



EOL Contribution to Right to Education Policy Changes and its Impact on the Right to Education in Practice

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May, 2024

EDUCATION **OUTLOUD**
advocacy & social accountability

GPE Transforming
Education

Acknowledgements

This study expresses gratitude towards several individuals and organizations whose contributions were crucial for the completion of this report. Firstly, this work acknowledges the financial support provided by Oxfam Denmark, without which conducting the study would have been impossible. Additionally, the study extends a special thanks to the staff based in Asia Pacific Regional Management Unit (RMU) Kathmandu for providing essential materials and organizing face-to-face meetings with the selected NECs supported by EOL, including the National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal), as well as arranging virtual meetings with staff from other organizations like All for Education coalition in Mongolia (AFE Mongolia), Civil Society Education Partnership Timor-Leste (CSEP Timor-Leste), Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN) and Civil Society Network for Education Reforms Philippines (E-Net Philippines). Furthermore, the study expresses gratitude to the staff of all five EOL grantees for their invaluable time and contributions. These contributions ranged from participating in discussions to providing essential materials they had produced. Moreover, their feedback on the draft version of the report played a significant role in shaping its final form. Overall, the study acknowledges and appreciates the collaborative efforts of all involved parties in advancing its objectives.

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Abbreviations

AFE	All for Education! National civil society coalition in Mongolia
ALS	Alternative Learning System
APRCM	Asia Pacific Regional Coordination Engagement Mechanism
ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
CCNGO	Collective Consultation of Non-Government Organization
CSEP	Civil Society Education Partnership Timor-Leste
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DC	District Committee
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction Model
E-Net	Civil Society Network for Education Reforms
EOL	Education Out Loud
ESMTDP	Education Section Medium-term Development Plan 2021-2030
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FM	Frequency Modulation
FMESU	Federation of Mongolian Education and Science Unions
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoM	Government of Mongolia
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer
MOE	Ministry of Education
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
MYF	Marginalized Youth Forum
NBC	National Broadcasting Corporation
NEC	National Education Coalitions
NCE	National Campaign for Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PEAN	Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RMU	Regional Management Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals)
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TEVT	Technical, Education and Vocational Training
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Executive summary

EOL one of the largest global initiatives for advocacy and social accountability, aims to contribute to education policy to better respond to the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities across countries. Under its four regional RMUs, EOL has been working with more than 60 countries across the globe to contribute to quality education for all through intensive policy dialogue, public engagement, data transparency, and capacity building of relevant stakeholders in civil society. While such efforts have been in place, there has been a need to document the key achievements and lessons learned during the policy change process and drawing implications from such initiatives for scale-up and future interventions. In addition, such documentation and review are also essential to derive knowledge on the process and effectiveness of the policies in achieving the goal of ensuring the right to education for all children in the concerned countries.

Aims and objectives

In the above context, this study aims to review the major policy changes EOL grantees have contributed to countries in Asia and the Pacific regions. In specific, this work has the following inquiry objectives:

- To outline details on the advocacy strategies applied by selected NECs in policy development/change procedures.
- To document how policy changes have contributed to the changes in rights to education in practice.
- To document the lessons learned and areas for consideration in future EOL initiatives.

Methodology

The study used a pragmatic approach to study, incorporating relevant data derived from policy change documents and interaction with EOL grantees. The sample for the proposed study, including both policy changes and key informants from the EOL grantees, were purposefully selected. In this process, specific criteria for the selection of policy changes and relevant stakeholders from the EOL grantees were mutually agreed by the researcher and the staff from the Asia-Pacific RMU. Two major criteria were used to select the grantees: geographical coverage across the Asia and Pacific regions and the scope and impact of the relevant policies to address the rights of educational access and opportunities for all children regardless of their socio-economic status, language, and culture. Using these criteria, the following grantees were selected:

- All for Education coalition in Mongolia (AFE Mongolia),
- Civil Society Education Partnership Timor-Leste (CSEP Timor-Leste),
- Civil Society Network for Education Reforms Philippines (E-Net Philippines)
- National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal), and
- Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN)

The relevant information was gathered through the analysis of documents of the selected NECs. In addition, focus group discussions (FGDs) with key informants from the grantees were conducted. Collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, with key themes extracted from both document analysis and interview/FGD data. The draft report, based on

findings from selected NECs' information, was sent back to each of the NECs participating in this study for validation, with inputs and feedback integrated before finalization.

The policy findings, which encapsulate effective strategies, insights acquired from past learning endeavors, and recommendations for future advocacy, were disseminated through a synthesized publication and sharing workshop. Additionally, communication materials, including blogs, are produced to disseminate information and communicate the achievements of EOL advocacy efforts.

Findings

Advocacy strategies

The NECs make strategic plans for advocacy strategies and execute the plan in partnership with their CSO members. The major advocacy strategies include 1) forging a coalition of relevant CSO members and collaboration with these members, 2) engaging stakeholders, including teachers, parents, elected members of local, federal and central government and education officials at both the central and local levels, in policy campaign 3) media advocacy including the feature articles in the daily newspaper, and talk show in radio and television, 4) social media including Facebook, 5) print materials including posters, brochures, banners, media materials, newsletters, and reports, 6) public debate, dialogue, symposiums, webinars and seminars, 7) public campaign, 8) lobbying with parliamentary and ministerial groups, 9) position paper, memorandum and letter to the government entities, including to the Ministers and Prime Minister.

Policy gains

The advocacy efforts of the selected NECs supported by EOL in collaboration with other CSO members contributed to certain policy gains in all five countries. Among the policy gains in each country, one notable example from each country include *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy, Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa* in Nepal, *Medium Term Development Plan IV (MTDP-IV)* in PNG, *Regulation on inclusion of children with disabilities in pre-schools* in Mongolia, *Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS)* in Philippines, and *Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for marginalized youth to access to the higher education, especially at the National University* in Timor-Leste.

Policy Impacts

With the promulgation and enactment of the above policies in the respective countries, several changes are being observed. In Nepal, GESI strategies are being implemented in Paterwa Sugauli Rural municipality. In the Philippines, with the introduction of the ALS policy, non-formal and alternative education programs are increased. In Timor-Leste, With the introduction of the “Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for Marginalized Youth to Access to Higher Education, especially at the National University” The policy was approved by the Council of Ministers and created scholarship packages for more than 10,000 marginalized youth to continue their higher education level, especially at the National University. In Mongolia, with the regulation on the inclusion of children with disabilities in preschool, more students with disabilities are enrolled in schools.

Knowledge building: In addition to the contribution towards policy advocacy and policy changes, the NECs also conducted research and identified the needs and challenges regarding access, quality, and equity of learning for marginalized children in particular. The knowledge derived from the research was found to serve as a basis for planning and

intervention to increase access, quality and equity of learning and inform the advocacy efforts of those coalitions. As an example, E-Net Philippines in collaboration with Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) conducted Youth-led Action research ([here](#)) that investigated deeper into the policies and practices, including perceptions, behaviors and norms, that discriminate against learners coming from different races, ethnicity and cultural identity.

Budget advocacy and gains: One of the major advocacy strategies the NECs have used in each of the five countries is to use various strategies and tools to persuade the governments to increase the educational budget at all levels. Although policy advocacy is able to exert pressure on the government with the commitment of the government increased, the exact data is scarce regarding the extent to which the educational budget increased due to the advocacy of the NECs. E-Net Philippines annually engages education agencies and the Philippine Congress for higher and improved investments in education. Alternative budget proposals for education are crafted from sectoral members' recommendations and become the basis for campaigning and lobbying work. In Nepal, the educational budget has not been increased for years, although NCE Nepal has continuously advocated for 20% budget in the education sector. The exact budget gains have been achieved in the Philippines and PNG where the 2024 budget was passed in PNG and K6,670 million has been budgeted for health and education, an 8.3% increase from last year, which will support another 3,400 teachers. In the Philippines, the budget in Early Language Literacy and Numeracy increased from P23.627M to P81.675M (PhP58.048M increase) and the budget for Indigenous Peoples Education experienced a marginal increase from P154,431,000 in 2023 to P154,436,000 for FY 2024. The budget for Madrasah Education increased from P359,503,000 in 2023 to P431,639,000 for 2024. Meanwhile, the School-Based Feeding Program witnessed a substantial budget boost, surging from P5,688,567,000 in 2023 to P11,711,147,000 in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for 2024. Notably, this budget closely aligns with the P12 billion proposal advocated by ABI-EDUC in collaboration with DepEd and the legislative. The increased allocation encompasses the expansion of coverage for underfed school children, an augmented actual food budget considering adjustments to inflation, and an extension of the number of feeding days from 120 to 200 days per school year. The Alternative Learning System budget also saw growth, rising from P562,000,000 in 2023 to P632,483,000 for 2024. However, this increase falls short of our proposed P5 billion budgets for the Alternative Learning System, which aims to reach out to out-of-school youth and adults who missed out on basic education. An allocation of P56,000,000 has been designated for the construction of Alternative Learning System (ALS) Community Learning Centers (CLCs).

Access, learning, awareness and empowerment: The policy advocacy effort of the NECs contributed to the greater awareness of the policy actors and commoners for the educational rights of the children and the approaches and processes through which such rights can be ensured. The capacity of local actors to lobby and enact the policy has been improved. As a particular group of people has more stake in a certain policy than others, there is a difference in terms of who is involved and what degree of awareness and capacity is developed through the policy process. In general, access to marginalized children, including children from ethnic minorities and children with disability increased, and participation and empowerment of women in and through learning campaigns is visible across the country.

Problems and Challenges

Frequent change in the government: The advocacy and lobbying towards new policy changes are often slowed and sometimes hindered by frequent changes in the government. When the government changes, the effort and continuity of policy advocacy are affected and there needs extra time and effort to continue the advocacy and lobbying for some policies to take effect.

Data availability and management: The generation and availability of data regarding access, quality, and equity of learning for the groups who are left behind are crucial to policy implementation and desirable results. However, the five countries under study lack a robust system to support, systematic, continuous, and scientifically rigorous data generation and data management.

Coordination among coalition members: With the greater number of CSO members working in different policy areas, there is difficulty in coordination, strong collaboration, and consolidated effort towards policy changes. Each civil society organization has some particular focus on specific policy areas, and this specificity sometimes hinders to forging of a broad-based collaboration and coalition.

Human resources and funding: The NECs face significant constraints and challenges in terms of their human resource and budget allocations, which limit their capacity to expand the scope of their policy advocacy efforts and drive meaningful changes. With the limited resources at their disposal, the NECs need to limit their activities and focus on some key areas of policy change.

Bureaucratic process: The decision-making process, including policy formulation and approval process in the parliament as well as at the different levels of government, requires going through several bureaucratic processes, this is complex, time-consuming, and slow. In addition, the policy implementation process requires approval of the budget at different levels of the government as well as enactment from different levels of government entities and officials.

Monitoring, feedback, and supervision: Effective policy implementation and changes require continuous supervision, monitoring, and feedback from the part of both government and civil societies. However, the mechanisms, tools, and human resources for supervision, monitoring, and feedback are poor.

Lessons learned

Focus on knowledge building and research: Along with the policy enactment, there is a need for knowledge generation and knowledge mobilization so that target-based results can be planned and achieved. This study suggests that knowledge building should be an integral part of the advocacy plan so that baseline information can be obtained before proposing the policies to prepare and enact. Prioritizing knowledge generation alongside advocacy efforts helps make policy advocacy efforts more objective. In this process, there is a need to allocate a budget for small-scale research, the grantees may explore opportunities for technical assistance from partners and EOL learning support initiatives when internal resources are inadequate, including training, monitoring, and feedback, to conduct the research in a scientific and valid way.

Data-driven advocacy and intervention plan: Building upon the knowledge base regarding the need for policy in a particular sector of society in this way, the NECs and

associated CSOs could work on a target-based framework whereby they can set agendas and activities with a definite timeline. This would make policy work more focused, objective, and practical. The NECs may find working on a longer-term plan and explore support available from the regional coalitions or EOL learning partners as this is one of the common areas that all the grantees can benefit from for more effective policy advocacy.

Engagement at the grassroots level: The greater engagement of common people in the policy dialogue not only ensures their ownership in the policy process but also validates the policy process fully by reaching out to the groups that are the main target of the policy. The NECs have shared some of examples of such engagements, however, enhancing focus at the grassroots level is an opportunity for policy practice.

Documentation portal: During the study NECs were able to share rich information and documentation of their work which is very helpful for the other civil society organization working on the similar priorities. However, the information is not easily available at the moment. Therefore, there is a need for a more systematic digital portal where the NECs at least supported by EOL grants from each country can use platform to continually learn and exchange the progress, challenges and lessons learned with each other. Such initiatives will benefit exchange of the ideas, strategies and strengths of each other regarding policy advocacy and impact on the ground in terms of both descriptions and evidence. EOL and its partner may choose to work together to identify the best mechanism for this considering sustainability, cost effectiveness and current collaboration. It might be helpful to offer basic support to create and ensure continuous sharing and link it with the learning collaborative mechanism might be helpful.

Increased use of digital, print, and social media: There is need of increased use of media brief, audio, and video clips, posters, newsletter, and other process- and outcome-related information materials that to be reached out to larger group of people through social media networking.

Increased use of collaborative approach: As the collaborative work of CSOs with policy actors, including parliamentarian group or caucus and relevant officials from the minister have made meaningful impact for policy gains and implementation, such collaborations are to be further increased focusing particularly on forming right coalition and partners.

Recommendations

Recommendations on planning and advocacy: A proper stakeholder analysis and strategies to engage with the key stakeholders is important in the very beginning, failure to such strategies not only limits the policy outcomes but also may limit the overall achievements of the coalition. In addition, planning for longer term advocacy efforts is crucial to accomplish the achievements. For example, AFE Mongolia, E-Net Philippines have shared the longer terms engagement have also helped to accomplish more strategic and longer-term policy changes. Therefore, it is important to analyze the capacity to sustain engagement, planning resources and partnerships, and strategies to continue building on past achievements.

Recommendations on organizational strategies: Building broader alliances of CSOs need to consider identifying the roles of each stakeholder and strategies to keep them engaged so that they are informed of the process, achievements, and challenges. In addition, identifying strategies to maintain the recognition and identity of the government as independent,

technically sound, and committed to a cause of equity and inclusion has a strategic advantage. Furthermore, the advocacy has been more effective when there is clarity on the policy issues what has been the policy barriers or how it can protect rights to education. Having a specific policy position and supporting research is useful. Finally, it will be helpful to offer support in enhancing their capacity and incentivizing the practice of developing advocacy plans. As the documentation not only provides clarity but is also useful to reflect on the longer-term engagements and strategies and identify what is working and what might be worth changing.

Recommendations on capacity building: Compared to the policy gains by the NECs, documentation, exchange of the strategies among each other and peer learning is an area of enhancement as all the coalitions have some unique approaches and strategies that might be valuable to each other. Therefore, it might be worth putting some additional efforts on the exchange of ideas, success, and challenges among the NECs.

Introduction

Background

Recent policy reform initiatives across the globe have been significant in addressing the issues of inequality, inequity, and injustice within the educational system. As most low- and middle-income countries in the Asia Pacific and other regions face challenges of ensuring access, quality, and equity of learning, development organizations have been supporting the national government's effort to make education accessible and inclusive for all children regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, gender, language, and other socio-cultural characteristics. To achieve this goal, development organizations are taking initiatives to strengthen the roles of civil society and concerned organizations in promoting gender-responsive and equitable policymaking. The increased role of civil society in working with the national government and international organizations in policy development, implementation, and monitoring is the key to reassuring democratic ideals such as transparency and accountability. As the issue of inequality, inequity, and injustice in schooling is common across many low- and middle-income countries, there is a need for transnational efforts to strengthen the role of civil society in policy development, implementation, monitoring, and advocacy. To contribute to this effort, Education Out Loud (EOL), one of the largest global initiatives for advocacy and social accountability, aims to contribute to education policy to better respond to the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities across countries. Under its four regional management units (RMUs), EOL has been working with more than 60 countries across the globe to contribute to quality education for all through intensive policy dialogue, public engagement, data transparency, and capacity building of relevant stakeholders in civil society.

While such efforts have been in place, there was a need to document the key achievements and lessons learned during the policy change process and drawing implications from such initiatives for scale-up and future interventions. In addition, such documentation and review were also essential to derive knowledge on the process and effectiveness of the policies in achieving the goal of ensuring the right to education for all children in the concerned countries.

Objectives

In this context, this study aimed to review the major policy changes EOL has contributed to countries in Asia and the Pacific. In specific, this work had the following inquiry objectives:

- To outline details on the advocacy strategies that NECs supported by EOL applied in policy development/change procedures.
- To document how policy changes have contributed to the changes in rights to education in practice.
- To document the lessons learned and areas for consideration in future EOL initiatives.

Design and methodology

Selection of policy changes submitted by the NECs

The researcher (learning partner) worked closely with the staff at Asia Pacific RMU Kathmandu and reviewed the major policy changes submitted by the NECs supported by EOL in the Asia Pacific region, including Moldova. Five NECs were selected based on the criteria agreed upon with RMU. The proposed criteria include the geographical coverage of the selected NECs countries across Asia and Pacific regions, the policy coverage in terms of its outreach across countries, societies, and groups; smooth, adaptable, and feasible strategies and procedures for policy implementation; key lessons learned; and key achievements and impacts of policy changes in ensuring right to education for all in the respective country. Based on these criteria, the following five NECs were selected for the study: All for Education Coalition in Mongolia (AFE Mongolia), Civil Society Education Partnership Timor-Leste (CSEP Timor-Leste), Civil Society Network for Education Reforms Philippines (E-Net Philippines), National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal), and Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN).

Document review

A content analysis approach was used to review the major policy changes submitted by the NECs supported by EOL in the Asia Pacific region. This is done by reading between the lines of the written texts of the policy and drawing meaning towards the potential of the policy to make an impact on the desired changes in educational access, quality, and equity. In addition, the relevant documents, progress data, indicators, and outcomes were carefully reviewed with the goal of identifying their best practices, challenges, and lessons that can be recommended for future interventions to other NECs and civil society organizations as many of them have shared priorities and working conditions to a large extent.

Focus group discussion and analysis

Focus group discussions (FDG) were conducted with the officials and staff of each NEC to understand what policy advocacy strategies are in place, how policy changes have contributed to the changes in rights to education practice, what lessons can be learned from policy implementation and advocacy, what challenges have been faced while implementing the policies, and what could have been done more differently and effectively. Five focus groups were conducted, one for each NEC in the face-to-face and virtual modes. The face-to-face meeting was organized with the NCE Nepal staff and virtual discussions were conducted through Microsoft Teams with the other four NECs. Each of the FGDs was recorded. Using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022¹), the recorded audio was played and listened to carefully in order to capture major codes under study. Then the codes were compared and grouped, encapsulating the major knowledge and experiences derived from the FGDs with the participants.

Integration of findings and report writing

The findings received from both document analysis and online FGDs were integrated, and a consolidated report was prepared. The draft report was presented to the RMU staff and the NECs to check for the validity of the contents and meaning drawn from the data collected from various sources. The feedback was incorporated, and the final report was prepared and shared with the staff at Asia Pacific RMU. Based on the findings of the study, the

¹ Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.

communication materials were prepared in the form of e-content, including blogs, flyers, and posters. The goal of preparing these materials is to inform and communicate about the EOL advocacy efforts and accomplishments.

Validation of findings

The findings derived from the information collected from the selected NECs and the draft report prepared accordingly were sent back to each of the selected NECs for checking their accuracy and validity. The inputs and feedback obtained from each NEC were incorporated before finalizing the report.

Dissemination of findings

The researcher arranged an online meeting to present the key findings and insights of the study to RMU, EOL grant recipients, and other relevant stakeholders. The objective of this event was to communicate successful strategies, insights acquired from previous educational endeavors, and suggestions for forthcoming advocacy initiatives. Additionally, this meeting served as a forum for gathering final feedback to be included in the report and communication materials, should any agreed-upon changes be sought.

Synthesizing the findings

Policy Positions and Priorities in NECs' Projects

The EOL grantees focus largely on the issues of rights to equitable and quality education for all children towards the goal of SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) 4 to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. In specific, the policy positions and priorities of the selected NECs in Asia Pacific supported by EOL include 1) inclusive, quality, and equitable education at all levels (all five countries), 2) access to education for children with disabilities (all five countries), 3) Educational financing and governance with the goal to increasing the government’s budget for education (all countries), 4) expanding alternative, non-formal and lifelong education 5) child protection, positive discipline and positive parenting (E-net Philippines), 6) Teacher’s rights and welfare 7) education in emergencies (Nepal), and 8) gender equality in education, 9) access to technical and vocational education, The NECs are working with various CSOs in their respective countries to prepare the legal policy, including the Acts, Regulations and Guidelines, and approve them through legislative bodies and effectively implement the policies. The policy priorities focus on inclusive, equitable and quality education by ensuring the rights to education for all children and adults regardless of their nationality, caste-ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and disabilities.

The advocacy model of the NECs has been primarily reflected in their values, principles, practice and the ultimate outcomes they have envisioned. A number of contextual factors have further contributed to the specific strategies, stakeholders and practical consideration and level of policy influence. The EOL practice resembles the advocacy framework the advocacy framework presented by Henderson and Pochin (2001)².

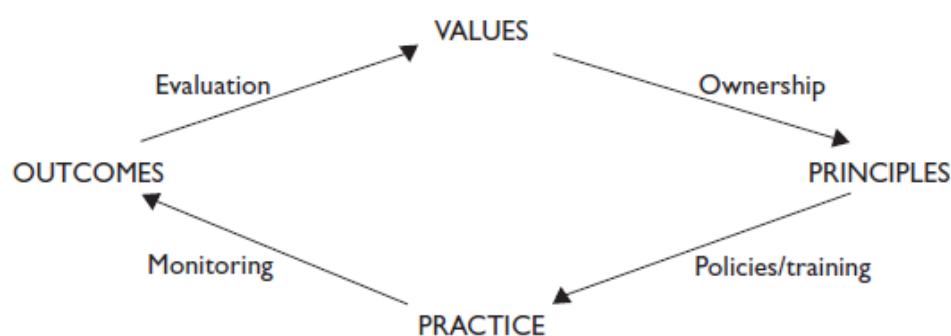


Figure 1: Advocacy Models (Anderson & Pochin, 2001)

As in the framework above, the NECs have shared value in public education. They have translated their values to build on the principles which they have used to guide their advocacy practices. However, the advocacy practices applied by the NECs largely vary for a number of reasons. First of all, the context is diverse, and it requires diverse advocacy approaches and strategies. Secondly, national education coalitions also differ in their capacity, membership, and ways of working which makes it reasonable to choose diverse strategies such as the coalitions that have membership with specific focus and expertise on specific causes have

² Henderson, R., & Pochin, M. (2001). *A right result? Advocacy, justice and empowerment* (1st ed.). Bristol University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1t88z0s>

thematic working groups and advocacy coalitions within coalitions which makes it possible for them to enhance their technical focus and evidence for their advocacy, while smaller coalitions in size find it useful to focus on advocacy without necessarily focusing on additional thematic groups and they identify individual think tank to focus on the identified priorities. The coalitions have also tried diverse strategies to secure space in advocacy practices, for example, CSEP Timor-Leste is able to have bilateral meetings with the Prime minister on key advocacy priorities, AFE Mongolia engages with Parliamentarians, while PEAN finds more strategies to identify strategies secure a space for AFE Mongolia in the Local Education Groups.

The key consideration that is helpful to identify the best advocacy strategies is to consider local cultural context, policy-making practices, civic space, resources, and capacity of the coalition and political structure such as tiers of the government that have a role in policy development and their effective implementation. There are a few considerations that are helpful regardless of these strategies having evidence base, remaining non-partisan, developing the technical identity of the coalition, and creating ownership of the policy change by the key stakeholders. One of the possible areas of support that might be helpful for all the coalitions is to enhance the reflection, knowledge management, and dissemination to inform and adapt future policy advocacy, and strategies to follow up the implementation. Most of the coalitions have shared anecdotal evidence of the impact, which is helpful in understanding how effective it has been, however, having more organized ways of monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of the policy may be helpful to further advocate for the improvement of the policy in a dynamic social context.

Advocacy Strategies and Strengths

The EOL selected NECs use several strategies to advocate for education as a fundamental human right of everyone. The EOL selected NECs make a strategic plan (e.g. advocacy plan AFE Mongolia [here](#)) every year for advocacy and execute the plan in partnership with their CSO members. The major advocacy strategies of the five selected NECs include the following:

Coalition and collaboration

Each selected NEC collaborates with its members and other civil society organizations (CSOs), individual experts, and other alliances that collectively work for policy advocacy and policy change. The number of CSO members varies from country to country. Smaller coalitions are formed with like-minded CSOs for a specific policy purpose. regular basis. Partnerships are formed among and between different CSOs, NGOs, and People's Organizations which collaborate to campaign for both the passage of a law and implementation of the law. For example, NCE Nepal has 490 members working across the country; E-Net Philippines works with 114 organizations from the marginalized and vulnerable sector and advocacy groups that actively work on preparing and advocating for legislative bills on inclusive education. AFE Mongolia and its members worked with the 'Mongolian Education Alliance', 'All for Education National Civil Society Coalition', and Associations of Parents with Children with Disabilities to advocate for the Education Section Medium-term Development Plan 2021-2030 (ESMTDP).

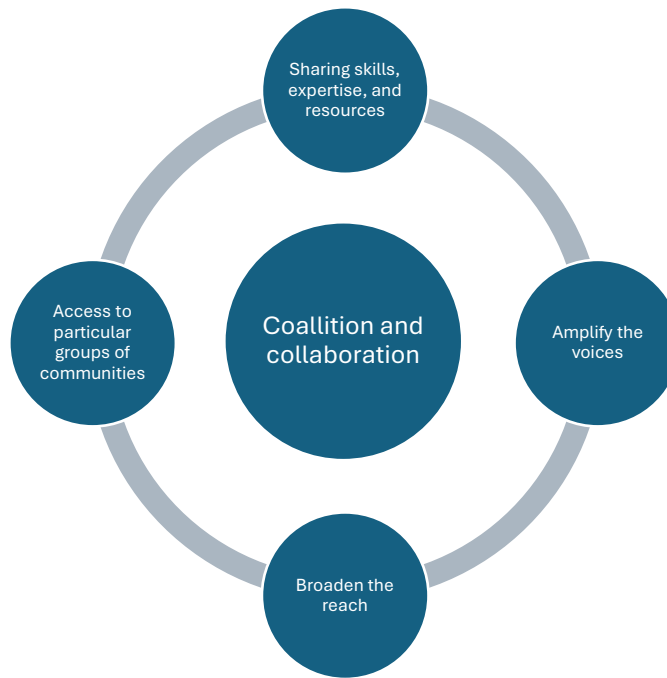


Figure 1. Key reasons for coalition and collaboration among the civil society organizations

The NECs have developed advocacy coalitions and collaboration among civil society organizations and other networks to share these skills, amplify their voice, broaden the reach, and access platforms, groups, and communities. In some cases, the NECs have formed advocacy task groups and alliances that is among the specialist organizations to keep it focused.

The collaborative efforts of the coalition of civil society partners create various advocacy strategies for ensuring access to education for all children. The coalition works together to identify the policy issues and plan better strategies, approaches, and instruments to make the policy issues heard by different groups of stakeholders, including the government and parliamentary bodies that have a direct stake in policy formulation and changes. Such meetings not only seek strategies to advocate and lobby for certain policy changes but also explore possibilities to reach out to the wider communities that have been deprived of educational opportunities. With the broader consensus from the consortium, the coalition members develop plans and strategies to work with the communities and people to advocate and lobby for ensuring the right to education for children who have been deprived of access to school and equitable learning opportunities within the school environments.

Table 1. Example of coalition and collaboration
<p>CSEP Timor-Leste is a member of the following networks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement on civil society (Mr. Jose de Jesus Seats as Vice Chair) 2. SUN movement on youth (Mr. Feliciano Soares Seats as Vice Chair) 3. Country Coordination Mechanism of the Global Fund (Mr. Jose de Jesus Seats as Vice Chair) 4. Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education – ASPBAE (Mr. Jose de Jesus Seats as Executive Council member representing SEA region) 5. Collective Consultation of NGO (CCNGO) Asia

6. Global Campaign for Education (GCE)
7. Asia Pacific Regional Coordination Engagement Mechanism (APRCM)

CSEP active participation and influence in the Local Education Group

- ▶ Timor-Leste LEG members are: CSEP, UNICEF, World Bank, Australian Embassy, New Zealand Embassy, Child Fund, Plan International, Portuguese Embassy, Japan Embassy, Ba Futuru NGO, Aloia Foundation and the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion.

PEAN Participation in LEG

- ▶ PEAN is member of Local Education Group and now included in the ‘Compact Technical Working Group’ within the Local Education Group (LEG).
- ▶ PEAN is also member of the Literacy Technical Committee, Education Cluster
- ▶ One of the NEC members is also in the WaSH Technical Working group.
- ▶ PEAN has been an active stakeholder with Consultative Implementation Monitoring Council (CIMC) in term of engaging with Ministry of National Planning and Monitoring for CSO engagement in National Development Plan consultations.

E-Net

- ▶ E-Net is active in different policy platforms including Open Government Partnership, Education Forum (LEG), Stakeholders Chamber for Sustainable Development Goals, Second Education Committee (EDCOM II), Department of Education’s Literacy Coordinating Council, National Council Against Child Labor. It also participates in various hearings of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture (CBEC)

A comprehensive plan to eliminate learning loss” (2021-2023) a 3-year plan endorsed by Government adopted by Ministry of Education on 21 May 2021

Coalition members

- Association of Parents children with disabilities
- Federation of Mongolian Education and Science Unions (FMESU)
- National School Parents Teachers Association
- Adolescent Development Center
- Association of Parents with Hearing-Impaired Children
- “All for Education!” NCSC
- Mongolian Education Alliance
- Branches of AFE (2 districts)
- Youth Policy Watch NGO

MoU signed with PNG Youth with Disability and PNG Education Advocacy Network to promote and advocate for Inclusion in Public Schools in Port Moresby. The signing was done by Dr. Kilala Devette-Chee Chairperson of PEAN and Colin Geno PNGYDA Chairperson and witnessed by other members of the two organizations.



Under the Education Outlook Program, 2022-2023 funded by GPE, PEAN and PNGYDA will work together to achieve its objectives. Gender and Inclusion responsive in both planning and financing. More than 10,000 persons with disabilities living in PNG and including them is a priority.




PEAN membership includes women, grass-roots organizations and through larger CSOs it has links to the provincial, district, and local levels. Grass-roots organisations participate in PEAN’s advocacy campaigns, as well as networking and training events at the provincial level in three provinces.

Stakeholder engagement and partnership

The selected NECs mobilized various groups of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, elected members of local, sub-national, federal, and central government, and educational officials at both the central and local levels, during the policy advocacy process. The engagement of stakeholders takes several forms, including dialogue, debate, public campaigning, and meetings. The stakeholders also represent their civil society organizations and have some form of partnership in order to forge alliances and synergy that contribute to creating public pressure on the governments to hold them accountable for ensuring access and quality education for all children in all situations. For example, in Nepal, NEC Nepal worked with the members of civil society organizations, partners, youths, students, parents, teachers, journalists, rights-based organizations, and people working with people with disabilities, LGBTIQ people in various activities to hold the government accountable for equitable, inclusive, and quality education for all children. organize a week-long campaign at the end of April 2022 through various activities. In Nepal, NEC Nepal worked closely with local governments to create policies, media groups (50 plus) to Inclusivity is the major approach of NCE Nepal, with marginalized groups Dalit, Janajati, and children with disabilities as key priority groups. They have been working with youth constituencies so that issues involving youth can be raised through their participation. Likewise, PEAN in Papua New Guinea worked with the inclusive youth champions to promote advocacy for disability inclusion.

Table 2. Example of stakeholders’ engagement activities

NECs	Stakeholder members	Goal and achievements
E-Net Philippines	Members of DRRM committees	Training school leaders to localize comprehensive school safety and develop a school DRRM plan
	Members of the House of Representatives committee and teacher leaders	Revising the Maga Carta for public school teachers with teacher leaders

	Department of Education -Human Resources and Operations Department	
NEC Nepal	Selected member of parliaments supportive, parliamentarians of education and health committee.	<p>Federal Education Act</p>  <p>Appeal submission to the Hon. Speaker of Federal Parliament.</p>
	Education journalist groups and media personals	Media engagement for advocacy, media fellowship
	Gender minority groups (LGBTIQ+ community)	Gender equity
	Individual experts and think tank	Professors, researchers
	Local leaders	Local level policies, budget
AFE Mongolia	Knowledge products developed and printed by the AFE are used by policy makers, Ministry of Education officials to develop guidelines, regulations followed by the Education law.	<p>Letter of Appreciation to AFE Mongolia</p>  

Timor-Leste	Youth consultation on SDG 4 Education 2030	
PEAN PNG	CSO educational sectoral review	

Media advocacy

Increasing use of media for awareness and advocacy has been one of the common features of civil society in general. Bandyopadhyay (2015)³ recognized that civil society has contributed to changing relationships between citizens and states through ‘the use of technology like social media has given a new fillip to traditional ways of mobilizing and organizing citizens’ voices’. The NECs use both print and digital media towards the goal of accessible and quality education for all. The NECs work with various media groups as civil society partners. For example, among 490 CSO members of the NCE Nepal, 50 or more are media networks, including FM radios and journalist groups. The NECs are co-working with the media to produce advocacy news and advocacy. They also have used a fellowship approach, through which the NEC provides agendas (e.g. right to education) and small financial support to the journalists. The NEC facilitates and provides the journalist groups a forum for policy debate and discussion by publishing evidence-backed news articles. In addition, the NECs also work with journalists who prepare and disseminate news stories through national and local dailies. NCE Nawapur DC, where [Vijaya FM](#) is acting as a district secretary, is a successful example of how NECs with media organizations for policy advocacy on education. Vijaya FM organize sessions for discussion on educational policy issues with local elected leaders and stakeholders to hold them accountable towards strengthening public education.

The NECs shared their experiences of using variety of media including radio/television talk shows, Facebook, WhatsApp groups, and newspapers towards the goal of accessible and quality education for all. For example, Among the 490 members of the NCE, 50 or more are media networks that represent FM radios online news, and education journalist groups. The coalition applies a co-working approach with the media, rather than limiting the engagement to providing news. One of the innovative approaches applied by the coalition is

³ Bandyopadhyay, K. K. (2015). Civil society at multiple crossroads in Asia. In R. Tandon, L. D. Brown (Eds.), *Eruptions, initiatives and evolution in citizen activism: Civil societies at crossroads*. Routledge

the fellowship approach, through which the coalition provided an agenda (e.g. specific themes on financing in education) and small support to the journalists. The coordinator of the coalition shared that ‘We facilitate, give them the forum (sometimes they work as spokespersons), and they research and share’. Monthly newsletters prepared at the central level are disseminated to the members to inform them about emerging issues, accomplishments, and priorities. This approach has enabled coalitions to inculcate media as a key partner for advocacy and education accountability. Likewise, CSEP Timor-Leste shared about the use of different means of social media television, and Facebook, to raise awareness and communicate about the coalition positions with the public and other stakeholders. Early engagement is not only helpful for developing the positions but also it provides power to civil society to create a unified position and promote accountability for the positive changes in public education systems.

NECs have used a range of media strategies. In this analysis, the media strategies applied by the NECs have been primarily categorized into three key areas of focus: a) inform and awareness, 2) engage and influence priorities, and 3) collaboration and co-creation. Although it may not be applicable to apply all those strategies in a singular context, different coalitions are at different levels of application, and facilitating peer learning among those different coalitions with diverse experience and capacity is helpful to learn and strengthen advocacy efforts. The current study revealed that social accountability efforts fall across all of these as it relies on "inform and awareness" to educate and empower citizens and "engage and influence their priorities" to drive changes in public service delivery and governance through collaboration and cocreation with the civil society and government stakeholders.

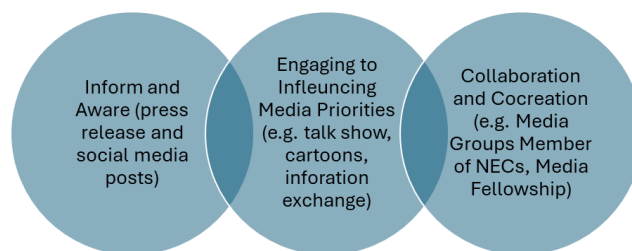




Figure 2. Key strategic outcomes of policy advocacy through media in EOL Asia Pacific

Among the media advocacy strategies, informing and awareness raising strategies have been applied by all the NECs, engaging, and influencing priorities have also been widely used, while collaboration and cocreation is still being explored in EOL. Process documentation of such promising practices and findings out quality interaction to promote such practices is helpful not only ownership of media stakeholders but promote informing stakeholders in a timely manner.

Table 3. Example of media news		
NECs	News content	News example
NCE Nepal	Suggestions paper submitted to the federal government to increase	Naya Patrika – a daily newspaper (both print and online) here and Ratopati online news portal here

	investment in education	
	School Education Bill – amendment issues	Nepal - TV interview Bill here
	Opportunities during Covid pandemic in Nawalpur	Vijaya FM radio program, example here
PEAN	Radio Talkback Show on two biggest radio station reaching the whole country. National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and FM100. 2 talk show on FM100 and 1 talk show with NBC	
AFE Mongolia	“Inequality in Education”	TV discussion here
E-Net Philippines	‘Matatag o Matatag?’ [‘Stable or Stable?'] World Teachers Day press conferences, social media and print coverage. Link here	

Social media is another major platform for sharing advocacy materials. The NECs utilize their Facebook page, LinkedIn page and other social media platforms to advocate. Several information shared on the Facebook page has reached thousands of people and there are so many positive comments. Also, people in very remote areas have access to information and shared their views and struggles. As an example of extension of social media to reach out to the larger group, PEAN Facebook page is connected to a WhatsApp number and people directly sent message for more information and, PEAN spotlight reports and other information has been sent through WhatsApp reaching more people far and wide. It’s a cost cutting measure of sharing information.

NCE Nepal	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064413442794
E-Net Philippines	https://www.facebook.com/ENetPhilippines
AFE Mongolia	https://www.facebook.com/AFEMNG
PNG Education and Advocacy Network (PEAN)	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068895955295
Timor-Leste	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063576128646

Among the five NECs, E-Net Philippines and AFE Mongolia are very active and regular in posting the news, resource and communication materials including link for audio and videos.

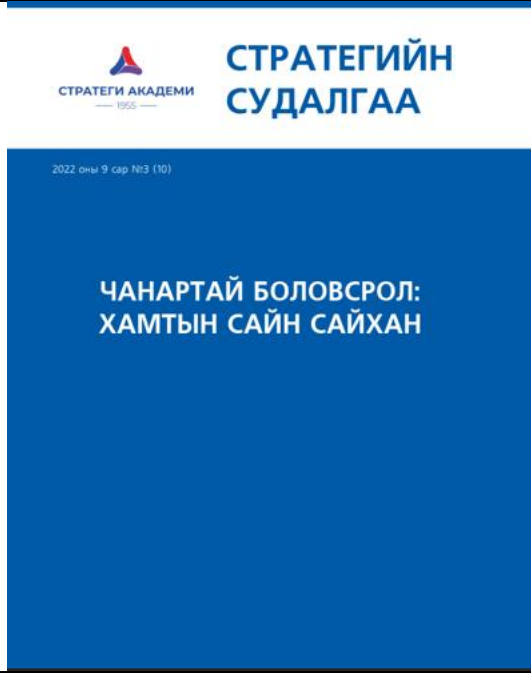
Print materials (posters, brochures, banners, media materials, newsletters, reports)

The NECs regularly produce materials in printed and electronic forms that capture the activities and outcomes of the efforts towards accessible, inclusive, and quality education for all. Such materials are produced in the form of posters, banners, play cards, brochures, media materials, flyers, and newsletters. These materials are generally used in public campaign which are visually striking with compelling graphics, concise messaging, and a clear call to action. Banners and play cards were found displayed in center areas where a large group of public visits every day. All NECs participating in this study produce and use these materials. Apart from these materials, AFE Mongolia has also published an advocacy journal for communicating the knowledge produced through review, analysis, and research. NCE Nepal also issues prompt press releases to draw the attention of the policy makers and also for rapidly response on the pertinent issues of public education to showcase the CSOs position and their asks. Press releases of NCE Nepal can be found [here](#).

Table 5. Examples of print materials produced by the national education coalitions

<p>NCE Nepal (posters)</p>	
<p>E-Net Philippines (Pamplates & Media materials)</p>	

AFE Mongolia
(Advocacy
journal)



PNG Education
and Advocacy
Network
(PEAN)

<https://shorturl.at/sVZ12>

STATUS OF TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL, EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**CIVIL SOCIETY REPORT
December 2021**

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Timor-Leste

Spotlight Report

Executive Summary

Civil Society Spotlight Report on the SDG 4 Implementation Status in Timor-Leste

Country and Education Context

As the youngest country in Asia, Timor-Leste achieved its formal independence in 2002 and became one of the poorest countries in the region with two-thirds of its 1.17 million population living on less than USD1.4/day.

Most of Timor-Leste's population live in rural areas, heavily relying on subsistence agriculture with little or no access to markets. The country is one of the most illiterate countries in the world, with 66.8% of the population accounting for 70 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and almost 90 per cent of the total government revenue between 2010 and 2013.

Published by the Ministry of Education in 2021, the government's National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) for 2021-2035 issued the following vision:

"By 2035, the population of Timor-Leste will be educated, knowledgeable and qualified for a living and productive life, regardless of place, gender and positive national values. All individuals will have the same opportunities to access the quality education that will allow them to participate in the economic, social and political development process, attaining social equity and national unity." (p. 12)

Keynote priorities for Timor-Leste in improving basic education and health care in the country. The key commitment for primary school teachers is to ensure that 100% of the population aged 15-24 are literate at an average annual rate of 2.10 per cent.

However, the 2019 National Education for All (NEFA) Review submitted by the Government of Timor-Leste to UNESCO in preparation for the World Education Forum (WEF), the government acknowledged the various challenges in education which will have an impact on the achievement of the 2030 SDG target unless addressed.

Country Implementation of the SDGs and SDG 4

The Government of Timor-Leste adopted the 2018 agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Government Resolution No. 44/2018 on 21 September 2018, just two days before they were formally adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

Public debate, dialogue, symposiums, webinars, and seminars

The NECs organize interactive programs to discuss the policy issues and draw attention of policymakers, including the government officials and legislative members, towards the policy issues, actions and the protentional decision and solutions. The NECs organize such programs in virtual or face-to-face mode depending upon the nature of the policy issues and availability of the stakeholders. Such programs invite people who are concerned with the policy and have a direct say in policy formulation and policy implementation process. These forums are found crucial in policy advocacy for several reasons. Firstly, these platforms provide opportunities for the public to inform the particular policy issues, their implications, challenges and particular solutions. Secondly, they provide opportunities for NECs to present major arguments, data and analyses in an accessible way. Secondly, such forums enable the participants for raising their voices with active engagement and dialogue and help ensure the different perspectives are considered in the policy making process. Thirdly, public debate and dialogues facilitate the exchange of ideas and perspectives among stakeholders which help to build a consensus around certain policy initiative, proposals, revisions, and increasing their possibilities of success. Next, public forums hold policy makers and other decision-makers accountable for their actions and decisions by providing a platform for answering the questions raised by the people from different walks of the society and help ensure transparency in every process of policy making and policy amendments. Finally, such forum provides a knowledge base and feedback for policy makers towards particular policy issues and potential solutions and serve a source of knowledge for citizen alike to understand the policy issues and play a role of watchdog, advocate, or activist by continuously raising voices against any sorts of potential barriers for policy promulgation or amendments. With these reasons, public debate, dialogue, symposiums and webinars and similar platforms are found the most effective strategies to hold policy makers and planners accountable for certain policy changes. The only issue is how to maximize the opportunities for marginalized groups and people without portfolios and power to engage in such programs as there are few active members from such group were found engaged in such programs on several occasions.

The following are the examples of the national education coalitions from five countries that organize the public programs in a regular basis. Some of the examples are as follows.

Table 6. Examples of public programs organized by EOL the NECs	
E-Net Philippines	Webinar on Excellence in Teacher Education Act A Challenge to the Future of the Teaching Profession here

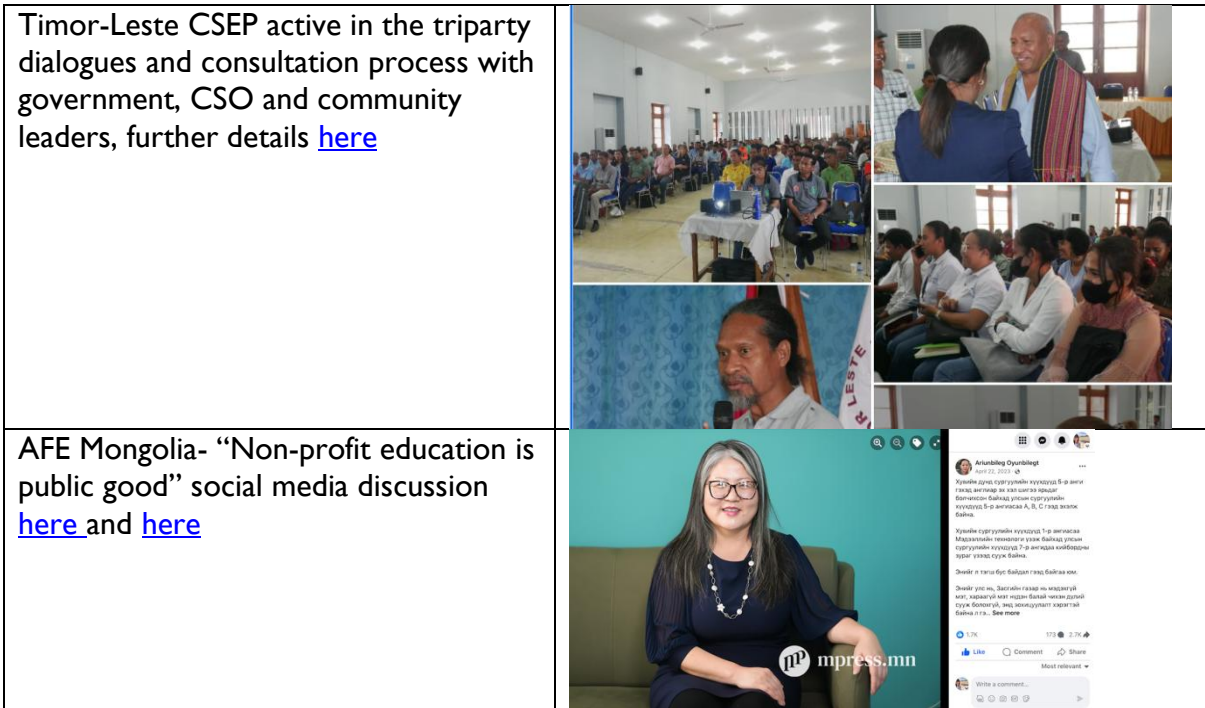


PEAN Global Partnership for Education (GPE) - Catalyzing Transformation In Education. Workshop with the Local Education Group in Papua New Guinea. May 11- 12, 2022



Interaction meeting organized by NCE Nepal district committee Parsa with the local level representatives and government officials of Parsa





Public campaign

The public level campaign is one of the major strategies of NECs to advocate for the right-to-education policies that contribute towards the goal of SDG 4. Such campaigns are found effective for raising awareness, mobilizing support and influencing policy makers to enact or change policies. In particular, such programs are found effective to draw attention of policy makers and planners toward specific policy issues. The campaigns are organized in the form of demonstration, protest, rallies as well as through other channels including social media, digital events including the radio, TV, and YouTube programs. Such campaigns mobilize people and help garner their support, with participatory actions such as signing petitions, attending rallies, and raising voices through play card demonstration and slogans. They exert pressure on policymakers to prioritise certain policy issues. In additions, campaigns bring together people from different walks of society which leverage collective resources, voices, and network to influence policy makers on certain policy decisions.

A case in point, NCE Nepal (organized a Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) organized a public campaign between 25th to 29th April 2022 with a number of activities with the theme “Project Education in Emergency Now”. This campaign included a number of activities to engage people from different sections and engage them in interaction programs, conferences, sit-in programmes, demonstrations, signature campaign, Public Service Announcement from the local FM stations, appeal submissions, rallies, and mobilization media including social media at the local, district, province, and federal level with a key message “Protect public education in all situations such as emergency, pandemic, disasters or any kind of political activities”. Similar campaigns are led by the coalition on an annual basis especially on diverse themes such as “Decolonizing Education Financing” and “Transformative education” which become a strong backdrop for a collective country wide advocacy action. The major activities and accomplishments of this campaign were captured in a newsletter which is available [here](#) and [here](#). Similar other examples are mentioned below:

Table 7. Examples of public campaign activities

E-Net Phillipines joins Commission on Human Rights and other CSOs in campaigning for women’s role in decision making with the theme "Invest in Women: Role of the Nation". This is in line with the International Women’s Day theme "Invest in Women. Accelerate Progress"



Timor-Leste CSEP’s Public campaign with teachers to against govt. teachers’ recruitment



CSEP’s media engagement / protest the decision of National Parliament members / politicians who approved the budget for their own interest.

TV news, link [here](#)



AFE Mongolia- Closed lobby campaign for Education law with Ruling political party leaders, Parliament members, MOE high level officials and AFE’s advocacy partner NGO



Lobbying with parliamentary and ministerial groups

The NECs lobby with parliament members and ministers for certain policy changes which is found as a strategic and effective advocacy strategy for influencing policy makers to advance the policy bills in the parliament. In so doing, the NECs rightly identify the MPs or legislator depending upon their past records, membership in parliamentary committee, and expertise who could influence the policy changes in the particular policy area. In most of the occasions, the NECs craft the policy draft or policy change in a written format with empirical data from the field, including public opinion and concerns, and present them clearly and compellingly. As parliamentarians have the authority and power to shape and influence policy through legislation, parliamentary debates and committee works, lobbying with them amplify the policy interest of the commoners, and particularly of the marginalized and underrepresented groups who may not otherwise have access to policymakers or the groups who have authorities and influences to change the policies.

A case in point is the work of E-Net Philippines that engaged in a sustained lobby to pass a bill to ensure educational rights of children with disabilities. A stronger campaign constituency engaged the legislature in the 18th Congress for the passage of national law. E-Net facilitated the involvement of the Coalition members from the disability sector in Technical Working Groups for the bill in both Houses of Congress. Continuous promotion of the bill was conducted through social media campaigns, forums/webinars, urgent appeals, and letter barrages to legislators. Additionally, the NCE Nepal is lobbying with Parliament members especially members of parliamentary committee of Education and Health, Ministry of Education Science and Technology for amending proposed School Education bill with 3 Mahale (suggestions with existing provision, expected change/amendment and reasons for change) suggestion paper for the amendment of the document as per the spirit constitutionally provisioned education related fundamental rights. Where 20 parliamentarians have registered the amendment point in line with the NCE Nepal position. Some of other examples are as follows:

AFE Mongolia

- Letter of Education law advocacy to all Parliament members, the Speaker and the General Secretary of the Ruling party [here](#)
- “Non-profit education” advocacy discussion with 2 Parliament members at Clubhouse platform [here](#)

CSEP Timor-Leste

CSEP met with the H.E. Vice Prime Minister and Forum NGO Timor-Leste (FONGTIL) appreciated CSEP’s involvement in the VNR process and representation in the HLPF 2023

NCE Nepal

NCE Nepal submitted its recommendation to the members who were shared the interest in public education. The recommendations included the three section details that included current provisions, gaps and desired provisions.



Position paper, memorandum & letter to the government

The NECs submit the memorandum and letter to the government organization. For example, NCE Nepal submitted a memorandum to the Finance Minister, Minister for Education, Science and Technology and National Planning Commission for increasing the budget in education with the need to allocate 20 percent of the total budget to the education sector in the fiscal year 2022/23. In this particular memorandum, the NCE reminded the political parties about their commitments to increase budget allocation to the education sector in their last election manifestos. NCE's position paper and call for action for this issue is [here](#). Another evidence from PNG PEAN shared a [position paper](#) with the government with a request for increasing budget in education sector. CSEP Timor-Leste met with the H.E. Vice Prime Minister and Forum NGO Timor-Leste (FONGTIL) appreciated CSEP's involvement in the voluntary national review process and representation in the HLPF 2023. To respond to the call for strong education advocacy, E-Net Philippines is launching E-Net Academy, to foster a global community of education advocates and provide a platform for advancing capacities through sharing of resources and information, and capacity building initiatives. This academy will strengthen the capability of the coalition as research, information, and capacity-building hubs. Currently, E-Net Academy is offering three courses – The Right-based approach to education, Citizens Education Advocacy and Comprehensive School Safety.

Table 8. Example of NECs' engagement with the government

David Kumie-Executive Director
PEAN meeting with Prime Minister
Chief of Staff-Philip Leo

On the 19th of July 2021 PEAN delivered a letter to the PMs Office at Manasupe Haus. The letter was a call from the Civil Society Organizations for the Prime Minister to support and make commitment to increase education budget to achieve SDG 4 indicators.



Influence of policy changes on the changes in rights to education in practice

The advocacy and effort of NECs on policy changes have brought several visible changes on the ground. The major changes that are prominent and effective include policy production, awareness building, public engagement, and empowerment of the citizens who were previously left out in the policy process. However, there are limited study and datasets to suggest the outcomes regarding the access and quality of learning the marginalized students due to the policy advocacy and changes. In other words, data are scarce regarding what changes in terms of the access and quality of learning of children are attributed to the policy advocacy and change effort of the NECs. As a result, this study is unable to capture the numerical information about the changes in rights to education in practice. This section briefly outlines the changes and impact observed due to the effort of NECs in five different countries, Nepal, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Mongolia.

Policy gains

The continuous lobbying and advocacy efforts of NECs and their advocacy alliances and sub-alliances formed for specific advocacy purpose have resulted in the production of number of policies that expand the educational opportunities of children and adults. The major policy gains which are the direct result of the efforts of the NECs and their coalition members in each of the five countries are as follows:

Table 9. Examples of policy gains in the countries of NECs

E-Net Philippines

Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS),
Excellence in Teacher Education Act
Inclusive Education for learners with Disability

NCE Nepal

<p>Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy, Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa</p> <p>Disaster readiness and response plan for education sector, 2023, Bagmati Province</p> <p>Procedure to Operate Learning and Earning Programme, 2023, Metropolitan level Bharatpur Metropolitan City</p>
<p>CSEP – Timor-Leste</p>
<p>Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for marginalized youth to access to the higher education especially at the National University</p> <p>Ministerial Dispatch for the closing of three new technical vocational schools in Ermera municipality due to a minimum quantity of students, quality, infrastructure, and the number of teachers.</p>
<p>AFE Mongolia</p>
<p>Regulation on inclusion of children with disabilities in pre-schools“ here “Comprehensive plan to eliminate learning loss” (2021-2023) a 3-year plan endorsed by Government adopted by Ministry of Education on 21 May 2021. here The Government Resolution on the approval of average norms of variable cost and funding guidelines (recently changed) March 2, 2022. here Ethical Code of Conduct for teachers and educational staffs” including the provision on not to discriminate against girls who re pregnant and adolescent mothers and LGBT children based on sexual orientation and gender identity, on 20th December 2022. here The policy for preventing and protecting students from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools and dormitories, approved by MoE 12th of June 2022. here Action plan of the school dormitories” for herders’ children. here</p> <p>The Set Laws on Education was approved by the Parliament on 7th July 2023. The General law on Education here The law on Preschool and General Education here</p>
<p>PNG PEAN Medium Term Development Plan IV (MTDP-IV). Government Tuition Fund Subsidy (GTFS) timely release of the budget Evidenced Based Advocacy for Menstruation Hygiene: PEAN has also been working with the adolescent girls’ issues through the collaboration with the teachers to research on the issues of girl students. The finds of the research were presented with the Primary School Teachers and Primary School Inspector and government officers. PEAN worked closely with Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council (CIMC) to mobilize the civil society organizations to seek CSO feedback on the ‘National Education Sector Plan 2022-2026’. National Employment Policy 2020–2030: PEAN advocacy contributed on more explicit articulation on the provision for disability inclusion</p>

Policy impacts

With the promulgation and enactment of the above policies in the respective countries, several changes are being observed. Based on the interviews with the key informants from the five NECs, the impact of the policies is discussed below:

Table 10. Examples of policy impact on NECs' countries
E-Net Philippines
With the introduction of "Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS)" changes are observed in relation to data generation, increased non-formal and alternative education programs, teacher recruitment and training and multiple interventions are being developed to address multiple and overlapping barriers keeping children and youth from school. The passage of "Excellence in Teacher Education Act" increased the teaching training programs, reform teacher preparation program, both pre-service and in-service. With the "Inclusive Education for learners with Disability" policy in place there are initiatives for increasing Budget and programs for educating learning with disability increased.
NCE Nepal
With the passage of the policy "Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy, Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa" the Municipality is making plan to execute the policy in the schools and allocate budget to implement the policy. Similarly, with the policy "Disaster readiness and response plan for education sector, 2023, Bagmati Province" the province government's reform programs are underway that is currently developing a disaster preparedness and response plan for Bagmati Province. In accordance with the province's treasury mobilization standards, one million Nepali rupees is being distributed to all districts and hazard-prone local levels to improve disaster preparedness and management. The learning and earning program in Chitwan are being implemented connecting the students at community schools with livelihood opportunities. The Directorate is spending Rs 18.15 million to implement the program.
CSEP – Timor-Leste
With the introduction of "Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for marginalized youth to access to the higher education especially at the National University" The policy was approved in the Council of Ministers and created the scholarship packages for more than 10,000 marginalized youth to continue their higher education level especially at the National University
Ministerial Dispatch for the closing of three new technical vocational schools in Ermera municipality due to a minimum quantity of students, quality, infrastructure, and the number of teachers. CSEP influenced the Ministry of Education to cancel their dispatch to not close these three technical vocational schools so that these technical schools are offering technical and vocational education to children from remote reasons. And the reform for increased quality and infrastructure are underway.
AFE Mongolia

With the passage of the six laws, Mongolia compensated for and eliminate learning loss, and digital transformation of education, evaluation system, and result-based budget reforms were implemented in the reform of the education sector in Mongolia. This resulted in the increased learning opportunities for all students. With the regulation on inclusion of children with disabilities in pre-schools, more students with disabilities are enrolled in schools. The funding guidelines helped allocate and spend the educational costs in a transparent and accountable way. The ethical code of conduct for teachers and educational staff ensures that teachers do not discriminate all students, including minorities, adolescent mothers and LGBT children based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Another policy contributed to reducing school bullying, harassment and discrimination in schools and dormitories Percentage of children-Victims of bullying has been decreased by 1% compared 2023 and 2017. It is not significant difference, but we have to note that reporting and handling of cases has been increased significantly. According to PISA 2023 report In Mongolia, 9.7 percent of 15-year-old students are classified as frequently bullied; and 21.3 percent of students reported experiencing any type of bullying. It means 16.1 percentage points decrease. The dormitory action plan contributed to increased access, opportunity, and quality of learning in dormitory for the children of the family who moves about three or four times a year in search of good grazing lands for the sheep, goats, horses, and cows that are their livelihood. Number of Herders' children staying in the school dormitories has been increased by 11 percentage points if we compare 2021 and 2023 statistics. In 2023 water and sanitation facilities of 67 dormitories have been improved in 59 local schools of 13 provinces. Children with disabilities enrolment in ECE has been increased by 42 percentage points between 2020/21 and 2023/24 academic year. Children with disabilities enrolment in primary and secondary education has been increased by 11 percentage points between 2020/21 and 2023/24 academic years and now 63% of them are enrolled in schools.

PNG PEAN

GTFS Increase in Budget 2022 - PEAN Letter to PM (ASPBAE Technical Support) 2021: PEAN lobbied with the government to increase the education sector budget and submitted a letter to the prime minister with the technical support of the regional coalition ASPBAE. PEAN also actively engaged in the development of the National Employment Policy 2020–2030 to share civil society perspectives and provisions to enable inclusion and opportunities for youth.

Knowledge building

In addition to the contribution towards policy advocacy and policy changes, the EOL NECs also conducted research and identified the needs and challenges regarding access, quality, and equity of learning for marginalized children in particular. The knowledge derived from the research were found to serve as a basis for planning and intervention to increase access, quality and equity of learning. The examples of such study and research are as follows:

Table 11. Research and knowledge building examples
E-Net Philippines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 Lubos na Alyansa ng mga Katutubong Ayta ng Sambales (LAKAS) Youth-led Action Research Youth-led Action research here that investigated deeper into the

policies and practices, including perceptions, behaviors and norms, that discriminate against learners coming from different races, ethnicity and cultural identity.

NEC Nepal

- An analysis of election manifestos of major political parties in federal and provincial elections 2022 [here](#)
- Analysis of education financing of [federal](#) and [provincial](#) governments 2023/24
- Analysis of Education Budget of Local Governments of Nepal for Fiscal Year 2022/23
- An analysis of election manifestos of major political parties in local-level elections 2022

CSEP – Timor-Leste

- Report on the Analysis of the Budget Cycle for the Education Sector Based on Civil Society Perspective, 2023
- Infrastructure, school facilities, and inclusive accessibility in schools in Ermera municipality

AFE Mongolia

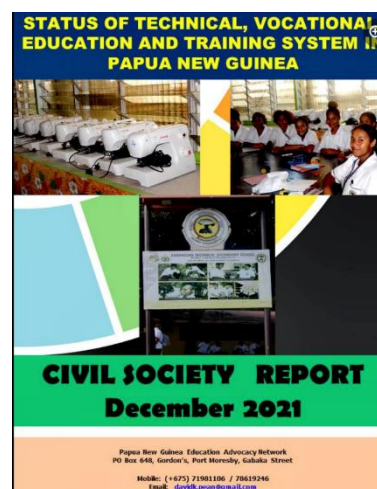
- The study on education barriers and challenges faced by marginalized groups children, 2020 [here](#)
- Assessment of Educational needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups of children, 2020 [here](#)
- Good practices on inclusive education and safe schools, 2020 [here](#)
- Evaluation of Implementation of laws and regulations on bilingual education, 2020 [here](#)
- The policy implementation evaluation of the right to education of socio-economically disadvantaged students, 2021 [here](#)

PNG PEAN

Puberty Research with Primary School students in Port Moresby. The presentation was attended by Primary School Teachers and Primary School Inspector and government officers. More discussions were made on the challenges that was faced by teachers in the classroom when teaching about menstrual hygiene. Some parents even approach teachers that it was cultural forbidden for kids at that age to learn and discuss about changes.

Status of technical, vocational education and training system in Papua New Guinea.

Presentation of the report on 'Status of Technical, Vocational and Training in Papua New Guinea' CSO view in which key government officers from Higher Education participated in the discussion to



highlight key policy and legislative issues to address on the recommendations. The workshop was conducted at Lamana, on 22nd April 2022.

Budget gains

One of the major advocacy strategies NECs used in each five country is to use various strategies and tools to persuade the governments to increase the educational budget at all levels. Although the effect of the advocacy exert pressure on the government with the commitment of government increased. However, the data is unavailable regarding the extent to which educational budget increased due to the advocacy of the NECs. E-Net Philippines annually engages education agencies and the Philippine Congress for higher and improved investments in education. Alternative budget proposals for education are crafted from sectoral members' recommendations and become basis for campaigning and lobby work. In Nepal, educational budget has not been increased since years although NCE Nepal has continuously advocated for 20% budge in the education sector. The budget gains data are available from Philippines only, and in the year 2023 and 2024 the following budget gains are achieved.

Priority	Allocation in 2023	Allocation in 2024
Child Protection Program	PhP53.320M increase from previous year	PhP 24.532M increase from previous year
Education for Learners with Disabilities (SNED)	PhP581.625M	PhP999.225M (PhP417.6M increase from previous year)
Construction, operation, and maintenance of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Community Learning Centers (CLCs)	PhP54.001M	P56M (PhP 2 increase from previous year)
construction of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers	PhP64M	PhP209M
Madrasah Education	PhP359.303M	PhP431.639M
Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program	P359,503,000	P431,639,000

Source: E-Net Philippines education sector budget analysis

GTFS Increase in Budget 2022 -PEAN Letter to PM (ASPBAE Technical Support) 2021- The 2024 budget was passed in PNG and K6,670 million has been budgeted for health and education, an 8.3% increase on last year, which will support another 3,400 teachers ([source](#))

Access, learning, awareness, and empowerment

The policy advocacy effort of NEC contributed to the greater awareness of the policy actors and commoners for educational right of the children and the approaches and process through which such rights can be ensured. The capacity of local actors to lobby and enact the policy has been improved. As a particular group of people has more stake in a certain policy than others, there is difference in terms of the who involved and what degree of

awareness and capacity is developed through the policy process. In relation to the kinds of policy changes from each country under study, the kinds of people who involved and whose capacity is involved are shown below:

Table 12. Examples of programs and activities to foster learning and awareness	
E-Net Philippines	
Policy	Capacity, awareness, and empowerment examples
Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors	Girls and adults who are excluded from the formal education opportunities are being educated and trained
NEC Nepal	
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy, Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa	Women from marginalized communities have greater access and opportunities in decision making committees, learning, and training. The women and people from the lower socio-economic background are provided better opportunities for engagement and learning
CSEP – Timor-Leste	
Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for marginalized youth to access to the higher education especially at the National University	Marginalized youth received scholarships so that their access and quality of learning enhanced.
AFE Mongolia	
The policy for preventing and protecting students from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools and dormitories, approved by MoE 12th of June 2022. here Action plan of the school dormitories” for herders’ children.	The children of herders’ family are protected better at the dormitories with reducing incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools.

Problems and challenges

With interview and discussion with the participants from each country, the following problems are highlighted during the process of both policy advocacy and policy implementation.

Frequent change in the government.

The advocacy and lobbying towards new policy changes are often slowed and sometimes hindered by frequent changes in the government. When the government changes, the effort and continuity of policy advocacy are affected and there needs extra time and effort to continue the advocacy and lobbying for some policies to take effect. This is one of the

reasons for taking longer time for policy change. The interview with NECs suggests that when there are changes in government, there is a reshuffle in the government and bureaucracy and when new people join the system, the NECs should start the process from the beginning as the new policy makers are not aware of the previous advocacy effort, discussions and knowledge base supporting certain policies. There is also a disruption of previous networks and relationships when key officials in the system are replaced and changed. As new policymakers may hesitate to commit to a new policy, there is a chance of discontinuity, instability, and uncertainty that make it more challenging to garner support again at the same level. Moreover, (in case of Nepal) there isn't a system in place to transfer knowledge from one person working at policy level or government institution to the next, which has created larger gap in policy implementation process. In addition, as the new government has its own set of priorities, they prefer not to give credit to the policy effort and priorities of the previous government. In short, the policy changes are the result of political will and priority of the government. Therefore, the change in government may not guarantee the continuity of advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Data availability and management

The generation and availability of data regarding access, quality, and equity of learning for the groups who are left behind are crucial to policy implementation and desirable results. However, the five countries under study lack a robust system to support, systematic, continuous, and scientifically rigorous data generation and data management. The lack of the evidence and updated data poses a significant challenge for initiatives and efforts of EOL NECs to tackle the problems regarding access, quality, and equity of learning for the marginalized and left-behind group of students. Without the in-built system and mechanism of information and data management system, the meaningful intervention and the results cannot be ensured. As the policy advocacy requires evidence and data-based knowledge, the lack of timely and updated data weakens and impedes the systematic efforts of policy changes on the ground. Therefore, investing in the development of data

Coordination among coalition members

The NECs in each country working with various civil society organizations that work on different areas of social fields. With the greater number of such organizations working in the different policy area, there is difficulty for coordination, strong collaboration, and consolidated effort towards policy changes. Each civil society organization have some particular focus on specific policy areas, and this specificity sometimes hinders to forge a broad-based collaboration and coalition. Again, difference in organizational mandates, priorities, organizational structure, and strengths further complicate building consensus in the strategies, instruments, and procedures of policy advocacy and engagement at the different levels. As a result, the potential impact of collaborative advocacy and policy change may be weakened and opportunities for collective advocacy and impact remain in crisis.

Human resources and funding

The NECs face significant constraints and challenges in terms of their human resource and budget allocations, which limit their capacity to expand the scope of their policy advocacy efforts and drive meaningful changes. With the limited resources at their disposal, NECs need to limit their activities and focus on some key areas of policy change. Such constraints may contribute to missing some of the important policy issues to include in the advocacy plan and programs. In addition, the government's mechanisms, tools, and delivery require a greater pool of actors in the field and require budget to a greater extent.

Bureaucratic process

The decision-making process, including policy formulation and approval process in the parliament as well as at the different levels of government requires to go through several bureaucratic process, this is complex, time-consuming, and slow. In addition, the policy implementation process requires approval of budget at different levels of the government as well as enactment from different levels of government entities and officials. The bureaucratic process is slow and cumbersome in these process that make the policy process difficult and time consuming. The NECs from each countries share that they must go through more structured hierarchies and excessive rules, procedures, and paperwork, that delays in policy process. The lack of flexibility, bureaucratic turnover, political pressure, and resource constraints are oft-cited reasons for smooth translation of policy into practice.

Monitoring, feedback, and supervision

Effective policy implementation and changes requires continuous supervision, monitoring, and feedback from the part of both government and civil societies. However, the mechanisms, tools and human resources for supervision, monitoring and feedback are poor. As a result, although many policies are in place, there is a lack of data regarding the extent to which there are continuous follow up, support, feedback and monitoring and the extent to which remedial measures are developed and implemented.

Responding the Challenges

The challenges mentioned in this section are prevalent in most contexts. The possible mitigation measures are context-specific, however, analyzing the working conditions and possible challenges can be helpful to develop effective advocacy strategies. Although such a response should be context-specific and may look different for different coalitions' contexts, a typical scenario is as below as an example to get better prepared for the same.

Internal (easy to respond)	Internal (difficult to respond- time, resources, capacity)	External (can be influenced)	External (difficult to Influence)
Management and Coordination	Strategize and Mitigate	Engage, Explore, and Influence	Mitigate
e.g. advocacy plan, preparation, management oversight	e.g. leadership and participatory planning	e.g. access to policy space, public awareness, and interest	e.g. frequent changes in the government

The policy influences documented in this study show that when national coalitions are aware of the challenges and invest time to analyze and identify strategies, the outcome of the advocacy is more impactful.

Lessons learned and recommendations.

Focus on knowledge building and research.

This study highlighted various approaches and efforts of CSOs to contribute to reducing the number of children and adults who are deprived from the opportunities for quality education. However, there are lack of data that suggests how much progress has been made and what is to be done further to ensure the rights of all towards quality and equitable learning. Similarly, there is a dearth of data at the local level that suggests the gap in access and outcomes of learning among a particular group of children. Therefore, along with the policy enactment, there is a need for knowledge generation and knowledge mobilization so that target-based results can be planned and achieved. This study suggests that knowledge building should be an integral part of the advocacy plan so that baseline information can be obtained before proposing the policies to prepare and enact. Prioritizing knowledge generation alongside advocacy efforts helps make policy advocacy efforts more objective.

In this process, it is beneficial for the national coalitions to identify and allocate resources for engaging in small-scale research that can be helpful to build evidence and credibility of the coalition positions and the outcome of their efforts.

Data-driven advocacy and intervention plan

The policy advocacy so far largely focuses on the formulation and enactment of policy that contributes to expanding opportunities for equitable, inclusive, and quality education for children and adults, particularly from marginalized communities, including children with physical and intellectual disabilities. However, there is a lack of data at the local level so that it is difficult to ensure the extent to which the advocacy contributed to increasing access and quality of learning of children from marginalized communities. Incorporating knowledge-building initiatives into advocacy plans ensures target-based results and contributes to achieving the goal of universal quality education for all. Therefore, the advocacy plan of civil society is better prepared based on the local-level data using the following template:

Issue(s)	Area/Location	Baseline information	Policy intervention plan, timeline, and target
Girls' access to education (A large number of girls do not go to the school)	... rural municipality	30 % of girls from ... community do not go to school	Local CSOs (e.g....) work with ...rural municipalities, devise a scholarship plan, and implement in the year 2024/25, The target by the end of FY 2024/25 – The number of girls who do not go to the school will drop to 10%

Building upon the knowledge base regarding the need of policy in particular sector of the society in this way, the NECs and associated CSOs could work on the target-based framework whereby they can set agendas and activities with a definite timeline. This would make policy works more focused, objective, and practical.

Engagement at the grassroots level

The policy activities, including advocacy and dissemination events, are conducted largely at the urban center and district headquarters, where people representing various corners of society take part in the dialogue. What found less impactful is the engagement of the people at the grassroots level who otherwise have little chance to share their views, experiences, and internet regarding the policy that CSOs are talking about. The greater engagement of common people in the policy dialogue not only ensures their ownership in the policy process but also validates the policy process fully by reaching out to the groups that are the main target of the policy.

Documentation portal

While NECs have done a lot in both policy gains and implementation, there are lack of proper and regular documentation of the activities and outcomes of the policy efforts. While some NECs have a better strategy for keeping records of policy activities (e.g. APF Mongolia, E-Net Philippines), other NECs are a bit behind in recording what they are doing and what results are being achieved so far. There is a need of central digital portal where NECs and other EOL grantees from each country continually provided updated information regarding policy advocacy and impact on the ground in terms of both descriptions and evidence. Such central portal can be used as peer learning platform and sources for knowledge exchange and sharing good practices.

Increased use of digital, print, and social media

While the NECs are using digital and print media for policy activities, including the dialogue and dissemination, there is need of increased use of media brief, audio, and video clips, posters, newsletter, and other process- and outcome-related information materials that to be reached out to larger group of people through social media networking. The social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, are the most-watched platform these days, these materials are to be regularly posted on these platforms.

Increased use of collaborative approach

The collaborative work of CSOs with policy actors, including parliamentarian group or caucus and relevant officials from the minister have made meaningful impact for policy gains and implementation. Furthermore, meaningful dialogue and meeting with parliamentarian and government officials are found very effective for persuading them for a new policy areas and budget required for effective implementation. Such collaborative actions are to be further increased focusing particularly on forming right coalition and partners. In this context, a good lesson can be learnt from Mongolia, where specific coalitions were formed to advocate for a particular policy (Annex below). The coalitions can be formed collaborating with member organizations working in the similar areas and interests.

Recommendations

This section provides some recommendations that might be worth considering in preparing for enhancing advocacy focus and outcomes. The recommendations in these sections are not necessarily the missing action or strategies but the actions and strategies that needs to be considered with importance in preparing for an advocacy effort. As contexts, opportunities and challenges may vary in different situations, some of these may be more crucial in one context than in another.

Recommendations on capacity building

- Compared to the policy gains by the national education coalitions, documentation, exchange of the strategies among each other and peer learning is an area of enhancement as all the coalitions have some unique approaches and strategies that might be valuable to each other. Therefore, it might be worth putting some additional efforts on the exchange of ideas, success, and challenges among the national coalitions. As the working conditions and capacity of the coalitions are diverse, different strategies might be helpful including virtual learning exchange, periodic face-to-face learning events, sharing of brief process documentation, developing some user-friendly knowledge products such as video documentation.
- The national coalitions are working in some complex environment such as bilateral lobbying with the Ministers, Parliamentarians, and other high level government officials, while these opportunities are extremely useful and important, it requires specific preparation and technical skills to convincingly present the advocacy positions. In this context, the national coalitions may benefit from periodic capacity building and technical assistance to remain well prepared to access maximum advantage from such strategic platforms as capacity and internal resources vary among the coalitions.

Recommendations on organizational strategies

- Although the national coalitions are an alliance of the education sector and civil society organizations, having an alliance that goes beyond the coalitions and includes other stakeholders such as other CSOs and networks, independent experts, parliamentarians, and government officials that are supportive to the advocacy positions is helpful. Building such alliances needs to consider identifying the roles of each stakeholder and strategies to keep them engaged so that they are informed of the process, achievements, and challenges.
- Policy advocacy has worked more effectively in the context when the coalitions had sustaining relationships with the authorities (because the government remained stable, or the coalition was able to navigate the relationship even when the government changed). Identifying strategies to maintain the recognition and identity of the government as independent, technically sound, and committed to a cause of equity and inclusion has a strategic advantage.
- The advocacy has been more effective when there is clarity on the policy issues what has been the policy barriers or how it can protect rights to education. Having a specific policy position and supporting research is useful.
- The national coalitions have shared the advocacy plan in their presentation. In some cases, they have developed advocacy plans, however, it will be helpful to offer support on enhancing their capacity and incentivizing practice of developing advocacy plans. As the documentation not only provides clarity but is also useful to reflect on the longer-term engagements and strategies and identify what is working and what might be worth changing.

Recommendations on planning advocacy

- A proper stakeholder analysis and strategies to engage with the key stakeholders is important in the very beginning, failure to such strategies not only limits the policy outcomes but also may limit the overall achievements of the coalition.

- Planning for longer term advocacy efforts is crucial to accomplish the achievements. For example, EFA Mongolia, E-Net Philippines have shared the longer terms engagement have also helped to accomplish more strategic and longer-term policy changes. Some of these policy changes, have incurred at a particular phase of the project implementation, it has been an outcome of the longer-term advocacy by the national coalitions, their members, and partners. Therefore, it is important to analyze the capacity to sustain engagement, planning resources and partnerships, and strategies to continue building on past achievements.

Annex I: AFE Mongolia Case Study

AFE Mongolia has been strategic in its policy advocacy. Long-term engagement with the stakeholders, keeping gender equity and inclusion at centre, and relying on evidence-based advocacy are some of the key strengths that have led to the recognition of education coalition with the government and non-government stakeholders. Partnership with the other stakeholders has been intentional and based on the needs and mutual benefits. Continuation of the strategic choices.

The Laws on Education (Approved on 2023 July 7): this is a set of four major laws that includes a) Law on pre-primary and Primary Education; b) Law on Secondary Education; c) Law on TEVT (Technical, Education and Vocational Training), and d) Law on Higher Education. AFE advocated for the right to the education of the marginalized groups in Mongolia as recognized by the coalition (Children with Disabilities; children from ethnic minority groups; gender minorities; children from poor family backgrounds; and herders, and remotely located children). As a result of AFE Mongolia advocacy efforts and facilitation with the respective stakeholders based on the evidence from the field, Now, these groups are now recognized by the specific clause of the law on education. In addition, the rights of those minority groups have now been recognized in the law including the need for creating inclusive education through teacher preparation, ensuring access to appropriate resources, and teacher preparation has been recognized. In addition to the Laws on AFE Mongolia has also advocated other policies in education in Mongolia.

- Education, Government Resolution No 91 “Regulation on Adoption of the average norms of variable cost per student and funding guidelines” (2022.3.2)
- Minister of Education, No A\214 “Guidelines for preventing and protecting students from bullying and discrimination in schools and dormitories” (2022.6.15)
- Minister of Education, No A\553 “Policy on Inclusive education” (2022.12.21)
- The Minister of Education and Science, No A\135 “Action plan on the improvement of the school dormitories (2023.3.31).

Policy Positions in AFE Advocacy

AFE Mongolia has consistently prioritized the key policy influence in its theory of change. Those policies have related to past engagements and informed by the existing evidence from the research studies, for example, the theory of change of the project implemented from 2020 to 2021 highlighted two major priorities directly related to education policy a) increased participation in policy spaces; and b) effectively influencing education policies. Participation in policy spaces is recognized as the key strategy, and empowering marginalized groups such as children with disabilities, and youth at risk is prioritized as a risk. The theory of change proposed for 2022–2023 aimed at policy revision and improvement to ensure the right to education for marginalized groups. Strategies are further elaborated as campaigns, policy consultation, awareness raising, and public hearings. In addition to empowering marginalized groups, the strategies also targeted members of parliament, the media, and other stakeholders. The most recent proposal from AFE Mongolia (2024 to 2026) has retained the strategies from the previous phases and aligned its advocacy efforts with the “Vision 2050” that aims to influence the Ministry of Education. The project has also prioritized building on *‘research findings and recommendations on the barriers and learning needs of marginalized children and youth, partnerships, engagements with NGO networks, media, and researchers, and trust and credibility earned through engagements with the MOE and the government’*.

Three major characteristics in AFE Mongolia policy advocacy have been explicit first clarity on policy positions which has been supportive to the coalition to ensure its focus and engage its resources including members and partners. The second key characteristic of AFE Mongolia policy advocacy is the sharing of the roles and responsibilities and the way members have come together with the specific areas of focus and expertise. The voice of the specific communities highlighting the barriers to education they have been facing and demanding their enabling to respond to those issues has been much more effective when it is done by the respective communities and alliances. The coalition has been able to ensure such engagement.

Advocacy Strategies and Strengths

AFE has been able to establish the coalition as an alliance committed to equity and inclusion and able to provide technically sound policy input which has been a major strength for the coalition in its policy advocacy. This has also been recognized by the EOL project evaluation EOL phase I as it mentions that 'AFE is accepted by policymakers as experts on education for equity and seeing as a valuable counterpart' This recognition has been a key strength for the national coalition to accomplish the policy influences and to gain access to the technical working groups of the Education law revision at the parliament level.

AFE Mongolia has applied the following advocacy strategies that have helped the coalition to accomplish the key advocacy priorities during the project implementation. Although some of those policy gains are visible at a particular point in time continuous engagement in the longer term has contributed to the achievements in policy advocacy. Policy advocacy strategies that have been primarily applied by Education Out Loud are highlighted below:

Timely Engagement with Adequate Supporting Evidence

Timely action backed up with the appropriate evidence has been one of the most effective strategies. AFE developed and submitted its input in 2019 to the Ministry of Education (MOE) before the official draft had been outlined by the Authorities and was continually involved in every stage of the lawmaking process using media engagements as well as face-to-face opportunities. The input was backed up with the evidence. To generate evidence, AFE conducted six research studies with the funding support of EOL and explored the educational barriers and needs of marginalized children which became the evidence for AFE Mongolia to contribute with the input during the policy process.

Multiple Levels of Engagement

Policy advocacy has been successful when it is applied from the top to down administrative layers of the government system. Lobbying with the parliamentarians directly, and writing letters to PMs, the speaker is very effective in drawing the attention of the key authorities to the advocacy asks and rationales behind the position. Engagement with and empowering the coalition members to advocate for the issues that are directly connected with the respective marginalized group, creating space for them to engage with the agenda and encouraging them to speak at the policy forums (national minorities or parents associations with children with disabilities) has been effective to amplify the voice of the marginalized communities and build pressure for change.

Partners from outside (such as representatives from fellow CSOs, progressive Parliament members, MoE-friendly officials, research institutes, individual researchers, lawyers, some

leaders of major political parties, government officials, and influencers) are helpful to further voice the advocacy position and ultimately change the policy provisions and their effective implementation.

National and local level consultation with the diverse stakeholders provides an opportunity to engage with the diverse stakeholders with diverse roles, levels of authority, and perspectives of both government, civil society, and independent experts. This is also effective in awareness building of the public and promotes citizen engagement for advocacy.

Building on the Past Advocacy Efforts

AFE Claims that their advocacy priorities and efforts have evolved from past research, community engagements, and vision for change which has been supported by the project they have proposed to Education Out Loud in three phases (2019, 2021, and 2023). This continuity has supported the coalition in enhancing their partnership, sharpening their understanding of the issues, and producing convincing policy positions supported with evidence from the field. Examples of such efforts are AFE's inclusive Education studies (since 2020) and study report on 2023 (The evaluation on the implementation of "Comprehensive Three- year Plan to Eliminate Students Learning Loss" (2021-2023), "School budget tracking" monitoring report) <https://we.tl/t-HRRYCYknG>, all these different studies build evidence on how students from marginalized communities have been disadvantaged in this process.

As a result, their recognition as a committed entity to transform education systems for better access and quality has been an asset they are able to capitalize on in their policy advocacy efforts. The level of recognition among the stakeholders has broadened the scope of engagement and influence.

Meeting and Consultation: The coalition also organized meetings of working groups, national consultations on key reform agendas, advocacy training, and education forums for the stakeholders.

Advocacy Materials: AFE published advocacy materials (research reports, position papers, recommendations, and documents) with support of the EOL project. They were used for lobbying with members of Parliament and persuading the different stakeholders involved in the law-making process. Among different advocacy materials, advocacy plans, knowledge products developed and printed by the AFE (which were used by policymakers as well), guidelines, policy positions, recommendations, input to the governments, collection of best practices, and budget tracking keeping equity at centre are some important that the coalition found effective in influencing policymakers' decisions and priorities.

Participation in Learning Opportunities: Technical assistance in developing TOC, change pathways, monitoring frameworks, and evaluation helped us much. Participation in different learning collaboratives organized by RMU and Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) was very helpful thematically and capacity building and advocacy spaces gave us encouragement and confidence to go through almost 3 years of advocacy and lobbying.

Media Campaigns: AFE Mongolia has been using media (radio, TV, portal sites, newspapers, and social media) to raise awareness of the stakeholders, campaigning on the rights to education and disseminating their research and positions widely. Such engagements have been useful in raising awareness and creating pressure on the policymakers from diverse

stakeholders both organized with coalition and independent individuals interested in the right to education.

Impartiality: The AFE is seen as an unbiased, non-politically affiliated, consistent force in promoting and defending equity in education. These assessments of all stakeholders, including policymakers, GoM officials, members of the coalition, and academia lead to the conclusion that in the constant instability of political institutions in the country context, the Coalition would continue to be viewed as an independent and reliable non-biased source for evidence.

Policy Gains: Policy Advocacy for National Level Laws on Education especially, a) General law on Education, and b) Law on pre-school and general education passed by the Parliament of Mongolia. Approved on July 7 and entered into force on 2023 August 3, 2023. The Set Laws on Education was approved at the spring session of the Parliament on July 7, 2023, since it was first presented in 2021. The set law on Education in Mongolia has 4 laws: The general law on Education, The Law on preschool and General education, the law on Higher education, and the law on Vocational and technical education and training.

The education laws provide for the introduction of major platforms in pre-schools, and secondary schools, the protection of children's rights to learn and develop, and the improvement of dormitory and student well-being services. The legal reforms have improved right-to-education policies with provisions for inclusive education particularly for children with disabilities, rural poor students targeting children from families with low socio-economic status and nomadic herders' children, gender-based violence, and lifelong learning. The current provisions guarantee inclusive education for children with disabilities including state responsibilities for education supplies, free meals in kindergarten, and meals in dormitories for school students. In addition, loans, and grants for children with disabilities in higher education have been provisioned in the revised laws. The legal provisions also prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or any other personal background of the students. The provisions also include mother tongue education and recognize lifelong learning of the individuals.

These laws represent a significant overhaul of our national education system, aiming to guarantee inclusive, quality education and lifelong learning for all our citizens.

Although collecting primary data and making it explicit to AFE contribution is complex, AFE Mongolia observes the key trends during its community consultation, partner engagements, and analysis of the available information in the education sector in the country. The major impact of the policy changes as experienced by AFE Mongolia includes an increase in the enrolment of children with disabilities in the last 3 years which was declining in the last 10 years prior to the policy change.

The policy change has also resulted in the priorities of the state and non-state actors in Mongolia. AFE has also been invited for consultation for the civil society initiatives in AFE Mongolia where the coalition representatives have been able to share their perspectives. The education programmes being implemented by the civil society organization have started to further focus on changing at every level of the governments and schools.

Lessons Learned

Among the key lessons learned by AFE Mongolis, a proper stakeholders' analysis is useful for policy advocacy. It is also important to target communication to the specific groups that might be hindering the right to education such as private education institutions. It is also important to prioritize enhancing awareness among all the groups including the ones that might not immediately benefit from the policy reforms such as parents sending their children to private schools to highlight the purpose and longer-term benefit of the coalition advocacy. Likewise, direct attacks on the special schools or against for-profit schools did not work well, instead, focusing more on the importance of public education and creating an inclusive environment in mainstream schools was found more effective strategies. In addition, not considering or targeting parents who send their children to private schools was another learning from the past advocacy efforts. The lessons learned in advocacy efforts.

Annex II: CSEP Timor-Leste Case Study

Policy Positions in CSEP Project

CSEP Timor-Leste as a young coalition has been focused on building its own advocacy capacities and the capacity of coalition members to effectively claim advocacy spaces and influence education policies. So that the coalition can bring in the voices of marginalized communities in the policy process to ensure their rights to education are protected in policy formulation and implementation. Among the issues identified as the key concerns are low quality, inequalities, marginalization (such as by gender and sexual orientation, age, geographic location, and language), low financing for education, and governance. CESP has maintained the key focus of the key priority areas identified in the phase I theory of change and made it further explicit in presentation and articulation. The priorities and strategies are linked to the national and subnational policy spaces and targeted to influencing policymakers. Policy positions proposed in phase III for the implementation between 2024 to 2026, have further specified progress and areas of challenges such as highlighting that ‘inclusive education policy is not properly implemented including very limited education budget allocation to inclusive education, gender-based violence cases continue to be high in schools in rural areas’ which justifies the coalition capacity to analyze the changing context and ensure advocacy priorities are informed of the national contexts and needs. CSEP policy positions articulate aspiration for an ‘institutionally strong and credible advocacy coalition’ capable of effectively monitoring, influencing, and engaging in education policy processes. The major marginalized groups identified for empowering to engage them in advocacy initiatives include Marginalized Youth Forum (MYF), persons with disabilities, and LGBTQI and women’s organizations so that the coalition contributes to equitable, inclusive, gender-responsive education and lifelong learning.

Advocacy Strengths and Strategies

CSEP Timor-Leste has applied a range of advocacy strategies in policy advocacy. The key advocacy strategies that have been effective include:

Active Participation in National Policy Platform: CSEP is active in the Local Education Group (LEG) which is called Acao Conjunta para a Educacao Timor-Leste (ACETL). The platform is led by the Ministry of Education and co-facilitated by UNICEF. This is a strategic platform in which the coalition presents key challenges in education based on its observation and engagements with the marginalized communities and presents its input for improvements. As the development partners also attend the ACETL, this is an opportunity to influence the government and other key stakeholders who are interested in education in Timor-Leste. CSEP's participation in the platform has made it possible to make CSEP well known among the different line ministries that have roles in education and development.

Bilateral Meeting with the Executives and Policymakers: CSEP prioritizes sharing its research findings and input on the key education issues with the Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Secretary of State for Youth, Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment, Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusions and Director Generals. The sharing of the findings and making the research reports including recommendations for improvements makes it possible for the coalition to influence the policy decision at an early stage before they are made. This is also helpful to continue having policy space in the platform.

Media Engagement: CSEP actively works with the media such as national Television Broadcasts to amplify its voice on the issues of education and education advocacy. It also uses its social media accounts to raise awareness on the issues of education and organize campaigns for the right to education. Media engagement offered a cost-effective strategy of policy advocacy for policy influencing.

Public Campaign and Seminars: CSEP organizes awareness-raising campaigns for the stakeholders so that the local communities are aware of the key issues and their rights in education. Such campaigns and seminars are organized to promote awareness on education issues, amplify the voices of marginalized communities, and help them access policy platforms.

Research and monitoring: Creating evidence-based through research and monitoring is another important strategy applied by CSEP Timor-Leste for policy influencing. This is done through research initiatives, monitoring of the policy implementation, and tracking and analysis of the education budget.

Learning and sharing: CSEP Timor-Leste engages in the regional and global platforms to learn from the advocacy trends and efforts so that the issues being prioritized and strategies that worked for the purpose remain relevant to the overall education systems. CSEP also shares its learning with other actors to contribute to the education advocacy efforts regionally and globally.

Policy gains and impact

National Coalition members believe that the advocacy efforts have contributed to enhancing access and continuity to higher education at the higher education levels in Timor-Leste. The enhanced access has particularly benefited marginalized students and youth in rural areas to continue their secondary level.

CSEP has been able to influence the following policies: Ministerial Diploma for the Creation of Scholarships for marginalized youth to access to higher education especially at the National University. The policy was approved by the Council of Ministers and created scholarship packages for more than 10,000 marginalized youth to continue their higher education level, especially at the National University.

Ministerial Dispatch for the closing of three new technical vocational schools in Ermera municipality due to a minimum quantity of students, quality, infrastructure, and the number of teachers. CSEP influenced the Ministry of Education to cancel their dispatch to not close these three technical vocational schools.

Lessons learned

CSEP recognizes the importance of documenting its good practices, thus it will share its best practices on the establishment of Marginalized Youth Forum (MYF) under CSEP, which supports and strengthens education policy advocacy and influences. The MYF representatives have enhanced their knowledge and capacities to speak on their own behalf and to continue to be a strong voice to influence important government decisions for their right to education and other related opportunities. Sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned with other stakeholders in the education sector can contribute to better ways of working. It is possible to share this documentation with other coalitions in the region that are looking to build their youth constituency.

Annex III: NCE Nepal Case Study

National Campaign for Education in Nepal has engaged in policy advocacy at all tiers of the government (federal, provincial, and local). NCE Nepal has aligned its advocacy priorities in supporting federal and provincial government in developing policies in changed political context, and financing in education. Policy advocacy by the National Campaign for Education in Nepal has applied various advocacy strategies at the federal, provincial, and local levels.

Policy Positions in NCE Project

NCE Nepal has consistent focus on strengthening its engagement in inclusive and gender-responsive education policy development, implementation, and monitoring process. The newly introduced federal context provided an opportunity to the coalition to enhance the focus in the policy development process. They expected outcomes of the coalitions EOL efforts are centered on increasing participation of women, youths, adults, people with disabilities and linguistic and religious minorities' in education process by widening its constituencies, formulating partnership with the other stakeholders working in inclusive education, promoting discourse in education policy process and collaboration and technical assistance with the local level government in development and effective implementation of the education policies.

Advocacy Strengths and Strategies

Diverse Membership and Wide Geographic Coverage

The National Campaign for Education has diverse membership and presence in all seven provinces. Although they have not reached all the local government units directly, there is significant engagement in many local governments. The diverse membership and wide coverage are one of the major strengths of the national campaign for education in Nepal.

Access to Policy Platforms

NCE Nepal has access to multiple policy platforms and recognition by government authorities at different levels. In addition to the advocacy efforts, NCE has offered technical assistance in policy formulation in a number of occasions particularly in local and provincial levels. This has strengthened the relationship between the coalition and policymakers.

Media Engagements

The National Campaign for Nepal has applied a range of media for advocacy including public service announcements (PSA), sharing their positions in an interview with the media mobilization for evidence backed critical reporting, and sharing awareness messages via social media. The advocacy efforts have been more successful in the development of the policies at the local and provincial levels. The advocacy efforts are also successful at the federal level in most of the areas.

Lobbying and Influencing Policy Makers

NCE Nepal has applied both formal and informal strategies in influencing policy positions. The formal strategies included collecting evidence in the form of field visits, studies and research, organizing policy discourse with the marginalized communities and thematic discussion, submitting position papers, joint field visits with the policymakers, and sharing observations in the Local Education Groups. The informal strategies included, submission of the position papers, submission of the position papers, submission of the position papers, submission of the recommendations, and position/ recommendations.

Policy Gains and Impact

As an influence of NCE Nepal's interventions, the three-tiered governments (local, provincial, and federal) have acknowledged the role and importance of CSOs to make participation in the discussion of policy-making processes. Among several influences in the process of formulating and implementing education budgets and policies at the local levels, NCE Nepal, particularly, influenced on the national budget for the education sector (F.Y. 2022/23, 2023/24), 'Disaster Readiness Response Plan for Education Sector' in Bagmati Province, 'Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy' of Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa, and 'Procedure to Operate Learning and Earning Programme, 2023' in Bharatpur Municipality.

Lessons Learned

- Working with the local government helps to develop compelling case in the policy development and translate them into effective programming practices that can be inspiration of the other local governments.
- The lessons learned indicate that despite the advocacy efforts some of the areas have been challenging for the national coalitions to influence particularly financing in education. The national coalition has rich advocacy strengths, analysis of the budget, and evidence of the gaps in the sector. In addition, possible areas of financing have been proposed, however, as it involves a more complicated mechanism and key decision makers remain outside the thematic engagements, it has been observed as an area of challenge.
- Other lessons learned from the results and consultation with the coalition indicate strategies to further monitor the implementation effectiveness and strategies to influence effective advocacy. This can contribute to maximize the achievements from policy advocacy to accountability for the effective implementation of the policies in place.

Annex IV: PEAN PNG Case Study

The Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN) was established in 2003 by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to advocate on basic and adult education policy and key education program issues in Papua New Guinea in line with EFA and now SDG 4. In the recent years, the coalition is advocating in the areas of disability inclusion, technical and vocational education, and youth issues.

Policy Positions in PEAN Project

National coalition in PNG has prioritized youth, adult literacy, disability inclusion, gender equity at the centre of its advocacy. The coalition works closely with its members, the regional coalition in developing its advocacy positions and advocating for the priorities. The coalition has also been working with the other national coalition in the region to continually in the advocacy priorities that are relevant to and informed of the local issues in Papua New Guinea and other Pacific Island countries.

Advocacy Strengths and Strategies

Inclusive champions

One of the successful strategies applied by PEAN is engagement with the inclusive champion to advocate for youth issues for education advocacy. This approach prioritizes to work closely with and empower the local youth to advocate for their rights so that they can claim their rights with the government. This approach has been powerful in advocating for disability inclusive rights in a policy rel

Partnership

The following are the partnership strategies PEAN undertaking:

- Participation in the Technical Committees and Task Team
- Civil Society Consultation
- Strategies to Presence in Local Education Groups
- Collaboration and Provincial Governments- academia and organization with thematic priorities such as youth organization,
- Engagement with Provincial Authorities
- Empowerment and Engagement of the Right Holders (such as inclusive champions)
- Recognition of the Government Priorities and Participation in the Available Platforms

Policy Gains and Impact

PEAN advocacy focused on the following policies which during EOL implementation.

Government Tuition Fund Subsidy (GTFS):

PEAN advocated for the improvement in government tuition fund subsidy policy practices. As result of PEAN advocacy, PEAN claimed that the government increased budget in 2022 which PEAN advocated through the Letter to Prime Minister with the technical assistance of the regional coalition ASPBAE in 2021. Attached Letter to Office of Prime Minister 2021. The chief of the staff at Prime Minister Office invited PEAN for the consultation meeting to seek PEAN advice on this matter. During the meeting PEAN staff and members raised concern on the needs to further prioritize basic education, allocation of additional fund for the GTFS and timely release of the fund as delayed in disbursement in funding has been barrier to effective utilization of the resources with possible space for budget manipulation.

Evidenced Based Advocacy for Menstruation Hygiene

PEAN has also been working with the adolescent girls' issues through the collaboration with the teachers to research on the issues of girl students. The finds of the research were presented with the Primary School Teachers and Primary School Inspector and government officers. Policy recommendations were made to respond to the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching puberty issues as it is culturally not acceptable to talk about those changes for the school age children which made it difficult for them to cope with their internal changes. PEAN support to promote this discussion has been able to enhance awareness among stakeholders and enhance the practices.

National Education Sector Plan 2022-2026

PEAN worked closely with Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council (CIMC) to mobilize the civil society organizations to seek CSO feedback on the 'National Education Sector Plan 2022-2026'. As results of this effort, CSO drafted position paper and submitted to the Education Department with feedback form the key policy document on the 23rd February 2022. The major feedback provided to the government included key thematic areas in disability and gender.

National Employment Policy 2020–2030

PEAN organized a workshop in April 2022 to present the CSO view on key policy issues. The workshop on ‘Status of Technical, Vocational and Training in Papua New Guinea’ was helpful to seek CSO position and share it with the government officers from Higher Education who participated in the discussion.

Lessons Learned

Evidenced-based advocacy: PEAN has work closely with the teacher to facilitate action research on the adolescent girls’ issues which helped the coalition to enhance the policy issues and gaps and support stakeholders enhance their practices. It is easier to influence policy changes when the right holders are engaged and empower to advocate for them than only technical experts and activist highlighting it in their presentations.

Partnership is Key: National coalition are strong in advocacy, however, in research and creating convincing evidence other partners such as universities are well equipped. As coalition have to work with the limited human resources it is more strategic to partner with the universities to crate evidence in partnership with the universities which also help to become more influential.

Strategic presence in the policy platform- identifying strategies to expand civil society presence in the policy platforms from the coalitions, its partners and or members is helpful to amplify civil society voice and offer more diverse insights and input to those policy platforms which is effective to influence policy changes keeping the most marginalized communities at the center.

[POSITION PAPER: Education Financing](#)

TOPIC: Education Financing

ORGANIZATION: Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN)

SUB-SECTOR: Lifelong Learning (SDG4)

Financing adult literacy in Papua New Guinea has been the lowest of all priorities in the past fifteen years under the Millennium Development and EFA goals. Adult Literacy, although established all over the country through civil society organizations, faith-based and community-based has all been managed out of the pockets of the civilians. The government has not declared financing assistance in this sub-sector. The Department’s coordinating arm of adult literacy, the National Literacy Awareness Secretariat (NLAS) is limited and therefore does not coordinate literacy in non-formal education; however, funding has always been an issue for this division. Adult literacy programs are equally important due to their accessibility, inclusiveness, timely delivery, and strong community presence. Funding adult literacy is mandated by the development partners to be 6% of the national education budget. Realizing the potential of adult literacy and its contribution to national development in the United States, Germany, and South Africa, and the fact that some countries have formalized holistic education frameworks has contributed to progressive and ongoing educational opportunities, hence the lifelong learning concept instead of adult literacy attributed to policy bias.

The National Census in 2000 which is the baseline for literacy statistics revealed that PNG has one of the lowest literacy rates among its Pacific neighbours. But while many may argue that adult literacy was an insignificant contributor to literacy statistics, the correlation between formal and informal literacy was sufficiently represented. PEAN research findings confirmed that the literacy crisis was right across both informal and formal learning and included school-aged youths who were functionally illiterate. This is further consolidated by a number of young people who leave school and do not make a living after they have completed their basic education. The UNSDG4 calls for quality education and lifelong learning as key to transformative and mutual actions’ for achieving the targets. Since the millennium development and EFA goals implementation, civil society has never been a part of the education budget sharing or decision-making. The globally agreed target for adult literacy (now lifelong learning) was 20% of the national budget, out of which 6% is allocated to adult literacy. PEAN is concerned that lifelong learning will suffer the same budget constraints if the Government continues to focus on financing 8% (2016 budget). Lifelong Learning is not implemented at the classroom level as it is believed to be curricula activities outside of the classroom coupled with trade skills (formal TVET) or soft skills (informal TVET) also employable skills.

PEAN believes that the 2016 budget of 8% unlike 11% in 2015 is still below the globally agreed target. PNG as a member of the United Nations signed and agreed to fund 20% of the national budget for education. The 20% funding will give the Department of Education K2.8 billion annually. The priority for the Government on integral human development will make a big difference; however, Government priority Pillar 1 is ‘economic’. While proponents of this pillar argue that money will sustain human lives, however, the illiterate population will never be able

Annex V: E-Net Philippines Case Study

E-Net has rich advocacy experience in Philippines and recognizes the importance of engaging with the regional and global advocacy alliances to learn from and contribute to the advocacy processes shaping. Through its active participation in relevant SDGs and SDG 4 advocacy spaces and events and its partnership with ASPBAE and GCE, E-Net has been able to contribute to the right to education beyond the Philippines. For the ongoing capacity development of members, E-Net has established an academy that works as the resource center for E-Net Philippines. As a result of its longer-term advocacy, E-Net Philippines has been able to contribute to the following policies through its policy advocacy in recent years.

- Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS)
- Excellence in Teacher Education Act
- Inclusive Education for learners with Disability

Policy Positions in E-Net Philippines

E-Net Philippines has consistently raised its voice for the children, youth, and adults with disabilities who have been left behind in education. E-Net has estimated that around 5.1M children and youth with disabilities are out of school and the data before accessed by E-Net Philippines indicated that less than 10% of children with disabilities have access to formal education. E-Net advocates for the information systems that track the children of disabilities' access to education, prioritization of the resources for education, and campaigns to raise awareness among individuals and communities so that they are supportive of issues of disability inclusion and help tackle the discriminatory attitudes towards persons with disabilities at all levels of society, contributes to the continued neglect of their right to education.

Advocacy Strategies and Strengths

E-Net Philippines has executed phased advocacy strategies to influence policy change in its strategic priorities. The key strategies and strengths of the coalition are as below:

Phased Strategies Based on the Advocacy Context and Readiness: Below is an example of how W-Net engaged in phased advocacy to advocate for Inclusive Education for learners with Disability.

E-Net Philippines engaged in policy advocacy in three phases which were strategically focused on particular phases of the policy development and required diverse strategies of engagements. Active Participation and Advocacy (2015-2018): in the first phase of advocacy, E-Net

Philippines engaged actively in the advocacy efforts in disability sector, advocate groups. E-Net facilitated consultation among marginalized sectors, including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and policy discourse to position the advocacy asks. The national coalition also formed a loose campaign alliance, Allied Members of the Coalition for Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities with 28 organization members, including national federations of disability groups, advocate and support groups, academe, and individual advocates.

Engagement with the Legislature (2019-2021): In the second phase of advocacy, E-Net Philippines contributed with a stronger campaign constituency and engaged the legislature in the 18th Congress for the passage of a national law. The lobbying initiatives were sustained during this period and legislator champions were developed who consistently supported the bill in technical working group sessions and plenary deliberations. E-Net contributed with the involvement of the Coalition members from the disability sector in Technical Working Groups for the bill in both Houses of Congress. Collaboration enhanced collective action in engaging the legislature. Social media strategies used for the continuous promotion of the bill, forums/webinars, urgent appeals, and letter barrages to legislators.



Legislative Success (December 2021 – March 2022): The third period from December 2021 to March 2022 was marked with the approval by both Houses of Congress, a reconciled version of the bill titled "Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act" was ratified in March 2022. The final enacted law mandates access to free, appropriate, quality inclusive education for Filipino children with disabilities including the provision for inclusive learning resource centers (ILRCs).

Social media for Advocacy and Awareness: E-Net Philippines used social media for awareness among the stakeholders which was to amplify voices and share urgent appeals, communicate any changes in the context, etc. The use of social media was effective as it involved low cost and reached a large number of people effectively in a short period.

Legislature Champion: E-Net engaged with the legislator and developed legislator champions who supported raising the position of the NEC in the law-making process to ensure the provision includes the key rights that the coalition is advocating for, and the strategy is helpful.

Engagement with the Department of Education: E-Net also worked closely with the Department of Education, shared its research findings and positions to communicate the needs for the policy provisions being advocated by the coalition which helped the coalition to communicate the context, and rationale for the provisions and how it supports the inclusive education in Philippines.

Building Loose Alliance: The coalition built a loose alliance for the advocacy that included the E-Net members, partners, and other stakeholders committed to the rights of inclusive education. This strategy helped to share expertise and resources and have impactful advocacy. The alliance also made it possible to engage in multiple platforms some of which required significant preparation to present the coalition positions.

Policy Briefs: E-Net Philippines developed policy briefs that included facts and figures, issues and concerns, and recommendations which made it possible to communicate the context, advocacy asks, and rationale behind them. The policy briefs also provide information to the policymakers so that they can use the information on their own. In

addition, the policy briefs also helped to create a uniform voice for advocacy by different members advocating for the same cause in different contexts and opportunities.

Knowledge building: E-Net Philippines has been successful in advocacy for continuous efforts and technical capacity which is possible due to capacity-building efforts. E-Net Academy which is launched to foster a global community of education advocates and provide a platform for advancing capacities through the sharing of resources and information, and capacity-building initiatives is an important strategy to contribute to the sustaining efforts on the same. This academy will strengthen the capability of the coalition as research, information, and capacity-building hubs. Currently, E-Net Academy is offering three courses – The Right-based Approach to Education, Citizens Education Advocacy, and Comprehensive School Safety

Policy Gains

E-Net Philippines has successfully advocated the following policies.

Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS): With the introduction of “Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the Marginalized, Excluded and Vulnerable Sectors (MEVS)” changes are observed in relation to data generation, increased non-formal and alternative education programs, teacher recruitment and training, and multiple interventions are being developed to address multiple and overlapping barriers keeping children and youth from school. The passage of the “Excellence in Teacher Education Act” increased the teaching training programs, and reform teacher preparation programs, both pre-service and in-service. With the “Inclusive Education for Learners with Disability” policy in place there are initiatives for increasing budgets and programs for educating learning with disability. In the Philippines, with the introduction of the ALS policy, non-formal and alternative education programs are increased which is a positive indication of policy impact.

Excellence in Teacher Education Act: The provisions in the act are expected to strengthen teacher education in the Philippines by enhancing the Teacher Education Council (TEC), establishing a scholarship program for students in the Teacher Education Program, institutionalizing the National Educators Academy of the Philippines, and appropriate funds for its implementation. However, the effective implementation of the legal provisions was an issue in the Philippines.

More than twelve years after the passage of the law, and with the contribution of the advocacy of the E-Net Philippines, there is now an IRR that will guide and clarify the mandate and obligations of Deped and other stakeholders, including funding for the genuine implementation of the law. It also ensures the close coordination and implementation of pre-service and in-service education and all other programs such as NEAP-recognized training programs.

Inclusive Education for Learners with Disability: "Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act" was ratified in March 2022. The final enacted law mandates access to free, appropriate, quality inclusive education for Filipino children with disabilities including the provision for inclusive learning resource centers (ILRCs).

Lessons Learned

Advocacy worked well while it was facilitated through networking and collaboration opportunities among CSOs, government entities, education institutions, partners, legislatures, and other relevant stakeholders. The application of such strategies is helpful in accomplishing advocacy goals as it amplifies the voice of civil society and connects with the policymakers. This helps the coalition to behavior change which can generate pressure on decision-makers and drive policy reforms and implementation. Also, public campaigns intensify their public visibility campaigns both offline and online which is helpful for its recognition and creates pressure among the policymakers for the rights to education for all. Another important lesson learned is to have active involvement of its members in the project for the success of the advocacy position as it is a longer-term initiative and requires patience and persistence.