

ASPBAE Update

on the World Education Forum 2015

19-22 May 2015, Incheon, Republic of Korea



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

Setting the Roadmap for Global Education Until 2030

The World Education Forum 2015 (WEF) was held from 19-22 May 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, and saw the participation of approximately 1500 people. The WEF 2015 provided a unique platform for global leaders in education, ministers, policy makers, and representatives of civil society, UN agencies, teachers, experts, the private sector, and the media to -

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This is a special issue of the ASPBAE Bulletin highlighting ASPBAE's involvement in and the outcomes of the World Education Forum 2015.

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Setting the Roadmap for Global Education Until 2030



- 1) Take stock of achievements and shortfalls in the implementation of the Education for All (EFA) goals and education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- 2) Agree on a joint position for the education goal and targets in the post-2015 development agenda, which will be adopted by UN Member States at a Summit in September 2015.
- 3) Chart the way for the implementation of the post-2015 education agenda through a Framework for Action.

Stakeholders adopted the [Incheon Declaration](#) (*Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all*) which codified the agreed essential elements of the Framework for Action of the new education agenda. The Framework for Action will be adopted in a special High-level meeting alongside the 38th UNESCO General Conference in Paris, as it will further seek to incorporate into the WEF 2015 consensus, the agreements on education forged during the 3rd International Conference on Financing and Development (13-16 July 2015 in Addis Ababa) and the UN Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (25-27 September 2015 in New York).

The WEF 2015 provided multiple spaces for discussion and interaction through a combination of plenary and parallel group sessions, thematic debates, and side events on issues related to the post-2015 education



agenda and its implementation. The first day included the opening ceremony and stock-taking of the EFA progress, the second focussed on the post-2015 education agenda, and the third on how this agenda will be implemented by the international community for the next 15 years.

Civil society was prominent in the official spaces of the World Education Forum. Camilla Crosso, Global Campaign for Education (GCE) President, was part of the high-level panel on the Opening Day and Rasheda Choudhury was also a Panellist on the plenary session

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The World Education Forum 2015 adopted the Incheon Declaration - Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all

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on 'How Does Education Contribute to Sustainable Development Post 2015?' on the final day of the WEF 2015. ASPBAE, represented by its Secretary-General, Maria Khan, with Camilla Crosso of the GCE, and Dennis Sinyolo of Education International, were the civil society representatives in the WEF 2015 Drafting Committee. Several civil society representatives were also part of panels in the different thematic parallel session, including ASPBAE's Cecilia Soriano who was part of the [panel](#) on 'Global and Regional Coordination and Monitoring Mechanisms'.



This E-brochure will give you a snapshot of what transpired at the WEF 2015 and some reflections from ASPBAE and its constituency who actively participated in the milestone event. You can also read ASPBAE President, [Robbie Guevara's blog](#), ASPBAE Executive Council Member, [Timote Vaoleti's blog](#), President of E-Net Philippines, [Edicio Dela Torre's blog](#), and former ASPBAE President, [Sandy Morrison's blog](#), to get glimpses in to the WEF 2015 as it was happening. You can also read the [opening remarks of ASPBAE Secretary-General](#), Maria Khan, at the NGO Forum,



and the [address of Carol Doyanan](#), representing the indigenous Aeta community in the Philippines, who spoke about youth and education, also at the NGO Forum. ASPBAE circulated the Festival of Learning's 'Statement of Commitments' during the NGO Forum and the WEF 2015. [\[Back\]](#)

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The Incheon Declaration - Appraising the outcomes of the WEF 2015

By Maria Khan, Secretary-General, ASPBAE



Maria Khan

At the end of three days of the WEF 2015 - culminating a more than 12-month process of regional and global consultations, mobilising a wide breadth of education stakeholders, including civil society - the assembly agreed the

Incheon Declaration, “Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all”.

Consensus around this Declaration is significant as: (1) it represents agreement on the essential elements of a Framework for Action (FFA) codifying the new agenda for education, ‘Education 2030’, and the means to pursue this; (2) it holds the solid political weight of

the broad education constituency having been forged with and in the high-level presence of more than 130 Ministers of Education, the heads of the co-convening agencies including the Secretary General of the UN, and a well-organised contingent of civil society; (3) it rallied agreement on a strong document – one worth the support offered it by the NGO Forum, with its over 250 civil society representatives, on the eve of the WEF 2015.

The Incheon Declaration is strong on a number of counts:

- It did not regress on its strong **human rights perspective** and degree of ambition in its targets – as called for by the NGO Forum participants.
- Its sections on education **access** were reinforced from the earlier draft with agreed commitment to ensure the provision of 12 years of publicly funded, free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary

education, 9 years of which will be compulsory – to align fully with SDG Target 4.1. Support for at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education was retained adding reference to all children having access to early childhood development, care and education. Additional commitment was also made to ‘meaningful education and training opportunities’ for out-of-school youth and children while enabling re-entry to the formal system.

- Commitment to **equity** was strengthened with a stronger emphasis on gender equality: a full paragraph was added in the Declaration to emphasise this.
- Despite the ongoing push for narrow conceptions of education quality, focused on standardised testing, the Declaration retained a comprehensive and broad notion of education **quality** – involving inputs, processes, and outcomes with the means

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The Incheon Declaration was a culmination of a more than 12-month process of regional and global consultations, mobilising a wide breadth of education stakeholders, including civil society.

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to measure progress. References to education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED) were retained, both recognised as essential elements to education quality. The section on education quality was also enhanced with a reference to 'empowered', 'well-trained', professionally-qualified' teachers and educators – underlining the dimension of quality non-formal education as an imperative as well.

- Quality **lifelong learning** remained prominent in the Declaration – covering adult literacy, adult education and training, non-formal and informal education, life skills, TVET, and higher education.
- There is strong recognition that the **fundamental responsibility** for implementing the agenda **lies with governments**, with strong adherence to accountability, transparency, participatory governance, and the **right to participation of all stakeholders**.
- The Declaration also reaffirmed recognition of **UNESCO** as the UN specialised agency for education to continue its mandated role to lead and coordinate the new education agenda, and

to function as the focal point for education (SDG 4 and all other references to education in the other SDGs), and within the overall (yet to be defined) SDG coordination architecture. It was also recommended that the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) be part of the future global coordination mechanism that is set up – offering a greater chance for this financing mechanism to be more fully aligned to the agreed full education 2030 agenda, thus representing an improvement from its current practice.

Notwithstanding clear 'wins' for civil society in the final version of the Incheon Declaration, its most uneven sections are those related to **education financing**:

- The benchmark for domestic resource mobilisation of 'at least' 4-6% of GDP, or 15-20% of public expenditures to education was reinstated, strengthening the financing target. This however falls short of the agreed benchmark by Asia Pacific governments during the Regional Consultation on the post-2015 education agenda which committed to allocations of 6% of GDP and 20% of public expenditures to education. CSOs in the Asia Pacific can pursue this more ambitious target in the roll-out

processes of the new agenda in 2016, onwards.

- Additional references to innovating financing or 'potential new resources' were added, framed within support for the right to education. Civil society needs to be vigilant however that these be more squarely directed at support for 'public education', especially in a climate of increasing education privatisation and commercialisation of education.
- More explicit commitment for education aid to 'prioritise neglected sub-sectors and low income countries' was added to the Incheon Declaration, along with commitment to aid harmonisation and effectiveness. This is positive. It is however a cause of grave concern that donors have so far failed to commit to stem the decline in aid to basic education, agree a clear target for education aid i.e. doubling of aid to basic education or 10% of ODA to basic education, or to reaffirm the Dakar pledge that no country with credible plans should fail for want of resources.
- There is more explicit language calling for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, or FfD, (July, Addis Ababa) to support

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SDG 4. This is overall positive since the current draft outcome document of the FfD Conference falls short of committing financing support for the full SDG 4 agenda and ignores adult literacy and adult education (para 67). Civil society however preferred a more specific call in the Declaration for the FfD to finance the education goal and all of its targets with specific minimum benchmarks for domestic financing and external support.

- Although the Incheon Declaration did not refer specifically to it, the Framework for Action discussed in the WEF 2015 underscored the importance of widening the tax base as a critical means to generate the resources needed to meet the expanded and ambitious education agenda. This involves a more purposive attention to tax justice – ending harmful tax incentives and preventing tax evasion. Calls during the WEF 2015 to “follow the money” and chase the world’s billionaires to contribute to setting up a Global Fund for Education to fill the financing gap were challenged by civil society. Civil society argued that aggressive tax avoidance of the private sector (though tax havens etc.) has denied countries much needed public funds for education. Tax justice offers

a better and more correct approach to mobilising the necessary funds for quality public education.

There is much that civil society can celebrate – having been actively involved in shaping this global consensus. The process, however, is not over.

The Framework for Action (FFA), Education 2030 will be adopted and launched at a special high-level meeting in November 2015 alongside the 38th UNESCO General Conference. This final FFA document will be aligned to: (1) the agreements codified in the Incheon Declaration; (2) and the final outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (July, Addis Ababa) and the UN Summit adopting the post-2015 agenda (Sept., New York).

Further on, it is envisaged that the wider set of thematic indicators by which progress on the agreed education goal and targets will be tracked will also be approved in the high-level meeting in November, while the global indicators for all the SDGs of which education is part, will be agreed in March 2016.

These define the spaces for continued advocacy and lobbying that education campaigners need to occupy with the same determination, competence, and

organisation they have successfully mustered to carry on the fight to secure the right to education and lifelong learning for all. [\[Back\]](#)

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Korean Civil Society Organisations Participate Strongly at the Incheon Events

By Bernie Lovegrove, CSEF Regional Coordinator, and Executive Director, ASPBAE Australia



Bernie Lovegrove

Korean CSOs had a strong presence at the Incheon events, including the Asia Pacific Pre Meeting, the NGO Forum and the World Education Forum (WEF) itself, both inside and outside the events.

Seven delegates from the Korean education network, known currently as the KoFID Education Thematic Group participated in the Asia Pacific pre-meeting, while more than 30 participated in the NGO Forum. The Korean delegation welcomed the international CSO guests and offered solidarity with a range of issues, including the jailing of students in Myanmar for protesting about education.



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They also attended some of the CSO caucus meetings organized by GCE and ASPBAE. The network also organized some excellent music at interludes through the NGO Forum and also the evening reception.

Six Korean CSO delegates were able to participate in the official World Education Forum through places made available by the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs (CCNGO), since spaces for Korean civil society were not made available from within the official



Korean delegation. One of the Korean CSO delegation attempted to speak in a plenary session but was not allowed to, in what was considered a moment of gender blindness by the moderator at the time. However after the plenary the young Korean woman attracted quite a deal of media attention, wanting to know what she wanted to say.

Additionally, Korean civil society was highly visible outside the WEF, where student and teacher union



groups protested and raised awareness about some of the problems within the Korean education system. Colourful banners, tables and slogans and role plays abounded with messages such as 'Abolish privileged education, and expand good quality free education'.

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ASPBAE Youth Participation in the NGO Forum and the WEF 2015

By Cecilia Soriano, Programmes and Operations Coordinator, ASPBAE



Cecilia Soriano

Through the years, ASPBAE strongly lobbied for the right to quality education of marginalised youth. Learning from good practices in education for marginalised youth, it has argued for the reform of education systems,

specifically pushing for the development of multiple pathways to learning – to provide different venues and appropriate curricula for youth learners. The youth agenda for education post 2015, now called, education 2030, was borne out of the numerous consultations and participation of marginalised youth in the ASPBAE events and youth constituency engagements.

Consistently, ASPBAE ensured that the youth voices

are articulated by the marginalised youth themselves in different policy platforms – the NGO Forum and World Education Forum 2015 are no exceptions. ASPBAE nominated two youth leaders to participate -- Carol Doyanan, a literacy worker in the indigenous Ayta community in the Philippines (LAKAS-E-Net Philippines), and Sifa Humaeroh, also a young educator working with youth in the urban poor communities in Jakarta, Indonesia (Yayasan Aulia-NEW Indonesia). Both are members of the ASPBAE Working Group on Youth Literacy and Life Skills convened three years ago.

Carol Doyanan, in the opening programme of the NGO Forum, illustrated the challenges in education being experienced by marginalised youth by talking about her own experiences. She narrated the discrimination she faced in school and how their community's learning system has been alienated from the public education system. Importantly, Carol highlighted the agency

of the youth – their capacity to act on the education challenges and shared her inspiring work in developing indigenous education in her Ayta community.

Together with Carol, Sifa Humaeroh actively contributed to the discussions in the NGO Forum and the WEF 2015 and distributed and explained to other participants the ASPBAE pins and policy positions on “Protecting Public Education”. [\[Back\]](#)



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Mapping Strategies to Influence Delegates at the WEF 2015

Asia Pacific Civil Society Preparatory Meeting

By Helen Dabu, Capacity Support and Advocacy Adviser, ASPBAE



Helen Dabu

The Asia Pacific civil society delegation to the World Education Forum 2015 (WEF) came prepared and ready to work with and influence their government delegates to commit to an inclusive and equitable quality education and

lifelong learning for all.

To ensure visibility of civil society advocacy efforts and map out strategies to influence the delegates of the WEF 2015, ASPBAE organised a preparatory meeting on 17 May 2015 in Incheon attended by Asia Pacific civil society organisations delegates. 46 participants from 33 civil society organisations, consisting of

ASPBAE, GCE, DWI, ActionAid, Plan International-Japan, national education campaign coalitions, local civil society organisations in the Asia Pacific, and Nagoya University took part in the preparatory meeting.

Some of the main discussions and outcomes were - Participants shared their engagements at the country-level on post-2015 education agenda, particularly from the time we strategised during the FOL in Yogyakarta, and how these engagements were highlighted in key events such as Global Action Week, and their meetings with government delegations in the weeks leading up to the WEF 2015. The Korean Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation (KoFID) shared, amongst others, their key consultations with Korean civil society organisations on post-2015 education agenda and processes, and their meetings and engagements with the Korean Ministry of Education on the preparations for the WEF 2015. Caroline



Pearce (Global Coordinator of the Global Campaign for Education, GCE) presented on the current state of play in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and financing processes. ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, shared the civil society analysis of the

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ASPBAE organised a preparatory meeting to ensure visibility of civil society advocacy efforts and influence the WEF 2015 outcomes.

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Draft Framework of Action of Education 2030, highlighting the strong points of the document and its weak points where civil society organisations need to be attentive, to especially during the discussions

in the WEF 2015 and their engagements with their government delegations. Maria Khan also summarised the targeted outcomes of the WEF 2015 and the post-WEF processes.

The last part of the preparatory meeting was devoted to sub-regional workshops for participants to analyse and provide recommendations for the Draft Framework of Action based on country contexts, and strategise on ways of working during the WEF 2015 to ensure that Asia Pacific civil society organisations are visible and actively participating and engaging throughout the WEF. This strategising process ensured that Asia Pacific participants were distributed in all the parallel workshops of the WEF. It also ensured that



they were prepared for timely intervention and closer engagements with their government delegations based on lessons learnt and strategies that worked in previous regional advocacy engagements on post-2015, such as the Asia Pacific Regional Education Conference (APREC) in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2014.

The preparatory meeting was part of the continuing strategising of civil society organisations in the Asia Pacific to influence the global commitments to education post 2015. The Asia Pacific preparatory meeting on 17 May was another milestone in our collective action. Its discussions focused on the Framework for Action (FFA) as well as education indicators, using the Open Working Group SDG Targets on Goal 4 (education) as starting points. It referred to the Muscat

agreement, Bangkok Statement, FOL Statement, and our submission to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on indicators as essential reference documents to reiterate our positions to governments.

Overall, these efforts of civil society organisations contributed to the positive outcome of the Incheon Declaration which will spur us in the next battle for the approval of the SDGs in the UN Summit in New York in September 2015, including ensuring significant support for the education agenda in the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July, the adoption of the final Framework for Action at a special High level Meeting in November alongside the UNESCO General Conference in Paris, and ensuring the successful implementation of the agreed education agenda between now until 2030. [\[Back\]](#)



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Agreeing on a Civil society Vision for Education Post 2015

The NGO Forum

By Cecilia Soriano, Programmes and Operations Coordinator, ASPBAE



Cecilia Soriano

The NGO Forum gathered almost 300 delegates representing varied civil society organizations—national education coalitions, teachers' unions, non-government organisations, international and regional networks,

universities and youth organisations. The NGO Forum was organised by the Collective Consultation of NGOs in EFA (CCNGO-EFA), a mechanism institutionalised for the past 15 years to ensure the substantive participation of NGOs in the different levels of deliberations and decision making in EFA.

The NGO Forum was held on 18-19 May before the World Education Forum 2015 "to provide a space for NGOs to meet among themselves and agree on

a collective civil society vision for education post-2015 as well as reflect on strategies for civil society engagements in the post-2015 education agenda".



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The NGO Forum was held for NGOs to reflect on strategies for the WEF 2015 and for civil society engagements in the post-2015 education agenda.

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In groups and plenary, the NGO Forum deliberated the Draft Incheon Framework for Action and Draft Incheon Declaration, importantly looking at key contentious issues such as financing of education, strengthening of public education systems, narrow education indicators, emphasis on standardised testing, civil society participation in education and the relation of education in the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These discussions facilitated agreements on key messages and helped prepared the NGO delegates in their engagements with Member States in the WEF 2015. They also informed the adopted statement of



NGO vision for education 2030 with recommendations for the Draft Incheon Framework for Action and Draft Incheon Declaration.

The NGO forum highlighted the marked success of civil society in asserting their voices in education. In Dakar in 2015, the NGOs were in the margins, fighting for their right to be heard in the World Education Forum and in general, EFA policy development and decision-making. Fifteen years after, the NGOs are at the core of deliberations on education 2030, with a constituency of more than 85 national education coalitions under the leadership of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and a host of other organisations working for education. [\[Back\]](#)

The NGO Forum helped prepare NGO delegates in their engagements with Member States in the WEF 2015.

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Making Schools a Safer Place

By Zehra Arshad, National Coordinator, Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)



Zehra Arshad

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE), with the Government of Norway, co-convened a side event on '*Protecting education, schools and universities from attacks and military use*', focusing on education under attack. The frequency

and brutality of attacks on education and the education community – on students, teachers, schools, and other education workers – and the appropriation of education facilities for military use are a source of serious concern, and are significantly undermining the global achievement of the right to education. Such attacks and misuse of education facilities have lasting effects,

for those directly targeted, and also on the strength and resilience of the education system as a whole. The session included a presentation of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use (developed by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack), which was overwhelmingly supported by GCE Members during its recent World Assembly in South Africa.

The panel for this side event comprised of national civil society representatives and global experts. The discussion was moderated by Ita Sheehy, UNHCR. The speakers were - Bjørn Haugstad, State Secretary, Royal Norwegian Government; Bede Sheppard, Human Rights Watch/GCPEA; Camilla Croso, Global Campaign for Education; Zehra Arshad, Pakistan Coalition for Education; Silvia Alonso Felix, Incidencia Civil en la Educación, Mexico; and Refaat Sabbah, Palestine Education Coalition.

I highlighted that Pakistan is facing multiple challenges both internally and externally. The internal challenges are due to several reasons, one of the more prominent ones being the conflict intensified by incidents of terrorism. Other internal challenges are also linked to global politics. The crisis that Pakistan faces makes education a prime target and is affected greatly.

In recent years, areas affected by Taliban militancy have been aggressively targeted where hundreds of schools were blown up and proponents of female education were killed. The total number of reported militant attacks on schools in 2009-2012 was around 900. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) reported 505 schools damaged or destroyed in 2009 alone. There was a strong trend for schools to be blown up at night in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the north-west.

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Violent attacks and misuse of education facilities have lasting effects on the strength and resilience of the education system.

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According to media reports, there were at least 40 cases of schools being used by the military, five incidents of militants based in schools, and one case of the police being housed right next to a school. For example, one media report indicated that schools in Swat district had been used as bases by the Pakistani military for over a year, preventing the education of around 10,000 students. Such cases are also found in Baluchistan. In 2011, the UN reported that 152 attacks on schools and educational facilities had been registered in FATA and KP province.

Children's education cannot wait. Ensuring children in conflict-affected countries continue to enjoy their right to education is crucial to ensuring that they are able to see beyond the everyday horrors of conflict. Moreover, securing continuity in education is crucial to enabling children and young people to have the chance to break away from the cycle of violence and conflict, and to decrease the opportunity costs of becoming involved in the conflict surrounding them. Responding to the scale of the challenge will require action on many fronts.

Access to quality education is not possible unless we

can give students understanding and togetherness, acceptance, patience, critical thinking, harmony and respect, for which the education curriculum and syllabus, teachers' pedagogy, and the learning environment ranked high.

For progress of education, the following steps need to be taken -

- Dealing with conflict needs to be a part of the post-2015 education agenda. The goals should be defined in clear language with clear targets linked with quality education.
- Civil society needs to be a part of the process of including education in the post-2015 education agenda. Discussion on issues, along with campaigning, should be initiated to declare schools as peaceful zones, engaging legislators on the issues to have comprehensive policies specific to the context of each country.
- The donor/international community should lay emphasis on acquiring resources to make schools a safer place and bring all children in schools so that militants cannot take advantage of the facilities and

inculcate ideologies against education within them. The Government should bring curriculum reforms, build capacities of teachers to broaden their horizons towards tolerance, respect and harmony.

- International civil society networks should have a firm position on the effects of conflict on education. A rapid response mechanism should be in place to take a firm and prompt stance after an attack on education occurs. Campaigns to make curriculums around the world more responsive should be developed for peace building, tolerance, religious, and cultural harmony. [\[Back\]](#)

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Debating the Global Framework for Financing the SDGs

By Rene Raya, Lead Policy Analyst, ASPBAE



Rene Raya

The Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) hosted the Seoul Forum on Financing for Sustainable Development on 18 May 2015, a day prior to the World Education Forum (WEF) that convened in Incheon, Korea. The high-level forum discussed the global framework for financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically the global financing for education and climate change adaptation. The forum was attended by over 200 participants, including high-level representatives from

Korean government, academia, civil society and business community. The forum was keynoted by Yun sik Hong, Vice Minister of Office for Government Policy Coordination.

The forum started with a special session on the global financing framework which featured Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director, SDSN, and Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on the MDGs. Professor Sachs noted that the year 2015 will be crucial given the series of world conferences that will culminate in the UN Summit in September which will adopt the new Post-2015 Development Agenda. He discussed at length the successful mobilisation of funds for the health sector which can be replicated towards building the global fund for the SDGs. Noting that a significant part of global fund for health came from the private sector, he stressed that importance of "following the money" and

seeking out the billionaires of the world to contribute to the global fund. Professor Sachs expressed optimism that there are funds available which can be directed especially for education, health and climate financing. He stressed the need to immediately launch the global fund, starting it at any scale and expressing optimism that many others will join, contribute and benefit from such a global fund.

During the open forum that followed the special session, David Archer of ActionAid International suggested to go after the unpaid taxes especially of big businesses and recommended the formation of a global tax watchdog that will address cases of tax evasion, prevent tax havens, and end harmful tax incentives.

After the open forum, the first session on Global

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The Seoul Forum forum discussed the global framework for financing the SDGs, specifically the global financing for education and climate change adaptation.

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Financing for Education started which featured a panel of distinguished speakers that included Julia Gillard, Chair of the Board of the Global Partnership for Education, Dr. Liesbet Steer, Senior Fellow from the Brookings Institution, Professor Sungsang Yoo from the Seoul National University, the State Minister of Education from Ethiopia, His Excellency Omer Fuad Ibrahim, and Jeffrey Sachs. The session, co-hosted by SDSN, the Global Partnership for Education and the Brookings Institution, focused on the necessary financing architecture to scale up education delivery in developing countries. It discussed trends in the

quality, magnitude, and allocation of domestic and international public finance and private financing; the experience to date in supporting scaled-up investments across countries; and the development of a global fund for education building on the Global Partnership for Education.

The panelists agreed to scale up and strengthen the Global Partnership for Education to fill the gaps in education financing and ensure the fulfillment of the new global commitment to education. The panelists looked up to the experience of the Republic of Korea, noting that the country serves as a global example of educational excellence that paved the way for its unparalleled economic successes. The Korean government, for its part, committed itself to increase its development assistance particularly for education in order to achieve the SDGs.

The proposals and discussions that were taken up in this Seoul forum will be carried forward to the Third Financing for Development Conference that will convene in Addis Ababa from 13-16 July 2015. ASPBAE circulated a [position paper](#) on education financing, 'Protect and Fund Public Education' during the WEF 2015. [\[Back\]](#)



Panelists of the Seoul Forum agreed to scale up and strengthen the Global Partnership for Education to fill the gaps in education financing and ensure the fulfillment of the new global commitment to education.

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New Power of Youth and Adult Education

By Jose Roberto Guevara, President, ASPBAE



Jose Roberto Guevara

Katarina Popovic, Secretary General of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), welcomed participants to the lunchtime side event conducted together with ASPBAE and DVV International on 21st May as part of

the World Education Forum 2015.

Entitled the 'New Power of Youth and Adult Education - contribution to the post-2015 development agenda', the speakers identified examples of integrated approaches to youth and adult education from Europe, Latin America, and Asia. These examples highlighted

the value of successful linkages between social partners, especially governments and civil society, in the conduct of both basic and vocational education, within both formal and non-formal education contexts.

The panel was chaired by Dr. Heribert Hinzen, DVV International, and included two government ministers, namely Nath Bunroeun, Secretary of State, Cambodia,

and Srdjan Verbic, Minister of Education, Science, and Technology, Serbia. Uwe Gartenschlaeger, of DVV International, and Maria Graciela Cuervo from ICAE spoke on behalf of civil society organisations. [\[Back\]](#)



The session on Youth and Adult Education highlighted the value of successful linkages between social partners, especially governments and civil society, in the conduct of both basic and vocational education.

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Reflections on Leaving the World Education Forum, Incheon

By Camilla Croso, President, Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

Reprinted from the [GCE website](#)



Camilla Croso

The World Education Forum (WEF) in the Republic of Korea has yielded good outcomes. Almost halfway into 2015, we have reasons to celebrate: more than 100 governments have adopted the **Incheon**

Declaration, consolidating important progress towards realising the human right to education. The Forum also agreed that the Declaration would be the basis for the **Education 2030 Framework for Action**, which will be adopted in November, at a special high-level meeting to be organised alongside the 38th

session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

Civil society has been struggling over the past years to ensure that a paradigm based on the understanding of education as a fundamental human right would inform the post-2015 education agenda. The context we faced was a complex one, with aggressive trends towards privatisation and commercialisation in education, including the scaling up of low-fee private schools promoted by important actors such as the World Bank, and the growing influence of private enterprises, such as Pearsons, in education policy and practices worldwide. We have also witnessed an increasing movement whereby success in international standardised testing is being taken as proxy for quality education, with influential actors conveying the message that “measurable learning outcomes”, based

on the results of standardised testing, should be our top priority – and such actors pushing the message that this is the overwhelming consensus of the international education community. Education networks and movements have had to make a concentrated effort to deconstruct false consensus, dispute other and broader meanings of quality education, and place the emphasis on the strengthening of public education systems. In such a context, the achievements of the Incheon Declaration show that civil society has much to celebrate.

By acknowledging education as a fundamental human right and a public good in the Declaration, governments have committed to implementing the basic principles of this right, such as ensuring the provision of 12 years of free, publicly funded, equitable, quality primary and

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secondary education, of which at least nine years are compulsory; at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education; the overcoming of all forms of discrimination, with special emphasis on gender equality; lifelong learning, recognising that this right starts at birth and continues throughout all life; and an education which promotes peace and citizenship, delivered in safe spaces free of violence, which fosters critical thinking and creativity. Furthermore, they have committed to better and more education financing of at least 4-6% GDP and at least 15-20% of national budget; the valuing and better treatment of the teaching profession; and civil society's right to participate in education policy debate, design and implementation. Last but not least, the recognition of States as duty bearers and the absence of reference to the private sector in the Declaration must be highlighted.

We have other reasons to celebrate on leaving Incheon: the education movement – with its international, regional and national networks and campaigns, teachers' unions and non-governmental organisations

– has left strengthened. Civil society organisations from all continents were present in large numbers, leading the implementation of the NGO Forum which preceded the WEF, and which were then present throughout WEF. Civil society was strongly represented during different sessions and working groups, and – crucially – as members of the Drafting Committee, whose responsibility was to consolidate the Incheon Declaration. The civil society caucus sessions, which took place at the start of each day of the Forum, were of vital importance to our strategic advocacy. It is clear that our collective action, coordinated and well-argued, was the key to the outcomes reached, and we left the Republic of Korea with renewed enthusiasm and energy to face the challenges ahead of us.

We still have important landmarks to come this year to fully realise our vision for post-2015 education, be it at the Financing for Development Conference in July, the follow up of intergovernmental negotiations in New York ahead of the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda discussions, or in the final definition of the

Education 2030 Framework for Action, which will be adopted in November, in Paris. But beyond our advocacy in the education and development agendas, it is of absolute importance that we, as national, regional and international representatives of civil society, focus our attention on the challenges in the current context, including education privatisation and commercialisation; the strong emphasis on measurable learning outcomes as proxy for quality; and the scaling up of violence that directly affects education and its community, including the criminalisation of activists and movements and tackling the root causes of violence and conflict.

As we move towards the closure of the negotiation and adoption process of the education and development agendas, our attention and energy must move towards their implementation, within the scope of the realisation of human rights, and challenging the obstacles that impede the achievement of this vision. [\[Back\]](#)

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Highlighting Education's Fundamental Role in Securing the Full Range of SDGs

By Alan Tuckett, President, International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)



Alan Tuckett

From 2011, ICAE has worked alongside its regional members towards the Incheon World Educational Forum, determined to secure a better deal for adults than we all managed at and after Dakar in 2000.

We recognised that

EFA offered a holistic programme for education for development, and that goals 3 and 4 covered adult literacy and skills for life and work for young people and adults alike. However, when the MDGs included only universal primary schooling and gender equality in schools, the effect was to marginalise the other dimensions of education. In the event the Incheon declaration and its endorsement of SDG4 on education



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were encouraging and successful outcomes from a long process, and we all benefited from the astute political analysis, hard work, and diplomatic skills Maria Khan and Camilla Croso demonstrated as civil society representatives on the EFA steering committee.

We could go home saying a job well done. But before we even arrived at Incheon, the zero draft document of the Financing for Development conference in Addis Ababa arrived. Its paragraph on education finance differs dramatically from the inclusive SDG4 and excludes literacy and lifelong learning entirely. If this goes through unchanged, adult learners will be in the same position as they faced since 2000. As a result ICAE will focus its immediate advocacy work on Addis, then on the conference in Oslo. We will seek to influence the Framework for Action and the technical indicators adopted in the light of Incheon, and, at our World Assembly, 11-14 June, we will begin to explore how best we can support our members to take global agreements and secure their local implementation. In addition, we will focus on highlighting education's fundamental role in securing the achievement of the full range of SDGs. Click [here](#) to read Alan Tuckett's blog on the WEF 2015. [\[Back\]](#)



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World Education Forum Declaration: Education International's demands included in the new strategy for 2016 – 2030

By Shashi Balasingh, Chief Regional Coordinator for the Asia Pacific Region, Education International (EI)



Shashi Balasingh

Education International (EI) was represented by a 20-strong delegation at the World Education Forum (WEF) in Incheon, South Korea, which brought together over 1,500 stakeholders from policy, civil society, and the classroom from

May 19th until May 21st to deliver the new education declaration.

The EI delegation advocated for the inclusion of teachers' voices in the new strategy that defines

education policy in the coming years. Education International welcomes the new declaration, which contains many of our key demands, making it clear that our advocacy efforts and those of our affiliates have paid off.

Education International's advocacy success lies primarily on the well-coordinated and effective engagement with governments, UNESCO, other UN agencies and participants during the WEF. We managed to influence the civil society outcome document and to get our major demands into the Incheon Declaration. The critical role of teachers in achieving the education goal and all of its targets was recognised, with the delegates committing to "ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited,

well-trained, professionally-qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems".

Education International's demand for free, quality primary and secondary education of at least 12 years (of which nine years are compulsory), early childhood education, comprising at least one year of free-pre-primary education, and equitable access to VET and tertiary education was also accepted and reflected in the outcome document. Governments also agreed to include minimum benchmarks for domestic and external education financing in the outcome document, with the Forum recommending that at least 4-6% of GDP and/or 15-20% of a country's public expenditure should be invested in education.

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Still, the agreed benchmarks were a compromise and below EI's proposal for a categorical commitment by governments to investing at least 6% of GDP or/and at least 20% of public expenditure to be invested in education.

Education International's advocacy efforts for quality education for all are far from complete. We must continue to put pressure on governments and the UN in order to ensure that the final Education 2030 Framework for Action, the indicators and financing frameworks, to be adopted in the coming months are broad, ambitious and robust enough to guarantee quality public education for all. [\[Back\]](#)

EI must continue to put pressure on governments to ensure that the final Education 2030 Framework for Action is broad, ambitious, and robust enough to guarantee quality public education for all.

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Cultivating Seeds for the Future!

By Naomi Kamijo, ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing East Asia, and a member of the ASPBAE delegation to the WEF 2015



Naomi Kamijo

I have never seen such an enthusiastic team work as ASPBAE's advocacy team did through the World Education Forum (not only within the Forum, but also through years and years of advocacy). Education requires patience and tireless effort to gain fruit, and advocacy is the same. ASPBAE is always trying to listen and encourage members to raise their voices, and the WEF 2015 was a time to collect them and put them together.

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education is strongly connected with "quality" or the content and concept of education. DEAR Japan (Development Education Association and Resource center) emphasizes value on critical thinking, education, citizenship, participation, diversity, and in arching together Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education for societies.

As civil society, especially in the field of education, a lot of seeds have been sown. Isn't it a great pleasure to cultivate them for the future! [\[Back\]](#)

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Towards a Shared Agenda

By Batjargal Batkhuyag, ASPBAE Executive Council Member representing East Asia, and a member of the ASPBAE delegation to the WEF 2015



Batjargal Batkhuyag

Some of the parallel sessions were not really participatory, for instance, the parallel session on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) I attended in the afternoon of Day 2. The panellists were great, especially Ms. Hannah Godefa,

UNICEF Youth Ambassador, and Prof. James Heckman. The panellists emphasised how important early experiences and support of parents and families are. The parallel sessions were dedicated to discussing the global targets with special attention given to key policy measures, strategies, and priority actions proposed in the Framework for Action. I wanted to raise two

issues, but I wasn't given the floor to express myself even though I was raising my hand as high as possible as soon as the panellists finished speaking. Rather, the chair of the panel invited two (most probably) pre-selected speakers to speak. My two points were - first, if all of the panellists are highlighting the crucial role that families and parents play in early development, how come families and parents are not mentioned anywhere in the Framework of Action? And second, Target 4.2 really diminishes the critical role of ECCE down to school readiness, even though the discussion in this regard throughout the WEF 2015 was about it being the very foundation of human development.

I was really astonished by how much the civil society representatives in the Drafting Committee tirelessly and continuously pushed our shared issues to be included in (and also excluded from) the final document of WEF 2015, the Incheon Declaration.

Our regional preparatory meeting organised by ASPBAE was really helpful in many ways. Most specifically it helped us to identify and understand the critical "red flags" or areas that raise our concerns, strategise our efforts during the WEF 2015, be present in all of the parallel sessions, and encourage us to speak up when needed.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the ASPBAE secretariat for assuring that we came prepared to this significant event with thorough analysis, thoughtful insights, and tireless determination all of which made my first participation of such BIG global event a success. [\[Back\]](#)

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