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# Newsletter

## Lifelong Learning and Non-formal Education in Lao PDR and Southeast Asia



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EDUCATION 2030-THE  
NEW GLOBAL AGENDA

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## Editorial

Dear Readers,

The first issue of the New Year 2016 is designed to inform you about the new global education agenda. When world leaders in September 2015 took the decision for the so called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), they agreed on objectives, which should be relevant for all countries of the world. To be so, we have to take care that;

- these goals are well known by decision makers and the public everywhere and
- that these goals are relevant for each individual country.

The first task seems easy: it is about informing about what was decided, and this issue of the Newsletter undertakes this exercise for the education goal, the so called SDG 4. Reading through, you might feel that these goals and targets sound nice, but what do they have to do with my work, with my country and people?

Exactly this is the second, more difficult task: To ensure that the goals and targets are relevant for Lao PDR! What can be said about this? The SDG 4 talks about Lifelong Learning, and in the targets to this goals, which define what should be achieved, some aspects are mentioned, which are of special important for our sector, the non-formal education:

- Ensure literacy and numeracy: We still have to work hard especially on the quality of literacy and numeracy teaching in NFE, including teacher training, textbooks and provision of qualified teachers to rural areas
- Vocational skills for youth and adults: It is important not only to invest into the formal TVET system, but to enlarge offers for youth and adults to train and improve throughout the lives
- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCEd): In Lao PDR, effects of climate change can be recognized more from year to year, modern industries force people to change their traditional lifestyle. How can non-formal education contribute to prepare people for these changes? How can we raise respect for the nature? And how can we enable youth and adults to live in a global, interconnected world with a lot of migration and contact to different nations and cultures?

The global adult education movement invested a lot in advocating for the new education agenda. Let us work together to implement these visions into reality in our villages and cities!

Yours sincerely,  
*Uwe Gartenschlaeger*  
Regional Director  
DVV International, Southeast Asia



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## ICAE (International Council of Adult Education) Statement

*Speech of H.E Associate Professor Sandra Lee Morrison,  
President of ICAE*

At the Education 2030 High Level Meeting in Paris

Your Excellences; Colleagues,

I represent the International Council for Adult Education, a global network with a specific mandate to advocate for youth and adult learning and education as a universal human right. After several years of collective work we celebrate this renewed commitment to education, ensuring inclusive, equitable, quality and lifelong education for all. There is indeed a lot to celebrate given such a universal and holistic 2030 agenda through not only formal, but also non-formal and informal pathways for people of all ages.

The guidance provided by the 2030 Framework for Action is especially important for the realization of the right to education of youth and adults. Adult Learning and Education is a pre-condition and fundamental base for all other goals to achieve sustainable development, inclusive democratic citizenship and to overcome poverty by developing the full potential of all men and women.

However, there is still a lot of work to be done. We have to recognize that the former education agendas only achieved modest progress. For the 2030 agenda to be successful and to develop full opportunities for all youth and adults to learn and to continue learning, political and policy commitments must be followed by financing that guarantee and support absolutely implementation.

If we are truly committed to "leave no one behind" we cannot be satisfied to only reach 'a substantial proportion of adults'. 774 million adults remain illiterate in the world, of which more than 60% are women.<sup>1</sup> We cannot afford another unfinished agenda, as the next generations will inherit the consequences.

*Literate adults have a positive impact on their children's learning. Family and inter-generational literacy programmes can help to create and sustain the wider culture of literacy highlighted as a major challenge in the GMR. Teaching literacy in adults' mother tongue is critical for effective engagement, and, of course, there is an urgent need for more qualified and skilled teachers.*

We are optimistic and stand proudly in partnership to meet challenges that may arise and to find innovative and creative solutions. In working together let us upscale all our efforts to ensure that "no One is left behind" "no VILLAGE is left behind" "no COUNTRY is left behind."

Thank you.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uis.unesco.org/literacy/Pages/data-release-map-2013.aspx>  
Cr: Picture <https://educationpost2015icae.wordpress.com>

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## Reflections on the Outcomes of the Post 2015 processes

*Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan*

ASPBAE Secretary General

To exuberant applause and a standing ovation, the Education 2030 Framework for Action was adopted in a High level meeting on November 4, 2015 in UNESCO Paris. The enthusiastic endorsement of the Education 2030 Framework of Action was a fitting culmination of an almost 3-year unprecedentedly broad and democratic consultative process to shape the new education agenda, post 2015. A high point in the process was the World Education Forum (WEF 2015) in May 2015, in Incheon, South Korea that gathered around 1,600 participants including 120 Ministers of education, heads of UN agencies, and various education stakeholders including civil society, that agreed the essential elements of the Education 2030 Framework for Action.

The Framework for Action represents the global education community's consensus on the ways to concretise and implement the new global education agenda or 'Education 2030'. This agenda builds on the achievements and unfinished work attendant to the 'Education for All' (EFA) commitments and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on education, while confronting the more contemporary challenges to education and learning.

Education 2030 is an integral part of the post 2015 development agenda. 'Transforming our World – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', adopted by the UN Summit in New York on September 25, 2015 outlines the new development agenda which is expressed in 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. 'Education' is one of the 17 SDGs: Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) which commits to "Ensure equitable, inclusive quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030. SDG 4 is further expressed in 7 targets and 3 means of implementation spanning early childhood care and education, primary and secondary education, youth and adult literacy, skills for decent work and TVET, tertiary education, education for sustainable development, global citizenship education, human rights education, gender equality, equity, inclusion, and education quality especially through well-trained teachers and effective learning environments for all. It also commits to increased scholarships for least developed countries in higher and tertiary education.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) advancing the right to education and lifelong learning were actively involved in the processes shaping the new education agenda, realizing that the decisions coming out of these processes would have

wide-ranging impact on education policy and financing in the years to come. The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), DVV International, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), Education International (EI) and others worked vigorously to influence the post 2015 processes in its centres in New York and Paris and in the different regions.

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) was particularly active in the UNESCO-coordinated processes shaping Education 2030 and its Framework for Action. Aside from its involvement in regional and national processes, it was one of the 3 civil society representatives in the EFA Steering Committee which drafted the Muscat Agreement – the main input of the education community to the drafting of SDG 4. This expanded Committee also drafted the WEF 2015 Incheon Declaration and Education 2030 Framework for Action.

Many welcomed the new education agenda, noting its positive features: As a stand-alone goal in the new development agenda, education enjoys continued prominence that will potentially favour financing and policy priority. Lifelong learning is a core part of the new agenda. Education 2030 strongly affirms education as a human right and a basis for the realization of other rights. The new agenda is also framed for universal application in both richer and poorer countries where the earlier EFA was seen to be an agenda only for developing countries. Education 2030 offers a solid commitment to gender equality, equity and inclusion. It sets out a more ambitious agenda for education access– 12 years of free, publicly funded primary and secondary education of which 9 years are compulsory; at least one year of free and compulsory pre primary education; equal access to tertiary education while retaining attention to adult literacy, skills for decent work and TVET. It promotes a wider notion of education quality oriented towards the full development of individuals and recognises education for



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sustainable development, global citizenship, human rights, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence as inherent features. Governments are seen as the primary drivers for the new agenda with civil society being recognised as a full partner.



Lifelong Learning organisations will however need to be vigilant that the implementation of the new agenda lives up to its promise. The indicators to measure progress on SDG 4 are still under debate. All of us will need to lobby hard to ensure the indicators well embody the full intentions of SDG 4. There are fears that the

financing required to see Education 2030 through will not be easily forthcoming. Aid to education has declined and aid appetite is low. Unjust tax structures result in billions of dollars being lost in tax dodging – depriving countries of much needed domestic resources for education. Civil society has cautioned against over-optimism in the private sector to fill the financing gap as this offers serious threats to equity and inclusion. In the paucity of funding, non formal education for adults stands the most vulnerable.

Nevertheless, advocates for the right to education and lifelong learning need to persevere, muster the strengths that helped bring about heightened appreciation for adult education and lifelong learning in the current policy discourse, and powerfully make the case for adult and lifelong learning and the pivotal role it plays in “transforming our world”.

SEAMEO celebrates its golden jubilee!

The Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organizations (SEAMEO) was established on the 30th November 1965 in Bangkok as a result of a meeting between the Ministers of Education of Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the then Republic of (South) Vietnam with the objective of enhancing regional understanding and fostering cooperation among the countries in Southeast Asia. SEAMEO is an intergovernmental organization to promote regional cooperation in education, science and culture.

SEAMEO has a total of 11 member countries to date and Laos has been a member since the day of its establishment. The other countries that took its membership later on are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippine and Timor Leste (which was the last to join in 2006).

In five decades, SEAMEO has successfully established strong networks, partnerships and various centers in its member countries which focus on one among its 3 priority areas- Education, Science and Culture. Currently, through the 12 centers, 6 centers and 2 centers for Education, Natural Science and Culture respectively, SEAMEO continues to pursue and develop its priority areas.

To celebrate 50 years of invaluable contribution of SEAMEO in the fields of education, science and culture, the Department of External Relation of the Ministry for Education and Sports organized an event on 6th November, 2015. The event was chaired by Her Excellency Mrs. Sengdeuane Larchanthaboune, Deputy Minister of Education and Sport. As a representative of the government, she congratulated SEAMEO and expressed her wishes that it continues achieving greater heights, and showed interest and commitment to build more regional centers in Laos as a way forward.

In the future ministry is planning to build the SEAMEO Center in Lao where the knowledge and culture can be change.



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## Sustainable Development Goals: An Introduction



In June 2012, governments agreed at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (also known as Rio+20 or Earth Summit 2012) to create a set of universal sustainable development goals (SDGs). The SDGs were originally envisaged to be an international framework to enable countries to better target and monitor progress across all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental and economic). The goals will be applicable to all countries, regardless of their level of development.

At Rio+20, it was agreed that the SDGs should be consistent with international law, build upon existing international commitments and contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major summits in the economic, social and environmental fields.

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A UN General Assembly Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs was established to develop a proposal for the new goals. This intergovernmental process ran parallel to a UN Secretary-General led process on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, which involved a number of consultations to assess the options for a successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were established in the year 2000 and are set to expire at the end of 2015. The MDGs were eight international goals that aim to accelerate development in the world's poorest countries.

Finally, the SDGs were adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit September 25–27, 2015 in New York, USA. The title of the agenda is Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The document includes 17 goals, which define the topics the world agrees to work at within the next 15 years. Goal number 4 is on education and sound like “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

For each goal, the governments agreed on a set of targets, which define the results to be achieved. All in all, there are 169 targets, for SDG 4 (education) we have 7 targets. Finally, to measure the outcomes, indicators will be introduced. There will be some global and thematic indicators, relevant for all countries, but as our world is very diverse, it was agreed that every country will identify some national indicators as well. This process is still not finished.

The goal most relevant to our working area is SDG 4: **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.** This goal has seven targets and three so called “means of implementation”:

**Targets: By 2030:**

- 4.1 Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that

they are ready for primary education

- 4.3 Ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- 4.4 Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 4.5 Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.6 Ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy
- 4.7 Ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

**Means of Implementation:**

- 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
- 4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries
- 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.

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## **Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED2030)**

25-27 November 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

### Next Steps: Actions for 2016

The global Education for All movement was born in Asia-Pacific (Jomtien, Thailand) and the Education 2030 agenda was also launched in this region (Incheon, Republic of Korea). Having fully endorsed and embraced the vision, principles and targets of Education 2030, Asia-Pacific governments, development partners and civil society organizations have the unique responsibility to carry the torch for this new global education agenda towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.

Having examined SDG 4, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” its targets and the Framework for Action, and discussed the implications, opportunities and challenges of SDG 4 within country contexts, the participants of the first APMED2030 reflected upon the necessary steps, coordination and monitoring mechanisms at the country, sub-regional and regional levels and discussed the capacity development needs for the integration of SDG 4 into national education and other sector plans.

There is a general consensus that SDG 4’s focus on lifelong learning and its contribution towards sustainable development and global citizenship requires the engagement of and coordination among various sectors and ministries, civil society, and a wide range of actors and stakeholders at all levels. While the overall coordination mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have yet to be finalized, APMED2030 participants recognized that SDG 4’s targets reflect the aspirations of this dynamic and diverse region and thus agreed to embark on the following immediate follow-up actions during the course of 2016.

### **Immediate actions by Member States**

1. Establish or strengthen a national coordination mechanism for SDG 4 - linking to the overall SDG coordination mechanism - with a high-level national body supported by technical committees; broaden its membership to include diverse sectors and civil society; and identify an appropriate SDG 4 coordination focal point.

2. Map existing policies and programs that contribute to SDG 4 targets in preparation for national consultations.
3. Organize national and sub-national consultations to analyze the Education 2030 targets and Framework for Action in light of existing plans, policies and programs to identify gaps and opportunities and to plan actions to implement and monitor SDG 4.
4. Build or strengthen inter-governmental cooperation to foster synergies and mutual learning for SDG 4.

### **Immediate actions by development partners and civil society organizations**

1. Review and redefine the composition and terms of reference of the regional/sub-regional coordination mechanisms and develop a roadmap and a strategic plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to provide effective support to national efforts toward SDG 4 (TWG-EFA).
2. Prepare advocacy/communication materials that provide key messages on SDG 4 in consultation with Member States, (TWG-EFA).
3. Prepare guidelines on the processes and milestones for planning, implementing and monitoring SDG 4 based on capacity assessments, and support the alignment of national plans with SDG 4 targets (TWGEFA and lead DP at national level).
4. Map available data and data sources for SDG 4 indicators, including administrative data, household surveys, learning assessments and data collected by civil society, as well as capacity needs in data management, reporting and use (UIS).
5. In consultation with Member States and regional partners, develop and disseminate technical guidelines for monitoring SDG 4, including definitions of the indicators, data sources, and methods of data collection and analysis (UIS).



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## Address to the Education 2030 Special High Level Meeting

*Camilla Croso*

President, Global Campaign for Education

Your Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,

Today, we celebrate the adoption of a comprehensive and coherent Education 2030 Framework for Action, which is the culmination of three years of intense multi-stakeholder negotiations and dialogue.

Civil society welcomes the Framework's commitment to lifelong learning, including prioritizing early childhood care and education as well as adult literacy and education, and making explicit reference to primary, secondary and higher education. We welcome the centrality of inclusive education across the Framework as well as the broad perspective of quality it finally embraced, moving away from an overemphasis on measurable learning outcomes and testing.

Similarly, the recognition of a trained and valued teaching workforce as central to the delivery of the right is commendable, as is the commitment to 12 years of free, publically funded primary and secondary education- a core dimension with the potential to challenge patriarchy and multiple forms of deep-rooted inequalities.

As we move towards implementation, we recognise that ensuring coherence will be crucial and civil society will be particularly vigilant in this sense. While the Framework recognizes civil society organisations as critical to the policy-making process and participation as a right in itself, we note with concern the increase in the closure of spaces for such participation in many national contexts, and in particular the criminalisation of civil society – including teachers, students and other activists. Similarly, while the agenda is anchored in human-rights and cognizant of the need to strengthen public education systems, we observe trends and policy making that do not speak to these principles. We note, for example, with serious concern, the formidable increase of for-profit edu-businesses, ranging from those in the testing industry to chains of so-called low fee private schools, which stratify societies and deliver double tier education. We highlight that to place profit over people is unethical and deconstructs human rights.

There must be coherence also in the financing of education. While we commend the vital inclusion of financing commitments in the Framework - so woefully lacking from other global instruments – it is with dismay that we note plans by donors to cut development assistance, and assistance to education and civil society in particular – just weeks after committing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Framework for Action offers every person a new hope that their right to education will be realised – and to do this, we need not only the commitment we make today, but serious, tangible actions to ensure delivery tomorrow. There are challenges ahead of us, but we believe that our renewed, shared vision for education is one which gives us all added vigor: let this propel us all into action and make the right to education a reality.



## Interesting

### Important Website in region

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)

[www.pria.org](http://www.pria.org)

### Interesting publications

Adult Education and Development

AED 79: Networking - Rio + 20 - Lifelong Learning

AED 80: Post 2015

AED 81: Communities

AED 82: Global Citizenship Education

### International Perspectives in Adult Education

IPE 69: Youth and Adult Education in Prisons

IPE 70: Research and Development in Adult Learning and Education in Hungary

IPE 71: Adult education in an interconnected world

IPE:72: 1914-2014-Remembering the past to live the present and shape the future

### Newsletters

The ASPBAE Bulletin access via [www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)

NEXUS - access via [www.uil.unesco.org](http://www.uil.unesco.org)

Voice Rising - access via [www.icae2.org](http://www.icae2.org)

Education Policy Matters - via [www.unescobkk.org](http://www.unescobkk.org)

### New Publication

Newsletter: Lifelong Learning and Non-formal Education in Lao PDR and Southeast Asia

Sharing for Learning in Lao PDR: DVV International Engaged in Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific

Education and life long learning for Sustainable Development: Asia Pacific Consultation

Published by DVV International in cooperation with partners in Lao PDR, Cambodia, South and South East Asia.

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