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Member of the month

WAVE Australia

Women in Adult and Vocational Education Inc.

WAVE started its work in 1987 in Canberra, Australia. WAVE is an active feminist network of support, stimulation, sharing, and communication for all women in adult education and vocational training in Australia. It supports and builds connections between women as teachers and learners at local, community, state, national, and international levels.

WAVE works for the advancement and empowerment of women in adult education and vocational training through networking, lobbying, and advocacy. WAVE is part of a proud tradition of women’s struggle for justice and social change in Australia.

To know more about WAVE, you can visit their website at www.wave.org.au.

Photo of the month

Bangladesh Minister of Education, Nurul Islam Nahid (2nd from left), cutting ASPBAE’s 50th anniversary cake with CAMPE Executive Director, Rasheda Choudhury, in Dhaka during CAMPE’s commemoration of ASPBAE’s anniversary.
ASPBAE urges member states to engage civil society in EFA reviews

UNESCO Regional Technical Feedback Workshop on National EFA 2015 Reviews in the Asia Pacific
29-30 April 2014, Bangkok, Thailand

Half way through the country Education for All (EFA) reviews, the UNESCO Regional Office organised the Regional Technical Feedback Workshop on the National EFA 2015 Reviews in the Asia Pacific. The event is part of a series of activities in the EFA review process that will feed into the post-2015 education agenda setting and culminate in the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in May 2015. 26 Member States in the Asia Pacific, UN offices, and several EFA partners /civil society organisations, like ASPBAE, Action Aid, Education International, and Plan International actively participated towards improving the country EFA reports.

The regional workshop provided an opportunity for country teams to share and learn from each other and to provide feedback on the draft national EFA review reports. Prior to the workshop, countries shared their draft EFA reports which were reviewed by UNESCO, in cooperation with a pool of experts and practitioners in the field of education. ASPBAE reviewed five country reports and will review another five as soon as the drafts are submitted.

Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of UNESCO Bangkok, in his opening remarks announced that 40 Member States in the Asia Pacific are participating in the National EFA 2015 Review. He expressed confidence that the results of the review will help “Member States accelerate actions in the last Big Push to 2015 and inform policy debates on the post-2015 education agenda items at the global, regional, and national levels.” Min Bista, Coordinator of the UNESCO APPEAL Unit (Asia Pacific Programme of Education for All), stressed that the workshop aimed at pointing out gaps in the report as well as provide constructive recommendations to Member States towards their pursuit of Education for All.

ASPBAE’s Thea Soriano presented the EFA reviews from the civil society perspective, sharing the initiatives being taken by ASPBAE and other NGOs in doing their own independent reviews of the EFA progress. On ASPBAE’s part, it will look specifically at the value addition of civil society organisations in the EFA processes, and will focus on issues such as equity, quality, and financing. The input was well received and provided the UN and national governments with an overview of the role of civil society organisations in the review processes. Representatives from countries also requested ASPBAE to provide civil society contacts so that governments are able to hold dialogues with them on the EFA report.

In a group workshop, ASPBAE’s Helen Dabu pointed out that one way to engage civil society organisations is to make functional the Local Education Groups (LEGs) and other mechanisms for participation already existing in countries.

Rene Raya of ASPBAE moderated the session on ‘Deconstructing the EFA-Land Report’ where groups of participants in breakout sessions critically examined the EFA report of an anonymous country, thoroughly
The UNESCO EFA Review Workshop reminded on the need to push forward towards achieving education for all and chart a future agenda of education beyond 2015.

analysing the chapter under study, with the aim to identify strong and weak points in the report and draw key areas for further improvement.

The regional workshop ended with agreements on the next steps for finalising country EFA reports and for preparation for the upcoming Regional Education Conference in August 2014. The workshop serves as a momentum for the Asia Pacific region to move forward together, collectively, towards the achievement of EFA, and chart the future of education beyond 2015. Indeed, it opened up possibilities for EFA dialogues at the country level and civil society needs to continue to be vigilant to make these policy spaces responsive to the people.

ASPBAE congratulates ‘International Adult and Continuing Education’ Hall of Fame inductees!

Fourth International Conference on Adult Education in Universities – Local and Regional Perspectives
27-30 April 2014, Iasi, Romania

The ‘Fourth International Conference on Adult Education Adult Education in Universities - Local and Regional Perspectives' was a forum for exchanging information in the scientific, practical, and legislative areas, presenting research results in the field of continuing and adult education. The event, held every four years, fostered debates and exchange of good practices, reflections, and ideas on how universities can improve their provisions on adult and continuing education. The event also identified efficient ways to improve and diversify the role of universities as relevant actors in building a learning community in the field of adult and continuing education.

Chris Duke of RMIT University, Australia, and Heribert Hinzen of DVV International presented a paper at the conference entitled University engagement and the post-2015 agenda: What are the roles and functions to support adult education and lifelong learning? The paper debates the future of adult education and lifelong learning globally, the role and contribution of universities, and learning ‘beyond education’ with a focus on learning communities.

Alongside the conference, adult and continuing education leaders from around the world were inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education (IACE) Hall of Fame on 29 April 2014. Amongst the Hall of Fame Inductees for 2014 were Chris Duke, former ASPBAE Secretary-General and currently Professor at the Centre for European Studies, RMIT University, Australia; Dorothy Lucardie, Immediate Past President, Adult Learning Australia (ALA); and Sturla Bjerkaker, Secretary-General, Norwegian Association for Adult Learning, and Treasurer, International Council for Adult Education (ICAЕ). These individuals reflect the great diversity of adult and continuing education practice and scholarship and the increasingly global leadership community that constitutes the IACE Hall of Fame. Click here for the full list of the 2014 Hall of Fame Inductees.

Chris Duke, on the occasion of his induction, said, “I don’t really enjoy the business of celebrating ‘big names’ in this way. To me it is about doing the best job that you can and not having a lot of dress-up celebration that may seem to make the person more significant than the work, and even throw the value and reasons for what we do into a wrong light. However, making it global and less culturally restricted is a
step in the right direction which is why I did accept. I am very grateful for
the support and affection of ASPBAE colleagues in this as in many other
ways."

ASPBAE congratulates the Hall of Fame Inductees and is proud to be
associated with their work and the organisations they represent! [BACK]

Nirantar turns 20!
11-12 April 2014, New Delhi, India

ASPBAE’s long-standing member in India, Nirantar, completes 20 years
of work in gender and education in 2014. Nirantar organised a programme
at the India Islamic Centre in New Delhi to celebrate two decades of its
work.

Renuka Mishra, one of the founders of Nirantar, welcomed the audience,
largely made up of women representatives from Nirantar’s partner
organisations, members of the WeLit network on women’s literacy
(Initiated by Nirantar), and from the various women’s literacy centres in
Banda and Lalitpur districts of Uttar Pradesh where Nirantar first started
work through women’s literacy camps in rural communities.

The two-day programme included a seminar on Gender and Education,
comprising of three panel discussions on ‘Education and Us’, ‘Feminist
Visions of Education’, and ‘Doing it Differently’. Eminent personalities,
including literacy activists, researchers, education policy advocates,
academicians, feminists, social activists, and representatives of socially
excluded groups (transgender, minority women, rural women) shared their
experiences and views on literacy and education for women.

Baby Halder, who published a book based on her journey of empowerment
as she struggled through an impoverished life with three small children
and worked as a domestic maid, spoke passionately about how, with
encouragement from her employer, she educated herself, wrote her story,
and shared it with women across the country. Baby Halder’s book, now
translated in several Indian languages, mentions how she received her
biggest award when her daughter exclaimed “My mother is a writer!” as
she introduced her book in her school. Similarly, Kavita, one of the first
women who completed the literacy course organised by Nirantar in her
village 20 years ago, could not stop with the basic literacy skills that she
had acquired as “education started dancing in my head” and went on to
become the regional editor of the first ever newspaper run by women –
Khabar Lehariya (News Waves).

Other panelists, while speaking on feminist visions of education,
collected that even as recent as in the 1990s, education was not
prioritised by the women’s movement. Education for women started with
the aim of making women into ‘good’ mothers and housewives. Feminist
vision of education challenges the established power relations in society
which are based on caste, class, race, gender, religion, and sexuality,
among other, and gives women the freedom to cast oneself into a new
identity - an identity which is of one’s own choice.

The 20th anniversary programme was marked with cultural celebrations
that had a distinct feminist tone –collective dancing and singing of songs
from the women’s movement and folk music and poetry that upheld
women’s rights. A cake was cut and shared to commemorate two decades

ASPBAE’s Anita Borkar attended
Nirantar’s 20th anniversary
programme in Delhi, and ASPBAE
Secretary-General, Maria Khan,
sent a congratulatory message on
the occasion on behalf of the
ASPBAE Executive Council.
The 20th anniversary programme was marked with cultural celebrations with a distinct feminist tone – dancing and singing of songs from the women’s movement and folk music and poetry upholding women’s rights.

Nirantar acknowledged the contribution and partnership of its fellow travellers, including ASPBAE, in its 20-year long journey. ASPBAE’s Anita Borkar attended Nirantar’s 20th anniversary programme in Delhi and ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, sent a congratulatory message to Nirantar on the occasion.

Solomon Islands coalition holds workshop on adult literacy programmes

1-2 April 2014, Honiara, Solomon Islands

COESI, along with the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD), the Literacy Association Solomon Islands (LASI), and ASPBAE held a workshop called ‘Hem no Laet Tumas: Working Together To Achieve Quality Adult Literacy Programmes’.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders in adult literacy and community education to develop shared understandings of what makes a quality adult literacy programme in the Solomon Islands, and to agree to a common set of quality benchmarks and a monitoring framework for adult literacy programmes. A newly developed ‘Post-School Literacy Strategy’ commits MEHRD to work towards providing new and additional financial resources for the delivery of quality adult literacy programmes. The benchmarks and monitoring framework developed through the workshop will become the basis for MEHRD to assess programmes for funding and monitor their effectiveness.

The workshop was also an opportunity for COESI and ASPBAE to share preliminary results of the ‘Hem no laet tumas’ research, carried out early this year and funded by the World Bank. The final report, including the adult literacy provider profiles, good practice examples, and the finalised quality standards and monitoring framework will be launched in May this year.

GCE releases Global Action Week 2014 report

Equal Right, Equal Opportunity: Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities

The Global Campaign for Education’s (GCE) new report on education and disability synthesises current evidence around the scale of the challenge, highlighting levels of exclusion from education faced by children with disabilities, as well as outlining the common barriers faced in gaining access to a quality education (click here to read report). It also aims to set out the case for inclusive education systems, where children with disabilities are brought into mainstream schools, and classrooms and schools respond and adapt more effectively to their needs.

The report also summarises the policy responses which can help bring down the common barriers – from the family, local communities and national government, through to the international community – setting out clear set of areas of action and policy recommendations for governments.
donors and the international community. The report was written with the support of GCE member, Handicap International.

Global Action week will be celebrated from 4-10 May 2014 around the world with the theme Equal Right, Equal Opportunity: Education and Disability. [BACK]

**Arab education network works towards quality adult education and lifelong learning opportunities**

The Regional Initiative for Adult Education Advocacy is a coordination among regional Arab networks and DVV International working on adult education and learning for life to unify efforts and cooperation to enhance adult education through lobbying, advocacy, and guaranteeing quality and innovation.

The Arab networks that make up the Regional Initiative are - Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education (Egypt), Arab Network Popular Education (Lebanon), Arab Campaign for Education for All (Palestine), and the Arab Network for Civic Education, ANHRE (Jordan). The networks represent and include hundreds of civil society organisations all over the Middle East.

The objectives of the Regional Initiative are:

- Enhance capacities of main stakeholders in advocacy and lobbying from a development perspective
- Cooperate to enhance adult education and its developmental role
- Enhance networking and work on a regional and international level in adult education

The Regional Initiative held its first event in Amman, Jordan, on 30 April 2014 to launch Global Action Week starting on 4 May 2014. A position paper was also released by the Initiative highlighting the importance of advocating for a supportive educational culture and promoting adult education concepts that are rights-based. It also addresses the importance of lobbying decision makers to formulate and enforce relevant and inclusive legislative frameworks and laws in Arab countries.

The Regional Initiative sees imperative to endorse post-2015 education goals aimed at inclusive quality education for all.

The Regional Initiative can be contacted at - 4as.initiative@gmail.com. [BACK]

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*For more information on the ASPBAE Bulletin, please write to Medha Soni, ASPBAE’s Information and Communications Coordinator, at medha.aspbae@gmail.com*