as organizer. She worked as union organizer till 1992, and then studied for several years. In 1998 Wu Mei Lin started work at HKWWA where she is still employed.

Gender and work in Hong Kong

Key issue in Hong Kong is that poverty and gender inequality increase in economic growth. There is feminization of poverty, woman is more vulnerable in every aspect, and number of working poor is increasing:

- In 2012, 1 in every 6 people live under the poverty line

- 60% of older persons and 63% of working poor persons are women, majority of which are aged between 45 and 59 years old
- Child care service are insufficient and force women to choose casual work

Informal workers

- “Flexible” working time employment = less labour law protection as they are considered as self-employed worker
- Most are elderly and young new arrival women from Mainland China
For the last ten years every day 150, mostly women, migrate from the mainland China. Migrants arriving from China need a permanent permit to work, which takes 4-5 years. Also, education qualifications from China are not recognized in Hong Kong. Women get devalued, have lower economic power, they lack networks and family support and it is not easy for them to find jobs.
- Less unionized
- Under subcontract system - lowest cost get the business, which causes wage to go lower.

Social impact of casual work for women

- Women’s labour have been de-valued and is not recognized by society
- Economic power affects women’s position in family
- Low family income increases emotional stress
- Lack of protection for pre and after retirement lives
- Attacks women’s self esteem and self positive image
- Income disparity between the two sexes and increase in gender inequality

Education:

- Public schools offer cost-free 12-year primary education and secondary
- Eight public and one private universities, the study fee is high at USD 13,4000 per year, and most student fund it through loan so after 4 years of study graduate with a debt of 53,000USD

Skills training for adult women

- Employment Retraining Bureau (ERB) provide free employable skills training courses workers
- However training is mostly for low income and low skill jobs such as domestic worker, catering, retailer, childcare, and service for elderly.

Trainings organized with gender perspective through union and worker cooperatives

- Cooperatives movement as democratic movement, women movement, and labour movement
- Training provided by cooperative:
 - Under the principles of cooperatives.
 - Decisions made in cooperatives are balanced by the pursuit of profit, and the needs and interests of members, their communities, and welfare of their society
 - Members in cooperative have to voice out opinion, lobby with different opinion and make compromise, participate in decision-making and analyse information.
- Cooperatives are led by 7 principles as defined by International Cooperatives Alliance:
 1. Voluntary and open membership
 2. Member economic participation
 3. Autonomy and independence – guarantee the conditions under which members own, control and benefit from the business
 4. Provide education, training and information sharing. It ensures that members can contribute effectively to development of their cooperatives.
 5. Cooperation among cooperatives – strengthens the effectiveness and economic viability of cooperatives
 6. Concern for community – addresses corporate responsibility
- Cooperatives provide education, training and information sharing. They ensure that members can contribute effectively to development of their cooperatives.

There are cooperatives for catering, domestic, cleaning workers, etc. They can form a union with other workers in that sector so they can negotiate with their employer as a group. Cooperatives do not have the fear of being fired by the boss if they raise their voices.

- Unions: confront exploitation; organize workers from the same factory or industry; build workers' identity; open to workers
- Cooperatives: attempt to realize the democratization of production, workers' participation in production decisions; organizing targets can come from various background



7.6 Open discussion

Migrant workers should learn about their destination country before migrating, learn about the cultural norms, etc. Many people from Bangladesh work in Malaysia and Gulf countries. Many face domestic and sexual violence from their employers. What can they do before leaving Bangladesh?

In Bangladesh there is a government provided pre-departure training for them to understand what they need to do and not to do to protect themselves. Government should also provide self-defense classes.

Migrant workers often don't understand certain policies due to language barriers, so more should be done on standardization of laws and then teach these laws on the ground level in language migrant workers understand.

We need to encourage and empower women to claim their rights, as often even if they are aware of their right they are oppressed to recognize them.

7.7 Synthesis of the session

- Some big questions are coming out of the discussions so far: Where and with whom does the responsibility around human rights stand?
- Key issues include: culture, resources, location and data – what counts and gets measured
- In education we have a big difference in what is happening on the ground and the impact of marketization of education, commodification of education and education as a commodity. This is raising issues around cost, high fees, access, relevance, quality and choice.

- Raise of TVET as a global industry and what is this doing to formal and informal education and status of different types of education and training that is available. It is reproducing segregated labour markets and we go back to the described loop.
- Employment: global capitalism and labour mobility as a necessity for survival. We have decreasing jobs, which raises questions about opportunity, raising insecurity and personal security.
- Employment market is not youth friendly, there are layers of discrimination
- International conventions and governments find it difficult to deal with these issues
- Intersectionality: all different things that can come under the equity banner layer up one under another

Advocacy and voice

- There is another kind of reproduction in the name of production - it is reproduction of discriminate practices that are being allowed to exist
- We need to look at the gap between production and reproduction and see what we can do in this tension that lays there, first of all through strategic alliances. Today, we saw good examples of working in the center and on the margins at the same time.
- Importance of international agreements and conventions that protect the rights of people: almost all of our governments signed to Commission on the Status of Women 55, which is about education and training, and decent work for women and girls. The question is how we get the agreements put into action plans. This is even more important as we get into the complex world of SDGs where education and gender are undercutting all of them.

8. Country Context on Gender, Skills and Work

This session focuses on context of India. India is home to 1.2 billion people and still growing, likely to overtake China soon. 25% of the world workforce is expected to be in India. There are over a million 'millionaires' but there are huge disparities. There are more than 300 million of working people and India needs to have 10 million jobs created every year.

8.1 UNESCO India programme

Huma Masood, UNESCO

Note from Mr Shigeru Aoyagi, UNESCO Representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka, and Director of the UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office:

Friends,

I take this opportunity to congratulate both – ASPABAE and Azad Foundation as well as participants invited from Asia and the South Pacific, including strategic partners and international organisations such as DVVI, UIL, UNESCO, UNGEI and ILO for organizing and participating in the 'Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Gender, Education, Skills and Work', 26-29 October 2015, New Delhi, India.

This conference is taking place just one month after the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 by the UN General Assembly in New York, 25-27 September 2015. One of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4) is related to education with the formulation 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

This goal has been in the focus of the World Education Forum (WEF 2015) held in Incheon, Korea from 19-22 May 2015, which set a transformative vision for education over next 15 years. At the WEF 2015 session on 'Skills for work and entrepreneurship' the participants had deliberated how governments can promote systematic reforms, including through

strengthening links with the private sector and other stakeholders outside the TVET sector, improve the relevance of qualifications, increase and diversify funding for skills development.

Indian scenario

- With an ambitious target of a 'skilled India' where over a 500 million people will be trained by 2020, the new Ministry for 'Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)' has initiated a slew of measures:
- Launch of National Skills Mission – currently work in progress and this will certainly transform the skills and employment landscape of the country:
 - Alignment of National Skills Mission with other key missions
 - 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and 'Swachh Bharat', etc
 - Establishment of National Skills University in Raipur, Chattisgarh is underway
 - Revised National Skill Development Policy
 - LMIS (Labour Market Information System) to be developed, and
 - NSDC (National Skills Development Council) has already taken the initial steps by coming out with Television Commercials and a holistic communication campaign with the tagline 'Hunar Hoi Toh Kadar Hai' – translation 'if there is talent – there is respect'.

In the content of Women – Education and Employment

- There are 1213 Women ITIs and women wings in general it is. The training capacity in these institutions has increased from 47,391 in 2005-06 to 51,804 in 2009-10. As per recommendations of the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT), reservation of seats for women in it is for craftperson training has been increased from 25% in 2005 to 30% (India, 12 plan document)
- India is currently ranked 101 in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report, and 124 in the index on Economic Participation and Opportunity¹, out of 136 countries. This discrepancy between skills and the needs of the labour market is a major factor preventing young women and men from finding and maintaining stable employment². Higher unemployment rates and increasing worldwide competition **highlight the need to raise the education and skill level of the workforce. Poor education quality leads to a significant mismatch between labour market needs and the skills of graduates.**

UNESCO response

As a follow up to the recently adopted SDG4 UNESCO and UNICEF in collaboration with Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD), Government of India, organized the 'EFA Unfinished and Post 2015 Education Agendas in South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries', from 13 to 14 October 2015, New Delhi.

The SAARC countries adopted 'New Delhi Declaration' for enhancing collaboration for Education 2030. Some of the key areas identified in the agreement for commitment are:

- 'Ensuring that both girls and boys, especially from marginalized groups complete their education with expected learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) defined for respective levels of education (bullet 4);
- 'Promoting lifelong learning through better integrating formal, non-formal and informal education and addressing emerging challenges such as the need to improve the development of skills for life and for work and to foster global citizenship for all learners in all age groups (bullet 5)

UNESCO New Delhi is now in the process of developing the 'SAARC Framework for Action for Education 2030'.

- Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education, 2011 focuses on girls' secondary education and women's literacy.
- UNESCO convened the Third International Congress, 'Transforming TVET: Building Skills for Work and Life' 14-16 May 2012, in Shanghai, China, which resulted in the adoption of the Shanghai Consensus.

¹ <http://weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>

² European Union 2009

- Global Skills Summit 2013, 2014, FICCI and UNESCO;
- UNESCO conducted '**Review of TVET Policy in India**' with the Institute of Applied Manpower Research – a think tank of Planning Commission and organized National Consultation on 25 February 2014
- Partnered with All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) and co-hosted a national conference on 'Transition of Women from Education to full employment', 23 May 2015 which was dedicated to women's skills and empowerment.
- UNESCO and AIWEFA are also bringing out a publication 'Women, Education, Skills and Work: Case studies Compendium, India, 2015.

I sincerely hope that all the desired objectives of the Regional Workshop will be met and the workshop will also provide a platform for learning and exchange among practitioners and advocates of gender equality in education and decent work and develop a shared agenda for the future and identify how stakeholders can play a capacity building and shared advocacy role in influencing policies and practice to have a gendered approach in education, TVET programmes, and other skills building programmes across the region.

8.2 Informal employment and gender: Indian Context

Nilanjana Sengupta, Azad Foundation, India

Nilanjana Sengupta has been working for the last eight years in the field of gender and development with a special focus on labour, microfinance, programmes for poverty alleviation and their implications for empowerment. She has published in both national and international journals and her co-authored book on paid domestic work is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. She has taught undergraduate Economics in Delhi University, Rural Development in Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Tuljapur, Women's Studies at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University. She completed her graduation in Economics from Presidency College Kolkata and her MA and MPhil in Economics from JNU, New Delhi.

Nilanjana has also been active in movements around issues of labour, privatisation, communalism, violence against women and other issues for the last 15 years. She has also been actively involved with cultural organisations performing street plays and progressive and revolutionary music.

What is informal economy?

An expanded definition of the *informal economy* focuses on the nature of employment in addition to the characteristics of enterprises and considers all types of informal employment both inside and outside informal enterprises.

However, we need a workers centered definition, expand the definition and include people outside the sector and working without social security, hence National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), New Delhi, 2006 defined informal workers as:

Unorganised (informal) workers are those who are working in the unorganised sector (excluding regular workers with social security benefits) and the workers in the formal sector without any employment security and social security provided by the employer.

Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act in 2008 was a landmark act concerned with giving social protection to workers who were not coming under any labour law. Although it has its limitations, domestic workers have been recognized in this act.

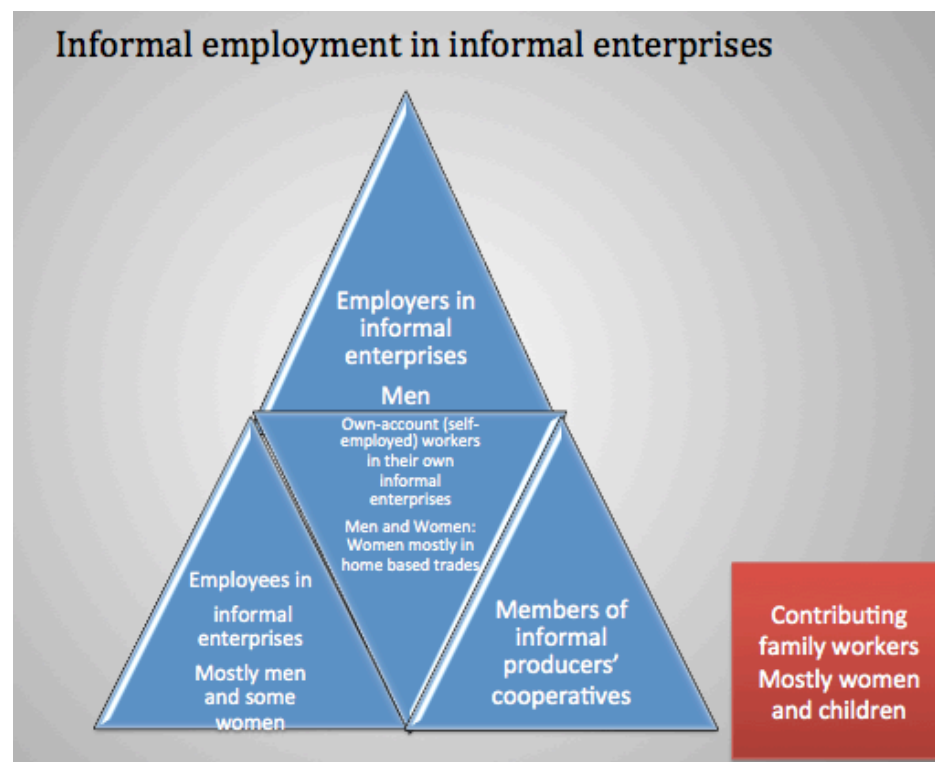
Unorganised (informal) sector

- Unorganised Sector consists of all unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale or production of goods and services operated on a proprietary or partnership basis and with less than ten total workers

Amongst the characteristic features of this sector are ease of entry, smaller scale of operation, local ownership, uncertain legal status, labour-intensive and operating using lower technology based methods, flexible pricing, less sophisticated packing, absence of a brand name, unavailability of good storage facilities and an effective distribution network, inadequate access to government schemes, finance and government aid, lower entry barriers for employees, a higher proportion of migrant workers with a lower rate of compensation.

- Employs 90 per cent of the total workforce in India and contributes over 50 per cent of GDP. Yet, only recently has this sector attracted research and policy attention.
- Formality rather than informality is the more transitory: the informal sector will not disappear with development; it has continued to expand over the years and more so after globalization.
- Informal economy offers a poverty management strategy in the absence of employment generating growth. Thus policy makers are beginning to pay attention to it.

There were assumptions that people in informal sector do not work hard and that it is a low productivity sector, however people started to realize it actually offers solutions. People cannot afford not to be employed, and informal sector actually aids poverty reduction.

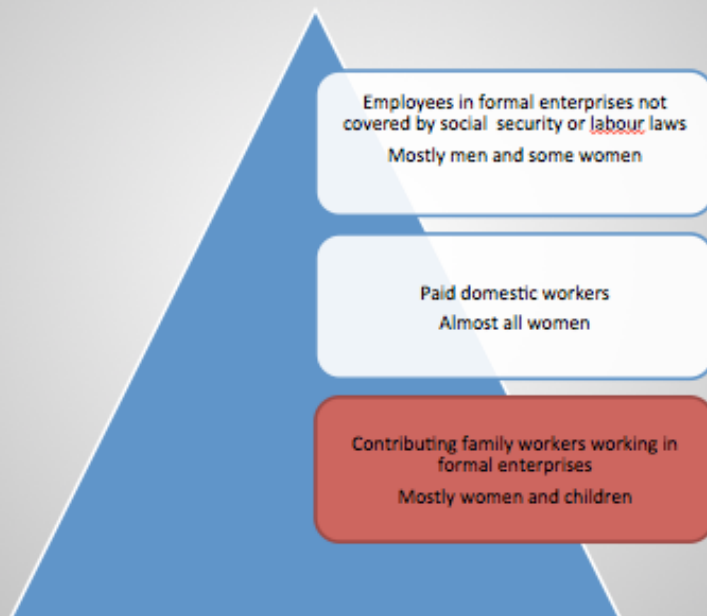


Own account workers such as street vendors are mostly men

Employees in informal enterprises are wageworkers, often women.

Outside the pyramid are outcasts, i.e. other contributing family members = unpaid family labour.

Informal employment outside informal sector



Some gender disaggregated data

Country (Year)	Persons in informal employment		Persons employed in the informal sector		Persons in informal employment outside the informal sector	
	Thousands	% of nonagricultural employment	Thousands	% of nonagricultural employment	Thousands	% of nonagricultural employment
Total	185,876	83.6	150,113	67.5	37,409	16.8
Men	150,955	84.7	125,639	69.4	26,615	14.7
Women	34,921	83.3	24,475	59.4	10,793	26.2

Some food for thought

- A large part of the urban informal workforce are migrants. Thus working for the rights of urban informal workers would need to take into account processes, challenges and outcomes of migration.
- In the context of education of skills for the urban poor, what do we invest in? Infusing current traditional livelihood practices of women with a sense of dignity and ensuring rights and social protection for them? Or do we invest in NTL which would endow women with skill, technology, dignity and remunerative incomes hitherto available only to men?
- What is the best path to adopt for resource poor women in urban settings, be it NTL or other traditional occupations: wage employment or self employment?
- What needs to come first: right to work and rights at work OR social security?

8.3 Skilling India's girls

Nisha Dhawan, Empower, Asia

Nisha Dhawan is the Senior Program Officer for India responsible for developing and managing grantee partnerships and other programmatic initiatives in India. In her role as Regional Advisor for Asia, Nisha engages in the representation of EMpower in the region, capacity-building within Asia through workshops and technical assistance and the cross-pollination of learnings within the region.

Prior to joining Empower Nisha worked at Abt Associates in New Delhi as a gender and market linkages specialist on a USAID funded project – examining food, agriculture and rural market systems. Nisha began her career working in Equities Compliance at Deutsche Bank and Barclays Capital where she managed the Banks relationship with regulators and exchanges.

Nisha has a Master's degree in Gender, Development and Globalization from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a Bachelor's degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada in International Politics and Women's Studies; she is currently pursuing her PhD in Sociology at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. She is based in Delhi.

About EMpower

EMpower is a public foundation, we make grants to NGOs across 15 countries. Within the Asia Pacific, we work in India, China, The Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Country context

There are several campaigns by the government as there is a need for skilled workers and there is a crisis around education and many educated people are unemployed. The education youth are receiving is not adequate for the labour force.

- There is a greater need for skilled people in the workforce due to the growth of industry and commerce, while at the same time there is a large incidence of unemployment amongst the educated
- India has celebrated the fact that women are entering the workforce but at the same time violence against women is unrelenting as are concerns about women's and girls' safety
- India oscillates between two aspects of her own self – the modernising "developing" India and the India that is holding onto "culture" and "tradition" as defined by the main (male) powerbrokers in society

Context of skilling needs to be considered in the current debate on what Indian culture is

- Certain aspects of the situation for girls in India are worsening. In the 1991 Census the ratio of females to males was 972 females to 1000 males, however in the 2011 census that figure has worsened to 940 females for every 1000 males. This is linked to financial attainment

Women vs. men ratio dropped due to dowry system, in many cases women do not enter the workforce. Even if she enters the workforce her wages will be lower. It is very expensive to have a girl. If girls cannot make as much money as boys, parents prefer to have a boy. Hence, the drop in sex ratio.

- There are 113 million adolescent girls in India – which is 20% of the world's adolescent girl population. For women in the workforce, they earn 64% of what their male counterparts earn in the same job. Ironically, when women do earn an income, they reinvest 90% of it into their families, as compared to only 30% to 40% for men.

Skilling India – National Skill Development Mission

Prior to 2014, skilling used to be very fragmented; in 2014 all initiatives came together under one ministry.

- “Recognizing the need and urgency of quickly coordinating the efforts of all concerned stakeholders, to achieve its vision of a ‘Skilled India’ the Department of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was created on 31st July, 2014 which was later made into a full fledged Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship on 9th Nov, 2014.
- National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), National Skill Development Fund (NSDF) and 33 Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) were brought under the Ministry of Skill Development.
- The thrust of the Ministry is the co-ordination of all skill development efforts across the country, removal of disconnect between demand and supply of skilled manpower, building of new skills and skill upgradation, and encouraging entrepreneurship”
- “On the occasion of the first ever World Youth Skills Day on 15th July 2015, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) will launch the SKILL INDIA Campaign” with a new National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship with objectives set by the National Skills Development Mission.”

Vocational training has always been a very important component of 3 million NGO initiatives in India, however loads of the skilling has been restricted to gender stereotyped professions. Women are often not paid because it is ‘natural’ to them to do these things. If they are doing this work in their home, even if she is doing it for profit, she is dealing with two things:

- She is not going to make the same level of money as if she was doing the work outside. There are many studies on this in Bangladesh showing that when women work outside home not only their sense of agency increases, they can also earn more money. That’s why the formal sector is very important.
- They face triple shift: work there are doing, work related to childcare and emotional support for family.

Putting women and girls into the picture

There is a major gap in relation to this need for progress in India and expectations in relation to gender roles.

- Major gaps in relation to expectations in gender roles and earning potential.
- On one hand, traditional mechanisms of keeping women confined to the home are at play; however, at the same time people are beginning to recognise that their children must be educated if they want to become earners, which is vital to their productivity.

However, retention and quality of education are the key issues.

- Therefore, the importance of earning livelihoods and generating an income is seen as a necessity. However, certain occupations are off limits for women; many livelihoods initiatives in India for females focus on occupations that are traditionally “women’s’ work” such as beauty parlour training, stitching and embroidery.
- Nearly 95% of women and girls are employed within the informal sector; or in home based work, therefore their access to higher salaries is also limited, because of the naturalisation of the work that they do.

Women and work – barriers to entry

The following barriers apply to all women across Asia, and actually all over the world. We need to leverage off these barriers so women can enter formal workforce and have access to dignified salary in a dignified manner:

Women in resource poor communities carry the burden of running a household. “Young women perform a significant amount of unpaid work: care for siblings or their own children; do household chores; help in the fields; help their families, friends, or partners in various ways. Their options to earn income remain limited for a variety of reasons:

- Not enough formal jobs exist for all youth who seek employment.

- Because young women often cannot get to school or have to quit school early, their lack of education limits their employment possibilities.
- Young women struggle to balance work schedules with childcare and other household responsibilities.
- Young women are called upon by their families to help in times of emergency. If they do not have their own money (or access to it), they sometimes end up getting money by engaging in risky behaviours.
- Cultural beliefs about what is and is not appropriate work for a woman lead to hiring discrimination and a lack of training opportunities for young women.
- Young women are called upon by their families to help in times of emergency. If they do not have their own money (or access to it), they sometimes end up getting money by engaging in risky behaviours.
- Cultural beliefs about what is and is not appropriate work for a woman lead to hiring discrimination and a lack of training opportunities for young women."

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship and micro-finance have been a huge topic in South Asia. However, entrepreneurship requires a certain skills and mind set to be able to succeed. There needs to be a space for skilling in addition to enabling women to be entrepreneurs.

The importance of exposure and access to non traditional livelihoods - lessons learned

Women were doing the same kind of work all over the world. There is a need to enable women to go into more non-traditional professions. Women in non-traditional livelihoods can earn higher salaries and these women are change agents in their own communities. But we cannot look at this only in terms of skilling; we need a more holistic approach.

- Women engaging in non-traditional careers are building their self-efficacy and agency in relation to positive choices that they are able to make for themselves within their own lives. In addition, their entry into non-traditional livelihoods means that they are also changing perceptions of gender norms and are creating a 'new normal' for women at work in urban environments
- Recognition that it isn't just about skilling but also about:

EDUCATION: We need to look at exposure of girls at school level to STEM subjects, because if girls are not trained at school they are less likely to go into engineering, maths or science.

EXPOSURE: You cannot just look at imparting technical skills but also life skills. You need to look at gender norms and the fact that young girls need to consider themselves as human as their male counterparts, especially in Indian context.

OPPORTUNITY: Women need to be able to access the profession in a safe environment.

Importance of leveraging the barriers

Stork and fox are good friends, fox invite stork for a soup in a large basin. Then stork invites fox back, and serves soup in a large long narrow tube so the fox goes home hungry.

This story shows that there are barriers but we need to leverage these barriers.

Girls and boys learn differently, girls have as much right to formal work as boys and we need to be more like fox not like stork.

8.4 Open discussion

- *In relations to waste pickers, it is being said that public private partnerships is the way to address informal sector. Do you think this is viable?*

There are three different categories of waste pickers in India. Most vulnerable are those that independently go pick waste and sell it. It is also very difficult to count them. Second category includes those associated with municipal co-operations. These are in formal jobs. Then there are people involved with the recycling industry, they collect from your home and go to a particular agent. That's the sector where there is already the interaction between informal and formal sectors.

Public private partnership is of course one of the solution, but the complexity needs to be recognized. We need separate policies for separate categories.

Another thing to consider is the organisation of the system. It is a hierarchical system that often operates on the verge of legal and illegal.

- *What do you think the role of civil society in addressing the barriers related to women and their livelihoods is and do you see policy level solutions to address this?*

Civil society needs to be the fox.

Many organisations want to start vocational training, however everyone is going for the same thing, which leads to cannibalism in the sector. CSOs need to do a market scan.

In terms of the policy, we are heading into the right direction but the government really needs to take gender into account and recognize barriers to enter, and the needs of girls not only in terms of skilling but also what happen afterwards. Eg, girls miss on education due to menstruation.

There is one important scheme, REGA – that guarantees employment in rural areas in India to prevent migration, which is unsafe and policy wise this needs to be also addressed.



Day three: Wednesday 28 October 2015

9. Report from site visits

In the afternoon of the second day, the participants visited three organisations offering innovative skill training for young people in India: IN&FS, ETASHA and the co-host of the workshop Azad Foundation. This section offers perspectives of participants on these three organisations.

9.1 IL&FS

Adjectives to describe the organization and its work

- Interesting – because of the use of new technology, specifically K-Yan – a type of machine that is easy to use for presentations in classes for both teachers and students. Also, classroom set up is for both theory teaching as well as practice.
- Elitist – only a small proportion of students can study with IL&FS. They provide training for students who find the job, and do not address the issue of lack of basic education.
- Professional and strive for excellence – have own curriculum in line with government policy, based on national and global needs. They have audio-visual materials, and combine theory and practical approaches.
- Synergy – combining government, private and corporate sectors and catering to national and global needs

Vision

- Placement and skill orientated, 45 days long training to get great job opportunities
- IL&FS define organisations with larger needs for skilled workers, they do enrollment and train people and then put them back into those industries
- Build India through education and empowerment
- Expertise in global market

9.2 ETASHA

Adjectives to describe the organization and its work

- Participative – engaging everyone in the process, educators, students and youth. This was demonstrated by students being part of the presentation given to us - they confidently approached us and asked us questions.
- Grounded – based on community participation, including visits to student homes to talk to parents.
- Empowering - provide several courses for boys and girls, motivating the youth to be orientated to job training

Vision

- Community participation - happy students - providing various training on different skills
- More than 75% that train with ETASHA get employed – hence the vision is to provide entrepreneurship, employability, life skills and behavioral training. Training involves interpersonal skills, and other soft skills.
- They cater to Indian labour market needs, study market and identify the problem, collect information and based on that provide the training. They cater to the needs of the market as well as of young people.
- They find job vacancies and placements in the labour market for the trained young people.

9.3 Azad Foundation

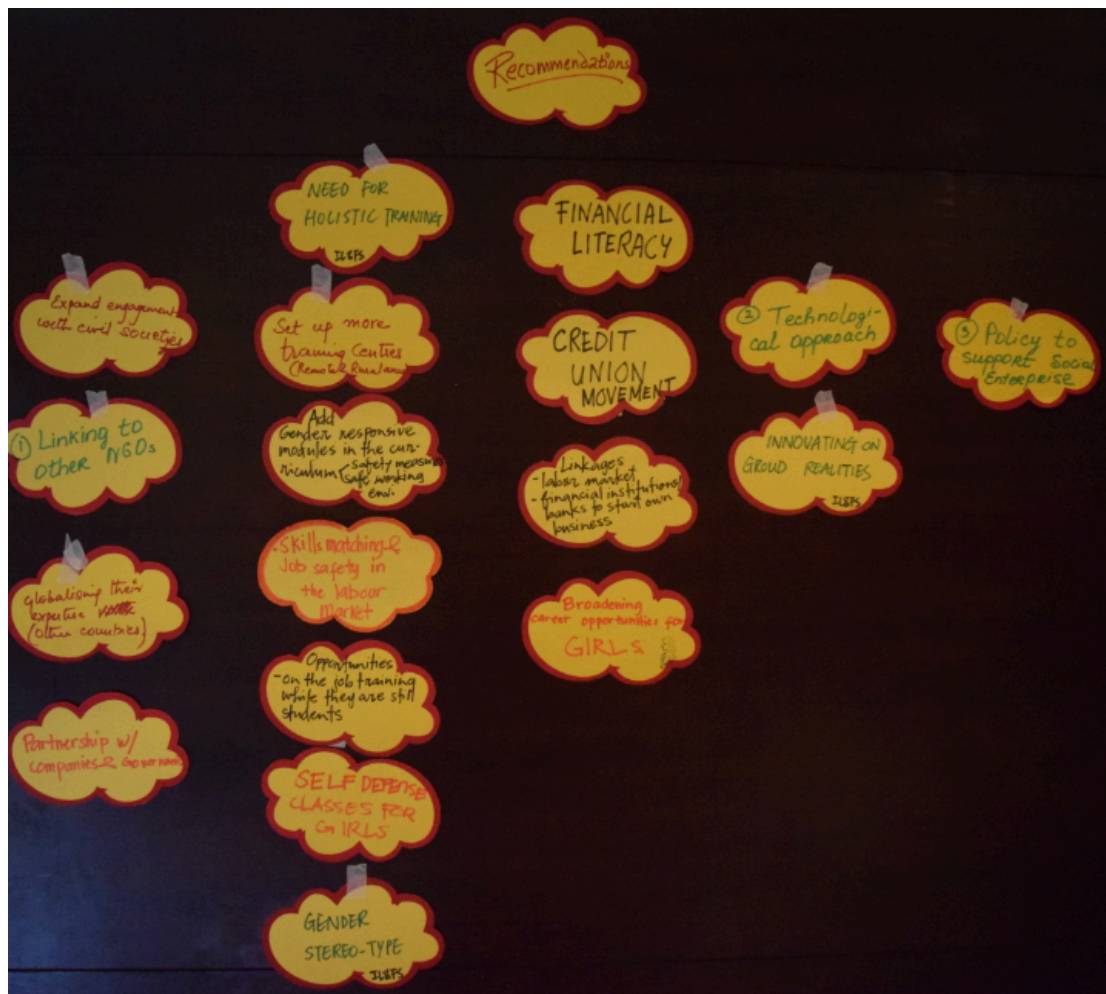
Adjectives to describe the organization and its work

- Collective – empowering women to make a change in a male dominated culture
- Innovative – using non-traditional way of transforming the society, give skills to women as drivers to enable women to come out of households. It is a new way of using technical knowledge. They have 6 centres to reach at grass root level.
- Innovative – it is not new to have women on the streets but it is to have women from marginalised backgrounds. So even if you don't own a car you can drive, and this is what is challenging the boundaries
- Inspiring and motivating – challenging loads of structures and ideas of patriarchy

Vision

- Economic empowerment and breaking gender stereotypes and norms
- Life long learning experience for women by women to bring about social change
- Loads of policies are full of key words like life long learning, TVET and gender mainstreaming and this organization is a real life example of how these words are put into practice

9.4 Recommendations for the visiting organisations



10. Lessons from the field

10.1 Azad Foundation, India

Meenu Vadera

Meenu Vadera's commitment to women's rights and development has been an integral part of her personal as well as professional life. She has been involved with grass-root level initiatives both in India and Uganda and has had the opportunity to work and travel extensively in India and Africa. Having returned to India in 2003, she led an innovative initiative of setting up Aagaz Academy- schools of leadership for elected woman panchayat leaders.

A graduate from London School of Economics with an MSc in Social Policy and Planning, she has also, over the years written and published articles on women's rights in various books and magazines. Having worked on women's issues for over 20 years as a grassroots worker, trainer, implementer and a leader, she founded Women on Wheels – a hybrid social enterprise designed to provide livelihoods with dignity to resource poor women on one hand; and provide safe and alternate transport to women users on the other. A pioneer in bringing women into the transport sector, Azad has already helped more than 500 women in gaining employability in this sector.

About Women and Wheels

Women on Wheels programme helps women to empower themselves and prepare them for livelihoods with dignity.

Driving as a vehicle of change –

- It breaks gender stereotypes: income generation projects and training projects are so segregated in terms of gender roles and we wanted to break these and look for new role models
- **Driving is very remunerative**, while traditional training programmes do not really add significantly to income. Women are able to add by 100% to their family incomes, and later on even by 200%. Driving is also something they can use in perpetuity.
- It is **reclaiming dignity** - it is not just about learning to control wheel of the car but also control own life, make own decision, understand and control own body and sexuality opposing violence, and becoming active citizens. All these are equally important aspects of the programme.
- And enables women to **claim mobility** - one of the key ways how patriarchy manifests is by keeping women at home, and driving helps them to reclaim and own public spaces.

'It is about shifting identity from someone who is looking for help to someone who is able to help later on.'

Learning: Work in progress

Giving skills alone is not sufficient

Particularly when working with resource poor women, it is not about women not wanting those skills but social structures denying them access to those skills. Hence, we need to address those social structures as well as other aspects. We do this through outreach and the curriculum, which focuses on communication skills, English language skills, sexual and reproductive health, grooming, etc

Hurdles to entre

We learnt that no one tells young women in slums that it is important to study, continue to study and keep a certificate of completed education.

There is a lack of family support - average family is very controlling. It takes a lot of time and investment to work with families to let women go and take up the training.

Need of a flexible pace of learning

We have a flexible approach – from 5 months to as long as they require - so if someone falls sick or needs to go back to her village for a month we enable them to come back. If we were not flexible we would lose half of women we work with.

Negotiating support

Families need to become a part of the learning cycle, therefore we run Family Faculty meetings.

Redefining success

We are introducing **Girl's Path** developed by EMpower to better understand what success means to us. Girl's Path shows various indicators of empowerment, so success is not only about someone starting the training and completing it.

Resource intensive

Empowerment consists of so many aspects and requires such a range of interventions; therefore it is resource intensive. It requires more resources than people would traditionally think is required for skilling.

Build allies

This intervention goes so against the dominant forces, it is not possible to train thousands of women in Delhi but by building partnerships with other likeminded organisations which also train a number of women, there will be a critical mass of women drivers.

Finally, be ready to burn your hands!

Q&A

- *Driving is such a difficult job, and some drivers live far away. Have women been able to transform lives in their households, so when they come back they can rest and someone takes care of them?*

We have loads of experiences where women were able to transform those spaces and became visible members of their families, anchors of their families. In one case a husband actually changed his job to enable the woman to do this job. There are many stories when families help them to do the job, but there are many cases when it is not happening, especially for women in marriages. The situation is mixed, but we are supporting them in this regard.

- *Is it possible for women to get loan to buy their own car?*

There are now new players that came to the market like Mehru and Uber and some of our drivers left Sakha for these companies. We had meetings with these women to learn what business model they would prefer, and it has shown that they prefer the current salary model but we are not discounting other options, and perhaps having a mixed model in the future.

- *Some women drive at night and not all customers might be nice. How do you ensure safety?*

All our trainees go through self-defense classes, carry a pepper spray and are trained on what to do in case of an emergency. Our cab and chauffeur services are primarily for women and families; we only occasionally take male customers through personal recommendation and have GPS in all cars. But mainly, women have confidence to deal with situations that arise, they know how to handle them and in the past when something happened they called us for support.

Homes are actually much riskier spaces for women, with 90% of crimes against women happening at their homes or within their communities. It is much easier for women to deal with violence on the road because personal emotions are not involved.

10.2 PEKKA, Indonesia

Nani Zulminarni

Nani has been working on women empowerment programmes at the grass root level since 1987, using different kind of entry points such as social economic activities, reproductive health and rights issues, political education, etc. Nani facilitates gender training for all levels of participants including decision makers, NGOs leaders, and grass root people.

She was one of the founders of ASPPUK a national Network of NGOs working on Women in Economic issues, and was elected as the chairperson of executive committee for period of 1995-2001. Nani was also elected as a member of the executive council of ASPBAE—Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (2000–2008). She was also elected as an executive committee member of SEAPCP-South East Asia popular Communication Programme - a regional network of community based organization focusing on Community Organizing Activities in South East Asia region (2004 – 2008). In addition, she has been involved with Social Watch Network, REMDEC – a consulting firm for people’s empowerment, JASS (Just Associate) a global network of activists for justice, and AWID (Association for Women in Development). In 2009, Nani joined MUSAWAH movement and helped in establishing a network of Indonesia Muslim Scholars and Activists fighting for equality in the Family, namely ALIMAT.

Nani was the executive director of Pusat Pengembangan Sumberdaya Wanita (PPSW) or the Center for Women’s Resources Development - a women’s NGO organizing poor women using economic empowerment as entry point during 1995-2000, and currently is associated as an elected chairperson of the organization. In 2001, Nani started to focus her work into organizing women headed households in post conflict and poorest regions of Indonesia and started an organization called PEKKA (Women Headed Household Empowerment) and became its National Coordinator.

Nani has received many awards. In 2007, she received the ASHOKA fellowship; in 2010 the Saparinah Sadli Award; in 2014 an Asia Pacific Award called the Lotus Leaderships Award from The Asia Foundation and the Global Fairness Award, and Lencana Bakti Kesra Utama, Menteri Koordinator Bidang Kesejahteraan Rakyat, Republik Indonesia.

Why women heads of family?

- Women Head of family are widows, divorced, abandoned women; women with disabled husband; women in polygamous marriage; single and unmarried women with a child, and those having irresponsible husbands.
- 14% of households in Indonesia are headed by women and this continually grows by about 0.5%. Our data showed that government data are underestimating the number of women headed households as we found that women head one in every four households and they are the poorest of the poor.
- These women face exclusion, stigma and discrimination. ‘GANDA’ – widows, divorced women, women whose husbands migrated to another country and never returned or just left and women in polygamist marriages - face loads of discrimination.
- Women in polygamist relationships do not see themselves as heading households although they are.

Economic empowerment

- **Savings and borrowing activities – access and control over financial resources**

It is expected that we will give money, but instead we help women with savings. We encourage even those that do not have financial means to save, for example to save coconuts or something else and then sell it so they build assets. This is a very different approach to micro-credit.

- **Small enterprises**

We build on their existing skills, bring women together and help them slowly build up the skills to form a different initiative.

- **Building leadership skills**

Rather than feeling as a victim of domestic violence or divorce, we want them to feel as the head of the family, so they can change their lives and fight the stigma.

- **Community centres**

Children of the women can come to these centres, learn and engage with our work. We have more than 60 centres, which are also training centres where we sell the products the women produce.

Challenges



- **Macro economic landscape** really affected these women as loads of land has been transformed into factories and palm oil plantations
- Many women are traditional weavers and they grow their own cotton. They are linked to global market **and if the global market is shaken, it affects them badly** and decreases their profits.
- **Women buy food they can not grow**, for example rice needs to be bought and women often cannot afford to buy it.
- **We become target of:**
 - Cash transfer program – Money Politics
 - Money lenders – debt trap
 - Micro credit – DependencyMicro-credits can put women into a very vulnerable position as they focus on women to become producers, but if they are unable to become producers they become consumers of the credit.

- **Focus of the state:**



We are planning to go back into the issues of food and energy when it comes to economic empowerment. Women are losing skills to produce their own food and energy due to development programmes that came in. This is needed in order for them not to depend so much on cash.

Q&A

- *When family is woman headed, women are making decisions, so how are they discriminated?*

It is not really true that if they don't have a husband they are the ones who make decisions. Husband's family or other family or community members might be making decisions. For example a village head decided who would attend a meeting we organized. There was a woman we wanted to attend, but she decided not to go because she was afraid what would happen if she went against his decision.

There was another woman whose husband left for Malaysia and she hasn't heard from him for years. But the eyes of the whole community were on her and it was difficult for her to make decisions.

There is a stigma that you are a 'bad' woman if you get divorced and you are a good woman if you are married.

- *In relation to the point that if women are not producing than they are consuming. When we are talking about STEM, growing food is actually a very scientific skill. What needs to be done to bring back those skills to women?*

Women do all the hard work but do not have control over the market, as marketing is controlled by 'big players'. On one island where we have 4000 members, we encouraged them to create their own market by selling amongst themselves.

- *If a woman is empowered with education and knowledge and gains wealth, she might be the head of the family despite her husband being there. Do any of the women headed households have husbands?*

Based on my study of 15 years, I don't think women can become the heads of household in Islamic culture, even if a woman is more educated than her man. There are many women who are very knowledgeable and skilled, but women's knowledge is not valued.

If we included women who are the breadwinner and still have husbands, then our numbers would be much higher.

10.3 FRIEND, Fiji

Sashi Kiran

Sashi is the Executive Council member of ASPBAE, representing South Pacific.

As the Founder, of home grown NGO, the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development (FRIEND), Sashi has been involved in development of adult education programmes on good governance, financial literacy, food security including backyard garden establishment in villages/ settlements, large scale commercial production of grains, signature production of gourmet food products as income generation programme for rural women, youths including deaf and rural farmers. Sashi has been involved in various research programmes, including Citizens and Good Governance conducted by the Commonwealth Foundation.

Since its inception FRIEND has won many international and National awards for its groundbreaking work on development and implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in the under-served communities. Under her leadership, the organisation has been piloting medical outreach programme - screening and providing after care for patients of non communicable diseases, the largest killer in Fiji, since 2009. This programme has received accolades from the World Health Organisation. FRIEND celebrates 13 years of existence this year.

Sashi has undertaken postgraduate studies in development studies after completing her journalism studies while working in print and radio media. Over the last seven years, Sashi has also served on the Advisory Board of the University of the South Pacific Lautoka Campus. She has also served on various government committees including National Advisory on AIDS, Committee for Abandoned children, Children's Coordinating Committee, Disaster Management Council, National Youth Congress to name a few. Sashi has served on the Board of CIVICUS (international NGO) for two years and has been a fellow of the Commonwealth Foundation.

Recently in recognition of her work in social and economic empowerment work Sashi has been appointed a Human Rights Commissioner. She is also part of the Reserve Bank's Taskforce on Financial Inclusion.

We work with:

- Rural farmers - farming
- Youth – up-skilling with USP Lautoka Campus and placement in jobs (60% girls)
- Deaf youths – recycled paper and cards
- Rural women - social empowerment, economic and health programs

We make sure there is an ethnic balance as there are two major ethnic groups in Fiji and also that there is gender balance. 60% of the young people we work with are women.

Socio-economic-health empowerment

Our programme integrates a range of interventions:

- We get people to believe in themselves, we empower them economically and work in health as in Pacific islands we have a health crisis of diabetes and high incidence of cancer.
- When youth drop out of school, we pick them up, train them and then help them with work placements. We help them set goals, think about what their dreams are and what being an active citizen means.
- In Pacific, you are not an individual being, you are linked to the community so we link them to community governance.

- People are dependent on imported food, which is contributing to many health issues. So we help people learn about healthy eating and life style.
- We also work on disaster preparedness and mitigation, income generation and financial literacy.

Skills Building on fruit/ food preservation

- Simple Solar Dryers
- Food Processing
- Packaging
- Recordkeeping
- Financial Literacy

Our products

People often have skills to make traditional clothes or grow products. We work with what they know, and help them develop the product for the current markets and work with them to sell it. For example, we produce gluten free flour from cassava. We also teach them how to sell and use the products. For example, to use dried fruit rather than dried noodles for health reasons.



Our story

- We started in 2001 after civil unrest to work with indigenous populations. We decided to bring them together to work on product development.
- Originally we planned to work in collaboration with a corporate partner, but our partner disappeared on us because it was too expensive to produce the products on the ground.

Learning

- **Need for focus on packaging and marketing to compete**

If you act as a beggar you are treated as a beggar. It's not the product but good marketing packaging that sells.

- **Sell the product NOT the Poverty**

Poverty does not sell, but packing does. We don't have just a story, but a true story.

- **Importance of being upbeat and positive - everyone wants to join the fun**
We need to present an upbeat story, but the problem is that if you are always upbeat people do not realize the struggles you go through.
- **High cost**
We had to change packaging of our products as we are going into Australian market as such colourful packaging would not work there, which was very expensive. Hence, most people would not want to go into product development on the ground for poverty alleviation, as it is just too expensive.

'It is a real struggle to organize all the producers into collectives to meet demand of the market. We now provide products to all hotels in Fiji, but if we were not able to meet their demand, they would just import those products.'

Other livelihoods

Not everyone has land to grow produce on, so we look at available resources and develop suitable income generation based on what's available and the market around them.

For example, free range poultry, organic farming and beekeeping. 100 women are doing beekeeping this on the side of other work. From all the produce, we develop multiple products out of one.

We also impart recording keeping and financial literacy skills. If people cannot sell their products we buy it off them, as we do loads of back up planning for the market.

Impact

- Everything we produce is highly profitable
- Honey could yield between \$10,000-15,000 a year
- On most of the products, people can make between 45-2,000 USD a month

Two organizations

We are splitting the organization into a training organization and a company that will do the packaging, marketing etc.

We are also planning to set up a restaurant. We have a mobile clinic and want to enable people to pay with produce for the health service. The produce can then be bought by the restaurant.

Gender research

- Working on research papers to share stories of men and women working together
- Trauma healing and gender violence
- Financial literacy and bank accounts
- Need for changing narrative and stop looking at problems in isolation, and counting our strengths

Q&A

- *Everything was mostly focused on agricultural production, what health related work are you doing?*

I deliberately focused on skill development, however we have doctors, nurses, physiotherapists who do diabetes and soon also cancer screenings. Our teams work with the communities to get their health back, and nutrition is a big focus too.

There is a huge use of MSGs and additives so we help people to cook healthy. Before people started to eat imported food they were healthy. Now we have many cases of diabetes. Health component is actually in everything we do.

10.4 Center for International Education and Development (CINED), Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh

Shahnewaz Khan

In 1984, after completion of post-graduation studies Shahnewaz joined Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and started a professional career in Non-formal Education. His initial concentration was development of training courses and materials for NFE programmes. His first contribution at the national level was in 1989 when he took part in development of Adult Literacy Curriculum and Materials for Ministry of Education (MOE).

Since then he has been contributing MOE in policy and resource development. In 1992, he joined Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and worked extensively at the National and International level as a material development and training specialist. Under his technical guidance more than 400 print and audio-visual materials and a huge number of Training Manuals were developed and hundreds of training courses were organized.

He attended and contributed to many regional and international workshops in the Asia Pacific Region, Europe, Africa and Middle East. He contributed to development of many Training Manuals and Resource Books published by UNESCO, ESCAP and ACCCU. He worked in Afghanistan as a UNESCO consultant and supported the MOE in developing National Adult Literacy Curriculum and Primers for war affected Afghanistan. In 2008, he joined UNESCO Afghanistan as Programme Manager. He designed and help implemented a massive NFE programme for 600,000 adult learners. His work spans in 23 countries around the world.

In 2011, he joined "CINED" an Institution of Dhaka Ahsania Mission as CEO. He is involved in developing innovative programmes and digital contents for literacy and skills training and implementing comprehensive projects for abandoned children, street children and destitute women.

About Dhaka Ahsania Mission

One of the oldest NGOs in Bangladesh, it works in 41 districts and various interventions but gender is an aspect of all.

Core sectors

- Education
- Health
- Economic development

Complementary sectors

- TVET
- WASH
- Agriculture

Cross-cutting sectors

- Rights and Governance
- Climate change and DRR

7 Vocational Training Institutes: Offering BTEB Affiliated Courses and General Courses

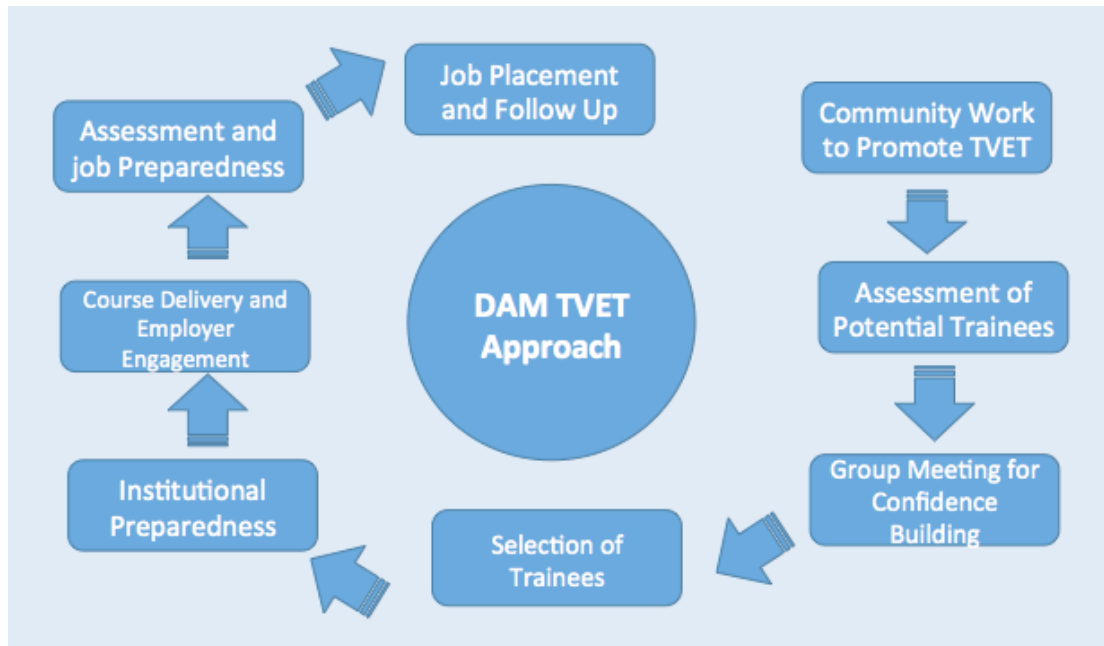
- Electrical Woks: Domestic & Industrial
- Electronics: Domestic & Industrial
- Garments Machine Operator: Export oriented Industrial

- Mobile phone servicing
- Beautician: Beautification & hair dressing
- Dress Making & Tailoring

4 Vocational Training Center: Offering Short Courses as per Needs of the Community

- Embroidery
- Leather craft
- Block Batik & Screen Printing
- Katchcupi & Jori Chumki
- Handicrafts

DAM TVET Approach



We train and help get employed much more women than men.

RMG Sector

- Around 5000 garment factories.
- RMG industry earns around 78% of total export earnings.
- By the year 2021 RMG sector is planned to hit US\$ 50 billion export.
- Employing over 4 million people
- More than 80% workers are young women.
- Very little or no formal education or vocational training.
- These young female workers work as helpers and receive low salary.

Increasing skills of women working in the RMG sector

- Medium level employees are all male. We initiated the training to give women the skills to enable them to get better jobs and salaries.
- We are providing training on HR, social compliance, quality control, production process, productivity and floor management, merchandising and marketing management to enable women to get into these positions.

Employment support strategy

- Advertisement and admission (existing lower level RMG workers and new)
- Identify potential employers
- Get information of employers requirements and discussion on course curriculum
- Regular contact with employers
- Select course graduates as per requirements of the employers
- Preparation of personal profile of each trainees with CV and certificate

- Submit trainees profile to potential employers
- Organization of job fairs and assist trainees to get job
- Six months follow up after placement in the job and maintain database of graduates

Achievements

- 2500 trainees (lower level RMG workers and new) received training since 2011
- 95% got employed / upgraded to higher positions

Outcomes

- Higher productivity in the RMG sector
- More women in the mid level positions
- Increased demand for skilled women workers in lower and mid level positions
- Advanced commitment and demand from the industry owners
- Higher wages and status

'Status of women in mid-level positions increased not only at work but at home too.'

Q&A

- *Are the courses free or subsidized by companies? In your dialogue with companies, are there any negotiations about working conditions that the trainees go back to?*

The government provides training equipment, and the training is a free of cost but hence we cannot expand this model as per the needs of the market. So we need other organisations to scale this up or we might need to start charging something for the training.

There are loads of conditions and compliance, but garment factories are not close to the mark on these. So we also cover this in our training and we have 6 months follow up so women can complain then and we also do placement visits.

11 Financing and Provisioning

11.1 Education financing

Cecilia Sorano, ASPBAE

Cecilia Soriano (Thea) works as Programmes and Operations Coordinator of ASPBAE and she is based in Manila. She assists education coalitions in India, Nepal and Indonesia in their education research, policy advocacy and campaigns. Thea has been active in education reforms since 2000 after the Dakar Declaration of Education for All and served as Executive Board Member of E-Net Philippines and then as National Coordinator. She had also been a popular educator facilitating learning sessions in trade unions, political movements and indigenous communities.

In order to scale up programmes and to ensure programmes can reach more marginalized people there needs to be adequate financing in place. This is particularly relevant in relation to the new SDG on education.

We have failed on education MDG4 targets particularly on literacy. There was lack of financing despite evidences of impact of literacy on gender empowerment:

Adult Illiteracy and Poverty

- There is a correlation between literacy and empowerment and economic conditions of people.
- Illiteracy highest in countries with greater poverty, which is a link observed even down to the household level.

Illiterate women tend to bear more children

Correlation between increasing literacy and gender empowerment

- Illiterate women tend to inhibit themselves from making decisions about family and household matters and rely more on partner or some other persons to make decisions. Cultural norms still influence decisions of women, but the impact of literacy is there.
- Illiterate men and women tend more to agree that wife beating is justified under certain situations
- Illiterate women experienced more violence.
- In India, half of illiterate/semi-literate women experienced abuse.
- In Bangladesh, 4 in every 5 illiterate/semi-literate men admitted to committing abuse on women.

Magnitude of illiteracy

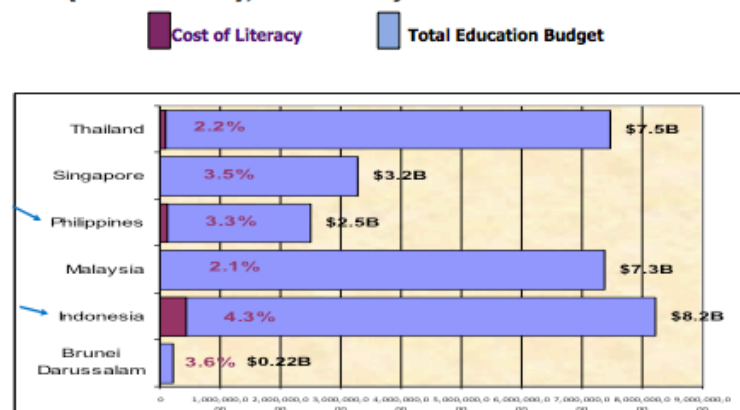
- Two-thirds (2/3) of adult illiterates are women
- No change in the last 40 years! This is not only in our region but globally
- 2013 UIS data – 775 million adult illiterates, 63-64% female

Required financing

- However financing of literacy policies and programmes still not prioritized
- ASPBEA did analyses of what proportion of the education budget should be dedicated to literacy



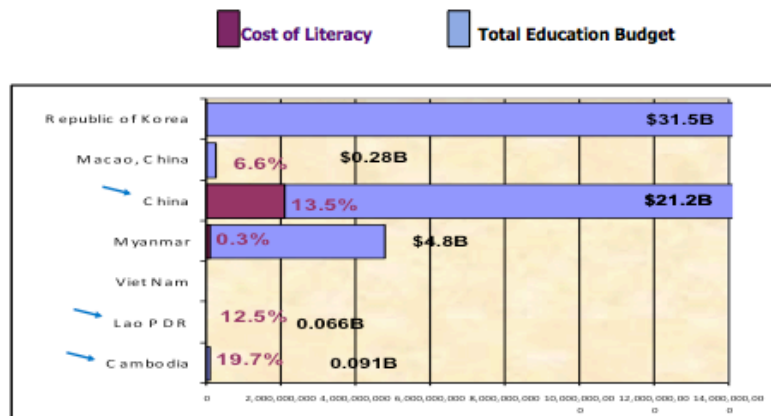
Comparing Cost of Literacy to Total Education Budget (ASPBEA Study, 2009-2010)



Source of Basic Data: UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)

➤ Will need external help

Comparing Cost of Literacy to Total Education Budget/2

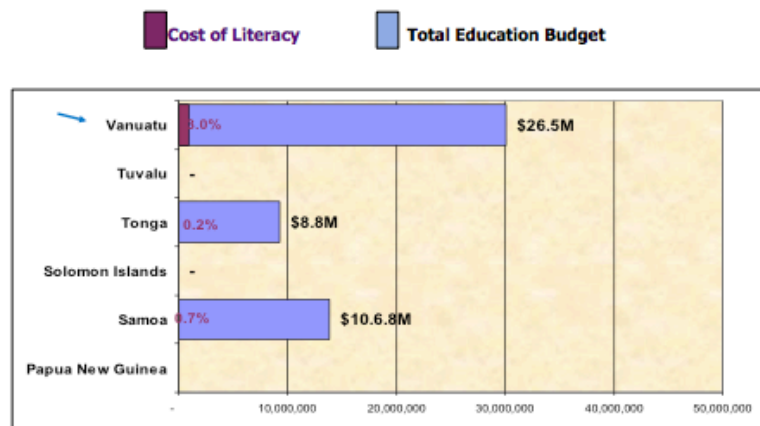


Source of Basic Data: UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)

Will need external help

11

Comparing Cost of Literacy to Total Education Budget/3



Source of Basic Data: UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)

Will need external help

12

- Most countries spent less than 1% of their education budgets for Adult education and literacy. (Benchmark: 3% to 6%)
- Donors' lack of support for Member States in implementing policy and programme development under LIFE (Literacy Initiative for Empowerment)

Financing literacy, youth and adult education and skills (TVSD) especially for the marginalized learners, is at risk of being neglected again in Education 2030

- 340 billion is the budget needed to achieved SDG education targets by 2030
- We have more students now as we are talking about 12 years of education, and we need to invest in improving quality of education
- Based on the projection, we will still have a gap of 39 billion per annum, despite countries being able to mobilize internal resources
- Unless we find the funds equitable education will be forgotten

Means of funding

Policymakers are looking to understand what we mean by skills and what should be provided by government and through other means

Funding sources include:

- Public funding from national government (e.g. via the direct payment of teacher salaries or grants to institutions, or by tax incentives, scholarships, training vouchers)
- Individuals (via training fees),
- Enterprises/companies (e.g. via fee payment, in-house training, levy-payments)
- National or sectoral training funds
- Official development aid: decreased due to EU crisis and many countries reducing aid budgets
- NGOs: often provide trainings for livelihoods, but also developing empowerment of communities
- Social Protection Schemes – Cash transfers with livelihood trainings
- Micro-finance: large source of funding
- Social Enterprises

PPPs in skills development in South Asia

- Public private partnerships is a dominant source of funding around skills development
- This type of approach is more focused on youth, however funding for adult learning is also needed.

National training funds

- Leverage financing for skills development, outside government budgetary channels
- Bring together finance from government, enterprises and donors
- Allocated according to national policies and priorities
- Can prevent fragmentation in skills training programs

Challenges

- It is relatively easy to calculate how much is needed for education, but not so easy for skills
- Skill development is not only entrenched in one ministry, but various institutions for example youth council, Ministry for women, Ministry of agriculture. All of these have skills development aspect in plans and budgets.
- It is not only about the budget needed, as delivery systems are integrally linked to development and sustainability of quality, relevant and equitable training systems.
- Unless approaches like community learning centres and multiple pathways to learning as in case of Azad are entrenched in the system, how are we going to finance such interventions?
- How are financing mechanisms promoting skills development for youth, women empowerment, equity, inclusive growth. As discussed, interventions to achieve social mobilization are expensive and current financing mechanisms are very market oriented. Similarly, there is a need for financing support systems such as coaching, career guidance, support for women, peer circles and support. If these interventions are to be scaled up, there needs to be adequate financing.
- Based on ASPBAE analysis in 2010, 20% should be added to the standard education budget for the support systems for the marginalized people.

'To get investment for skills development as well as literacy as part of SDG 2030, there is a need to look at funding sources and push our governments to invest into innovative approaches, ensure regulations are in place, private sector has accountabilities and marginalized people are reached.'

Q&A

- *All the MDGs have failed on its targets? Is there any analysis of why, beyond financing?*

From member states perspective, national websites of UNESCO include information on how each country fared in terms of achieving EFAs and goals on education for all. Education financing has been identified as the key barrier.

From civil society perspective, we saw a weak support for women literacy in the region; hence there is a high number of illiterate women. Political will is important - the agenda has shifted to universal primary education, and later on to quality primary education, and all the efforts have been put into this and other goals have been forgotten. There is no political will to put in place policies addressing all the goals.

Also, donor countries should have supported countries that could not afford financing education but this did not happen.

- *There is invisible and hidden power that hinders women to gain literacy. The current frameworks are not really addressing this and changing women's lives.*

We expect people to become literate after a 9 months course, but if they don't practice for two years they go back to illiterate. There is lack of supportive environment.

There was no evidence that literacy programmes are effective, hence more donors moved onto primary education that is easier to measure.

11.2 Private sector and skills

Ajay Mohan Goel, Wadhwani Foundation, India

Ajay facilitates connecting and nurturing the Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, Innovation and PwD initiatives of the Foundation with the larger eco-system of Governments, Industries and Academics for ensuring scale and speed. Ajay led the Foundation's implementation of skills development in schools in partnership with State governments and design of community college, and other skill development schemes for higher education with Ministry of Human Resource Development and UGC.

Earlier Ajay has worked for 24 years at NIIT Ltd in diverse areas of education & training, franchise management, corporate planning and international operations. Ajay is passionate about integration of skill development and employability skills in formal education structures. He has been a speaker in the area of skill development and higher education in many seminars and conferences during the last 3 years.

Wadhawani Foundation – is a philanthropic foundation founded by Dr Wadhwani, who recently committed 1 billion of funding to education in India and elsewhere. We have been working in India for 12 years.

Our approaches

				
NEN	SDN	OND	POLICY	RIN
Enable large scale job creation through entrepreneurship	Accelerate employability through skill development	Empower the educated disabled	Impact policies to accelerate economic activity	Promote world class research and innovation

NEN: Large scale job creation

- NEN has as been taken to three countries – Indonesia, Pakistan and Malaysia, and are exploring taking it to Philippines and Bangladesh.
- To support large-scale job creation in emerging economies we have been working on entrepreneurship development with higher education institutions.
- Last year, we researched about 0.5 million students in India, engaged with 100,000 more deeply and out of those 1,300 students created 700 companies. Each company creates around 4-5 jobs.
- The programme is now being scaled up with Ministry of Skill Development in India

SDN: Skill development initiative

- Creating e-content on skill development in partnership with employers; this is open access content that can be used widely
- Integrating skill development programmes into high school curriculum; there is also a government scheme giving 9-12 class students in government schools an option to chose a subject related to a vocational field, primarily related to services sector
- Integrating skills development programmes into higher education space through a scheme of community colleges

OND: Empowering disabled youth

- Empowering disabled youth to participate in private sector and be visible to general public
- Demonstrate to companies that people with disabilities are efficient workers, often better performing than non-disabled employees

Policy

- Influencing policy for our initiatives

RIN: Research

- Set up research centres focusing on bioscience
- A centre in Mumbai focusing on research in biosensors and one in Bangalore focusing on neurology and cardiology using stem cells

Status of Skill Development in India

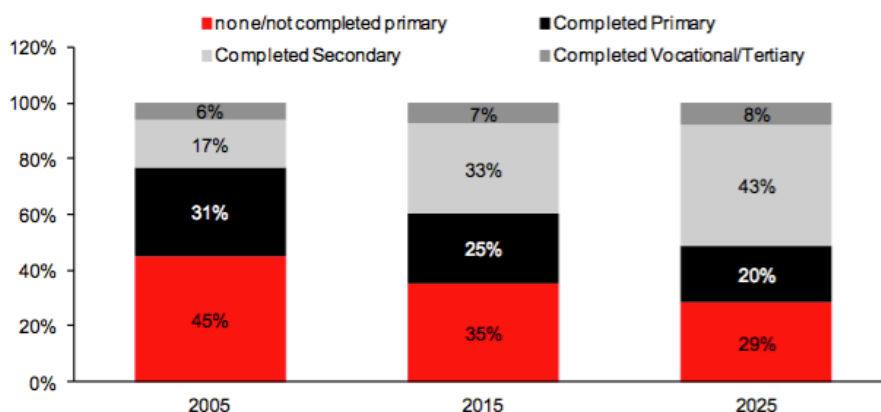
- Education: quality and not the quantity matters
- Productivity - lot of scope for improvement
- Employment: female participation rate key to drive productivity and growth
Many more women are going into higher education so should enter the labour market later although this is not based on formal studies.

Vocational Education System

Only 7% went through vocational education and only 4% through formal vocational education (based on data of all 15+ employed people)

- India is far behind on vocational and TVET education

Education Profile of India's Population (15+ age group)



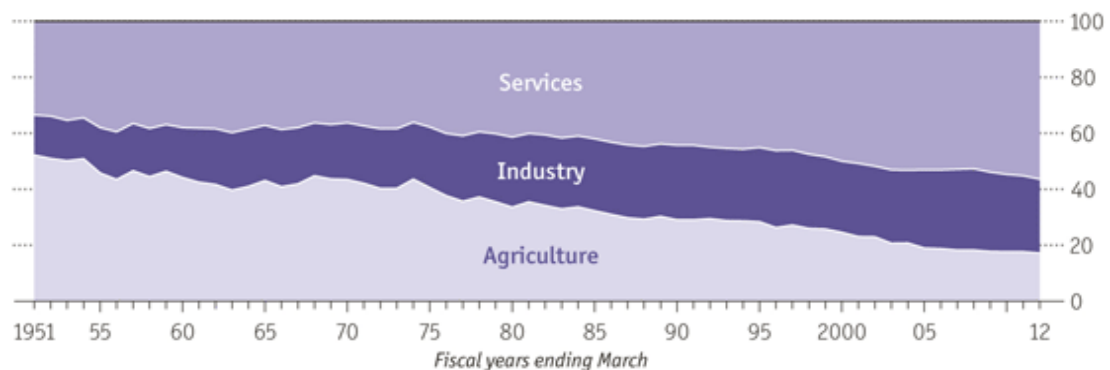
Graduates lack soft skills and basic workforce employability skills

Weaknesses of Vocational Education System

- Mismatch between demand and supply
- Weak Industry and Job Linkages
- Out-dated courses and inadequate curriculum
- Lack of practical orientation and apprenticeship
- Stigma/ Lack of Motivation
- Financial constraints
- Dead End – Certificates and Diplomas: such as polytechnic diploma from which it is difficult to vertically transfer over to higher education
- Aspirational links to Higher Education and better jobs unfulfilled

Skilling needs to align with the Economic Growth

- Most of vocational education focused on manufacturing industry
- 58% of India's GDP now comes from Services Sector
- There are hardly any service sector training opportunities for IT, hospitality, healthcare sectors



Source: CEIC

Initial Inroads by Private Sector in Skilling: Case study – NIIT

- Started in 1982 – Bringing People and Computers together...Successfully
- Model: Industry driven, placement led, student paid, for-profit, high quality, aspirational
- Objective: Help nascent IT industry grow
- Introduced franchising in training
- Many more for-profit IT training organizations started
- Became engine for provide trained people to India's IT industry
- Got listed in the stock exchange in 199
- Has impacted 35 Million learners across 40 countries
- It created a job growth and overall growth of the IT industry

'Make training aspirational and industry led'

- Skill training expanded in areas like air hostess training schools, sales training schools, fashion designing, pilot training, but not to Blue collar jobs as informal training continued to dominate in this area
- In-house training by companies: IT industry took the lead, hospitality, large auto manufacturers, etc
- Government / PSU jobs remained aspirational, coaching for recruitment exams continued to expand

Financing Mechanisms to scale Skill Development

	Costs	Benefits
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial cost of training Opportunity cost (may earn more being an unskilled labour) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility and mobility to move vertically and horizontally across jobs Higher Salary
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mistakes by inexperienced trainees Learning curve → Lower productivity Training Materials etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher efficiency – Larger profits Solving supply side shortage of skilled workers
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidies to training firms Vouchers, loans Financial concession to employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower cost of supporting people as higher wages would mean higher standard of living Inclusive growth Increase in income tax from higher earnings

Source: Realising the Demographic Dividend – Santosh Mehrotra

- For high salary jobs, students are prepared to pay fees
- Employers do not want to provide training as they think trained employees will leave to another company
- Solution:** Financing through a dedicated training Fund and setting up a Labour Management Information System

11.3 Modes of Delivery (CLCs, TVET, Learning Cities, Special Schools, Migrant Education and others)

Kiichi Oyasu, UNESCO, Bangladesh

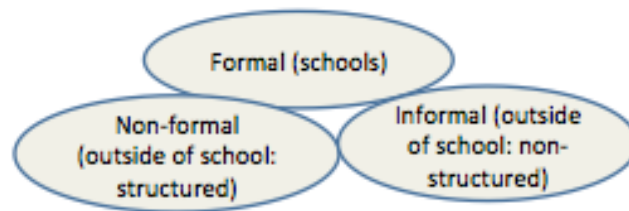
Currently working as a Programme Specialist in Education in UNESCO Dhaka Office since 2008, responsible for UNESCO's education programmes in the country. Prior to the assignment in Dhaka, worked as a Programme Specialist in Literacy in UNESCO Bangkok for 15 years to assist member states in the Asia-Pacific region in promoting literacy and continuing education including institutionalizing community learning centres. Kiichi obtained PhD in Human Science from Osaka University, Japan.

EFA unfinished agenda

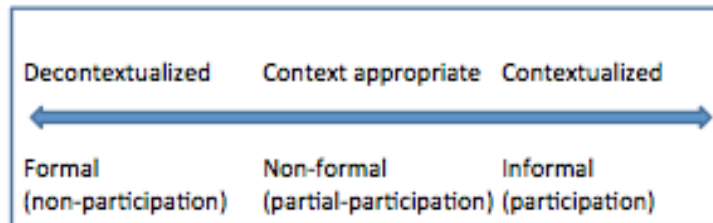
- Universal primary education almost achieved, gender disparity in primary education has been reduced, however progress on literacy and non-formal education for children out of school has been slow: youth and adult literacy (51% of world illiterates are in South Asia) and Out-of-school children (17.3% are in South Asia)
- There is a need to expand the vision on education to informal and non-formal education as modes of delivery but actually this has been discussed for the last 25 years.

Non-formal education

Domains and systems:



Process and approaches:
participatory, need based, contextualized



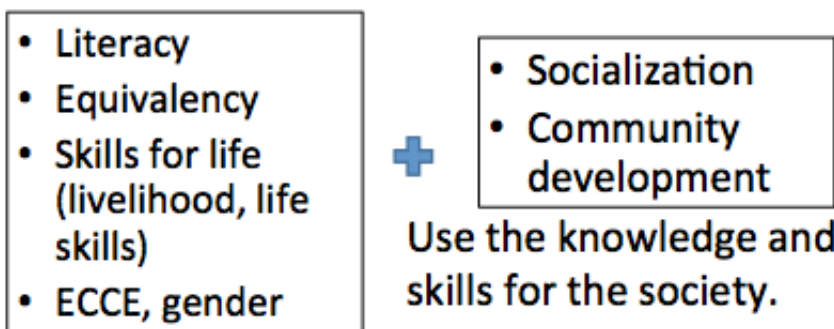
- Even in non-formal education, formal systems and processes are being used
- Relationship between formal and informal education is dynamic

Community Learning Centres

- Local education institutions outside the formal education system
- Set up and managed by local people
- Various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of people's quality of life.
- Use of existing infrastructure, when necessary, e.g. schools, temples, mosque, health, centres, public halls

Activities of CLCs

Focusing on how people can contribute to the society and be better as a person



- Learning to know
- Learning to live together
- Learning to do
- Learning to be

CLCs in education system

- In some countries like Bangladesh, CLC are in policies but not implemented by the government

Sustainability challenges

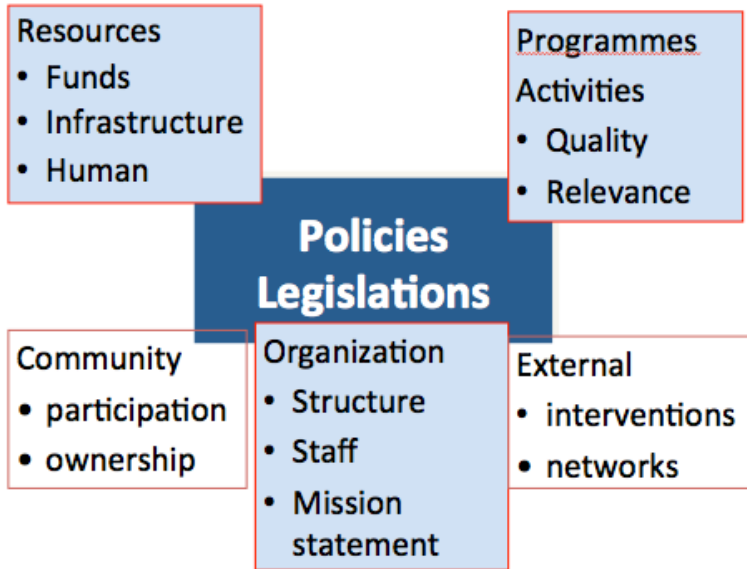
- Most NFE activities are under time and budget bound projects:
 - Start with new centre, staff, committee, target (literacy, skills, girls, women, micro finance, etc.)
 - Close down when the project finishes.

- New mechanism is initiated when a new project comes – not much linkages with previous resources
- Community participation often led by external organizations
- Lack of continuous technical support from outside – sustainability is often considered as self-efforts by community alone

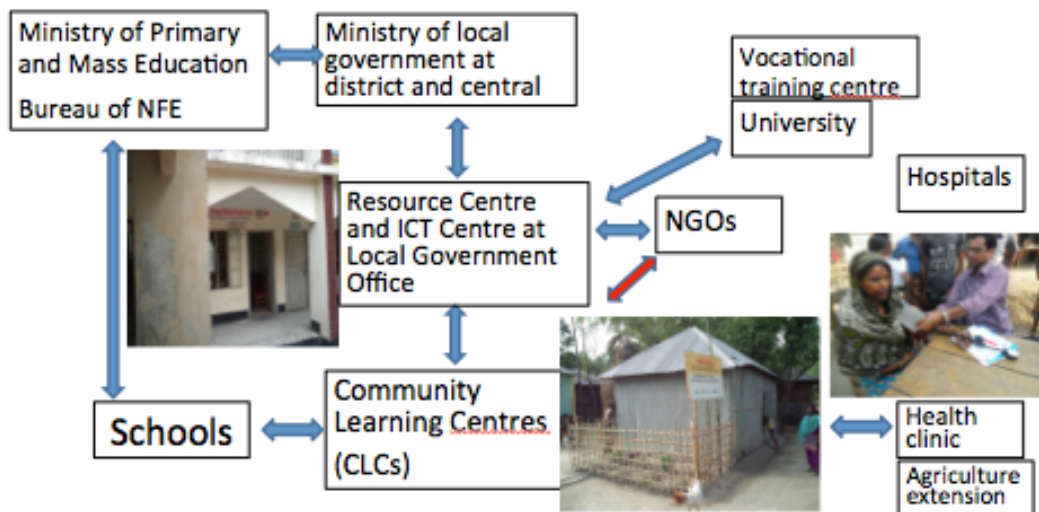
It is expected community will sustain the centres, but it is difficult for the communities to sustain them as technical support from outside is required.

Policies and legislations

What is needed for the CLCs to sustain themselves? It is not only about funding but other aspects need to be considered as follows:



Developing sustaining community learning networks

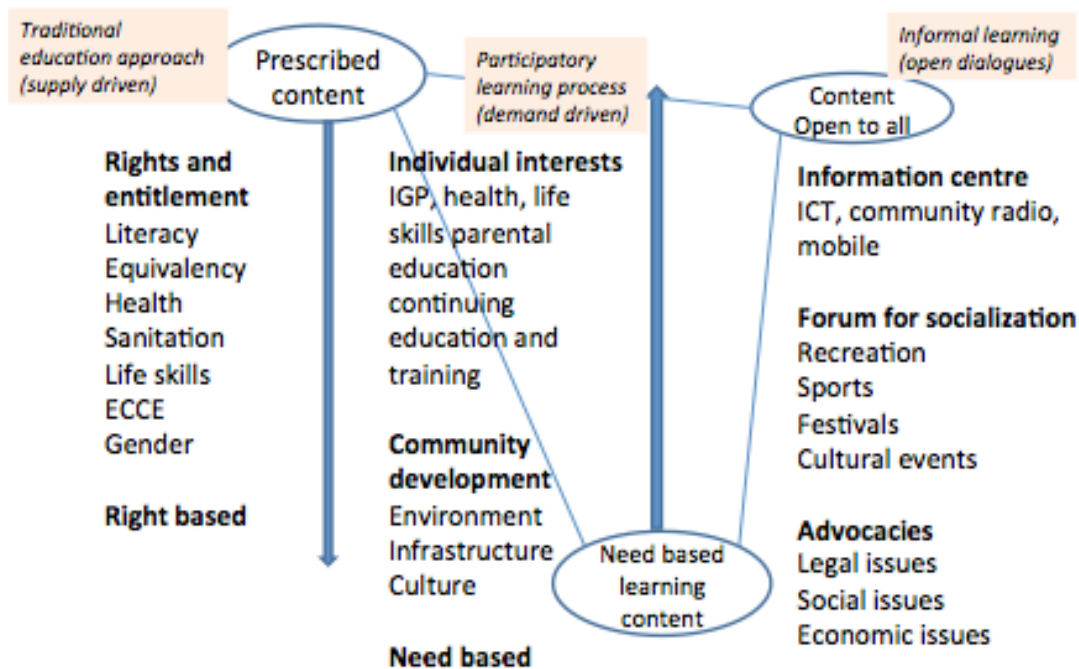


- NGOs often support directly the CLCs and do not interact with government
- We tried to make linkages with other sectors, university professionals and skill training institutions
- CLCs are small institutes so they need to be linked as they can't achieve much on their own

Learning in CLCs

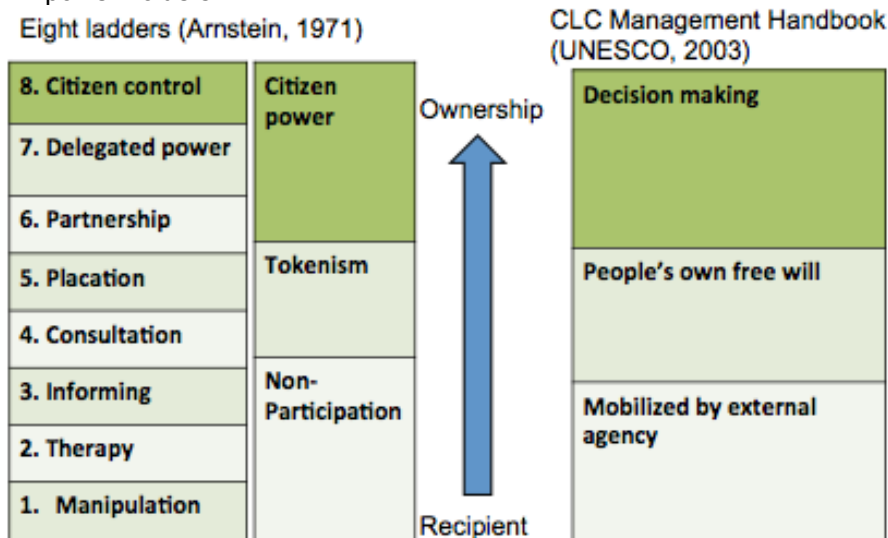
- Based on the needs of learners, individually as well as on community demands

- People are encouraged to come to the centres without any learning purposes too, e.g. to use a computer, for sports, just to chat and discuss issues. Centres also offer mobile health consultations by volunteer doctors.
- Ready made materials can be made to focus on prescribed content / rights based
- Learning incorporates:
 - Literacy class and library
 - Skill training
 - Use of local traditional skills
 - Advocacy drama on social issues (dowry, early marriage)
 - Mobile theatres for awareness promotion and entertainment



Participation of women

- There are different degrees of participation
We see many women at the table as recipients but we cannot claim that there is women's participation. We need to look carefully on how learning is being organized and training interventions for women.
- Expanding skill training from the stereotyped – available skill training is not always linked to employment and market
- Educating both men and women: target approach often cause conflict with traditional power holders.



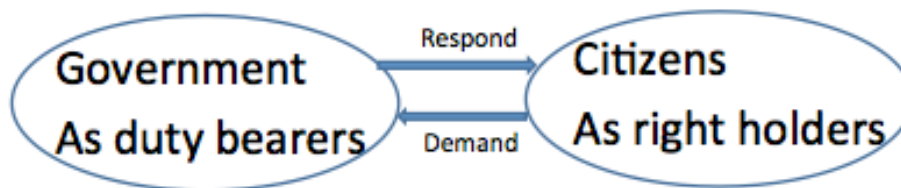
Kominkan-CLC International Conference on ESD, Okayama, 2014

The conference discussed community based human development and recognized importance of life long learning.

Commitments

- Quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all as a central place of national education and development systems for achieving SDGs.
- Rethinking education to build inclusive and sustainable learning societies as a key role to community-based learning.
- Community-based learning in collaboration with all providers and stakeholders in national learning and education systems to achieve ESD and SDGs.
- More information: <http://www.city.okayama.jp/contents/000212064.pdf>

Learning for sustainable society who is responsible?



Can the government ensure all the rights?

- Civic-political
- Socio-economic
- Environmental-cultural

Cooperation/collaboration of different stakeholders

- New Public
- Public-Private Partnership (PPP)
- Human Security (protection + empowerment)

Lifelong and life-wide learning

It should be intergenerational, from the youth up until the senior age

Life-wide learning is also about learning at home, school, CLC and workplace

There is a need for

- Diversifying learning opportunities
- Synergy of difference learning spaces
- Schools, CLCs, deschooling, deCLCs: we should not think just about one system
- Learning: individual and social: e.g. poverty, gender, environment

Illiteracy is considered an individual problem, but it is not true – policy makers need to learn too to understand factors such as poverty, gender, etc.

'We tried to find strengths of the community and how to link it to national and global sustainable agenda and goals.'

11.4 Open discussion

- *Private sector is a huge player in skill building India. One my concerns is that none of them is changing the workforce environment in terms of health and safety, environment, workers rights, etc, while they have a huge potential to do that. Another concern is huge gender discrimination in skills, in terms of skills provided to women and the professions women are encouraged to enter. This is not part of the discourse in the private sector.*

Industry is not demanding this, and there is not huge incentive for private sector to provide this. Employers are happy to get unskilled workers and give them low wages. Health and safety are of primary importance and some large employers provide in house training, but even in formal parts of ITIs there isn't much training on these aspects. I don't see this changing in the near future.

In terms of gender discrimination, the situation is changing now, especially with services sector. There are some sectors for which women have 'natural' inclination due to social and cultural norms, for example beautician. There are certain sectors where women don't participate for example e-commerce, in IT sector we see good participation but low participation overall.

- One of the biggest concerns is the corporatization of the entire sector in India. In the name of sustainability we increasingly hear about self-financing, soft loans and impact investment. The entire NSDC model being rolled out in India adopts one fit all solution without taking into consideration different contexts. Skill is not gender neutral, it is also not caste neutral nor context neutral.

It is concerning we made very small progress in literacy and that's where financing needs to go. Loads of work needs to be done on the funding model. You can see unanimous view of how it works on the ground and it is very far from the view of policy makers. There is an increasing gap between spaces where power and money is and where the grass root wisdom is.

Finally, women do not have any natural inclination to any skills. Those barriers need to be broken in our own minds. Women seem to be taking certain skills naturally because there is so much of conditioning on their part and also on the side of skill training providers.

- Agree that it is an issue not to contextualize curriculum. Anchors are the national standards, and 1/3 should be contextualized.

I don't see gender issues as a major worry since I see changes happening in India. For example in Haryana, 'security services' subject is being taught and many female students are taking up this subject. There are places where gender biases are being broken and we are moving into the right direction.

- *Are there any Pacific specific data on literacy, especially for women?*

As SDGs have been approved and many countries will be doing their national planning, we as a civil society need to push for including this agenda in these plans. Governments failed to put in place data management systems. They do not have data on people who are not in schools, what their education needs are, who they are, and how much financing is needed. This particularly relates to programmes for the marginalized and women.

Lastly we need to talk about the system. The integration of formal, non-formal and informal education has always been out there but our governments do not respond to that. Education reforms need to be done.

- In the 60s and 70s the discourse viewed schools as bad and non-formal education as better, hence denying school education and promoting non-formal education. However,

the focus should be on life long and also life wide education and learning between different generations and in different spaces. Literacy and life long learning is not very attractive for funders. We need governments to understand these alternative out-of-school mechanisms are important and there is a need to invest into them.

- *In relation to the funding gap of 39 billion. Some countries are over-relying on financing through private sectors and decreasing the budgets for education. We should think about innovative approaches to raise funding for these initiatives.*

Education is a right and hence it is a responsibility of governments to provide basic education. But for example in Nepal 40% of education is private, in India 30%. We are advocating for the governments to take responsibility. There should be regulations for private schools and any PPP should be supporting public education system and not replace it. These are the positions of ASPBAE.

11.5 Session summary

Elaine Butler, WAVE

We all know what we know and had a chance to reflect back and think about our aspirations and disappointments and what we learnt through those. We are looking forward to the 2030 agenda and asking the same questions again – what have we learnt and what our aspirations are. ASPBAE is an ever-increasing important organisation in this 'post school education' environment.

We live in a society and not an economy. Culture is not a static thing, it evolves and changes, and nothing is fixed.

Where do we go with this?

A whole post school environment and TVET is like a pea and elephant and there is need to grow the pea so it gets bit more recognition.

It takes back to the question of 'education for what'. Education in whose interest; whose agenda is being served and what kind of education do we want for what kind of societies for what kind of world.

This brings us to being aware of meta discourses that often become normalized and we take them for granted. At the moment the meta discourse in the global TVET discourse is about production of a mobile workforce. It is also about reproduction of disadvantaged, and it can be changed, it is not static.

School education is being impacted, community education is being minimalized, vocational education is in schools and universities are moving into what they call 'work integrated learning'.

Politics happen from the grassroots to the top. Power is something that can be put on us or we can take. The SDGs are going to be a big challenge for us, they are located in the global economy and it is an extremely complex agenda with goals, targets and indicators needing to be integrated.

Despite the SDG process being very consultative, a worry is the input from the private sector. Big banks and the multinationals cannot wait to get started. Where before the big projects used to have four pots of funding and four implementing NGOs and focus on gender - unless there is transparency and accountability, we are going to fight a pretty tough fight.

A challenge will be to keep the balance between private and public provision. For example in Australia, we have over 6,000 private providers and there are issues around quality, variety of qualifications and where they do or not lead to.

Advocacy

We have to work out what our priorities are going to be, have clear-cut messages and together as well as in our local contexts, we might need to get a lot more savvy with social media, use evidence and stories to get the messages out. Consistency and strategic relationships will be really important. We need to get pretty smart on policy and policy analysis, and reflect on who names and decides on what the problem is.

We need to advocate on embedded learning that is contextualized that leads people somewhere in life, rather than keep them in one spot, with pathways that they can aspire to.

Based on work of my colleague – we focus so much on disadvantage, perhaps we need to focus on politics of disadvantage in a world where we have ever increasing gap between those who have and those who don't.

Sujata Gothoskar, India

The more things change, the more they are the same. Economic atmosphere has changed; now there is a complete takeover of neoliberal agenda. On the other hand where health and education is concerned and where lot of other things are concerned, either not much has changed or we are little behind.

There has been a lot of talk on non-implementation or delayed implementation of policies, especially education ones. We have not achieved what we set to achieve not just in education but also healthcare.

The key thing in financing is the proportion of GDP that goes into education, and proportion of collected taxes that go into education, welfare, and the long-term perspective of development. We have a very short-term perspective on development since 1990s.

It is not true governments do not have enough money. In addition to political will there also needs to be taxation will. All of us need to be proactive on this issue to ensure everyone pays taxes.

There has been much less clear targeting and financial strategy in terms of finance resources. Each one of us needs to get involved in collecting and monitoring of resources and accountability.

Regarding the long-term vision of how we look at growth as economy and society - there is a study of Pune region in which are hundreds of factories. The study looks at what is happening to children in terms of education and healthcare. Not even 15% of the workforce is permanent; 85% is on contract. Therefore their wages are low and they are not able to invest much into education and healthcare of their children. We producing substandard students and our workforce is also substandard.

Day four: Thursday 29 October 2015

12. Special tribute

There has been a tendency for women's work to be invisible and we as ASPBAE we don't want to fall into that trap. Now when we are looking for the future plans, we should look back at people who build the spaces we are enjoying today.

1999 we went through a shift in the organization, when we went from more academic education organization into the organization of today, more rooted in grassroots education work, in promoting adult right to education especially for those most marginalized. This shift happened thanks to a very strong women's movement.

One of the stewards of this movement was Mua Vermeulen, and another two women who have furthered this work were Junko Kuninobu (1984-2014) and Martha Farrell (1959-2015).

Matatumua Vermeulen, (1936-2012)

Matatumua or Mua as fondly called by everyone was an outstanding woman leader, a champion of the right to quality education for all, and a tireless worker for sustainable livelihood systems that transform the lives especially of poor, marginal communities in the South Pacific and the Asia Pacific region.

She was a former member of parliament in Samoa and the founder of the Samoa All People's Party (SAPP) - the first political party to be founded and headed by a woman. A former Superintendent of Nursing, Matatumua was also instrumental in founding and development of the Samoa School of Nursing. In the last decade of her life, Mua threw her energies in the work of METI, an NGO member of ASPBAE, working on preventive health care especially in the treatment of sleep apnoea, in agro-forestry development and conservation, organic farming, marine rehabilitation projects and second chance teacher training.

In 2004, Mua was elected for the first time as South Pacific representative in the ASPBAE Executive Council. She was re-elected in 2008 and held this post until her untimely demise. As a member of the Executive Council, Mua was passionate about issues of gender, sustainability, citizens' participation and good governance. She was one of the first in the Executive to point out that climate change should be high on the agenda of adult educators - as an issue of power, marginalisation and survival.

For those of us who had the privilege to interact and work closely with Mua, we knew we were in the presence of a great soul. She was wise; she was razor sharp, grounded and strategic. She was unflinching in reminding the Executive of the specific concerns of the small island states of the South Pacific - and yet she steered us all to focus on the larger picture and uphold the organisation's broader, overall interest. She took clear, firm positions even when it was not easy or popular to do so. And she did these all with humanity and great kindness.

We remember today her generous contributions to ASPBAE that are her lasting legacy

Junko Kuninobu, (1948 – 2014)

Junko Kuninobu passed away in 2014 after a long illness.

Junko is remembered in ASPBAE as a feminist scholar, activist and dear friend.

Long-serving members of the current ASPBAE Executive Council and staff would have had the opportunity to meet and engage with Junko during her many years as an active member of the ASPBAE Gender Mainstreaming Committee and the ASPBAE Executive Council.

One of ASPBAE's stalwarts, Junko had the outstanding ability to bridge perspectives and interests – gender divides, richer and poorer contexts, movements and universities. Her commitment to ASPBAE was steadfast, her friendship warm and resolute.

Her willingness to share her knowledge and skills in addressing gender and women's rights and its application to adult education continues to be acknowledged by ASPBAE members who worked with her during global events like the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995 and internal ASPBAE events like the Gender Facilitator's Training Workshop in Hua Hin in 1998, various gender mainstreaming workshops and conferences on education for migrant women especially in East Asia.

Junko will be remembered for the various facets of her personality – as a dedicated educator, a passionate activist for gender and women's rights. And more for her smiling eyes and warm laughter, a razor sharp mind, her unwavering support, her gentle soul, her inquiring mind, and her loving heart.

It is through the passion and audacity of many like her in the early years of ASPBAE's 'reformation' that we have the privilege to sustain work on gender justice within ASPBAE. So it is only fitting that we remember Junko now, with gratitude and fondness.

Martha Farrell, (1959 – 2015)

Our friend Martha Farrell, NGO leader and adult educator, was among 14 people killed in a Taliban attack on a guest house in Kabul, Afghanistan on 13 May 2015. Martha was known and respected in India, and around the world, for her work on adult education, women's rights and gender equality. She had been leading a gender training workshop with the Aga Khan Foundation in Kabul at the time of the attack. She was fearless and committed to her work, despite the dangers.

She undertook pioneering work on sexual harassment in the workplace in India, and in 2014 she published the book on the subject, *Engendering the Workplace: Gender Discrimination & Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Organisations*.

Martha began her career as a literacy worker, and she broadened her focus into adult education, where she began her lifelong practice of participatory learning methodology.

Martha's crusade for gender mainstreaming in organisations began in 1998 when the Vishakha Guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment at workplaces were formulated by the Supreme Court of India. She ensured that PRIA developed a mechanism towards this end—a Board-mandated Committee on Gender Awareness and Mainstreaming in PRIA (CGAMP) was established. It was through her sustained efforts that the policy of 'zero tolerance' in this regard was enforced in all workshops, meetings and offices of PRIA and its close partners.

Martha was a strong woman, always very focused and determined. She was a great trainer, full of life, she was instrumental in mainstreaming gender in PRIA, and she always raised gender issues in all discourses. Martha was passionate about her work, she loved life, she was a keen traveller, and she was a great mentor to her team.

Martha was closely associated with ASPBAE's work through PRIA. We bid adieu to our dear friend and we are sure her work on gender equality will continue.

13. Ways forward

13.1 Post 2015 Education Agenda, CONFINTEA and TVET

Aliénor Salmon, UNESCO Bangkok

Gender equality as a global priority

- Commitment to promote gender equality across UNESCO's mandate
- The Division for Gender Equality is responsible for ensuring the promotion of Gender Equality at UNESCO both in programming and in the Secretariat.
- Specific programmes and mainstreaming through all sectors.
- Priority Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2020)

EFA & the MDGs

1. Expand Early Childhood Care and Education
2. Achieve Universal Primary/Basic Education (UPE)
3. Provide Life Skills and Lifelong Learning
4. Improve Literacy Rates
5. Achieve Gender Parity and Equality in Education
6. Provide Quality Education

Remaining challenges

Basic education:

- Low participation in pre-primary education
- High dropout rates in primary level

Beyond basic education:

- Lower enrolment in post-lower secondary education
- TVET unpopular in secondary level
- Adult literacy still low in some countries

Out-of-school

- In 2012, 17 million out-of-school children and 34.9 million out-of-school adolescents

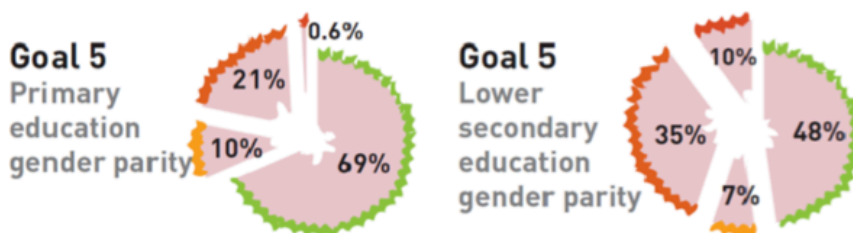
Parity

- Gender parity improved at primary level but still lagging at secondary and tertiary levels
- Divides based on economic status, geography, gender etc continue to exist across and within countries.



There has been strong movement worldwide towards greater gender parity, but country progress has been uneven

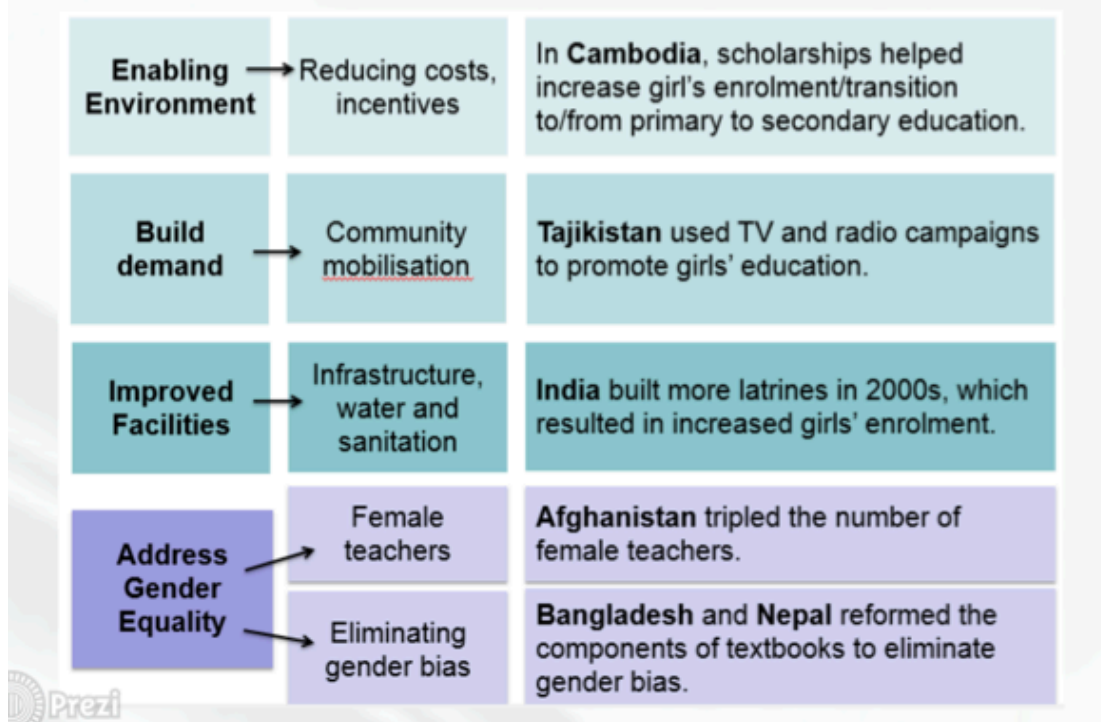
Defining and measuring gender equality remains contested



A third of countries did not reach gender parity in primary education; almost a half did not in secondary

Prezi

What has worked in the Asia-Pacific?



Sustainable Development Goals 2030



Differences between MDGs and SDGs

- SDG agenda is transformative, integrated and universal
- SDG4 and Education 2030 are one common goal – there is no separation between MDGs and EFAPage 76 of 90
- Focus on country-level implementation
- Gender equality is reflected in all targets

There is emphasis on all of the themes discussed at the event, including transversal skills that enable people to contribute to society



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Relevant targets to gender, skills and work:

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality **technical, vocational and tertiary education**, including university

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have **relevant skills**, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.5 By 2030, **eliminate gender disparities** in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the **knowledge and skills** needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Relevant targets to gender, skills and work:

5.1 End all forms of **discrimination** against all women and girls everywhere

5.4 Recognize and **value unpaid care and domestic work** through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and **equal opportunities for leadership** at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life



World Education Forum 2015 - Incheon Declaration

Led by UNESCO, with focus on 5 core teams:

Access

- At least 9 years compulsory free, publicly funded, equitable quality basic education
- At least 1 year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education
- Meaningful education and training opportunities for out of school youth and adolescents

Inclusion and equity

- Addressing all forms of exclusion, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes
- Focus on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities to ensure that no one is left behind

Gender equality

Commitment to support:

- Gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments
- Mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula, and
- Eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools

Quality of Education

- Improving learning outcomes
- Qualified, empowered, motivated, and supported teachers and educators
- Focus on creativity and knowledge to develop skills for education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED)

Lifelong learning opportunities

- Emphasis on all setting and all levels of education
- Equitable and increased technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education
- Harnessing the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Within access there is an emphasis on inclusion and quality, looking at learning outcomes and life long learning.

Incheon Framework for Action

Education 2030 to be implemented through:

- Development Cooperation
- Financing
- Participatory governance
- Global coordination mechanism

UNESCO's role

To lead and coordinate Education 2030 through:

- Advocacy
- Policy dialogue
- Monitoring
- Convening stakeholders
- Education focal point within SDG coordination structure

Regional implementation

- Build on existing partnerships, frameworks and mechanisms, as well as forge new partnerships to ensure implementation of the new education agenda.
- Specific roles and activities of regional mechanisms may be established and draw on the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Regional Education Conference (APREC) as well as the findings of the assessment of the EFA architecture in Asia-Pacific

The Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific (GENIA)

- The network has gender focal points in different countries who coordinate gender related in-country work
- Consists of 14 members: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, LAO PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam
- GENIA Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality in Education 2009 for teachers is being updated

Country level implementation

- Country-led action supported by multi-stakeholder partnerships and financing lies at the heart of Education 2030
- Countries to translate global targets into achievable national targets based on the national context and priorities

Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED)

- 25-27 November 2015 in Bangkok
- First step towards building a common understanding of Education 2030 and preparing for its implementation at the regional and national levels
- 250 participants, CSOs to be very prominent
- Key themes: New education agenda, targets and Framework for Action; M&E; Partnerships and coordination mechanisms; Capacity development needs

TVET

- Based on Kuala Lumpur Declaration 2015 plays a significant role in the post-2015 agenda
- Remaining challenges and priorities:
 1. Quality and relevance
 2. Inclusion and equity
 3. Lifelong learning
 4. Greening skills
 5. Qualifications frameworks
 6. Governance and investment
 7. ICTs
 8. Regional integration

A photo competition took place prior to the conference. Below is the winning photo showing Lao women working in a non-traditional field. The accompanying note talked about how emergency services offered by female electricians are very different, warmer and how women can positively contribute to fields like this:

Asia-Pacific Conference on Education 2030
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 25-27 August 2015

UNESCO
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION
MALAYSIA

THE MODERN FACE OF SKILLS TRAINING IN ASIA-PACIFIC

“These students show that they are as competent as their male counterparts in a 50-foot pole climb and a tango with high voltage wires.”

“Women in Power (Lines)”
Romando Javillonar, Philippines
First Prize: UNESCO “Show us the modern face of Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET]” photo contest

Adult education

- 6th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), 2009, Belem Brazil: adoption of the Belem Framework for Action
- Revision of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education
- Post-2015 agenda re-emphasizes lifelong learning perspective, youth and adult literacy and skills for work and life
- Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE), 2013, 2nd edition

13.2 Review of post 2015 outcomes and next steps for ASPBAE

Maria Khan, ASPBAE, India

SDG Agenda

- A new development agenda – “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*” – 17 goals, 169 targets
- SDGs contain a specific target on ending gender disparity, and one on literacy
- Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030
- SDG 4 is further expressed in 7 targets and 3 means of implementation

Framework for Action

Education 2030 Framework for Action approved – High level Meeting, November 4, 2015 in UNESCO Paris – deepens and further elaborates on SDG 4:

- Vision, Rationale, Principles
- Strategic Approaches
- Indicative strategies for each Target
- Indicators – global, thematic, regional, national
- Implementation Modalities – governance, coordination, monitoring, financing

Why is this important?

- In contrast to other SDGs, it might seem that there is a recommended process for implementation only for SDGs on education and climate change
- For education it has been build on EFA
- The workshop kits contain a draft guide for implementation - a document that will be used by governments to draft their plans to contextualize the SDG agenda

Defining indicators

- Defining indicators for all goals is still in the process and it is being led by the UN commission of statistics
- Indicators will be adopted later on and will be expressed in four categories
- Global indicators will be defined on global level, most likely one indicator will not capture all themes under a goal, so for education there will also be thematic indicators
- Regional and national indicators that will speak to more context specific issues will then be defined
- Development of indicators is a political exercise so we should be involved in this process, as this is what actually indicates priorities and intentions of governments and is linked to funding

SDG4 and the FFA

The new agenda:

- Builds on the unfinished business of EFA and attends to more contemporary challenges, and encompasses loads of the advocacy
- **Universal** – applicable to all countries – richer and poorer

- EFA used to be the agenda of developed countries that they only supported through aid. Now the same yardstick applies to all countries including richer countries of the world.
- Upholds **education as a human right** and as a public good with **states as duty bearers**
- Set within a **lifelong learning framework**
- Scaled up ambition in education access: 12 years of free primary and secondary education, of which 9 years are compulsory; at least 1 year of free and compulsory pre primary education
- Strong on **equity, gender equality and inclusion**
There is higher ambition in terms of the gender encompassing pre-primary and secondary education
- **Education quality is defined more broadly** – beyond measurable learning outcomes/standardized testing
 - This has been one of the most contagious issues. Civil society argued for wider understanding of the standards as rich people have access to better quality education. Wider society issues affecting performance at tests cannot be ignored, for example richer students have better access to tuition that improves performance at tests.
 - Furthermore, standardized testing is not free - there is a whole industry that benefits from it, and is in favour of large education conglomerates.
 - Low fee private schools put a big burden on poor families who are denied quality public education. The same conglomerates that win the contracts for standardized testing run these schools.
 - Private sector involvement of this way is worrying, and many of us are likely to face this at the national level as it is an agenda pushed by the World Bank, UK and other donors.
- Recognises the key role education plays in promoting sustainable development, global citizenship and in preventing and mitigating conflict and in promoting peace
- Lifelong- learning - recognises the need for **multiple and flexible learning pathways; formal, non-formal, informal education opportunities; literacy and numeracy proficiencies, TVET, tertiary education and other skills trainings** to better prepare youth and adults for decent work and life
- Agreed **benchmarks for education financing – 6-8% of GDP or 15-20% of public expenditure** to education

BUT

Uncertain as yet if final indicators will capture the full spirit of the Targets

- Quality for primary, secondary education – based on tested performance in reading and math; push to add early grade assessment (testing)
- Indicators for Targets on adult education – do not specify adults or non-formal education; digital literacy as proxy for 'skills for work'
- Although:
 - proposed thematic indicators now track performance with respect to human rights covenants i.e. *Number of years of (i) free and (ii) compulsory pre-primary, primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks*
 - Strong equity indicators – all indicators to be disaggregated by gender, location, wealth, disability, conflict

What we should be attentive to:

- Not known what the final indicators will be
- There is push to narrow down the quality indicators as there are plans to institutionalize testing even in pre-school education
- Current indicator for adult literacy is very weak, as it focuses on young people only and does not track informal and non-formal education. We continue to push for this to be recognized.

Financing commitments not in step with demands of the new, broader agenda

- Addis Ababa Action Agenda – regressive influence on the SDG outcomes with its over optimism on the role and ability of the private sector to assist in meeting the SDGs and the right to education in particular; and its neglect of adult literacy and adult education outside of TVET
 - Private sector investment was a big thing discussed
 - No specific language on financing adult education
 - Financing priorities only talk about basic education so there is push to expand this to education for women, non-formal education, etc.
- Global Partnership for Education (GPE) – still limited in priority to basic education, constrained as well by diminishing aid contributions
- Commission on Financing of Global Education Funding Opportunities – focuses only on formal education, education in conflict; also over optimism on the private sector to deliver

'We lost the battle for benchmarks for official development assistance.'

CSO role in post-2015 process

- CSOs was a very strong player in the process
- It strengthen the CSO sector as it reinforced voice of CSOs and enabled us to build new partnerships and speak in news spaces such as ministries of statistics and finance

CSO Role in the Framework for Action

- Education 2030 Steering Committee is the main committee for implementation of the agenda
- CSOs recognised as one of the key partners for Education 2030
- CSOs – constituency represented in the new coordination mechanism set up to steer the follow up processes for the new education agenda
 - Education 2030 Steering Committee: 3 CSO representatives (2 NGOs, Teachers)
 - UNESCO to retain the Collective Consultation of NGOs as an institutionalised mechanism to consult and work with NGOs on Education 2030
- CSOs to be represented in the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) – charged with overall political guidance of the SDGs and its implementation

Next Steps for ASPBAE: Broad Directions

1. National Level roll-out of Education 2030

- Track & analyse national education sector plans - equity, inclusion, gender equality, quality and lifelong learning
- Influence country-level indicator setting processes - capture the full spirit of the agreed SDG4 targets, attuned to individual country realities and starting points
 - **Strengthen the voice of women and youth** in these processes
 - Focus on adult literacy, skills for life and work, particularly reaching the marginalized
- Education Watch – type activities down the line to track implementation

2. National, regional, global mechanisms set up

- Ensure inclusive, broad-based processes
- Ensure institutionalised participation of all relevant stakeholders including learners, teachers and civil society: we will be working together with you to ensure voices of women and youth are included and new mechanisms include participation of CSO

3. Mobilisation of resources needed to strengthen public education systems to deliver on the full, much wider new education agenda;

- Education budget advocacy: budget tracking, revenue monitoring and budget analysis – focus especially on adult literacy, skills for life and work, particularly reaching the marginalized; **gender analysis of budgets** (area that will require more attention of CSOs in the future)

- Challenge education privatisation in the region – map out presence of private (for-profit) presence in non formal education; regulation of private sector; use of human rights mechanisms to check education privatisation impact on equity and the right to education
- Map out existing practice on innovative domestic resource mobilisation approaches in the region
 - There is lack of analysis on this subject and need to push to generate domestic resources for education
 - We also need to develop our capabilities to understand issues of progressive taxation and tax justice
- Broaden support for progressive taxation and innovative financing strategies that do not burden the poor, strengthen the public education system - raise awareness on illicit financial flows, tax dodging and harmful tax incentives
- GPE – address full SDG 4 agenda

4. Capacity-building to advance the new education agenda and towards meeting the agreed goal and targets;

- Two tracks: 1) adult education providers to enrich adult education practice in the region; and 2) national education campaign coalitions for strong advocacy on the right to education and lifelong learning
- Documentation of good practice especially on AE and LLL not only to strengthen AE practice but also to inform more robust lifelong learning and education policy
- Research, development of toolkits, policy analysis and policy briefs to deepen understanding needed to engage Education 2030
- Foster dialogue and learning exchanges between national education coalition members and LLL campaigners - to deepen policy understanding and work among education campaigners on LLL and to likewise scale up the involvement of adult education practitioners in policy work

Planned capacity-building opportunities

- 7th General Assembly of ASPBAE in 2016 – as an important site to discuss and build our capacity on these topics
 - National consultation of members
 - Regional Strategic Review and Planning – end November 2016
- On-going capacity-building programmes – CSEF, Basic Leadership Development Course, study exchanges, others

Partnerships

- Will sustain work with and through its members
 - 152 member organisations, 100 individual members
 - Education campaign coalitions in 17 countries
- Global networks of civil society organisations on education, INGOs
 - International Council for Adult Education
 - Global Campaign for Education – and regional networks
 - Collective Consultation of NGOs
 - DVV International, Open Society Foundation, Right to Education Pr CSOobject
 - SDG CSO networks
- UNESCO, UIL, UNGEI, UN ESCAP, SDC and others

Upcoming Platforms in 2015

- Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on the SDG Indicators – October 26-28, Bangkok
- High-level Meeting to Adopt the Education 2030 Framework for Action – November 4, Paris
- 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference – November 3-18, Paris
- UNESCO Experts Meeting to develop Asia Pacific CLC Standards – November 19-20, Bangkok
- Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 – November 25-27, Bangkok
- UN Forum on Climate Change 21st Session of the Conference of Parties (Cop 21) – November 30-December 11, Paris

13.3 What is UNGEI (United Nations Girls' Education Initiative) doing?

Cecilia (Thea) Sorano, ASPBAE

UNGEI is working predominantly on primary and secondary education, but as we discussed it is important that girls have access to life long learning, stay in school and receive quality education. Therefore we work with UNGEI on these agendas.

The issues, opportunities and challenges we have been working on with UNGEI include:

Gender in East Asia Pacific

- Notable progress in narrowing the gender gap
- Disaggregated data reveal significant disparities exist within countries.
- Girls continue to be disadvantaged in primary education in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.
- Gender inequalities in transition from pre-primary to primary, primary to secondary, and school to work
- A "reverse gender gap" becoming apparent in the relative underachievement of boys, especially in Lower Secondary (Myanmar, Philippines, Kiribati, Samoa, Thailand, Vanuatu, Mongolia, and Fiji - SOWC, 2015)

Status of Gender Parity in Education

Pre-primary level

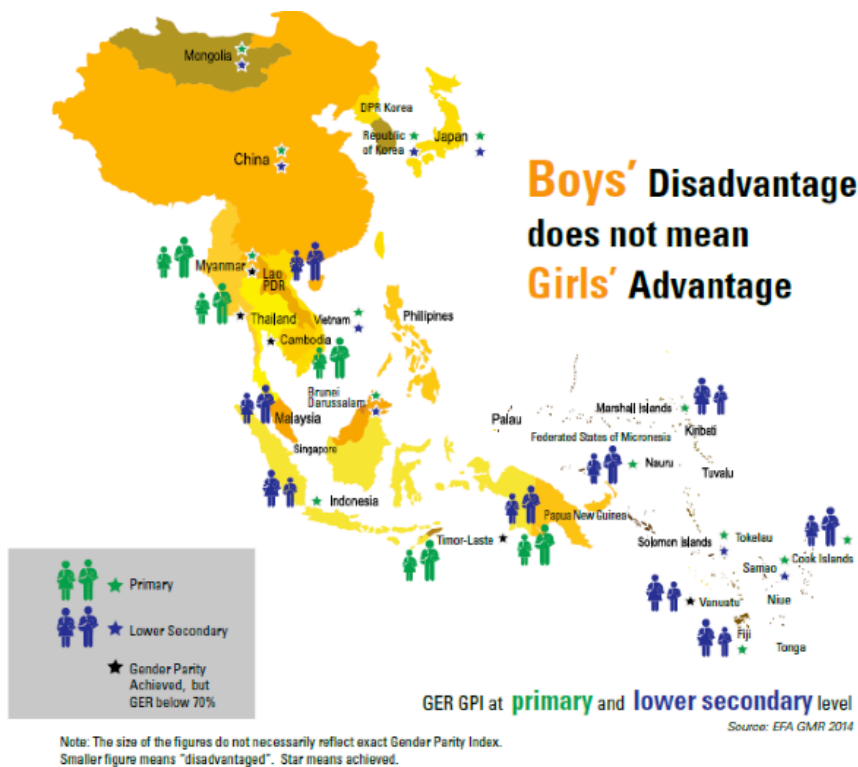
- Boys are disadvantaged in Fiji, Lao PDR and Samoa.
- Girls are disadvantaged in Malaysia and Viet Nam

Primary level

- Girls are disadvantaged in countries such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.
- Boys are disadvantaged in Kiribati.

Lower secondary level

- Boys are disadvantaged in Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Samoa, Thailand, Kiribati, Fiji, and Vanuatu.
- Girls are disadvantaged in Cambodia and Lao PDR.



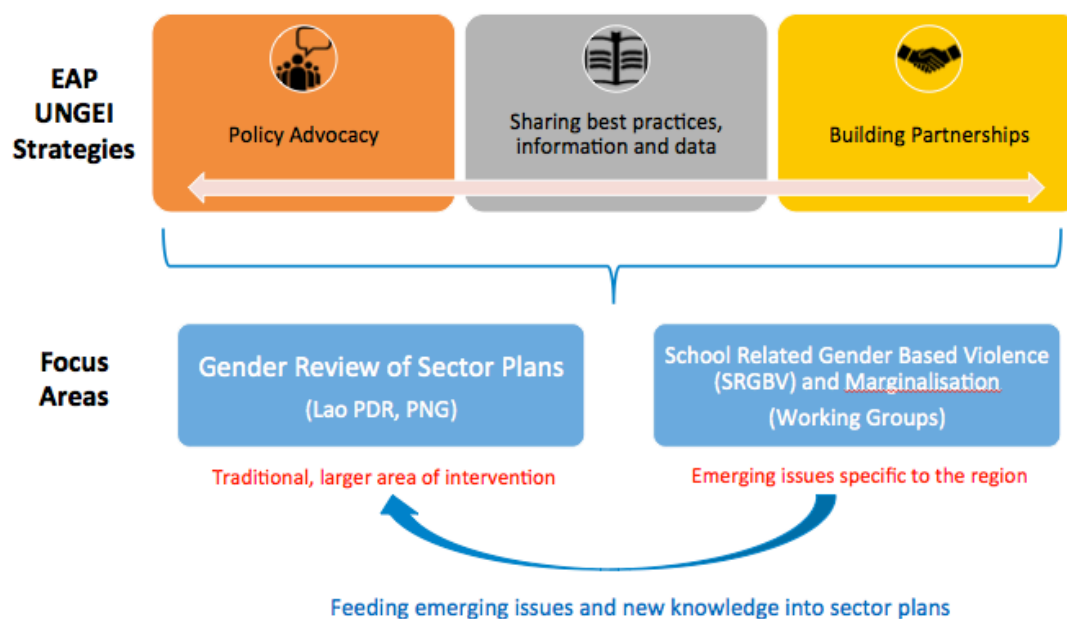
Opportunities and Challenges: "Our Girls are Fine"

- Boys' underperformance
- Gender and disabilities
- Adolescent Pregnancy: 19 % of young women in developing countries become pregnant before age 18. 22% in South Asia and 8% in East Asia Pacific (UNFPA, 2013)
- School transitions: successful transitions from primary to secondary education and from school to work
 - This relates to what kind of education girls achieve, what orientation is in the school system and a lack of secondary education programmes for girls who get married early.
- Child marriage
Nearly half of girls in South Asia and 1 in 5 in East Asia Pacific are married before 18 (UNGEI)
- Language, Gender, and Education
It is girls and women who tend to be monolingual, being less exposed through schooling, salaried labour, or migration to the national language.
Mother tongue and multi-lingual education significantly benefits girls in terms of enrolment and participation in education.
This is strong agenda for UNGEI.
- Gender and Early Childhood
Children begin to form concepts of gender around age 2, and know if they are a boy or girl by age 3, develop stereotypes by age 5, and these become rigidly defined between 5-7 years of age (Martin & Ruble, 2004)

What is UNGEI?

- A multi-stakeholder partnership established as a designated flagship of Education for All (EFA) in 2000
- Committed to improving the quality and availability of girls' education
- Contributes to the empowerment of girls and women through transformative education
- Works through collective advocacy, coordinated action, knowledge sharing and capacity building for member states and CSOs

As a knowledge partnership, the EAP UNGEI's main role is to disseminate and share information and knowledge with the members, leading to evidence-based policy making and implementation at the country level.



Building partnerships

- UNGEI works with governments of member countries as well as CSOs at country level
- By facilitating capacity building and specific projects in countries it builds partnerships at local level
- At regional level there are research collaborations on some key issues

UNGEI has 4 advocacy agenda points but in our region the focus is on the following two issues:

School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV)

- Development and piloting of a **SRGBV regional curriculum, a tool for 11-14 years old** that includes guidance note for teachers and 31 lesson plans, is developed and to be piloted by the end of 2015.

Marginalisation

Policy Advocacy on marginalisation issues such as child labour, violence against women, and disability were organized with partners like ILO and UNWomen (UNiTE Campaign).

Policy advocacy & knowledge generation and sharing

- Celebrating international days
- Resources produced by the EAP UNGEI and its members: Girls, Disabilities, and School Education in the East Asia Pacific Region (2014) followed by a webinar (2015); School-Related Gender-Based Violence in the Asia-Pacific Region (2014); Why are boys underperforming in Education? Gender Analysis of Four Asia-Pacific Countries (2012)
- The EAP UNGEI Newsletter: A platform to share best practices from the field and news on the region and global education agenda.
- Sharing resources from partners: blogs, event announcement, publications launched, and etc.
- There are policy briefs and workshops

Challenges in gender work at the country level:

- Work toward gender equality (because national gender parity estimates are high, the progress toward gender equality, which is a more complex construct, is stalling)
- Links between Gender analysis and Equity are not seen: Vulnerability mapping and indices not always done

Member states are very focused on gender parity, however UNGEI pushes for gender equality in education. Even in countries that achieved gender parity, there is a huge inequality within the female population based on class, ethnicity, identity and geography. UNGEI works with member states to understand what is a gender analysis of equitable education.

- Gender is still regarded as a girl issue, yet boy indicators continue to be a problem
- LGBTi issues remain sensitive: LGBT are bullied and discriminated by teachers so these issues are also being taken up by UNGEI
- The middle income context must be taken into account including how to address gender within the framework: links to the labour market and employability

Way Forward – EAP UNGEI Priorities in 2016

- SRGBV: Roll out of the SRGBV curriculum
Continual advocacy on gender based violence - with research complete now the advocacy will proceed
- Marginalisation: disabilities, child labour, adolescent pregnancy and marriage
- Focus on LGBTi communities: how to address this issue need to be defined
- Transition to Secondary education: focus on how girls that marry early can transit into the secondary education
- Regional Gender Forum: theme to be confirmed
- Knowledge Management and Advocacy (Newsletters, Publications)

Q&A

- *Realizing the context of a natural disaster, education and gender in emergency and DDR is missing. These points should be considered.*

Incheon Declaration talks about education in conflicts and natural disasters.

It is recognized that natural emergencies happen and the new agenda certainly covers that. Critical is how this is expressed in government strategies on country level and to ensure there are support mechanisms for the governments available at regional level to enable them to ensure access to education even in emergencies.

However, most of the discourse on this topic does not really go into tackling the root causes of natural disasters and how to equip people to be more resilient. Natural disasters impact the poorer much more than the rich, and there is a need to put in place mechanisms to address these realities.

In terms of disaster prevention, one of the targets on knowledge and skills for sustainable development is around transversal skills. Education is more than passing a test. It is really important to equip people with transversal skills to help tackle these issues by for example including environmental issues in relevant subjects.

For SDG4 there is one global indicator, which measures the number of countries that integrate environmental science in curriculum in secondary education. At the country level, we should look into how to best track the work of our governments in this area.

14. Plan of action on sub-region and country level

Regional sub-groups were asked to discuss a plan of actions at the regional, sub-regional and country levels and what they would like ASPBAE to work on going forward.

14.1 South Asia

Plan of actions

- Work on revising relevant policies on gender, education, skill and work, and make synergy between these four
- Consultation and lobbying to include this in election manifesto

ASPABAE

- ASPABAE can be a platform on regional level for countries to share their initiatives in this area, involving media and social media and celebrities as ambassadors
- It could also work on national synthesis of experiences and bring them to forums at the regional and global levels

14.2 Central Asia

Plan of actions

- In some Central Asian countries there is formal and non-formal education but sustainability and fragmentation across countries are key issues. Therefore, we will engage in mutual working with our governments on this.
- Financial education for women is important due to migration, as men migrate to Russia and send remittances but women tend not to spend that money wisely. There is a need for financial education projects for women on how to invest and spend money sustainably.
- Continue to address needs of our clients and women's groups

- We will advocate on socioeconomic and political reforms and for the pot for development of women
- Promote human rights and opportunities for women, ensure they can feel part of a society

14.3 East Asia

Plan of actions

- Advocate on national policy development for youth development, capacity building of marginalized groups, including women households, and against gender and age discrimination

Advocacy

- In-depth research and collecting of evidence to express context of each country
- Strengthen networks amongst the other groups, especially NGOs and experts working in this field
- Use recommendations from UPR and convention on human rights in advocacy to ensure gender equality is included in all national policies

14.4 South East Asia

Plan of actions

Advocacy on

- Incorporation of SOGI (sexual orientation, gender and identity) in school curriculum
- Formal and informal of education for single and young mothers and pregnant girls
- Enable indigenous people to study in their mother tongue
- Non-formal and informal education for senior citizens
- Engage local and international governments and on the regional level through ASPBAE

14.5 India

Plan of actions

- Scanning of existing policies and gaps and conduct research to fill the gaps
- Bring civil society organisations together to have a dialogue on the existing policies and goals and the issues of implementation
- Advocacy on teacher training courses to be more gender sensitive, review of curriculum and books to make them more gender sensitive and training for school management groups
- At the policy level, the implementation has been lacking, mainly in capacity building aspect. In India, there is a lack of training organisations that really shift the paradigm.

ASPABAE

- There is one set of organisations that work on education and another set that works on livelihoods and skills, and currently there is a very limited dialogue between the two groups. ASPABAE could lead on facilitating the dialogue between them.

14.6 South Pacific

Plan of actions

- Stop calling ourselves small islands and change our name to BOS – Big Ocean States
- Research in BOS analysing education enrollments, what subjects women are going into and the level of graduation
- In Fiji we have already been involving young people to take action to contribute to sustainable development of Fiji. We will share our work in this area with other island states and encourage them to do similar initiatives.

- A student associated with WAVE has been undertaking a masters level research project on SDGs and gender in post-compulsory education. We can make the report and info graphic analyzing the research results available.
- WAVE is a member of Australian women association. The next meeting of the association is coming up where we will be looking at the big picture issues, particularly around financing and how the goals will be integrated.
- Due to high likelihood of SDGs being implemented by private sector, we have to do work on the indicators, holding our governments accountable, but also coalesce strategically around public provision and social agenda.

ASPABAE

- Reach out further into the Pacific from the ASPABAE's Australian office
- Develop an online network to engage NGOs in the wider Pacific region to discuss the implementation of SDGs, the gender aspect and to share about the good work being done. This should be facilitated by ASPABAE as a Facebook and email group.
- Many education institutions in the sub-region do not know what is happening on the global agenda, therefore a creation of ASPBEA Education Platform would be helpful.

