

Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE)  
with the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF)

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**Programme on Capacity-building for Education Advocacy:  
Accelerating Action to Achieve EFA**  
CEF-funded components 2006-2007

Evaluation report  
*revised and final version*

by Vera Razon  
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## Acronyms

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ANCEFA	African Network Campaign on Education for All
ASPBAE	Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education
BBA	Bachpan Bachao Andolan
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CEAAL	Latin American Adult Education Association
CED	Coalition for Educational Development
CEF	Commonwealth Education Fund
CSOs	civil society organisations
CWIN	Child Workers in Nepal
ECCE	early childhood care and education
EFA	Education for All
EJG	Education Journalists' Group
FGDs	focus group discussions
GCAP	Global Call to Action against Poverty
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGOs	international non-governmental organisations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCE	National Coalition for Education
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
NZAID	New Zealand Aid
ODA	official development assistance
PCE	Pakistan Coalition for Education
RWS	Real World Strategy
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
TSMOs	transnational social movement organisations
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICEF ROSA	United Nations Children's Fund Regional Officer for South Asia
UPE	universal primary education
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## 0 Executive Summary

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In 2006 and 2007, the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) supported a set of regional processes coordinated by the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) under its five-year (2006-2010) Real World Strategy (RWS) programme. These processes were organised under an Education Watch initiative aimed at building capacity of 10 Asia-South Pacific national coalitions on education advocacy, particularly in generating evidence-based policy. The CEF funding comprised a third of the programme's budget for the first two years and was intended to support programme activities involving the South Asian coalitions in five countries: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.

CEF's support to ASPBAE was distinct because, unlike its country-based initiatives, it entailed funding a transnational approach to capacity-building of national education coalitions. With CEF over this evaluation study was commissioned to document and analyse the results of two years of programme implementation through the Education Watch initiative and how these have contributed to enhancing capacity of the five national coalitions for policy advocacy on Education for All (EFA), particularly in the area of policy research and education finance and budget monitoring.

### Findings, conclusions, and recommendations

1. **A certain level of capacity for evidence-based research had been built within each of the national coalitions** in the two-year period in the form of a core team of policy researchers skilled in the Education Watch methodology, a rich database of alternative information, particularly on disadvantaged groups, and a set of policy research and popular communication tools – all of which constitute a strategic resource for policy advocacy work for national coalitions and ASPBAE.

The research results are presented in the form of country education watch reports and a regional synthesis report, which are intended for public dissemination and for use as policy advocacy tools by national coalitions and ASPBAE. The data generated by the project are organised into an Education Watch database that could be easily retrieved and updated by the coalitions. A set of toolkits on education monitoring were also developed and are accessible online through the ASPBAE website.

The raised capacity for policy research was achieved among the South Asian coalitions through an intensive two-year process of training that combined face-to-face sub-regional and regional training workshops and meetings, in-country mentoring, and provision of readily available technical advice from experts and resource persons.

Further raising this capacity to a level that is broad and sustained depends significantly on the coalitions expanding the number of skilled 'education watchers' amongst partners and the wider CSO community, or at least among those groups that have made conscious organisational and political stakes in pushing for accelerated progress towards EFA by 2015. Embedding 'education watching' at community level is of course the most strategic and sustainable path but will require massive resources and energies on the part of coalitions to undertake. The formation of a larger core of trainers, who are placed strategically across the coalition's network and are accessible to potential 'education watchers', might be a more manageable approach for the coalitions. In order for ASPBAE to assist the coalitions in consolidating their new capacities, it would have to sustain in the next couple of years the same level of support that it has so far provided in the first years of the programme especially for the younger coalitions, most of which are still in the process of getting themselves stabilised.

2. **The Education Watch processes at country level spawned a new set of conditions and relational dynamics between the coalitions and the other actors who were involved in the education budget monitoring process – local governments, partner NGOs and civil society groups, and the participating communities.** On the plus side, the process of budget monitoring raised knowledge among coalition partners and community participants on how education financing actually works (or does not work) in their schools and communities. It raised their awareness of the budget's importance as a means of gauging effectiveness of government education policy as well as of citizens' rights and government's responsibilities to education. The monitoring process also helped establish linkages with local officials and ways of sharing information with them in the future. It also put pressure on local officials and EFA coordinators to plan for actions with regard to their education commitments, while cultivating their interest on how the education watch results in their country would compare with those of the other South Asian countries. As a result of their engagement with the project, coalition partner NGOs and media organisations gained better understanding of how government funding mechanisms work and how to analyse the budget.

On the constraints side, the budget monitoring process elicited a defensive attitude from some local officials, resulting in non-cooperation and unwillingness to share information and data. This was the case mainly in Pakistan but was also experienced by the other coalitions in a number of sites. The education watch process also exposed, in a significant number of cases, weak and unreliable data being produced by state agencies, a finding that helps challenge what coalitions describe as a 'glorified' picture of EFA progress presented by their governments, especially concerning poor, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach groups.

The positive relational effects and raised awareness engendered by the Education Watch process provide national coalitions with opportunities to broaden the base of support for accelerated progress towards EFA among local governments, village committees and community groups, and other civil society organisations. Seizing these opportunities will depend on the organisational and resource capacities of coalitions to cultivate and sustain these relationships through regular communication and continuing involvement of partners, local governments, and schools in coalition activities. Appropriate strategies to encourage cooperation and sharing of information by local officials would have to be developed by each of the coalitions based on the particular political contexts and specific relational issues that emerged as a result of the education monitoring processes.

3. **The regional and sub-regional capacity-building processes enhanced solidarity amongst South Asian coalitions and within the ASPBAE network as a whole.** The transnational processes created by the ASPBAE programme provided valuable spaces for national coalitions to identify common problems and challenges in policy advocacy work, compare and exchange learning and experiences, develop common frames and strategies for addressing these challenges, and thereby enhancing their ties and commitment to collective and coordinated action. There was expressed recognition among South Asian coalitions of the significant value of sub-regional and regional processes in helping them complete their country processes even as they faced a number of challenges during the implementation of the project.
4. **The participation of national coalitions in the CEF-supported ASPBAE programme opened up important transnational policy spaces and linkages that have significant bearing on their policy advocacy work at country level.** This is exemplified by the EFA Mid-Term Policy Conference in which South Asian coalitions were able to engage South Asian education ministers and contribute significantly to the formulation of concrete targets and guidelines for EFA planning nationally, particularly in the areas of education finance, equity, education quality, literacy, and inclusive education. It was also an important opportunity to use the data generated by the Education Watch initiative; the results and

analysis of the research proved extremely useful in arming national education coalitions with key information in their engagement with the ministers.

The concomitant challenge for national coalitions is translating the gains in influencing the discursive positions of intergovernmental bodies (such as UNESCO) to changes in domestic policy. There are enabling conditions which may facilitate these for some coalitions, such as the linkages developed with government delegates during the South Asia EFA Policy Conference, the existing relations they have with members of parliament (India) and government committees on education (Bangladesh), and with media organisations (Nepal), and the positive relational effects achieved with local governments, village and community groups, and other CSOs in the last two years of 'education watching'. Maximising these various opportunities will require enhanced capacity for political strategising by coalitions. This means better skills to creatively use the technical data; to frame goals, issues, and actions in ways that resonate with different publics; and to effectively deploy these messages and interpretive frames in ways that mobilise the broadest possible base of constituents and supporters for accelerated changes towards EFA. These types of capacity-building activities need to be integrated into the programme and undertaken vigorously in the succeeding years.

5. **Several approaches to policy research and research capacity building emerged in the process of Education Watch implementation.** By and large, all coalitions attempted to build in-house capacities for policy tracking and research through the training of coalition staff and partners. Some employed consultants at various points of the research, or mobilised research expertise among their member organisations, i.e., research institutes, university departments. CAMPE, the most experienced in Education Watch by far, has a distinct Education Watch infrastructure involving a highly reputable research institute.

It is relevant to reflect on whether it makes good sense to build research competencies among education activists (as Education Watch attempted), rather than perhaps relying primarily on research institutes to undertake research in partnership with campaigners and advocates. The more appropriate arrangement will obviously vary in different coalition contexts, and ASPBAE and the national coalitions have to assess the best, most appropriate approaches to evidence-based policy research per coalition and as a regional effort.

6. **Most of the national coalitions are young (two to three years old) and are in the process of struggling to institutionally stabilise and survive and thus require further support in building network cohesion, managing coalition relationships, and helping coordinate coalition activities.** ASPBAE and the coalitions need to sit down and strategise how they can jointly mobilise this kind of support especially with the CEF over. If resources permit, ASPBAE might want to consider getting a dedicated staff for more focussed support and mentoring to South Asian coalitions while the coalitions are at still at a stage of getting stabilised.
7. An RWS monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be put in place for more systematic and in-depth learning within the network, and to inform future programming. This would help ASPBAE and the national coalitions critically assess the progress of their advocacy work on an ongoing basis both at national and transnational levels, and the important ways by which the two are interwoven. The analytical framework provided in this report might be useful in developing this M/E framework and system.

CEF support to ASPBAE complemented its country initiatives at capacity-building by enabling stronger regional and global capacity development opportunities to national coalitions. This particular partnership demonstrates the distinct contributions that transnational processes can make in raising policy advocacy capacities at country level through facilitation of access to: transnational policy spaces and linkages that have bearing on country policy-making; a wider

array of experiences, knowledge, expertise, strategic information and frames that coalitions could draw on for their work; and opportunities for forging strategic partnerships with other civil society organisations and networks in other countries which could lend political, technical, and organisational support and solidarity they may require to bolster and complement their own struggles at home. ASPBAE and the national coalitions face difficult challenges ahead as 2015 nears and the imperative for accelerating policy changes towards EFA becomes even more pressing. The study finds that the first two years of the RWS programme have laid important foundations for increased capacity of the network to meet these challenges.

# 1 Introduction

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Collective citizen action aimed at challenging and reforming existing state policies is not a new phenomenon but has been an important feature in the historical transformations of states and societies throughout the world. The wider-known collective struggles of peoples of what was formerly called the ‘Third World’, now referred to as the ‘South’ or the ‘developing world’<sup>1</sup>, were pursued under the banner of anti-colonialism, national liberation, and national development against colonial and neo-colonial states, and in the name of democratisation against authoritarian and militarist-dictatorial regimes that emerged in the newly-independent nations following the Second World War. Additionally, relations of solidarity between and among citizens in the North and the South was not uncommon and took a variety of forms, from moral and material support to Southern people’s nationalist and democratisation movements, to awareness-building and political advocacies with Northern governments and publics on Southern issues and causes.

What is seen as constituting a significant shift in the nature and realm of collective citizen action, however, was the emergence of *global* citizen action at the turn of the century, preceded by the phenomenal growth of local and international non-governmental and civil society organisations and networks in the decade of the 1990s (Mayo 2005:1; Khagram et al 2002)<sup>2</sup>. There has been increasing *transnationalisation* of citizen action in the recent decades, a phenomenon that parallels the shifts occurring in the economic and political realms—‘globalisation’ or global market integration, and ‘internationalisation’ or increasing global integration of political institutions (Smith 2005:226)<sup>3</sup>.

The global integration of economies and political institutions is seen to have impacted heavily on states, especially those in the South, in terms of reduced capacities to regulate their national economies and protect the welfare of their citizens (ibid: 227)<sup>4</sup>. Economic planning and decision-making increasingly shifted in favour of global free market forces (e.g., World Trade Organisation, International Monetary Fund), while the range of policy choices of national governments are seen to have become more constrained by international laws and policies, created through treaties and agreements aimed at addressing transnational problems such as disease, climate change, environmental and natural disasters, crime, and so on.

In short, there has been a marked shift in the landscape of governance in recent decades with the advent of ‘globalisation’ and ‘internationalisation’. Policy-making has expanded to transnational sites, consequently altering or diminishing the sovereign authority of states as they increasingly adopt policies such as trade liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation, decentralisation, and so on. Expectedly, transnational economic and political institutions, such as the UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank and its regional affiliates, lead and dominate these policy processes. An important difference between the two ‘integrations’, however, is in enforcement capacity. Transnational economic institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank have far greater capacity to enforce their policies than the political institutions under the UN and its treaty bodies. Furthermore, power in these economic institutions is highly skewed in favour of Northern governments because their voting systems are based on the size of the financial contributions of states, putting rich Northern

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Emerging markets’ or ‘emerging economies’ is the preferred term of economists; ‘transition economies’ for post-socialist countries.

<sup>2</sup> The ‘Battle of Seattle’, the protest event surrounding the 1999 ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle, Washington, is often referred to as the coming-out party at the world stage of the citizen-based anti-globalisation movement (Mayo 2005; Khagram et al 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Transnational means operating beyond a country’s border and involving two or more nations or nationalities. In political sociology, transnational interactions are characterised by ‘the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of government or intergovernmental organization’, their operations outside the nation-state system and not under the exclusive control of foreign policy departments of national governments (Silliman 1998: 50, citing Nye and Keohane).

<sup>4</sup> This and the succeeding paragraph draw heavily from Smith 2006: 226-48. See References for full details.

governments at a huge advantage over their Southern counterparts; in contrast, the UN operates through a one-country-one-vote system.

These shifts in the terrain of policy-making similarly transformed the terrain within which citizens pursue their struggles. Citizens began to *expand* their protest and policy-influencing actions beyond states to encompass these transnational sites<sup>5</sup>. Consequently, new forms of interactions, relations, organising strategies, and mobilising structures emerged and were demanded from, among, and by civil society organisations in order for them to effectively respond to the complex challenges of transnational advocacy.

Globalised policy-making concomitantly brought with it a new vocabulary, new concepts, various and often competing discourses, alongside a different set of policy practices and procedures, cycles and processes that citizens as well as their governments must be familiar and adept with if they are able to effectively engage in these transnational arenas. Thus just as ‘capacity-development’ of Southern governments has been a consistent theme and component in international development cooperation and official aid programmes, that is, in the light of the new challenges of operating in a globalised and internationalised context, capacity-building or enhancement has also become a mantra within the civil society sector. Capacity to micro-macro ‘linkage’, generate and advocate ‘evidence-based’ policy, ‘glocalise’, navigate the transnational terrain and engage with various kinds of transnational actors and policy-makers are just some in the growing list of capacities identified as needing development and enhancement.

Emphasis needs to be made on the use of the term *expand*. Transnational policy-making sites did not *replace* state policy-making, but by their emergence and influence effectively transformed the ways states make policy. The emphasis is also important in the case of civil society organisations because, while they face the challenges of extending their advocacy to transnational arenas, they continue to confront the imperatives of effectively participating in the decision-making processes in their own countries. These therefore require them to be knowledgeable and skilled as well in the ways of modern statecraft and democratic governance, and the ways in which these have been influenced and are being transformed by transnational processes, discourses, practices, actors, and institutions.

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<sup>5</sup> Greater access by civil society organisations to transnational policy arenas such as the UN occurred in the decade of the 1990s, beginning in 1992 during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), when UN forums were opened to national and sub-national groups; prior to this, only ‘international’ organisations were given ‘consultative status’ (Smith 2005: 233-4).

## **2 Evaluation framework, objectives, scope, and methodology**

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The short introduction gives a contextual perspective, albeit quite simplified, to the analytical framework and approach adopted in the evaluation of the CEF-supported ASPBAE programme on capacity-building for education advocacy. The framework shaped the construction of the evaluation's methodology, and contains certain key concepts that were used in analysing the data and making judgments about the results and outcomes of the programme. While the traditional evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency are taken into account in the analysis of programme objectives and implementation, it was also necessary to generate a set of relevant standards for a *transnational* programme with which to compare and evaluate programme results and outcomes. The scope and limitations of this evaluation can be found throughout this section and are raised as they become relevant to the point under discussion.

### **Key analytical concepts**

#### **Transnational advocacy network**

The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) is a regional association of over 200 organisations across 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region that is committed to advancing equitable access to relevant, quality, and empowering education and learning opportunities for all people, especially the most marginalised groups. It engages in capacity-building of national and grassroots adult education groups towards transformative adult education policies and practice; networking and forging strategic partnerships to strengthen the voice of its constituency in international fora as well providing access to the same; documenting and sharing relevant knowledge, innovations, and good practices; and undertakes national, regional, and international policy advocacy to reform policies and processes on education and adult learning. In pursuit of its advocacy ASPBAE undertakes policy research, reviews, and tracking, lobbying and campaigns, and representations in various policy processes. In the last few years it has begun to emphasise the full range of Education for All (EFA) goals in its policy advocacy work, with a special focus on adult education concerns (see Annex 5 for more about ASPBAE).

ASPBAE, in many ways, demonstrate the characteristics of a *transnational advocacy network*. 'Principled ideas or values' are central to its formation and existence, its goals are aimed at 'changing the behaviour of states and international organisations' to implement certain norms (e.g., human rights, right to education), it functions as a 'communicative structure', frequently exchanging information and services as well as engaging and participating in larger policy spaces 'to influence discourse, procedures, and policy', and also serves as a 'political space' in which nationally and culturally-diverse actors negotiate 'the social, cultural, and political meanings of their joint enterprise' (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 3-5)<sup>6</sup>.

Transnational advocacy networks seek to influence or change policy and the contexts in which it is produced. In order to do so they employ and deploy a range of strategies and tactics, such as 'framing processes', creative use of available 'repertoires of contention' that would effectively maximise and shape 'the structure of political opportunities' (i.e., the political context) in ways that favour the realisation of their goals (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001: 16-18). The power of these networks does not lie in traditional sources, or in the classic sense that power is understood,

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<sup>6</sup> The term originated from activists networks, and the phenomenon it describes has generated increasing interest and a growing literature among social movement, political science, sociology/anthropology, and organisational studies scholars, some of whom draw upon their prior experiences and involvements with social movements, NGOs, and civil society organisations. Within and between disciplines, the terms vary, the debates endless, and the nuances intricate and manifold. For example, some social movement theorists use the term 'transnational social movement organisations' or TSMOs (Smith 2005), and categorise the same within the broader notion of 'mobilising structures' (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). One typology makes a useful differentiation between transnational advocacy networks, transnational coalitions, and transnational social movements (Khagram et al 2002). For purposes of simplicity, the evaluation framework uses the term 'transnational advocacy network', drawing largely from the work of Keck and Sikkink (1998). But where related terms and concepts developed by other researchers are deemed more appropriate and precise in analysing the point in question these are used and referenced accordingly in the text.

i.e., control of economic resources and of the state and military apparatus, but in the effective ‘use (of) the power of their information, ideas, and strategies to alter the information and value contexts’ within which policies are made (Keck and Sikkink: 16).

Network actors may include international and local non-governmental research and advocacy organisations, trade unions, consumer associations, local social movements, media and church organisations, foundations, even parts of the executive and parliamentary units of government. Often, NGOs play prominent roles in these networks performing coordinative and secretariat functions, initiating actions, sustaining communication and exchange, and acting as an important, sometimes a key, node of the network activity (ibid: 9).

A central feature of network activity is the horizontal, reciprocal, and voluntary exchange of information. In the case of transnational advocacy networks, however, this does not mean the mere passing/sharing of information to and from and across the different parts of the network, but its deliberate production, strategic use, and creative deployment in ways that reframe debates, alter their terms, even their sites, and shape the stance, stakes, discourses, behaviour, and practices of the actors involved.

The concept of a transnational advocacy network is relevant and useful in examining and evaluating ASPBAE’s programme strategies, processes, and their outcomes since it draws on comparative and empirical studies of transnational advocacy networks led and comprised mainly by non-state (and non-market) actors. Its use is also practical in light of the paucity of similar systematic and comparative studies by/within the CSO/NGO community from which standards for comparison could be drawn<sup>7</sup>. Time and resource constraints, and the limited terms of evaluation, also did not allow the gathering of comparative primary data on similar formations.

The concept similarly applies to national education coalitions, which have advocacy and policy change as a key component of their work and which exhibit the characteristics of networks described above (see Annex 6: About the South Asian national education coalitions). They too have a *transnational* character even while their constituent membership are nationally and sub-nationally based. These coalitions partly constitute regional and global network formations such as ASPBAE and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) either through direct membership, strategic partnership, or participation in transnational campaigns, programmes, and activities. They, in turn, are mutually constituted by this linkage as they utilise the available transnational spaces and resources for their own national advocacies, and appropriate, internalise, integrate into their own the ideas, discourses, and practices they become socialised to through these transnational connections.

The issues of transnational linkage and mutual constitution are important here because they help identify the key sites of network activity for investigation and help define the evaluation’s central question—in what ways has the *linkage* between ASPBAE and the national education coalitions been beneficial to both (as a mutually constituting network), but especially to the latter in terms of enhanced capacities for education advocacy?

### **Capacity-building**

Definitions of capacity cannot be de-linked from the concepts and agendas for which capacity is built and the historical and institutional contexts in which particular notions of capacity emerge (Razon 2004). The frequency with which the term ‘capacity-building’ is invoked in the literature of development agencies and organisations has certainly earned it a place among those distinguished terms in the development lexicon, such as participation, empowerment,

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<sup>7</sup> Arguably, there is a growing literature on civil society network formations, campaigns, and social movements in development studies programmes in certain university-based institutes as a result of collaborative research with CSOs and NGOs (e.g., IDS at the University of Sussex, CCS at the London School of Economics), but these are largely focused on national formations and social movements (see, for example, Borras Jr et al 2007, Baviskar 2007, IDS participation website), and hardly any on regional formations.

sustainability, otherwise known as development buzzwords (see, for example, Cornwall 2007). 'Advocacy' has acquired a similar fate (ibid: citing Samuel). Najam, for example, defines advocacy, particularly in regards to NGOs, as 'prodding government to do the right thing', a description that identifies a clear institutional target of action, while Lewis expands it to include the corporate sector as a target of action by NGOs in behalf of under-represented groups (Lewis 2001:123). In the case of advocacy of Northern NGOs, Jenkins defines it as 'any attempt to influence the decisions of any institutional elite on behalf of a collective interest', a vaguer description in terms of target of action but broaches the notion of differential power, something that Edwards directly points out, while at the same time extending the locations and scale of power asymmetries: Advocacy is the effort 'to alter the ways in which power, resources and ideas are created, consumed and distributed at *global* level, so that people and their organizations *in the South* have a more realistic chance of controlling their own development' (ibid:127, emphasis added).

The variety of meanings that could be ascribed to these terms significantly contributes to their ambiguity and elasticity, thus posing very complex challenges in 'judging' the success of activities associated with them<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, the choice of standards with which to evaluate outcomes must be made. In the case of this evaluation framework, the use of 'transnational advocacy network' concept as developed by Keck and Sikkink was informed mainly by how it hews closely to ASPBAE and its partner coalitions' own self-descriptions and self-defined agendas and roles, as well as the stated goals/objectives of their programme under evaluation. The thematic focus of education is straightforward, but the choice of approach to 'advocacy' is informed by the framework that underpins the concept of 'Education for All' as defined in the Dakar Framework—human rights<sup>9</sup>. The human rights framework emphasises the relationship between states and citizens in terms of duties, obligations, rights, and entitlements<sup>10</sup>, while also specifying the main actors and institutions involved in the field of action.

With the above the attendant questions are: what sorts of advocacy capacities should transnational advocacy networks in education be building, what standards are to be used to gauge effectiveness of advocacy work, and to what extent could we draw comparisons across the networks in question?

ASPBAE's programme clearly stipulates the adoption of a 'real-world' strategy (RWS) to capacity-building for education advocacy among its partner national education coalitions. This strategy is characterised as 'context-based and demand-driven', adapted to the identified capacity needs and priorities of national coalitions based on the specific EFA advocacy challenges they confront. The limited resources and terms of evaluation, apart from its somewhat retrospective character, do not allow a historical, in-depth investigation into these multiple contexts (five South Asian countries). The work of Keck and Sikkink nevertheless identifies a set of key capacities that transnational advocacy networks demonstrate in pursuit of their distinct type of politics. They suggest that the bulk of what networks do is what can be called 'persuasion' or 'socialisation', which involves, among others, 'reasoning with opponents, bringing pressure, encouraging sanctions, and shaming' (ibid: 16). ASPBAE identifies an identical set in its repertoire of advocacy strategies, 'from more "confrontational" approaches such as "name and shame" reports, campaigns, fact-finding missions, white papers, "people's parliaments", and mobilizations, to

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<sup>8</sup> Some of the challenges include distinguishing Southern advocacies with Northern ones in a transnationalised (and postcolonial) context, if Edwards' broader definition is to be adopted, or painstakingly clarifying the often blurred boundaries between government and non-government, or state and civil society in places such as Bangladesh, for example, where the NGO sector acts as a 'parallel state', or a 'franchise state' (Wood 1997), and assume key responsibilities in public services provision, apart from assuming 'market-like' characteristics, for example, as in the case of Grameen Bank with its affiliate corporate formations.

<sup>9</sup> UNESCO Education for All website at <http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=361>

<sup>10</sup> Citizen is just one of the multiple identities persons assume. There are 'many forms of belonging' (e.g., class, race, gender, ethnicity, caste, etc), but the human rights framework privileges the identity of citizen and its relationship with the state (see, for example, Kabeer 2002; Nyamu-Musembi 2002).

more collaborative yet critical engagements such as CSO participation and input in educational policy-making bodies and processes supported by robust policy research and analysis' (ASPBAE 2006a).

In order to 'persuade' and pressure, networks employ a range of tactics, which are outlined below.

- Information politics – or the ability to quickly and credibly generate politically usable information and move it to where it will have the most impact;
- Symbolic politics – or the ability to call upon symbols, actions, or stories that make sense of a situation for an audience that is frequently far away
- Leverage politics – or the ability to call upon powerful actors to affect a situation where weaker members of a network are unlikely to have influence
- Accountability politics – or the effort to hold powerful actors to their previously stated policies or principles.

Furthermore, they identify the types or stages of policy influence that networks achieve in their advocacy work:

1. Issue creation and agenda setting
2. Influence on the discursive positions of states and international organisations (e.g., persuading states and international organisations to support international declarations or change *stated* domestic policy)
3. Influence on institutional procedures (e.g., mandating NGO/CSO participation in planning of projects/programmes)
4. Influence on policy change in 'target actors' (e.g., reduction of military spending, increased education budget)
5. Influence on state behaviour (e.g., enforcement of policy and not just issuing statements of policy)

The above framework is useful in analysing programmes outcomes and the extent to which networks achieve the policy changes they seek in their advocacy and campaigns.

## **Objectives**

The terms of reference for the evaluation contain the following objectives:

1. Document and appraise the over-all capacity-development support of ASPBAE to national education campaign coalitions in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka along the identified objectives, activities, outputs and outcomes defined within ASPBAE's Programme on Capacity Building for Education Advocacy: Accelerating Action to Achieve EFA (a.k.a Real World Strategy or RWS programme), and as they relate specifically to CEF's over-all objectives.
2. Analyse the contribution of sub-regional/regionally coordinated capacity-development support in deepening national level CSO competencies to effect specific policy changes in favour of EFA.
3. Recommend to ASPBAE and its partners, ways to enhance the effectiveness and impact of sub-regional and regionally coordinated capacity-development support for national-level effectiveness and impact in education advocacy work.

The terms of evaluation emphasised learning as a key objective, with the findings of the evaluation serving as a tool for self-reflection by ASPBAE, while meeting the end of project evaluation requirements of the Commonwealth Education Fund.

The learning objective is not always compatible with the accountability objective, and simultaneously meeting both within a limited time-frame involves trade-offs in the kind of processes that can be designed. However, it is envisioned that the analysis generated from the process, including the analytical framework used by the evaluation, will be a useful resource for ASPBAE in assessing and monitoring its own work as well as for programming purposes.

The programme is expected to be implemented across five years, from 2006 to 2010. This evaluation looks into the first two years only, 2006-2007, and specifically on those processes and activities relating to the Education Watch initiative and those involving the South Asian national education coalitions.

Because it is an ongoing programme the consultant was aware that clear policy change or influencing outcomes may not yet emerge, but where there are patterns emerging these will be examined. Ultimately the search for long-term *impact* and *outcomes* would lie in the nature of education opportunities and the extent of respect of education rights of citizens, especially of poor and marginalised groups, as well as the nature of the political opportunity structures for the realisation of EFA. Given the timing of this process wherein the programme being studied is in the midst of implementation, what can be realistically be generated in terms of analysis would be at the level of *intermediate outcomes*, which involve the changes in the capacities of national education coalitions and of ASPBAE, to engage in education advocacy with states and international policy-makers on Education for All (i.e., capacity for information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics). These are distinguished from *outcomes*, which are the levels of influence and changes in education policy that ASPBAE and its partner coalitions have achieved as a result of their joint advocacy actions and/or practice of their distinct type of politics.

## **Methodology**

Always, a key methodological question is, which are the key sites for investigation that would generate the sorts of insights discussed in the evaluation framework? In the case of ASPBAE and its partner national education coalitions working on education advocacy, one would have to look at where the transnational sites of network activity occur. A review of programme plan and monitoring documents would reveal that these occur in the regional and sub-regional gatherings, meetings, workshops in which the members of the ASPBAE network converge and conduct their activities as a network. The other important site is that of its counterpart in countries where national coalitions operate.

However, given the somewhat retrospective character of this evaluation, all of the transnational activities of the programme and the Education Watch project had already taken place in the last two years (trainings, workshops, meetings, policy engagements in international policy forums, etc), the substitute approach taken by this evaluation is to examine the proceedings of these regional/sub-regional gatherings, and use the information to guide the formulation of questions for key respondents and informants as well as the conduct of the interviews. Fortunately, one such regional activity took place during the evaluation period, the Education Watch Regional Assessment Conference in Bangkok, Thailand in mid-September 2008, and participated in by all national education coalitions in the region and key ASPBAE staff, as well as resource persons from other institutions such as UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Open Society Institute in Pakistan. The consultant's participation in this conference was extremely helpful as it provided real-time and real-space perspective into the transnational gatherings of ASPBAE and how the network gets constituted through these sites of network activity.

The conference involved self-assessment of national education coalitions and ASPBAE on the pilot implementation of the Education Watch initiative. However, as with many CSO conferences, the four-day agenda also included sessions on planning, workshops to refine the Education Watch

toolkits, talks and presentation from various resource persons from BRAC, UNICEF, UNESCO on how better to analyse the data from the Education Watch initiative, as well as hands-on training on the use of ASPBAE's information database.

The evaluation terms and resource limitations also did not allow the conduct of fieldwork at country-level. The consultant maximised her participation in the conference, sitting in both the sub-regional assessment and planning workshops of the South Asian national education coalitions and the plenary sessions and presentations, conduct of face-to-face interviews with coalition members, ASPBAE staff, and with representatives from other participating organisations. Follow-up interviews were done through phone and mail, including with those who were not present in the assessment conference.

The approach taken was an iterative one. This means that as information was gathered about the programme, the cumulative knowledge emerging from the data collected was used to inform succeeding interviews/exchanges with respondents and key informants and to structure/re-structure interview questions. Follow-up questions and responses (through mail/phone/internet/face-to-face conversations) were pursued as part of the process. The various methods used in the evaluation are as follows:

- Desk study: Review of programme documents
- Observation/participation in group self-assessment of South Asia national coalitions and the regional group in general
- Combination of open-ended and semi-structured interviews (face-to-face, mail, phone)
- Review of available relevant literature

### 3 The policy challenge - EFA deficit in the Asia-Pacific and in South Asia

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In July 2007 the international community reached the mid-point to the deadline for governments around the world to deliver on the Dakar 2000 promise of Education for All by 2015. The figures of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007 show that, in spite of an increase in enrollments, progress in achieving universal primary education (UPE) is slow with 77 million children still missing out on school. The global estimate understates the problem: too few pupils complete primary school. Data from household surveys show that many children enrolled in school do not attend regularly. The children most likely to be out of school and to drop out live in rural areas and come from the poorest households. Gross enrollment ratios to secondary education still remain low (30 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa, 51 percent in South and West Asia, and 66 percent in the Arab States). There are not enough qualified and motivated teachers to reach the EFA goals. Also, the recruitment of women teachers is far below the requirement to attract girls to school and retain them. 781 million adults lack minimum literacy skills; two-thirds are women. The youngest children have been neglected with many countries having no formal programmes for children under 3 years. The private sector is prominent in ECCE delivery leading to large disparities within countries. Children from rural and poorer households have less access to ECCE than children from urban and richer households. Governments give relatively less priority to ECCE in their spending, and ECCE is not a priority for most donor countries.

ASPBAE's monitoring of the progress of Asia-South Pacific governments on EFA reveal that majority are falling behind in meeting their commitments<sup>11</sup>. At least half of the countries in the region are failing in their commitments to early childhood education, youth and adult learning, gender, universal primary education, and literacy, while most countries continue to face huge issues concerning poor quality of education.

In South Asia, only Bangladesh and Sri Lanka met the 2005 gender parity target for both primary and secondary schooling. India and Nepal are moving towards gender parity at primary level, but disparity against girls persists at secondary level. Pakistan remains unlikely to eliminate soon gender disparities against girls in primary and secondary enrollments based on an analysis of its progress from 1999/2000 to 2005.

Huge strides have been made towards universalisation of primary education in South Asia, with net enrolments rising to 21 percent (Nepal), to as much 91 percent (India, Bangladesh) between 1999 to 2005. However, Pakistan is unlikely to achieve the UPE goal by 2015 as the rate of its progress remains slow. In spite of these achievements a bit of cautious optimism is in order as high drop-out rates of 21 to 39 percent are prevalent across the primary school system in the South Asian region. Furthermore, there is a lack of progress in raising the number of trained teachers to match the pace of expansion. The region's average of trained teachers went down from 69 to 65 percent between 1999 to 2005. Teachers are not being trained fast and sufficient enough in order to reduce high pupil-teacher ratios, which are among the highest in the Asia-Pacific, and which have adverse impacts on learning outcomes. India, Bangladesh, and Nepal still battle with ratios ranging from 30 to 50; only Sri Lanka has been able to keep its pupil-teacher ratio within the ideal of 20:1.

Average government spending on education in South Asia also went down to 14 percent in 2005 from 15 percent in 1999, a level which remains far below the commitment of governments to allocate at least 20 percent of government expenditure to education.

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<sup>11</sup> This and succeeding paragraph draw heavily from ASPBAE's 2008 Asia School Report Card, *Failing the Mid-Terms: Half-Measures Won't Do!*

Gross enrollment ratios in pre-primary education show some progress in terms of expanding access. India doubled its enrollment between 1999 and 2005, and Nepal tripled it in the same period. The dominant trend in Pakistan and Bangladesh is contraction of access to pre-primary schooling. While pre-primary access has expanded from 19 to 37 percent, South Asia remains far distant from providing universal early childhood care and education.

Provision of non-formal learning opportunities for youth and adults in South Asia suffers from acute neglect as governments continue to focus on expansion of access to formal primary education. This is unfortunate in a region that has the second highest illiteracy rate in the world (70 percent), next to sub-Saharan Africa. The challenges are various: lack of constitutional commitment to expanded and sustained adult and youth education programmes, insufficient financing for existing interventions, lack of information on literacy levels that could better inform policy. Existing programmes are largely unresponsive to current and emerging learning needs of youth and adults confronted with rapid shifts in labour market demands and in the agricultural economy as a consequence of globalisation. Vulnerable employment in the region remains highest in the world—over 70 percent—with the absence of learning opportunities for the huge number of illiterates, women, and youth significantly contributing to the vulnerability.

## **4 The Programme and the Education Watch Initiative**

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### **ASPBAE and its EFA advocacy**

From 2000, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), ASPBAE and GCE partners and coalition members in the Asia Pacific have been mobilising civil society organisations, teachers' unions and child rights advocates in the North and South to articulate clear demands to governments and international institutions to make good on their commitment to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015. While GCE members in the North press their governments hard to ensure that the promised resources are used to deliver coordinated and flexible support to basic education, in the South, national education coalitions have pressured their governments to develop and implement ambitious but sound plans for meeting the Education for All goals and strategies and demanding that donors play their part in funding such plans. The annual GCE Global Action Week - a coordinated, public awareness raising and mobilising event for EFA - has mobilised millions of children, adults, heads of state, politicians, agencies and drew world attention to critical issues on education quality, equity, financing, and access. The 2006 Global Action Week mobilised 6 million people and involved 25 heads of state who made concrete commitments on the call for quality teachers.

Some governments have responded favourably to the call for education reforms by CSO campaign coalitions and networks.

- In India, the government has banned the employment of children as domestic servants or servants in roadside eateries, restaurants, hotels, motels, teashops, resorts, spas or in other recreational centers from October 2006, following efforts of the Global March Against Child Labour and its partner, the Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA). A massive "work to school" campaign followed this announcement to ensure public awareness about the law and to accelerate the efforts to eliminate child labour in favour of universal education of good quality.
- Government policies in Bangladesh, guaranteeing stipends for poor students especially poor girls, and free school meals, have been cited by poor communities as contributory to their perceived improvements in primary education services.
- The UK government's announcement of \$1.5 billion a year in aid to education to 2015 hence \$15 billion until 2015, represents a doubling of UK aid to basic education and also poses a challenge to other G8 countries to follow the lead, particularly the US, Japan, Germany and Italy to fulfill the Gleneagles promise.

In spite of these favourable developments, the revelations of the EFA 2008 Global Monitoring Report behoves civil society advocates for EFA to remain vigilant. While there are advances in school enrollments, the drop in aggregate numbers of out of school youth, gender parities in primary education in some countries demonstrates that progress is far too slow. Unless governments in the developing and developed countries accelerate efforts to honour their commitments, quality education will remain a privilege of a few, and millions of boys and girls, men and women, will continue to be denied their right to education. The report further underscored the disparity in attention to the different EFA goals. Adult literacy, life-skills training for young adults, and early childhood care and education received very low priority and acute neglect by governments and donors.

### **Convergence: ASPBAE and CEF**

The partnership between ASPBAE and CEF grew out of a discussion in July 2005 in London between Maria Khan, ASPBAE Secretary General, Bernie Lovegrove, ASPBAE Programme Manager, and David Archer, Head of International Education, Action Aid and Co-Chair of the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) Management Committee. The discussion revealed a great

deal in common between CEF and ASPBAE in terms of objectives and approach to building national and regional civil society capacity on education policy advocacy.

Concrete support from CEF to ASPBAE's programme on capacity-building for education advocacy (also known as the Real World Strategy or RWS programme) began in 2006 following ASPBAE's submission of a concept note on a brief history of its work, its various in-country, sub-regional, and regional support to national EFA coalitions, as well as an outline of the second phase of its RWS programme. This programme is jointly developed and managed by the GCE, ASPBAE, and ANCEFA, and funded by the Dutch Government. Funds were also made available by the New Zealand aid agency (NZAID) for capacity building work in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Samoa. Both these programmes are aimed at building in-country CSO capacity to more effectively engage governments on education policy.

The amount of CEF support (GBP 200,000) constituted a third of the over-all funding requirements of the ASPBAE capacity-building programme for a two-year period. It was based on the ongoing support needed in building CSO capacities in the South to intervene more effectively in education policy. Leadership and institutional capacities (human and financial) of education campaign coalitions to sustain education campaign and policy work at the national and regional level still remain slim and fragile. Coalitions still struggle to maintain cohesion and unity among their broad constituencies of different education interest groups (NGOs, teachers unions, child rights activists, women's organisations, to name some) as the experience of working together has not been long. Capacities for policy analysis among the different coalitions, especially on the full range of EFA goals, remain uneven.

CEF support to ASPBAE's capacity-building programme encompassed the first two years (2006 to 2007) of the five-year programme (2006 to 2010), and was specifically intended for building advocacy capacity of ASPBAE partner coalitions in South Asia, namely, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, and to a set of regional processes involving the piloting of the Education Watch initiative. Unlike the four other South Asian countries with participating coalitions, Nepal is not a Commonwealth country but is part of ASPBAE's RWS programme in South Asia being one of the countries in the subregion with severe EFA needs. It has a national education coalition affiliated with GCE that has been active in education campaign work since 2003. The inclusion of Nepal was encouraged in the negotiations with CEF on the ASPBAE proposal for the above reasons and also because the issues and priorities being advanced by the Nepal education coalition was consistent with that of CEF (e.g., education budget tracking, education quality, participation in policy-making); additionally, CEF also saw Nepal's inclusion as a means to expand its outreach in the subregion even if it is not a Commonwealth country.

A table description of the programme, its objectives (and correspondence with CEF's), strategies, and activities can be found below, as well as a description of its component project, the Education Watch.

## ASPBAE's Programme on Capacity Building for Education Advocacy: Accelerating Action to Achieve EFA, 2006 - 2010

**Goal:** Enhance the capacities of national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific towards achieving specific policy changes at global, regional, and national levels to escalate EFA progress over the next 5 years by:

Objectives & strategies	Correspondence with CEF objectives	Desired Outcomes by 2006	Desired Outcomes by 2010
<p>A. Strengthening and deepening the work of existing national education coalitions; help build national education coalitions in countries where none exist.</p>	<p>Objective 1: Strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans, especially through the support of broad based national alliances and coalitions  (Coalition building)</p>	<p>Increased number of broad-based education coalitions in the Asia-Pacific that have clear governance structures and are able to sustain education policy advocacy and campaign activities for policy change.  Nine (9) coalitions in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands; five of these are able to implement time-bound national campaign plans that establish specific policy change objectives  Joint trainings among different coalitions are organised along commonly identified capacity-building needs</p>	<p>15 national coalitions are capable of implementing time-bound national campaign plans that establish specific policy change objectives and set out work plans for bringing about these changes through systematic advocacy, awareness-raising, and campaign activities.  These national coalitions, in cooperation with ASPBAE, GCE, and other partners, are able to bring about specific policy changes at global, regional, and national level, consistent with collectively agreed campaign objectives among GCE partners.</p>
<p>B. Enhancing the recognition and substantive participation of education coalitions as key partners in national policy dialogue</p>	<p>Objective 1 (above) and  Objective 2: Enable local communities to monitor spending on education both national and local levels  (Budget tracking of government expenditure on EFA)</p>	<p>Enhanced abilities to: Mobilise mass public support for increased investment in education and appropriate fund use through sustained and effective citizens' watch activities  Develop and advance alternative education policies and mainstream good practice based on grassroots experiences  Monitor the impact of international institutions' policies on the education sector.  Nine (9) coalitions participate in developing the Asia Pacific School Report Card.  At least 7 coalitions pilot Education Watch activities in their countries and 9 coalitions contribute towards an Asia Pacific Education Watch initiative.  At least 8 coalitions sustain their preliminary policy work: Education financing for South Asia</p>	<p>15 coalitions contribute to a periodic Asia Pacific School Report Card on Southern governments' commitment to basic education  At least 10 coalitions commit to collecting and analysing basic data on education inputs (expenditures) and outputs through a reputable annual Global Education Watch  At least 10 coalitions are engaged in regular established dialogue with governments and donors on EFA planning.</p>

## continued: ASPBAE's Programme

<b>Goal:</b> Enhance the capacities of national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific towards achieving specific policy changes at global, regional, and national levels to escalate EFA progress over the next 5 years by:			
<b>Objectives &amp; strategies</b>	<b>Correspondence with CEF objectives</b>	<b>Desired Outcomes by 2006</b>	<b>Desired Outcomes by 2010</b>
C. Strengthening the national education coalitions' ability to deliver effective global advocacy work by ensuring consistency between national advocacy plans and regional and global strategies.	Objective 1: Strengthen civil society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans, especially through the support of broad based national alliances and coalitions (Coalition building)	Enhanced capacity for joint campaigns at regional and global levels.  8 coalitions, ASPBAE, GCE, ANCEFA participate in jointly planning a regional and global Education Watch initiative.  ASPBAE, ANCEFA, GCE and CEAAAL jointly plan a coordinated School Report Card for release in 2007.  Joint planning for 2006 and 2007 among the 9 coalitions, ASPBAE, and GCE.	At least 10 national coalitions support GCE in leading regional and global campaigning on improved public services, with adequate budgetary support by governments and through ODA.
D. Assisting the national education coalitions in forging alliances with broad-based movements and other interest groups, linking education interests with others working on public sector service delivery, aid, debt, and children's issues.	Objective 1 (above)	Collaborations forged with other formations at regional and global level to jointly campaign for international policy change to support the achievement of EFA and the MDGs.  Sustained linkages with GCAP especially at the regional/sub-regional levels to explore possibilities of joint action in 2007 and after  Exploratory work undertaken to link up with other groups involved in debt campaigns and other public sector service delivery interest groups especially through EI, e.g., health workers unions/campaign groups	15 national coalitions are able to run joint campaigns at sub-regional and regional levels with other coalitions and with other campaign groups, e.g., anti-poverty, debt, health campaign formations.

## Education Watch

The Education Watch initiative was organised as an independent, alternative, citizen-based assessment of the status of basic education at the regional, national, and local levels, and is designed to keep track of the progress in achieving EFA in the Asia-Pacific. Inspired by the education watch work of CAMPE in Bangladesh, the regional monitoring project was initiated in March 2006 at a meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia of ASPBAE and eight of its partner national education coalitions.

The Education Watch initiative is aimed at strengthening the national education coalitions' capacities to inform policy, and formulate/propose well-targeted programmes to effectively cover the EFA deficit. The results of the monitoring project are primarily aimed at feeding into the ongoing advocacies of ASPBAE and member coalitions, including the School Report Card project.

The piloting of Education Watch became the locus of capacity building efforts of the ASPBAE programme for the years 2006 and 2007. These efforts were characterised by sharing of knowledge, technology, and technical expertise among the national coalitions and supported by input from resource teams, specifically from the ASPBAE Secretariat and with support from CAMPE Bangladesh. Ten national coalitions in the region were involved in the piloting of Education Watch. In Southeast Asia these are Indonesia, Cambodia, and the Philippines. In the South Pacific these are Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. In South Asia these are Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

## 5 Findings

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One of the key achievements gained by civil society organisations at the World Conference in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 was the international community's recognition of the important role that CSOs play in realising Education for All:

- enabling civil society to help 'mobilise strong national political commitment to education, develop national action plans and enhance investment'
- facilitating the 'engagement of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development'

Governments from 164 countries also pledged through the Dakar Framework for Action that no country committed to Education for All should be allowed to fail for lack of resources.

An important connection between the two statements however is missing. While CSOs are recognised for the crucial role they play in EFA processes, the flow of resources to them is unclear. Governments have clear mandated sources of funds with which to finance the performance of their role (e.g., taxing their citizens); civil society organisations, on the other hand, are left to fend on their own. While it is true that there has been a significant channelling of aid through non-governmental organisations in the recent decades, it is also the case that accessing these funds is subject to huge uncertainties, their grant often tied to donor priorities. Thus the establishment of the Commonwealth Education Fund, a dedicated fund for building Southern CSO capacity to participate in national education policy making, is a rare and welcome instance of government putting its money where its mouth is.

With CEF over it is important to learn from its experience and what sorts of potentials such a rare CSO resource has realised, what possibilities and limits it has engendered, and what relevance a similar fund in the future may have for CSOs such as ASPBAE and its partner national education coalitions. It is hoped that the findings in this study contribute to knowledge-building of the CEF experience, particularly in supporting transnational advocacy networks such as ASPBAE and the distinct contributions this type of regional formation makes in enhancing citizen capacity for EFA advocacy at the country level.

### Relevance of objectives

ASPBAE's programme on capacity-building of CSOs is directly relevant to CEF's objective of strengthening civil society participation in national education planning and monitoring (CEF objective 1). All four of ASPBAE's programme objectives are aimed at enhancing a set of capacities for strong civil society participation in national EFA processes, which include setting-up coalitions where none exists, strengthening existing ones through a range of processes and activities that help build their standing as legitimate and credible actors in national policy making, their ability to broaden their constituency and the base for EFA advocacy in their countries, and their capacity to mobilise available transnational resources that could strengthen their advocacies at home. (See table description of programme, pages 21-22). ASPBAE's approach to providing capacity-building support to its partner coalitions is informed by its 'real-world' strategy, characterised as 'demand-driven, context-based, and oriented towards education campaign support' (ASPBAE 2006a).

In 2006 and 2007, the focus of the programme's capacity-building efforts revolved around the piloting of an Education Watch initiative in which ten (10) national coalitions in the region participated, five of which are based in South Asia: India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan (see page 22 for a description of Education Watch).

The decision to engage in a region-wide education monitoring project grew out of the demand of national coalitions for increased capacity to generate ‘evidence-based policy’, which they see as an important component in their engagement with their governments. A regional planning meeting was convened by ASPBAE in March 2006 in Jakarta, Indonesia in order for the national coalitions to jointly discuss and deliberate on how to respond to this demand. It was in that meeting that the decision to undertake the Education Watch initiative was made, and for Education Watch to be the locus of the programme’s capacity-building work in 2006 and 2007.

A common monitoring theme for the whole region was also agreed upon (i.e., addressing the EFA deficit with focus on disadvantaged groups). Within this overarching theme each sub-region (South Pacific, Southeast Asia, South Asia) also decided to adopt a sub-regional focus. The South Asian coalitions agreed to focus on ‘finance and budget tracking’, a priority concern even prior to 2006. This effort by the South Asian coalitions corresponded with CEF’s objective 2 (monitoring government spending on education).

There was thus a convergence of objectives between CEF, ASPBAE, and the national coalitions on the programme and its component project, Education Watch. With regard to government spending on education, none of the five countries have reached the EFA recommended minimum spending level of 20 percent. Below are figures on government spending levels culled from ASPBAE’s research for the 2008 Asia Pacific School Report Card:

- Sri Lanka: 10 percent in 2005
- India: 13 percent in 1999 and 2000, down to 11 percent in 2004
- Pakistan: 6.4 percent in 2004; 11 percent in 2005
- Bangladesh: 15 percent in 1999; 14 percent in 2005
- Nepal: 12.5 percent in 1999; 15 percent in 2003

## **What the national education coalitions say**

The piloting of the Education Watch project ended in December 2007, although the public launch activities of some country reports were moved to 2008. After undergoing an intensive two-year capacity-building process on education monitoring, what do the national coalitions—the immediate and primary ‘beneficiaries’ of the project—have to say about the effort? Was it worth doing? Were the results relevant to their capacity-building needs of producing ‘evidence-based policy’?

Below is a list of some of the reflections shared by members of South Asian coalitions during the sub-regional assessment of the Education Watch and during the interviews.

- Official data gives a glory picture; this research is evidenced based
- Budget was demystified with communities, leading to an understanding of micro-macro links
- Participating members gained understanding of funding mechanisms and how government works
- Barriers to knowledge were broken with the sharing on the education budget with citizens.
- The formation of the Asia South-Pacific EdWatch added momentum to this initiative and opened a window for thinking out of the box.
- [The education monitoring] put pressure on the EFA Coordinators at the country level and regional level
- [The Education Watch] facilitated the process of thinking globally and acting locally
- Capacity of partners to analyse the budget process was enhanced
- Without the regional support, collaboration, and mentoring, this kind of research for a new coalition would have been impossible; in cases of established coalitions it added momentum
- The space was useful in identifying common problems across the region.
- Government officials are keen to compare the progress with neighbouring countries while

planning for actions

- The sub-regional voice of civil society organisations was strengthened
- It raised awareness on how the effectiveness of education policy and the level of government commitment to it can be gauged by the budget
- Linkage with government officials was developed and sharing mechanism established
- Village education committee became aware of their rights and responsibilities. Put pressure on decentralisation of education budgeting.
- [There was] media engagement on education budget issues
- Lots of organisation owned the education watch report; it became a major agenda of coalitions in Nepal

Overall, the evaluation of the national coalitions indicated that the Education Watch initiative was a valuable and effective exercise for them. There was general agreement that the: 1) independent monitoring and third party validation was an important CSO function; 2) evidence-based research is a very important tool for advocacy, especially where there are gaps; and, 3) sub-regional and regional capacity-building, coordination, and collaboration contributed greatly to national efforts. During the regional assessment workshop the coalitions expressed a collective desire to see both research and advocacy continue.

A number of issues and challenges faced during the implementation of the project were also raised by the coalitions and are outlined below. These pertain to research design and planning, research capacity, project management, country political and institutional contexts, and issues concerning utilisation of research results and how to build on project outcomes. These reflections (above) and issues and challenges (below) shared by the national coalitions are further discussed and examined in the section on 'Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation' and 'Outcomes'.

Research design and plan

- The design structure was good but in some cases not compatible with the data available on the ground
- Qualitative and quantitative data needs balancing
- Need for more small scale study, action research
- Need to carry out qualitative research to elicit grassroots level lessons
- Need for more flexibility of design to accommodate various challenges
- Inadequate time for collecting data
- Difficulty in obtaining required data, which delayed processing and report writing
- Data was not available or poorly maintained or unreliable and thus delayed the research process; budget allocated based on the school level data not reliable, we had to go for alternative sources of data

Capacity issues

- Lack of adequate skills to gather data
- Low analytical skills

Project management

- Inadequate budget
- Changes of resource persons during the study
- Maintain schedule - lot of time developing the research instrument
- Education economist is lacking

Contextual/environmental issues

- Field data gathering was challenging because of conflict and emergency situation
- Non-cooperation of government officials in some cases

### Monitoring strategy and utilisation of results

- It should not be a one time activity but a regular activity
- Monitoring effectiveness of budget is critical to government accountability and improving the efficacy of future budgets. Need to be clear how to influence the government to become more results-focused and people-centered
- Community involvement – provide regular two-page feed back to community

## Summary of implementation results

At the time of evaluation, the programme has produced a set of **concrete outputs** through the Education Watch project and related processes of the programme:

- Ten Country Education Watch reports, including the five from South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka)
  - In South Asia two national coalitions had publicly launched their reports: Bangladesh in 2007, India in 2008
  - The rest of the South Asian national coalitions have targetted the public launch of their reports in October 2008 (print manuscripts at editing stage at the time of evaluation)
- An Asia-Pacific Education Watch report, which synthesises the results of the Education Watch initiative in the ten participating countries
- An information database and online resource base
- Education Watch Resource Toolkit, which contains a set of research guidelines, training modules, and research instruments/questionnaires culled from the Education Watch research and monitoring experience. The research topics include education budget tracking and advocacy; education quality; gender disparity; school fees and household education expenditure; poverty, education, and literacy; and, literacy assessment, non-formal education and alternative learning programmes
- A core of trained researchers in each of the ten coalitions skilled in the Education Watch methodology
- A primer on education financing in South Asia, which provides quick facts/data, cross-country comparisons, trends, flags key issues related to financing, and present some options for addressing these issues.
- An Asia South Pacific Report Card, a citizens' rating of the performance of governments in the region on Education for All
- 32 members from 14 national coalitions trained on popular education and communication strategies and techniques
- Contributions to the development of common indices for the Global School Report
- Contributions to the development of policy positions of the Global Campaign on Education

These outputs were generated through a series of national, regional, and sub-regional processes and activities involving:

- 1) Conduct of trainings and workshops to develop the Education Watch methodology, instruments, and plans and to analyse its results
- 2) Mentoring visits to countries by resource persons
- 3) Primary and secondary data collection, processing, and analysis
- 4) Mobilisation of resource persons and relevant experts from within and outside ASPBAE and coalitions' networks
- 5) Participation in inter-regional workshops and regional assembly of the GCE
- 6) Communication and coordination

A brief description of how each of the South Asian education coalitions implemented the project is provided below.

## **Education Watch implementation in South Asia**

### **India**

The Education Watch initiative in India was designed to uncover the budget allocation and utilisation for primary education at the central and state levels and to recommend strategies for more efficient use of resources to address specifically the education needs of children of vulnerable groups and girl children. The study, led by India's National Coalition for Education or NCE, was conducted in five northern states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh) with comparison to Himachal Pradesh (which is performing better in northern states). It employed a combination of conventional and participatory research methods. It developed appropriate research instruments to generate primary data through interviews, focus group discussions, and case analysis. A total of 5,000 respondents were covered by the study. Primary data were complemented by available secondary data from relevant government agencies and schools. The project served to strengthen local partnership, built the capacity of NCE and its partners and mobilise key resource persons to participate as members of the advisory group.

### **Pakistan**

The Education Watch initiative was designed to study the education spending patterns in the country. It sought to understand the funding schemes, spending processes, and budget utilisation at federal, provincial, and district levels. It analysed spending levels and its impact on education performance and outcomes, particularly of poor and disadvantaged groups. The study covered a representative sample of districts, with contrasting features in terms of location, poverty, education performance, girl's education, ethnic background and other relevant characteristics. The study relied on existing materials and primary data culled from interviews with key informants, including planning, finance, and education officials at the district and provincial levels.

### **Bangladesh**

The CAMPE study analysed the education budget in terms of allocation and actual utilisation by sector, stream, level, school type; examined the flow of funds to the educational institutions; and assessed the level of per student education expenditure and fund sources. The study covered a total sample of 300 educational institutions from each stratum, totaling 1,200. Thirty (30) pupils were selected from each institution, totaling 36,000. The selection of institutions were proportionately distributed by type of school and by area. The study generated estimates for each of the following: 1) Primary under general education stream; 2) Secondary under general education stream; 3) Primary under religious education stream; and 4) Secondary under religious education stream. Educational provisions for rural and urban areas and for disadvantaged groups were also analysed.

Apart from its participation in the regional Education Watch effort, CAMPE was also tapped by ASPBAE to serve as a resource group for the project. CAMPE provided valuable input during the regional and sub-regional workshops, sharing its experiences particularly on the monitoring framework, research methodology and sampling design, research instruments, data analysis, building the research organisation, information dissemination, and policy advocacy.

CAMPE's Education Watch publication and documents were distributed to the national coalitions for their reference. CAMPE's experience in literacy mapping, budget tracking, and quality assessment came very handy in developing the research designs for the country-level education watch initiative. ASPBAE also made arrangements with CAMPE's research and technical team for online enquiries on matters related to the implementation of the research project. The support has been very useful particularly in formulating the research instruments and in developing the survey sampling design. CAMPE also gave support in data processing and analysis, providing comments on the analysis of the survey data generated and processed by the other country coalitions.

## **Sri Lanka**

The Coalition for Educational Development in Sri Lanka participated (and hosted) the South Asia Education Watch meeting of researchers in Colombo in July 2007, which paved the way for their involvement in the Education Watch process. The Education Watch project was aimed at understanding the costs, financing, and the budgetary processes in education in Sri Lanka. It conducted a budget analysis to assess the expenditure level, allocation, and utilisation at the macro (national) level.

## **Nepal**

The favourable situation in Nepal brought about by the peace initiative allowed the implementation of the education watch project in the country. The budget tracking initiatives were done in poor and conflict areas to assess and recommend policies, programmes, and budget allocations, specifically for disadvantaged and at-risk children who have been deprived of education. The study covered 16 districts all over Nepal – three districts from each of the five development regions (Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-Western and Far Western), and another three districts in the Himalaya, Hilly, and Terai regions.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency in implementation**

This section looks at the aspects of programme and project management, coordination, communication, and resources, and the ways that they facilitated or hindered programme implementation and the achievement of desired outcomes. Key contextual and external factors and influences and the ways that these were managed by the programme/project are also discussed.

### **Programme and project management**

The Education Watch and the larger regional capacity-building programme to which it is attached are being implemented by eleven (11) networks across the region: ten national coalitions and one regional network.

Overall programme management is handled by ASPBAE's secretary-general, who is based in India, and is supported by a small number of administrative staff at the ASPBAE office in Mumbai, and by a small policy and campaign team whose members are based in their assigned sub-region (Bangladesh for South Asia [in India until December 2007], Indonesia for Southeast Asia, Australia for the South Pacific, and in the Philippines, the lead policy analyst and the regional coordinator for policy and campaigns.

The Education Watch project is jointly managed by the lead policy analyst and the regional coordinator for policy and campaigns, with the former taking on the technical and substantive aspects of the project, and the latter the coordinative and day-to-day concerns, but both working closely with and through the sub-regional coordinators.

Each of the South Asian national education coalitions have a designated focal point who perform coordinative and secretariat functions. The coalition secretariat is often hosted by a member organisation, as in the case of Pakistan, Nepal, and India. CAMPE in Bangladesh has its own office, while CED in Sri Lanka is hosted by the Save the Children Fund-UK.

The original timeline for the implementation of the Education Watch project was from March 2006 to end December 2007. However, the project suffered a series of delays due to a number of reasons, which effectively pushed back the full completion of the project by six months.

- *Staff turnover.* Two of the coalitions (Nepal, Sri Lanka) experienced shifts/departures in their designated focal points and/or lead researchers in the midst of project implementation; the search for replacements led to delays in conduct of research/analysis

of results. At the level of the region, the sub-regional coordinator for South Asia left in December 2007 due to health reasons. The coordination was temporarily taken on by the regional coordinator for policy and campaigns until the hiring of a new sub-regional coordinator in June 2008.

- *Organisational restructuring.* NCE in India underwent a major organisational crisis in the project's second year and had to undertake a restructuring of the organisation.
- *Security issues.* The extremely volatile political environment in Pakistan posed a huge setback for PCE in Pakistan as its lead researcher was arrested for political reasons; the search for replacement contributed to the delay in project implementation.

Despite these challenges, some critical, all the South Asian coalitions managed to complete the implementation of the project. The coalitions adapted to the new conditions and made the necessary adjustments to overcome the challenges. Time constraints did not allow the study to look deeper into this point, but what seem to emerge from the interviews of coalition members, particularly those who faced huge challenges, is a kind of stakeholdership in the project. They kept on despite the odds and proceeded to complete it. A partial explanation may lie in what nearly all the coalition members expressed in the interviews—a kind of belonging, a feeling of solidarity ('we feel we are not alone in facing the odds'). The process of joint planning and implementation also seems to have inspired a sense of healthy competition and motivation. When presented with the findings and accounts of how other coalitions proceeded with their research work during joint assessments and planning, those facing delays and difficulties were challenged and motivated to carry on.

The frequency and quality of interactions provided by the ASPBAE programme seemed to be a contributing factor to the development of a deep level of stakeholdership and commitment amongst South Asian coalition members to their collective project. Some members explicitly pointed out in their group self-assessment the emergence of a sub-regional voice and identity as they engaged in identification of common problems, priorities, and ways to address these as a group. Studies of transnational social movement organisations (TSMOs) have shown that transnational interactions enhance group identity and solidarity, which are necessary for collective action (Smith 2002; Rochon 1998). These interactions 'help cultivate a sense of unity' among members as they engage in processes of regular sharing and exchange, as well as a sense among participants that 'they are not alone in their struggle (even if they indeed *are* alone in their immediate locale)', which are both important in sustaining commitment to their collective goals (Smith 2002: 507, 514-5, citing Edwards and Foley 1997 and Minkoff 1997). The ways by which these transnational interactions were facilitated by the programme are thus important areas that need to be examined.

### **Communication**

Communication within the programme was undertaken through regional and sub-regional face-to-face workshops and trainings, national-level trainings, visits of programme staff to the coalitions' offices to participate in their meetings or trainings:

- On average, all coalitions had the opportunity to meet among themselves three (3) times a year in sub-regional and regional events
- ASPBAE programme staff would meet the coalition in their countries for planning meetings or trainings at least once a year. In the case of India and Nepal, the ASPBAE staff being based in India had the possibility to meet the coalitions more frequently: 2 times a year in Nepal and around 4 times for India
- In between face-to-face meetings, the staff and coalitions kept in touch mainly by email and phone calls.

The above shows that face-to-face and virtual contact and communication between and among staff and the coalitions were quite frequent. The frequency was a function of the nature of the programme (capacity-building) and the particular approach employed towards capacity-building:

a 'context-based, demand-driven real world strategy'. Frequency of contact and communications between the staff and the coalitions was thus critical for ASPBAE and the coalitions to better plan the appropriate and relevant capacity-building and mentoring support required by the coalitions. The regular interactions generated complementary effects on the capacity of both ASPBAE and the national coalitions. For ASPBAE, it deepened its understanding of the complex and varied contexts within which each of the coalitions operate, its limitations and constraints, the coalition's capacity - indicated by its leadership, membership, and standing in the CSO community it operates. Sustained interaction and exposure to ASPBAE-coordinated processes by the coalitions, on the other hand, facilitated their access to a wider canvass of experiences, information, and resources, which they drew on for their own planning and strategising, and which was particularly beneficial to the younger coalitions. But even for the older coalitions such as CAMPE expressed significant learning achievements through their participation in these processes. The sharing and exchange with the other national coalitions gave CAMPE new knowledge and insights about coalition approaches, such as, for example, engagement with other education groups such as teachers' unions. Capacity-development, joint planning and strategising within the programme were thus facilitated by an ease in relating, enhanced mutual understanding, greater confidence and trust in each other's motives and shared perspectives around common interests and goals.

Long standing political tensions and conflict within South Asia however hampered easy mobility among certain countries. ASPBAE staff could not travel easily to Pakistan and Bangladesh. Hence, visits to these countries were made by Philippine-based staff thereby making frequent visits economically unviable.

### **Resources**

CEF support comprised approximately one third of the overall programme cost of ASPBAE's Real World strategies programme. It was applied mainly in support of South Asia coalitions' participation and engagement in sub-regional and regional coordinated advocacy initiatives, and the capacity-building support for these.

CEF resources through ASPBAE fully supported the Education Watch work in India and Nepal; augmented supported to coalitions funded directly by CEF national offices in Pakistan and Sri Lanka for their Education Watch activities. CAMPE Bangladesh, having its own funding and infrastructure for Education Watch, was supported in its participation to various trainings where they lent support to the Education Watch process to other coalitions.

No overspending or underspending of CEF funds was reported by ASPBAE. The delays in completion of the Education Watch researches however pushed back spending of CEF grants beyond December 2008, its initial target of completion.

Some coalitions interviewed expressed that resources were not sufficient and that 'money constraints impeded provision of more intensive mentoring support'. A deeper look at the financial position of the coalitions sheds light on what is behind this comment. Except for CAMPE Bangladesh, all of the South Asia coalitions are newly formed organisations, struggling to institutionally stabilise and survive. The resources towards Education Watch provided the coalitions with the ability to sustain advocacy work beyond participation in an annual GCE Global Action Week event and other sporadic media campaigns on education or lobbying efforts. It is from these resources that coalitions drew funds to maintain the basic infrastructure required by any coalition to run a policy tracking/research undertaking: e.g., a coalition coordinator, communication and basic administrative budgets, meeting constituents. Funds were therefore stretched widely in various areas of coalition work – and therefore less than what would have been preferred applied to mentoring and training at the community level.

The absence of core support and the overall unpredictability of funding leave the national with having to make constant hard choices, juggling where best to apply among many legitimate organisational demands, whatever available resources they have for perceived longer-term benefit

and gain. The coalitions' ability to sustain campaign action and to optimise the application of skills and/or use of evidence generated by the Education Watch process depends heavily on the potential for core support being made available to coalitions soon. With the winding up of the CEF facility, ASPBAE and the coalitions are hard pressed to seek new, more sustainable sources of institutional support to advance policy change work in the region.

#### **Contextual/environmental factors**

Conflict and political instability had much impact on the ability of some coalitions to operate and therefore proceed with the planned activities of Edwatch. The lead researcher in Pakistan, as a case in point, was arrested and for a prolonged period even after his release, his movements were restricted. The over-all political instability of government in Pakistan also meant that engagement with government officials to secure data for the research was impossible.

However, even in countries where the situation was not as politically volatile and unstable, many of the coalitions experienced difficulties in accessing data on account of non-cooperation of government officials. Many were unwilling/reluctant to part with data and information to CSOs. The coalitions also observed that the data and information systems at the local level were also weak.

In future efforts in budget tracking and other similar policy tracking undertakings of the coalitions, resistance and non-cooperation of governments in sharing information and data should be assumed and built in to the research plan and appropriate courses of action defined in response. Allies in government may be developed to facilitate data access as experienced by some coalitions. Access to information is political in many cases. Coalitions may need to assess if campaigning on the right to information may be a necessary feature of policy tracking efforts.

#### **Design and research approach issues**

The 'technicalised' language of official policy-making poses huge demands on CSOs to learn the language for them to ably engage their governments on educational policy. The evidence generated by CSOs and the means to construct these therefore also assume this 'technicalised' idiom.

Expectedly, it was a steep learning curve for many coalitions to operate in this terrain. The day to day language and skills of activists, campaigners, and advocates are somehow distant from that of researchers and policy analysts. At country levels, coalitions faced a number of research design and capacity issues. There was a lack of adequate data-gathering skills within the coalition. There were low or limited research and policy analytical skills available to them.

The Education Watch mounted a series of workshops and mentoring sessions across the two-year project period to orient and train a core of researchers from the coalitions on these specialised skills, and so that they consequently are able to lead and guide their country research teams in evidence-based policy research. ASPBAE also facilitated coalition access to a pool of technical experts and resource persons available and ready to provide advice to coalitions should they require it at any time in the course of project implementation. The hands-on mentoring approach adopted by resource persons helped address some of the capacity issues, and the sub-regional/regional workshops were used to address issues regarding research design. Nonetheless, the coalitions by and large struggled to keep up with the demands in technical rigour that the Education Watch design required.

The evaluation workshop of the Education Watch pilot highlighted some issues and concerns that need to be considered for future undertaking of this type.

What would be an appropriate balance of quantitative and qualitative inquiry?

Some coalitions observed that the research methodology employed was ‘too quantitative’. This exacted high demands on technical expertise, time, and energies, which was sparse within the coalitions. While the evidence generated from such an approach lends easier to the idiom of mainstream policy engagement, it is also valid to argue that there is a need for the language of everyday life to gain currency and impact more positively on policy processes. CSOs can in fact ‘translate’ the language of everyday living and struggling and present these in powerful symbols, convincing narratives and accounts to inform policy development. Likewise, as shown by the Education Watch experience, CSOs can also translate highly technical concepts and processes into more accessible and popular terms with empowering effect on people and communities.

What would be more appropriate organisational arrangements to more effectively undertake Education Watch?

CAMPE, the most experienced in Education Watch by far, sets the bar in institutionalised arrangements for policy research within the coalition. It has a distinct Education Watch infrastructure involving a highly reputable research institute.

In the regional Education Watch undertaking, different organisational arrangements were pursued by the coalitions to draw technical expertise. By and large, all coalitions attempted to build in-house capacities for policy tracking and research through the training of coalition staff and partners to undertake research. Some additionally employed consultants at various points of the research, e.g., NCE India, GCE Nepal, PCE Pakistan, while CED Sri Lanka mobilised research expertise among their member organisations, i.e., research institutes, university departments.

It is relevant to reflect on whether it makes good sense to build research competencies among education activists (as Education Watch attempted) – rather than perhaps relying primarily on research institutes to undertake research in partnership with campaigners and advocates. The more appropriate arrangement will obviously vary in different coalition contexts. It may be useful to note, however, that it was considered very valuable for the coalitions to have learned to speak the idiom of research – to have been through an experience that de-mystifies ‘science’ and brought this closer to the coalitions’ everyday language of resistance, power, and persuasion. The skills gained would certainly assist the coalitions in a future task of engaging with and convincing researchers and other ‘scientists’ to lend their expertise generously in research and analysis for policy change.

#### **Relations/coordination with CEF**

The relationship between the national coalitions and ASPBAE was distinct from and ran parallel to their relationship with CEF (and its country offices where these existed, i.e., Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India). ASPBAE became a CEF partner near the tail-end of the CEF process (2006); by that time the country CEF programmes were already set and so was the RWS programme. Towards 2007, the CEF country programmes were also winding down while the RWS programme was only in its second year and was gaining momentum as the Education Watch research results began to be consolidated at country and regional levels. Also, it was only in Pakistan and Sri Lanka that ASPBAE and the national CEF office were working with the same national education campaign coalition. In India and Bangladesh, the CEF offices were supporting other civil society networks other than the GCE national coalition members, who were the ASPBAE partners. Nepal did not have a CEF national office not being a Commonwealth country, and this did not constitute any significant difference with the way the programme played out in Nepal vis-à-vis the four other countries.

There was recognition within CEF and ASPBAE of the distinct dynamic and evolution of each of their programmes, which made the parallel track a logical approach. Both, however, sought to systematise communication and coordination between ASPBAE and CEF country offices. ASPBAE was invited to attend the Asia-level annual planning and assessment sessions which brought all the Asia CEF national coordinators together. ASPBAE also kept the CEF offices

informed of RWS activities and involved them in programme activities that were organised with CEF support, e.g., Education Watch sub-regional workshops of South Asian national coalitions in Colombo, Sri Lanka (July 2006) and Kathmandu, Nepal (June 2007), the Asia-Pacific Consultation for the GCE Assembly in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (December 2006), where preliminary findings of the Edwatch initiative were presented.

CEF support to ASPBAE complemented CEF's national efforts in several ways: 1) it facilitated coalitions' access to ASPBAE's in-house technical and policy expertise and its network of resource persons and policy connections at regional and global levels (e.g., UNESCO, UNICEF, UNGEI); 2) it increased opportunities of coalitions for greater sub-regional interaction, support, and exchange; and, 3) increased opportunities for South Asian coalitions to engage with the larger ASPBAE network (e.g., Southeast Asian and Pacific coalitions, GCE) and thus access to a wider array of perspectives, insights, and experiences to draw and learn from. CEF support to ASPBAE thus enabled stronger regional and global capacity development opportunities to national coalitions, as well as expanded the outreach of CEF programme in South Asia (i.e., in the case of Nepal).

## **Outcomes**

ASPBAE's programme clearly stipulates the adoption of a 'real-world' strategy (RWS) to capacity-building for education advocacy among its partner national education coalitions. This strategy is characterised as 'context-based and demand-driven', adapted to the identified capacity needs and priorities of national coalitions based on the specific EFA advocacy challenges they confront.

Following the framework underscored earlier, the **capacities** to bring about targeted policy **outcomes** are characterised as '**intermediate outcomes**' – the set of competencies set in place to 'persuade' and 'pressure' towards policy change.

### **Intermediate Outcomes**

The most dominant competencies developed within the programme period are in the arena of information politics: or the ability to credibly generate politically usable information and move it to where it will have the most and timely impact. These are apparent at several levels.

#### ***At the level of the national coalition***

- The Education Watch process increased policy research knowledge and skills of participating coalition members.
  - Enabled them to gain a better understanding of government's funding mechanisms and how government works
  - They achieved better capacities to understand and analyse the budget process
  - Generated alternative data particularly about disadvantaged groups and communities through Education Watch. These data have raised the coalitions' abilities to challenge spurious or unreliable data as basis for policy formulation of government. In many instances, these serve to augment gaps in the official data and information systems which do not adequately track the participation of marginalised communities in education. In Bangladesh for instance, the findings further reinforced the demand to fulfill the constitutional obligation to 'extend free and compulsory Primary Education to all children'.
  - Sustained trainings and 'real world' capacity development generated a core of skilled researchers able to undertake policy work. It is envisaged that they also strengthen their abilities to train others and thus expand the pool of policy researchers and analysts within the coalitions' ranks.

- The Education Watch process built capacities within coalition partners and participating communities, villages as well:
  - Education budgets was demystified, and local grassroots organisers gained better understanding of macro-micro links regarding the budget process
  - The education budget was shared with citizens; also data regarding deficiencies in allocations to quality inputs in some countries, e.g., for teaching aids, training, supervision of teachers, library etc. became very evident to community members
  - In some instances, village education committee members became more conscious of their rights and responsibilities, which augurs well for strengthening responsible governance and accountability mechanisms at the local level.
- Coalitions had increased access to technical expertise and resources through ASPBAE, other coalitions and other groups/institutions, as facilitated by the programme (e.g., specialists within GCE partners, UNESCO, UNICEF etc.).

#### *At global/regional/sub-regional level*

- Increased access to strategic information and frames: Many of the coalitions interviewed spoke of the value of involvement in the programme in expanding their access to valuable information on advocacy spaces, approaches, and possibilities. Through ASPBAE's position in various global policy processes, e.g., UNESCO EFA High level Group, UN Girls Education Initiative, it had access to updated information on policy developments, the dominant debates and discourses – which were then shared with the coalitions and informed their joint planning. The participation of the coalitions in the Regional Consultation in preparation for the GCE World Assembly in December 2007 also exposed the coalitions to a range of policy issues and debates advanced by the broad constituency of GCE and raised skills in articulating and arguing their own perspectives in a setting of diverse and sometimes competing interests.
- Enhanced solidarity with sub-regional and regional counterparts due to transnational collectivity: The programme offered a common space to identify common problems across the region and to plan collective responses. One respondent said participation in Education Watch and its processes 'facilitated the process of thinking globally and acting locally'. The regional and sub-regional trainings, workshops also provided a forum to articulate and give greater visibility to issues of the disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the different countries. These can pave the way for drawing broader attention to those left out and continued to be denied their rights and entitlements in education.
- A strategic information infrastructure (database and online resource base, methodology, toolkits, popular communication tools, Asia School Report methodology and indices) was built. This will have continuing use and value to coalitions and even other networks and CSO movements. These lend to replicability, wider user-value as wider networks access the data generated by ASPBAE and the coalitions through sharing and open access, electronic based mechanisms.

#### **Outcomes**

The challenge to ASPBAE and the coalitions henceforth is how to more effectively harness these competencies built towards their policy change objectives. This was strongly articulated and recognised by the coalitions when they assessed the Education Watch process in September this year.

ASPBAE and coalition participation in the UNESCO South Asia EFA Mid-Term Policy Conference (June 2008) provided an important opportunity to use the data generated by the

Education Watch processes to engage with governments and other EFA stakeholders to influence the direction of EFA planning in the coming period. Utilising the strength of the transnational character of ASPBAE and its partnership with the coalitions, the CSOs carefully strategised and planned their lobbying approaches for this event during a workshop organised prior to the policy meeting. Prepared and coordinated, the representatives of the five South Asian coalitions thus actively participated in the thematic and country workshops that produced policy recommendations and concrete EFA targets, while presentations were made by ASPBAE representatives on issues on financing and served as facilitators of workshops on inclusive education, quality education, financing and governance, and literacy. One country delegation even asked its national education coalition to prepare its own country's report. The resolutions arising from the meeting strongly reflect many of the coalition advocacies especially in education financing, quality, and attention to marginalised groups.

These gains in shaping the discursive positions of intergovernmental bodies (such as UNESCO) should translate to changes in domestic policy that the coalitions need to see through. There are enabling conditions which may facilitate these for some coalitions. For some coalitions, their participation in the South Asia EFA Policy Conference facilitated access to government delegates they earlier did not enjoy. Some have had venues for strong and sustained engagement with government. CAMPE Bangladesh is a long established CSO and is part of several government committees on education where its Education Watch findings provide input to the discussions and debates. NCE India maintains sustained dialogue with Members of Parliament through a Parliamentarians' Forum at the national level and with members of the legislative assemblies at the State level. Some such as GCE-Nepal have strong allies in the media who they can call on to articulate and share their analysis and advocacies to a broader audience and publics.

The efforts in the coming period should be directed purposively towards enabling coalitions to expand their arsenal of competencies to better influence not only changes in statements of policy but in the enforcement of good policy by their respective governments on education.

## 6 Conclusions and recommendations

The Commonwealth Education Fund's support to ASPBAE's programme on capacity-building produced concrete benefits to national education coalitions as well as significantly contributed to laying a firmer ground for stronger advocacy on EFA in South Asia and the Asia-Pacific region by ASPBAE and its partner national coalitions. In its two and half years of life the programme has achieved the following:

- Created a strategic resource for advocacy work for national education coalitions and ASPBAE
  - Alternative information, particularly about disadvantaged and neglected groups, arising from the data and analysis generated by the Education Watch research. This solid information helps the national education coalitions and ASPBAE challenge the often too optimistic data generated by state agencies, fills important information gaps especially concerning those that are not reached or are excluded in state EFA policies and programmes.
  - A strategic information infrastructure (database and online resource base, methodology, toolkits, popular communication tools) that have continuing utility to all the networks and coalitions because these can be shared and echoed (replicable, multipliable) to other members of coalition and to wider networks (wider use of data through sharing, open access)
  - A core of skilled researchers within the national coalitions with capacity for evidence-based policy research who, in turn, can train others
- Increased the access of national education coalitions to an important official policy space—the South Asia EFA Mid-Term Policy Conference—which has significant influence on national policy-making on EFA because it is comprised by education ministers and senior officials of South Asian countries. Key decisions and concrete targets were made in the June 2008 South Asia policy meeting in terms of reducing the EFA deficit in the areas of budget/finance, inclusivity, lifelong learning, quality of education, literacy, gender.
- Increased access to strategic information and frames by national education coalitions. The planning, training, and strategising workshops mounted by ASPBAE through the programme provided strategic information and updates on key policy events and spaces that coalitions could maximise to enhance their national advocacies. The strategising workshop prior to the South Asia EFA Mid-Term Policy Conference helped prepare the coalitions in their engagement with the ministers and senior officials. The results and analysis produced from the Education Watch initiative proved extremely useful in arming national education coalitions with key information in their engagement with the ministers.
- Provided alternative channels of communication for voices that are marginalised in their own societies (disadvantaged and neglected groups); networks highlighted and amplified the concerns of these groups into transnational arenas and debates, which in turn can echo back into their own countries.

This study concludes that the participation of national coalitions in the programme of ASPBAE has enhanced their political resources to engage in policy advocacy, particularly in information politics (see Evaluation Framework). The transnational processes to capacity-building coordinated by ASPBAE have also helped enhance sub-regional relationships between and among South Asian coalitions and strengthened solidarity of the ASPBAE network as a whole, both important for them to engage in coordinated actions of influencing the different yet interconnected EFA policy spaces at country, regional, and global levels.

While the first years of the programme have laid important foundations for stronger advocacy capacity of ASPBAE and the national coalitions, there a number of key challenges emerging from this study.

- There is a need to enhance political strategising capacity of the coalitions. This means better skills on how to creatively use the technical data and effectively deploy it to different publics, and helping raise their capacity to frame goals and issues in ways that extend their possibilities for attracting the broadest possible base of affiliates, constituents, supporters. This would also involve raising the capacity to 'read' and 'analyse' their political contexts as well enhance skills in mass campaign handling and administration. Raising capacities in this area enhances their ability to deploy a wider range of tactics (symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics).
- There is a need to assess the best, most appropriate approaches to evidence-based policy research per coalition and as a regional effort. The piloting of the Education Watch generated several approaches to research. CAMPE, because of its longer experience in Education Watch, has developed high technical expertise in this area, even the necessary structure within the coalition that would ensure a solid, evidence-based policy research on a sustained basis. The other coalitions trained their own coalition members, mainly practitioners and activists, and understandably, encountered more issues concerning low capacity. Sri Lanka's CED employed a mixed-based approach of university/institute experts and practitioners. This point is just to emphasise what was already highlighted in the Regional Assessment Conference of Education Watch in Bangkok in September 2008: the aim of the research is to be able to produce the strategic information that could raise capacity of coalitions to engage other actors (local, national, and transnational) on EFA issues. It might be more cost-effective to maintain a mobilisable pool of experts within the national network that could lead the more technical aspects of generating this strategic information. However, it must also be pointed out that the participatory methodologies employed by the national coalitions with which they are more familiar with facilitated the translation of highly technical concepts of budget flows, funding mechanism, and tracking.
- A number of the coalitions are still young (two to three years old) and still require further support in building network cohesion, managing coalition relationships, and helping coordinate coalition activities. ASPBAE and the coalitions need to sit down and strategise how they can jointly mobilise this kind of support. ASPBAE, if resources permit, might want to consider getting a dedicated staff for South Asia to provide this kind of intensive, focussed support for a period of perhaps two to three years.
- It is important for ASPBAE to maintain the level of transnational interaction, support, learning and exchange already achieved through programme and in the combination of forms it has employed (face-to-face, sub-regional/regional meetings and workshops and field mentoring support). This kind of support is crucial to its 'real world, context-based, and demand-driven' approach to capacity-building; more important, sustained transnational interactions deepen solidarity and commitment amongst network members to their collective project of accelerating progress towards EFA in their countries and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.
- For more systematic and in-depth learning within the network, it would be helpful if ASPBAE and the national coalitions put in place a monitoring and evaluation framework that could help them critically assess the progress of their advocacy work on an ongoing basis both at national and transnational levels and on how the two are interwoven. The analytical framework provided in this report might be useful in developing this M/E framework and system.

## Annex 1 CEF EPE template

**Organisation: Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE)**

	Key Successes	Key Evidence	Key Factors/ Reasons for Successes
<p>Area 1</p> <p>Civil Society Participation in Education Planning</p>	<p>Successful policy engagement by national education coalitions and ASPBAE with South Asia education ministers on EFA deficit in South Asia and on thematic policy areas such as literacy, gender, inclusive education, quality education, finance and governance (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and Pakistan)</p> <p>Enhanced credibility of coalitions and ASPBAE with government and regional inter-governmental agencies on education policy work</p>	<p>Participation in and lobbying during the EFA Mid-Term Policy Review Conference in Kathmandu, Nepal, 16-19 June 2008</p> <p>Outcomes of Policy Conference defining guidelines for EFA planning nationally reflect many CSO advocacy positions especially on financing and education quality and equity issues</p>	<p>Access to strategic information (Education Watch results)</p> <p>Sustained (not one-offs) trainings and workshops on policy analysis, advocacy strategising, and positioning on key EFA issues in the region</p> <p>Dedicated strategising workshop for the EFA Mid-Term Policy Review Conference</p>
<p>Area 2</p> <p>Monitoring of Education Budgets by Civil Society at National and Local Levels (budget analysis, tracking &amp; advocacy)</p>	<p>Creation of strategic resource for advocacy for national coalitions – well-researched data on government funding flows, mechanisms, and budgets specifically in areas with large populations of disadvantaged groups</p> <p>- alternative information is supported by an easy-to-use technological platform and a core of skilled researchers to process and analyse this information</p>	<p>Country Education Watch Reports (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal)</p> <p>Regional Education Watch Report (Asia-Pacific)</p> <p>ASPBAE Education Watch database and online resource base</p>	<p>Whole research process was well-led, properly resourced in terms of technical and expert support, and provision of in-country mentoring</p> <p>Strong ownership of process by national coalitions and participating members</p>
<p>Area 3</p> <p>Development and Dissemination of Innovative Practice to enable Access to Quality Education for Marginalised Children especially Girls</p>	<p>- Not applicable to ASPBAE programme -</p>	<p>- Not applicable to ASPBAE programme -</p>	<p>- Not applicable to ASPBAE programme -</p>

## **Annex 2**

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## **Annex 3**

### **Persons interviewed**

Rama Kant Rai  
Convener, National Coalition for Education (NCE)  
M-6, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Kalkaji  
New Delhi, INDIA 110019  
Phone: +09811418201 | Fax: +01126236818  
E-mail: [nceindia@gmail.com](mailto:nceindia@gmail.com) | [cosar.lko@gmail.com](mailto:cosar.lko@gmail.com)  
Website:

Dr. Raghvendra Singh Tomar  
Member, National Coalition for Education (NCE)  
*Contact details same as above*

K.M. Enamul Hoque  
Programme Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation  
Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)  
5/14 Humayun Road, Mohammadpur  
Dhaka 1207, BANGLADESH  
Phone: +880 2 9130427 | 8155031 | 8155032  
Fax: +880-2-8118342  
E-mail: [enam@campebd.org](mailto:enam@campebd.org) / [h.enamul@gmail.com](mailto:h.enamul@gmail.com)

B. Charles Elamaldeniya  
Chairman / Director  
Coalition for Educational Development  
917/2, Ethul Kotte  
Kotte, Sri Lanka  
Tel/Fax: +94 112868499  
E-mail: [cedsrilanka@sltnet.lk](mailto:cedsrilanka@sltnet.lk)  
Website: [www.cedsrilanka.org](http://www.cedsrilanka.org)

Dr. Godwin Kodituwakku  
Coalition for Educational Development  
Director, Research and Development  
Department of Research and Development, National Institute of Education  
Maharagama, Sri Lanka  
Tel: +94 11 2851301-5 (Ext 241)  
Fax: +94 11 2851306  
E-mail: [tuwakku@yahoo.com](mailto:tuwakku@yahoo.com)

Bhuparaj Khadka  
Education Journalists' Group  
Global Campaign for Education-Nepal  
E-mail: [bhuparaj@gmail.com](mailto:bhuparaj@gmail.com)

Sharda Basnet  
Member, Steering Committee  
Global Campaign for Education-Nepal  
Programme Officer, Save the Children Norway  
Address: Sundhara, Kathmandu G.P.O. Box 3394  
Mob: 977-9851011332

E-mail: [s.basnet@savechildren-norway.org.np](mailto:s.basnet@savechildren-norway.org.np) / [sharda.basnet@gmail.com](mailto:sharda.basnet@gmail.com)

Ali Ahmar Naqvi  
Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)  
c/o. Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO)  
House 9, Street 89  
G-6/3, Islamabad. Pakistan  
Tel : 92-51-2272978, 2820426, 2820983 | Fax : 92 51 2273527  
Email : [zehrasg@yahoo.com](mailto:zehrasg@yahoo.com), [nationalsecretariat@pcep.org](mailto:nationalsecretariat@pcep.org)

Rabia Khan  
Pakistan Coalition for Education  
*Contact details same as above*

Edicio dela Torre  
GCE Board Member  
President, E-Net Philippines  
Education Network Philippines (E-Net)  
C/o. Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-Net)  
Door 23, Casal Bldg. No. 15 Anonas St., Brgy. Quirino 3-A, Quezon City 1102, Philippines  
Tel : +63 2 995 8955; +63 2 434 1368  
Fax : +63 2 421 4773  
Email : [ediciodelatorre@yahoo.com](mailto:ediciodelatorre@yahoo.com); [edicio2003@yahoo.com](mailto:edicio2003@yahoo.com)  
Web : [www.educ-net.org](http://www.educ-net.org)

Bernie Lovegrove  
Programme Manager, ASPBAE  
C/- Canberra Business Park,  
2 Bradfield St Downer ACT 2602 Australia  
PO Box 1067 Dickson ACT Australia 2602  
Tel : 612 6241 6252 | Fax : 612 6241 5284  
Email : [bernie@aspbae-oz.org](mailto:bernie@aspbae-oz.org); [bernielovegrove@yahoo.com](mailto:bernielovegrove@yahoo.com)

Mohammad Muntasim Tanvir  
Coordinator, South Asia Policy Advocacy and Campaigns  
Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE)  
11-C Nakshi Homes, 6/1A Topkhana Road, Segunbagicha  
Dhaka 100, BANGLADESH  
Mobile: (88) 01715437921  
E-mail: [mtanvir.aspbae@gmail.com](mailto:mtanvir.aspbae@gmail.com) | [tanvir301@yahoo.com](mailto:tanvir301@yahoo.com)

Jon Kapp  
UNICEF EAPRO  
19 Phra Atit Road, Chanasongkram, Phra Nakorn  
Bangkok 10200, Thailand  
Telephone: (662) 356-9499 | Fax: (662) 280-3563

Rene Raya  
Lead Policy Analyst, ASPBAE  
C/o Action for Economic Reforms  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor #40 Matulungin St.  
Central District, Quezon City, Philippines.  
Tel: 632 426 5632  
Telfax : 632 426 4626

Email : [rrraya@gmail.com](mailto:rrraya@gmail.com)

Maria Lourdes Khan  
Secretary-General, ASPBAE  
Secretary General  
Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE)  
c/o. MAAPL  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Eucharistic Congress Building No.3  
5, Convent Street, Colaba  
Mumbai – 400 039, India.  
Tel : 91-22-2202 1391 / 2283 6853  
Fax : 91-22-2283 2217  
Email : [Aspbae@vsnl.com](mailto:Aspbae@vsnl.com); [maria.aspbae@gmail.com](mailto:maria.aspbae@gmail.com)  
Web : <http://www.aspbae.org>

Raquel Castillo  
Asia Advocacy and Campaigns Coordinator, ASPBAE  
Asia Advocacy & Campaigns Office:  
Unit 14 Casal Bldg., No.15 Anonas St.  
Barangay Quirino 3-A, Project 3  
Quezon City 1102, Philippines.  
Tel : 632 9958955  
Fax : 632 4335152  
Email : [raqcastle@gmail.com](mailto:raqcastle@gmail.com)

## Annex 4

### Guide questions

#### 1. About the national coalitions

The programme is specifically aimed at raising capacities of national coalitions in education advocacy, thus making them the primary ‘beneficiaries’ of the programme. These set of questions are aimed at gathering your own assessment of the coalition’s ‘capacities’ before or at the beginning of the CEF-funded phase of the programme. It also asks you to provide information regarding the bases of your assessment.

Q0

In your encounters and interactions with the national coalitions in South Asia *immediately prior to or at the beginning* of the programme in March/April 2006,

- what was your assessment of their ‘capacity for education advocacy’?
- Please identify and describe these ‘capacities’ (or lack thereof) that you have observed and that you deem are required to accelerate education advocacy for EFA using the spaces below (Q1 to Q2-5).

Q1

What are these ‘capacities’? Please provide a description for each that you identify.

Q2

Which of the ‘capacities’ identified above do you deem as strong or weak in the coalitions in the following countries based on which encounter/s? (This may be a visit, meeting, workshop, series of engagements that you had with them immediately prior to or at the beginning of the programme. Please identify month/year and nature of visit/meeting/workshop/engagement. Q3 below is a follow-up question to this.)

Q21—India

Q22—Pakistan

Q23—Sri Lanka

Q24—Nepal

Q25—Bangladesh

Q3

A series of programme planning workshops were mounted by ASPBAE in the first half of 2006.

- Which of these planning workshops were you able to attend?
- Apart from your attendance to these workshops, did you conduct visits to South Asian coalitions in between workshops? To which countries? Describe your interaction with the coalitions during these visits – in terms of objectives and corresponding outcomes (did you meet your visit objectives? Why? Why not?)

Q4

Some of the national coalitions are older and some were in the process of formation at the beginning of the programme. Please provide any information you know of about each of the South Asian coalitions in terms of their history and their contexts at the time of programme start

- when were they formed (especially relevant for the new formations or those that ASPBAE helped form)
- what was the scope of membership – within the education sector (were there teachers unions? Development NGOs? Other type of NGOs or civil society associations? Government employees or officials? And so on...)
- what were the drivers/forces/the impetus/motivations that made them come together – internal and external
- what was the level and quality of cohesion
- what were the strengths/weaknesses of the coalition leadership

- what were key organisational issues they were dealing with at the start of the programme and how they were dealing with these issues from your vantage point
- other information you wish to share about the coalitions
- please identify other persons (non-coalition member) whom you suggest could provide key information about each of the coalitions

Q41—India

Q42—Pakistan

Q43—Sri Lanka

Q44—Nepal

Q45—Bangladesh

Q5

What ‘capacity’ needs were identified by each of the South Asian coalitions during the planning workshops, or at any time prior to or at the beginning of the programme?

## **2. About the national coalitions and ASPBAE**

These questions are intended to form a picture of the relationship between South Asian national education coalitions and ASPBAE.

Q6

Did your ‘impressions’ or ‘initial assessment’ of coalition capacities (Q2) match those of the coalition’s own assessment of their capacities? Where is the match? Where is the mismatch?

The purpose of these questions (Q5 and Q6) is to find out your view of the coalition’s capacity for self-assessment as well as the congruence of definitions of ‘capacity’ between the national coalitions and ASPBAE secretariat/staff.

Q7

One programme document indicates that a Memorandum of Agreement were forged between each of the national coalitions and ASPBAE.

- Have you seen copies of these MOAs?
- Do you have knowledge of the process of their drafting and finalisation? If so, please describe the process of drafting and finalisation.

The purpose of these questions (Q6 and Q7) is to understand programme planning processes and how ‘participatory’ these are or how national coalitions’ capacity needs (‘demands’) are reflected by and get incorporated in programme priorities, objectives, activities.

Q8

‘Mentoring’ is part of the programme’s strategy to help build capacities of national coalitions.

- What ‘mentoring’ activities did you undertake for the South Asian coalitions? What specific ‘capacity’ were these trying to address or help enhance?
- Were there any distinct approaches you employed for each of the coalitions? If so, what were these?
- Were there common approaches that you employed across South Asian coalitions? If so, what were these?
- In hindsight, what do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches you employed, both for each coalition and across coalitions? How can the strengths be sustained? The weaknesses addressed?
- Please specify your answers for each coalition as provided below.

Q81—India

Q82—Pakistan

Q83—Sri Lanka

Q84—Nepal

Q85—Bangladesh

Q9

Apart from face-to-face meetings/workshops and country visits,

- how often do you communicate with the national coalitions, e.g., e-mail or phone or internet chats?
- How would you assess the flow of exchange – how often is it initiated by you or by ASPBAE secretariat, how often is it initiated by coalitions?
- How often of these exchanges would you say are of the ‘mentoring’, ‘advising’-type rather than administrative or coordinative-type?

Q10

How many times, on the average, would you say that ASPBAE network (all national coalitions with staff or sub-regions with staff) come together? Once a year? Twice a year? Or more?

Q11

A regional assembly in preparation for the GCE world assembly was held in 2007 in Phnom Penh.

- Were you able to attend this regional assembly? Were you able to attend the GCE assembly?
- Based on your recollection, what were the priorities and demands expressed by national coalitions during this regional assembly? What were those distinctly expressed by South Asian coalitions?
- Do you think that the expressed priorities and demands by national coalitions were reflected in/incorporated into the GCE programmes, campaigns, priorities as decided upon during the GCE assembly? In what ways would you say that these are reflected, not reflected, partly reflected/incorporated into GCE plans?
- How did ASPBAE facilitate incorporation or adoption of perspectives of national coalitions into the GCE plan?
- Did you encounter problems/issues regarding advocacy of these perspectives and demands with GCE? If so, what were/are these issues?
- Please cite any other global civil society networks, apart from GCE, which you can cite to exemplify the points above.

*The purpose of these questions is to shed light on the dynamics of representation and negotiations within advocacy and campaign networks (national coalitions are ‘networks’ in themselves, which are part of a regional network, ASPBAE, among others, and also part of global networks, e.g., GCE) – and, consequently, the benefits and challenges of capacity-building for ‘networks’ (in contrast to single organisations).*

Q12

A related question is ASPBAE’s ensuring that ‘Southern’ voice/perspective is present in the plans and advocacies of global networks and policy-influencing bodies.

- What do you mean by ‘Southern’ voice/perspective?
- Please cite some concrete examples of ‘Southern’ voice/perspective vis-à-vis ‘other’ and/or ‘Northern’ perspectives in your engagements with these networks and bodies.
- Based on your experience, what are the continuing challenges of ensuring that a ‘Southern’ voice/perspective is integrated into global advocacies, campaigns, policies?
- What are the successes, by far, on the role played by ASPBAE on this regard?

### **3. On the programme – objectives, strategies, outcomes and next steps**

Q13

A significant part of the CEF-funded components relate to the Education Watch and developing technical research and data gathering/analysis skills of national coalitions.

- From the perspective of effectiveness and efficiency and strategy, what is your view of ASPBAE’s investment in time and resources in training coalitions on this type of technical skills, as compared, for example, to contracting these type of technical work instead to already trained researchers?

Q14

With the near completion of the piloting of the Education Watch initiative in these countries (the rest of the country coalitions which have not published/launched their reports will be doing so by October 2008)

- What is ASPBAE's vision of Education Watch? Is it something that it intends to sustain in each of the participating country, e.g., such as what CAMPE has done Bangladesh?
- Is it something that will be sustained at the regional level?
- If so, what are its plans for sustaining the initiative at either levels, especially since funds such as the CEF are no longer available?

Q15

A corollary question to the above – some of the national coalitions were formed and were sustained largely through CEF support, e.g., Pakistan and Sri Lanka. With the CEF over, how does ASPBAE aim to assist these coalitions in developing funding resources – that is, if ASPBAE has plans of doing so?

Q16

Based on your recent encounters with national coalitions in South Asia,

- what kind of capacities have the programmed enhanced? Which of the capacities you identified in Q1 do you think have been addressed? Please cite concrete examples to substantiate your response.
- Which of the capacities you identified in Q1 need further enhancement? And what kind of support/role should ASPBAE play in helping enhance these capacities?

Q17

Do you know of the results of the Education Watch initiative being used in any of your campaigns and advocacy work in 2007/08 whether at country, regional, or global level?

- Please cite/name the campaigns, advocacy activities in which the Education Watch outputs have been used in the year or so?

Q20

The programme document also specifies ASPBAE's input in terms of building and strengthening national coalitions. The national coalitions themselves expressed during their sub-regional workshop that sustaining the coalition constitute a challenge.

- What are ASPBAE's plans in terms of strengthening existing national coalitions, that is, beyond the technical capacity-building initiative it has undertaken in 2006/07?
- What are forms of investments it plans to make in this respect, e.g., organisational and political capacity-building (or does it have any plans to do so)?

Q21

Please give me your thoughts about the idea of putting up Civil Society Education Fund – usefulness, relevance, appropriateness of having this kind of fund – and ways to manage it.

Q22

What is the relationship between this programme and the RWS project?

#### **4. On programme funding and spending**

Q23 – programme funding

- What percentage of programme funding came from CEF?
- Where were the rest of programme funds sourced? Were they similar in nature to the CEF (civil society capacity-building type of fund? Largely ODA-origin or foundation/private sponsorship type? Etc.
- What is your experience in terms of the current and prospective challenges and opportunities in generating adequate resources for 'civil society capacity building' among official development donors? Private foundations and philanthropies? International NGOs?

*The purpose of these questions is to gather data in order to be analyse the kind of support that ASPBAE was able to mobilise for its capacity-building programme, and whether donors are giving it enough attention and priority (given that they keep saying that CSOs play a crucial role in planning, monitoring, evaluation, advocacy and holding governments into account...).*

Q24—on relations, engagements, interactions with CEF

--Thank you!--

## **Annex 5**

### **About ASPBAE**

The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, established in 1964, is a regional association of over 200 member organisations across 30 countries in the Asia South Pacific region. ASPBAE is committed to building an Asia South Pacific network dedicated to advancing equitable access to relevant, quality and empowering education and learning opportunities for all people, especially the most marginalised groups. Its members include university departments, NGOs, community groups, trade unions, indigenous people's, women's organisations and popular education groups promoting both traditional and modern media forms in teaching / learning processes.

ASPBAE seeks to mobilise and support NGOs, community organisations, national education coalitions, teachers' unions, child rights organizations, women's groups, academic institutions and other civil society organizations to hold governments accountable to ensure the right of all to education.

It strives to strengthen the over-all capacities especially of NGOs and civil society groups, to - through adult education activities, strategies and programmes - assist people and communities improve their conditions, fight for their rights, combat discrimination and participate equally in decisions that affect their lives.

There are 17 Commonwealth countries in the Asia South Pacific region and ASPBAE has over 60 member organizations in 14 of these: Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Australia and New Zealand. There are very few CSO networks with the same depth and reach as ASPBAE, in terms of geographic spread, the range of sectors involved, the diversity of perspectives and contexts it represents and the education issues / themes pursued.

Through the years, ASPBAE has offered support and partnership with these organisations in the promotion of adult education that is pro-poor and empowering through:

- a) capacity-building of national and grassroots based adult education groups to effectively promote and practice transformative adult education and to advance adult education policy reforms. These have been pursued through regional, sub-regional and national-level trainings, workshops, seminars, research, publications, leadership-building especially of women, study visits / exchanges, training of trainers, mentoring, production of user guides and research support for policy advocacy work. Programs have been geared towards CSO leaders, second line leaders and other key members. These programs and activities have provided our members and other organizations with rare opportunities for learning from the experiences and perspectives of other similarly motivated groups in the region, thus enhancing their own work.
- b) network-building and forging strategic partnerships. ASPBAE served as a clearing house of knowledge rooted in very rich and diverse experiences of ASPBAE members, documenting and sharing innovations and good practice, joint planning and coalition-building for solidarity, international cooperation and joint action. For instance, ASPBAE's ability to sustain the quality of its capacity-building work has been a function of its ability to draw from its network of experts and specialists in diverse fields for example citizenship education, HIV/AIDS education, gender mainstreaming, adult literacy, peace education and indigenous education. In harnessing this pool of experts ASPBAE's workshops and events have been significantly enhanced and more opportunities for research and training have been opened to members within the region. ASPBAE has developed additional networks and international strategic partners over the past 8 years that has made a significant improvement in ASPBAE's

ability to voice the concerns of its constituency and provide them with capacity building opportunities in international fora.

- c) national, regional and international policy advocacy. Over the past 3-5 years, ASPBAE has substantially developed its capacity to undertake policy reviews and policy tracking activities, researches, lobbying, campaigns and representation in various policy processes - enabling education CSOs to not only effectively address local development and education issues but also to lend a strong Southern voice to regional and international policy debates and reform processes on education and adult learning.

In the 1990's, the emphasis of ASPBAE work was on 'capacity and network-building' of adult education NGOs especially in developing countries in the region. ASPBAE's advocacy work was until the last 3 years focused almost solely on adult education issues and on policy platforms and spaces geared more specifically to adult education (such as CONFINTEA V<sup>12</sup>).

Over the last few years however, ASPBAE began to move its strategic emphasis towards policy advocacy that promotes the full range of the Education For All (EFA) goals, with a special focus on adult education concerns. In vast areas of the Asia Pacific region, this implies a continued focus on adult education policy issues albeit as these interact more sharply with other policy areas within basic education (ECCE<sup>13</sup>, Primary, Secondary Education, Adult Literacy). This new emphasis has been prompted by contemporary trends in policy debates in favour of Education for All (EFA 2000) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which pay greater attention to reforms in the formal education systems. To secure gains for adult education within the current policy context, it has been necessary to underscore within a rights perspective, the indivisibility of the 'education for all' (children and adults, men and women) agenda: that universal quality primary and secondary education cannot be achieved in the continued absence of safe, enabling learning environments for girls and boys in their homes and communities that literate, critically-aware parents - especially mothers - can provide. Conversely, the potential for meaningful 'learning throughout life' for all citizens rests on a strong basic education foundation. ASPBAE's attention to this expanded policy agenda also coincided with the development and growth within the region of national CSO coalitions for EFA inspired by the emergent global education campaign momentum following the 2000 Dakar Conference on Education for All (EFA) and the 2002 Monterrey Summit on Financing for Development.

Today, ASPBAE has grown to a network of organizations and individuals involved in formal and non-formal adult education, in campaigning for the right to education for all, working with and through NGOs, community organizations, education campaign coalitions, government agencies, universities, trade unions, indigenous peoples, women's organizations, the media and other institutions of civil society across the Asia-Pacific, committed to building an Asia Pacific movement dedicated to advancing transformative adult education and in making Education for All a reality in the region.

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<sup>12</sup> Fifth International Conference on Adult Education

<sup>13</sup> For example, Early Childhood Care and Education is crucial not only for the cognitive development of the child, but also in Southern societies (especially among poor households in patriarchal societies) frees the elder sibling, especially girls and mothers from childcare responsibilities and thus enhance girls' ability to stay in schools and mothers to participate in learning activities.

## **Annex 6**

### **About the national education coalitions**

#### **1 India: National Coalition for Education**

The National Coalition for Education or NCE is a coalition of five large networks:

- 1) Parliamentarians' Forum on Education—India
- 2) Bachpan Bachao Andolan, South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (BBA-SACCS): a network of 750 NGOs, trade unions, human rights and civil society Groups across South Asia
- 3) All India Primary Teachers' Federation (AIPTF)—a network of 3 million primary school teachers
- 4) All India Federation of Teachers' Organisations (AIFTO)—a network of 38 affiliate teachers' unions with membership of 1.6 million school teachers
- 5) All India Association for Christian Higher Education (AIACHE)—a network of principals and teachers in 300 colleges and 20,000 schools across India.

#### **Mission**

Education is a basic human right. Eradication of illiteracy and providing free, compulsory and quality education for all in particular for children, women and disadvantaged sections.

#### **The Work of NCE**

The coalition and its partners have long drawn track-records of initiating people's movement for ensuring the rights of children and disadvantaged communities. Many of its partners like BBA/SAACS have been struggling to eliminate child servitude of any kind for 25 years. This fight for a dignified and empowerment has resulted in the growing worldwide consensus. The intervention of NCE in the recent years have fueled newer dimension to the issue of child rights as a holistic approach to larger question of socio-economic and political issues have been incorporated. This transformation is possible when the disadvantaged communities are empowered making sustainable through education and subsequently ensuring dignity.

#### **Milestones**

The nationwide 15,000-kilometre Shiksha Yatra of 2001 (Education March) organised by BBA-SACCS under the leadership of Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, founder of BBA, is a testimony to the strengths of partner organisations of NCE. The education March of 2001 and hosts of other initiatives taken up by the coalition members of NCE have largely resulted in the policy changes towards achieving Education For All campaign worldwide. The long drawn interventions made by NCE has directly contributed in bringing the 93rd Constitutional amendment, which is a stepping stone towards making Education a Fundamental Right in India, and the banning of domestic child labour in 2006. Some more crucial achievements of our interventions:

- The Parliamentary Forum on Education-India and the South Asian Parliamentarians' Forum convened by the NCE have been instrumental in making voices of people heard in the National Parliaments regarding the deteriorating state of education in India and the region. The 168 member Parliamentary Forum is a key forum for political lobbying towards the formation of child-friendly policies.
- Large-scale lobbying and advocacy efforts through marches, signature campaigns, public hearings by the NCE paved the way for the 93rd Constitutional Amendment making education free and compulsory for the children between 6 to 14 years.
- Incessant pressure-building by the NCE resulted in UPA Government's decision to levy 2% education cess on the corporate sector for basic education.
- NCE also succeeded in pressuring the Government to agree in principle to increase the allotment 6% of the GDP to education.
- Village Panchayats and communities have been largely involved in all the grassroots and state activities.

## **2 Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)**

The Pakistan Coalition for Education is a coalition of civil society partners and individuals joined together to raise voice on the issues surrounding the education sector in Pakistan and advocate the same.

### **Beginnings**

The PCE came into being in April 2004, after a series of consultations facilitated by the Commonwealth Education Fund-Pakistan. The national meeting brought together some 40 participants, including those nominated in provincial consultations. In addition to that, representatives from some major organizations headquartered in Islamabad were also present. This meeting laid the foundations of Pakistan Coalition for Education PCE.

Such a coalition with the name of Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) evolved as a result of the first planning meeting to jointly celebrate the Global Week of Action 2004 in Pakistan. This week long campaign brought together like minded civil society activities having a strong personal and professional commitment to catalyze the education related efforts being done at the district, provincial and national level. The Common Wealth Education Fund has been facilitating and supporting a number of consultations after the GWA 2004 which resulted in the formation of a national coalition which is a movement of diverse civil society organizations and individuals committed to quality education for all.

The country's education and health indicators are still showing a low profile and large disparities with respect to regional, urban/ rural and gender divides. According to the report of SPDC (2003), the literacy rate has grown from 21-43%, it is surprising to note that the number of illiterate people has increased from 28 million to 46 million since 1972 till present. The traditional societal patterns lack of accessibility to state institutions and low-income area the major reasons of low literacy.

In the above-mentioned context, there is a need for more organized and collective efforts from non-governmental organizations in the form of civil society networks able to represent the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of the communities. It requires enhanced capacity and strengthening of the networks to proactively advocate for the bringing about a change in the education sector and influence policy making both at local and national level.

### **Mission**

Pakistan Coalition for Education is a network of diverse civil society organizations and individuals committed to quality education for all. It acts collectively to influence policies and practices through research-based advocacy and mobilization.

### **Values**

Transparency

Honesty

Commitment

Participatory & Democratic work

Non-hierarchical (structure & decision making)

Realistic Approach

Innovativeness

Proactive Attitude

PCE define outcomes of its Education Network Strengthening as:

- Development of an education focused network that originate civil society movements in selected thematic areas with Right Based Approach.
- Enhanced skills of this network in research and advocacy
- Increased outreach and recognition of PCE through partnerships with regional and sectoral networks

- Public sensitised about education related issues on a larger scale so that it understands its rights and identifies its roles and responsibilities
- Increased participation of civil society in decision-making processes Increased participation of civil society in development and fine-tuning of local and national level strategies and policies.

## **Sri Lanka: Coalition for Educational Development**

The Coalition for Educational Development (CED) is a non-profit organisation established for the promotion of quality and equitable education in Sri Lanka.

The CED enshrines the idea that linkage among policy makers, researchers and civil society groups is essential to formulate steadfast and viable educational policies of wider application and make insightful decisions. Thus, the Coalition constitutes an orchestration for increasing the power and leverage of civil society organisations, professional associations and individuals to advocate for educational development.

### **Beginnings**

In 2004, the Coalition for Educational Development (CED) was formed and received legal status as a non-profit organisation under the Company Act in Sri Lanka in May 2006. Provincial Coalitions of Civil Society Organisations who worked under the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) were invited to join the National Coalition. They were selected on the basis of their involvement in educational activities in the provinces and in the Notational Coalition they are organised at three levels: district, provincial and national. Each province is represented by a provincial coordinator who became a member of the National Coalition (CED). There are 63 registered civil society organisations dispersed working as partner organisations in CED and they work in various aspects in communities including education.

Advocacy is the main activity of the coalition. The need for effective advocacy is necessary as the coalition begins to engage in broader national issues. Major progressive changes in education do not occur by chance. Coalition needs to be guided by an honest and realistic approach to achieve its mission at a time education in Sri Lanka is moving without a clear guidance of a coherently enunciated long term educational policy.

CED is seen by its members as a national body of CSOs who have come to work together by a common agenda irrespective of different interests by considering education as a common concern to all of them (CED website, citing Amarasiri de Silva 2006). This positive attitude of the CSOs will lead to action involvement in achieving the goals set by the CED constitution. CED with a constitution, a vision and mission, a set of goals and a programme of work has the potential to develop a stronger public image using diverse resources and ideas. It will channel grassroots voices and experiences while influencing policy and practice, avoid duplication of effort, create synergy for combined and cooperative action and advocate for educational development with a unified voice overcoming the haphazard responses to issues in education. CED essentially is a mechanism for increasing the power and leverage of civil society organisations and individuals to advocate for educational development. It will develop an indigenous knowledge base with the civil society organization to advocate for evidence based policy and informed decision making in educational development.

### **Vision**

To ensure quality and equity in education for all irrespective of race, religion, language, social status and disabilities.

### **Mission**

To promote and advocate the involvement of civil society organisations from community level to national level in the formulation and implementation of national policy of quality education for all

and to support achieving innovative educational programmes at all levels to ensure quality and equal opportunities.

### **Objectives**

- 1) To promote and advocate the involvement of civil society organisations from community to national levels in the formulation and implementation of national policies that will promote quality education and equal education for all.
- 2) To advocate and support the reforms and programmes directed towards achieving educational development of the highest possible level in keeping with national needs and international standards.
- 3) To strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) at all levels in order to promote educational development activities in an inclusive manner and incorporate the participation of all stakeholders.
- 4) To monitor the implementation of educational programmes and utilization of funds and resources to ensure quality and equitable education for all.

### **Bangladesh: Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)**

The decade of the 1990s symbolised a collective effort in attaining 'Universal Literacy' all over the world. The Government of Bangladesh responded positively to the declaration of the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (EFA) by making primary education compulsory. At the same time, the NGOs involved in literacy sector also came forward to supplement and complement the state effort with a commitment to eradicate illiteracy from the country by the year 2005.

The genesis of CAMPE is rooted in an idea to take up a popular education movement in Bangladesh. Around the time of the World Conference on Education for All in March 1990 this idea was mooted by a small group of literacy activists, and a year later CAMPE was born as an organization with a coalition of 15 major NGOs working in the area of basic education. Over the years it has emerged as a strong network of more than 400 NGOs working in the basic education sector in Bangladesh. Since its inception, CAMPE has been working in close interaction with the Government as well as the popular forces towards achieving effective participation of the people in literacy and non-formal education movement. It symbolizes multi-faceted networking among the government, the partner NGOs and the international agencies. Duly registered under the Bangladesh Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, CAMPE acquired a legitimate status of an NGO forum to network in the area of literacy and non-formal education in August 1991.

CAMPE is affiliated with the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB), Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) and International Council of Adult Education (ICAE). It is an elected member of the Board of Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a worldwide network of NGOs and teachers unions operating in more than hundred countries. It is recognized by UNESCO as a nodal institution for basic education in Bangladesh.

### **Vision**

An educated, creative, democratic, secular, humanitarian and poverty free Bangladesh.

### **Mission**

CAMPE is a national coalition of NGOs working towards the implementation of program interventions in the education sector. CAMPE is committed to advocate and lobby for sustainable and pro-poor policy frameworks and effective program interventions for ensuring qualitative improvement in the overall education system by forming networks with organizations having similar vision towards achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA) both nationally and globally.

CAMPE is working for popularizing the trend- setting activities on quality education and intends to integrate literacy and education programs with other development interventions. CAMPE encourages its member and partner organizations and provides capacity development assistance to develop quality materials and innovative literacy models.

CAMPE is an adaptive and learning organization emphasizing on the promoting of a nation-wide network of voluntary organizations, action groups and media for creating a national literacy movement.

CAMPE carries with it a vast experience and works as development partner with a committed work force and strong partnership with all concerned NGOs, CBOs and private sector, national and international agencies and other stakeholders to ensure quality education for all.

### **Goal**

Establish an effective networking to achieve the goals of EFA.

### **Objectives**

- Increase awareness of people of all classes about the importance of popular education in terms of literacy, democracy, human rights, gender, and environment.
- Establish and promote a nation-wide network and coalition of NGOs and civil society to achieve Education for All (EFA).
- Facilitate the process of achieving MDG.
- Advocate and lobby to enhance NGO participation in educational policy making and other national and international educational activities/ issues.
- Promote and support education programs focusing on early childhood care and development, formal and non-formal primary education, adolescent education, adult literacy, continuing education and inclusive education.
- Strengthen, supplement and complement the primary and mass education programs (both formal and non-formal) of government providing networking, liaison, coordination and facilitation services and technical assistance.
- Strengthen capacity of partner NGOs through providing technical assistance and other support services.

### **Core Values**

CAMPE is a value driven organization. It strongly believes that values are the foundations on which an organization is based and these represent the core beliefs and convictions of an organization. In fact, they describe what the organization stands for. Values establish moral and ethical priorities, which serve to guide all organizational activities. The organizational principles, standards and qualities are also reflected through its practicing values. CAMPE has identified the following organizational core values and it places equal importance on all the values.

- Ensuring Participation
- Effective networking
- Transparency and accountability
- Credibility
- Promoting and adapting innovative learning
- Dynamism and professionalism
- Secular and democratic environment
- Committed towards achieving quality education for all
- Gender responsive

### **Core Competencies**

CAMPE enjoys some core competencies and believes that each of these competencies collectively contributing to achieve it's stated goals and objectives.

- 1) Dynamic and Functional Council
- 2) Pioneering role in popularizing trend-setting activities on quality education

- 3) Networking with like minded organizations and Civil Society groups nationally and globally in education sector
- 4) Policy research, catalytic and advocacy role influencing government and donor policies
- 5) Effective training services for capacity development of partner organizations
- 6) Extensive skills on development, documentation and dissemination of education related IEC and BCC materials
- 7) Integration of education programs with other development interventions leading towards poverty alleviation
- 8) Well defined organizational and issue based policies

### **Partners and Stakeholders**

CAMPE has been working, cooperating, networking, assisting and facilitating dissemination of ideas and sharing of experiences particularly with four major actors, such as, the concerned ministry and line agencies of the government, the donors, NGOs and other democratic forces of the civil society.

### **Management**

CAMPE is governed by a Council of 21 members, of whom 16 are founder members (15 from organizations & 1 individual) and 3 co-opted members which includes 2 organizational and one individual member. The Director of CAMPE is the ex-officio member. The Council plays a pivotal role in formulating policies and preparing operational guidelines for the organization. The Director is responsible for the overall management including planning, program, finance and administration. She is supported by a Deputy Director, who helps co-ordinate all activities of the Units through the Program Managers and other staff members. The staff members are accountable to the Deputy Director through the line managers/supervisors. CAMPE has a Secretariat consisting of 56 staff including 27 professional staff headed by the Director. The programs are implemented by the staff members through 4 different Units under the guidance and supervision of the deputy Director.

### **Role of CAMPE**

CAMPE tries to play a crucial role of a co-coordinator, helping and assisting different forces working in the education sector. The other roles performed by CAMPE are those of networking, advocacy and lobbying, capacity building, training, facilitation and material development, policy research, documentation as well as serving as a catalyst and information data bank. The major strategy in performing these roles is to focus on strengthening NGO-NGO, GO-NGO, NGO-Donor and NGO-Democratic force relationship for achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA).

CAMPE carries out its functional roles primarily through four major program units.

- Policy Advocacy and Mass Communication (PAMC) Unit
- EFA Partnership and Institutional Development (EFAPID) Unit
- Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Documentation (RMED) Unit
- Management Unit

## **Global Campaign for Education—Nepal**

GCE–Nepal is a network that brings together education stakeholders to ensure free, compulsory education of good quality for all children. GCE Nepal first started from 2003 through the Global Action Week in April. In year 2003, the Action Week focused on girls' education to highlight the gender gap in education was organized successfully in Nepal with the participation of 5,000 children. Continuing the trend, the same organising team came together for the Action Week for year 2004. Following the Action Week 2004, it was decided to turn transform itself into a national committee as GCE- Nepal. Since then GCE- Nepal has undertaken campaigns, networking, lobbying and advocacy activities at various levels.

Whilst the members of the GCE-Nepal acknowledge the gains made in education in Nepal in the last few years it also apparent that at the current rate of progress EFA will not be achieved in Nepal.

The GCE Nepal functions as a civil society watchdog by collecting information about the grassroots situation and feeding these back to the responsible partners, national government, donors and local governments.

The previous success of the coalition with the ‘Welcome to School’ campaign has highlighted the need for far reaching changes within the education system. The various and varied members of the coalition feel that it is time to focus their efforts and join together. It is hoped that by joining forces the GCE-Nepal coalition can pool resources and expertise and speak with one voice on the most pressing issues that effect access to quality education in Nepal.

GCE Nepal calls on local governments, national governments and international institutions to correct the global travesty that is the number of children excluded from education. The GCE also calls on the same institutions to achieve the internationally agreed EFA goals.

### **Aims**

- Build a national movement with long–term commitment to promote and monitor the fulfillment of the right to basic education.
- Provide a common platform to coordinate the campaigning activities of various education stakeholders towards Education for All
- Promote free, compulsory, basic inclusive education of good quality.

## **Annex 8**

### **Terms of reference**

# **Evaluation of ASPBAE's Programme on Capacity Building for Education Advocacy: Accelerating Action to Achieve EFA supported by the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) (2006-2007)**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **1. Background:**

In mid 2006, the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) approved a 2-year grant to complement ASPBAE's ongoing efforts to provide demand-driven, context-based capacity-building support to national education coalitions, crafted around their 'real world' education campaign and advocacy imperatives.<sup>14</sup> CEF support to ASPBAE was especially focused in South Asia.

With the winding up of the CEF in 2008, an end of project evaluation of all supported initiatives is incumbent "to assess performance, results, challenges and learning against the CEF objectives" - and it is in this context that this Evaluation is being organised.

ASPBAE's formal inclusion in the over-all CEF effort in the Asia Pacific occurred almost at the tail end of CEF. This CEF-ASPBAE collaboration was envisaged to open an additional tier of capacity-development for education campaign coalitions: while ongoing CEF efforts offered country-level and globally-coordinated capacity-development support, ASPBAE's efforts aimed at "...providing the space for *cross-country learning, mentoring and support for education advocacy; in spearheading regionally-coordinated campaign action; and in ensuring a strong, grounded Southern presence and voice in international policy debates on education.*"<sup>15</sup>

This Evaluation is thus aimed at arriving at a better understanding of the contribution of regional and sub-regional capacity-development support in deepening the capacities of national civil society organisations to achieve their policy change targets and objectives for EFA. It also aims to better appreciate the value and potential of sub-regional and regional CSO institutions, mechanisms and action for over-all education policy change.

### **2. Objectives:**

- 1) Document and appraise the over-all capacity-development support of ASPBAE to national education campaign coalitions in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka along the identified objectives, activities, outputs and outcomes defined within *ASPBAE's Programme on Capacity Building for Education Advocacy: Accelerating Action to Achieve EFA*, and as they relate specifically to CEF's over-all objectives.

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<sup>14</sup> From late 2003, ASPBAE has been implementing the Asia-South Pacific component of the Real World Strategies (RWS) Program. This is a program jointly conceptualised, developed and managed by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), ASPBAE, ANCEFA funded by the Dutch government.

<sup>15</sup> ASPBAE Concept Note to CEF, January 2006

- 2) Analyse the contribution of sub-regional/regionally coordinated capacity-development support in deepening national level CSO competencies to effect specific policy changes in favour of EFA.
- 3) Recommend to ASPBAE and its partners, ways to enhance the effectiveness and impact of sub-regional and regionally coordinated capacity-development support for national-level effectiveness and impact in education advocacy work.

### **3. Evaluation Approach**

The evaluation approach is envisaged as a tool for self-reflection by ASPBAE while meeting the end of project Evaluation requirements of CEF. This will be conducted alongside and in support of a dedicated evaluation of the Asia Pacific Education Watch, a regionally-coordinated civil society-based, independent tracking of government performance in EFA, which was piloted in 2006-2007 with part-support from CEF. This Evaluation is also envisaged to inform ASPBAE's over-all planning in its continued capacity-development support to national education campaign coalitions in education advocacy.

ASPBAE will appoint one (1) external evaluator who has sufficiently close awareness of ASPBAE and the environment in which it works to be able to undertake their role in an informed way, and yet sufficiently independent to 'call it as she/he finds it'. Further, the Evaluator is expected to have:

- 1) Strong knowledge and experience in relation to :
  - a. CSO capacity-building for advocacy,
  - b. Education, especially the broad Education for All agenda
  - c. Potential and constraints facing local, national and regional CSOs and development work in the Asia Pacific region and especially in the countries to be covered by the evaluation.
- 2) A strong understanding of sub-regional and regional (Asia Pacific) CSO advocacy work especially in education.

The approach will be consultative and cooperative, in the knowledge that we all have lessons to learn, and forward looking in terms of recommendations to enhance effectiveness and impact.

### **4. Evaluation Components**

- 1) Discussions and interviews with ASPBAE staff involved in the programme in their respective offices; and / or by telephone.
- 2) Review of selected documentation /literature /archival information on the ASPBAE-CEF partnership; and on the overall ASPBAE work on capacity-development for education advocacy in the Asia South Pacific to include:
  - Project documents and reports
  - Trainings/Workshop/consultation proceedings and reports
  - ASPBAE publications or draft studies, policy briefs related to the project
- 3) Consultations and interviews with 1-2 representatives from each of the national education campaign coalitions involved in the project.
- 4) Participation in the Regional Education Watch Assessment Workshop involving all participating education campaign coalitions, on September 16-19, 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand.

- 5) Interviews with external persons in a position to comment on the impact / added value of ASPBAE on a particular organization or set of organizations but also ASPBAE's added value regionally, sub-regionally and internationally, specifically CEF Country Coordinators in South Asia and selected UNESCO Bangkok staff.
- 6) Write-up of the draft evaluation report by the Evaluator.
- 7) Feedback from ASPBAE on the draft Evaluation
- 8) Presentation of the final report to ASPBAE.

## **5. Organisations/Individuals Selected for Interview in the Evaluation :**

- 1) The following ASPBAE Staff involved in the project (current and previous) will be interviewed:

Maria Khan – ASPBAE Secretary General  
 Raquel Castillo – Asia Advocacy and Campaigns Coordinator  
 Rene Raya – Senior Policy Analyst and Edwatch Regional Coordinator  
 Aruna Anand – (ex) South Asia Campaigns and Policy Coordinator  
 Bernie Lovegrove – South Pacific Advocacy and Campaigns Coordinator

- 2) The following national education campaign coalitions will be interviewed:

- National Education Coalition, India
- Pakistan Education Coalition
- Coalition for Educational Development, Sri Lanka
- GCE Nepal
- Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Bangladesh
- ENet Philippines
- ENet for Justice, Indonesia

- 3) The following CEF Country Coordinators will also be interviewed: Pakistan (Sadaf Zulfiqar Ali), Sri Lanka (Chandima Liyanagamage), Bangladesh (Muntasim Tanvir), India (Debdutt Panda)

- 4) Others: from UNESCO Bangkok offices; and others to be identified.

## **6. Timelines**

August week	Discussion of Evaluation TOR
September week 1 & 2	Drafting of evaluation framework, guide questions Programme Document Review
September 16-20	Participation in the Regional Education Watch Assessment Workshop, Interviews
Sept 21-30	Interviews, Additional literature review
October 15	Submission of first draft
October 21	Comments back on first draft
October 25	Submission of Final draft
To be scheduled	Face to face presentation to ASPBAE

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